OUR STORY

HOW WE TURNED A WEDDING IN A BASEBALL STADIUM INTO ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S FASTEST-GROWING AD FIRMS

Cake by Entenmann's. Booze from Smirnoff. Roses by 1-800-Flowers. The setting: home plate of Coney Island's MCU Park. The guests? More than 7,000 Brooklyn Cyclones fans. Clearly, this was no ordinary wedding.

DAVE + CARRIE KERPEN
LIKEABLE MEDIA

THREE-YEAR GROWTH **2,224.5%**

2011 REVENUE
$4.7 MILLION

no. 146

STYLING: ARETHA BUSBY

CARRIE KERPEN: You should have seen his face when I suggested we get married on a ball field—and pay for it by getting sponsors. He knew it was brilliant.

DAVE KERPEN: We used to argue about whose idea it was. I wish I could claim it, but it was all her.

CK: I knew that Dave would want something larger than life. And I had been married before, in a pretty substantial wedding, where the marriage lasted all of five minutes. I knew we weren't going to be able to go to my parents and say, "Can I have another big wedding?" So I said to Dave: "I know exactly how we're getting married. We're going to the Brooklyn Cyclones' stadium. We'll get married on the ball field. All of your friends can come. Boom—done."

DK: There were more than 7,000 people watching, but when Carrie and I exchanged vows over home plate, it was very quiet. It really did feel like just the two of us.

CK: I had mud on my dress, but I didn't care. It was a really beautiful ceremony.

DK: It was the birth of both of us as entrepreneurs. After the wedding, we got calls from some of our sponsors saying, "That was great. What are you doing next?" 1-800-Flowers said it was the No. 1 promotion they had ever done.

CK: At the time, Dave was a teacher, and I was a radio sales manager. But I felt we were ready to try something. I said to myself: "You know, we've got to start a company."

DK: We started working on marketing and events for Entenmann's and 1-800-Flowers and Verizon. To throw parties for Verizon, we turned to Facebook, and we found it was pretty good for creating buzz. Then, we realized it was not just building buzz—Facebook and other forms of social media were transforming organizations. The Like button may be trendy, but being likable isn't trendy. More and more, companies need content that's likable. They need to resonate with their customers. We help companies create messages—in the form of facts, trivia, and videos—that people can find on their Twitter feeds and Facebook pages.

CK: Dave is very much the face of the business. He wrote a book about how companies can build their brands, be more "likable," and use social media. He's a commentator on social media in the business world and makes appearances on places like CNN and Fox News, and at trade events. I handle the logistics and operations side. And I'm very active with our clients.

DK: Carrie does all the hard work.

CK: We still tell our wedding story when we talk to new clients. It plays superwell. I think there will always be sneers, especially from people who weren't there. But it was a really magical night of two people who loved each other getting married on a ball field.

DK: We have two daughters, and now we have them to think about—their sponsored bat mitzvahs.

CK: That was a joke. We're not sponsoring bat mitzvahs.

AS TOLD TO **JESS McCUAN** ◎ PHOTOGRAPHS BY **DAVID YELLEN**

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