

Cover
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THE ARTS**Vickie Smith ('97) Minds Her Own Business**

Though many performing artists are less than inspired to tackle the business end of the profession, a solid understanding of marketing can be a huge career boost.

New Jersey-based jazz singer Vickie Smith is a good example of a successful artist who knows how to take care of business. The daughter of a professional jazz guitarist, Smith began her own career singing with New York City swing bands, then performed solo cabaret shows while working as an executive assistant in publishing. When her husband's 2001 job change enabled her to pursue singing full time, she hired her own musicians, studied music theory, and generally put her Baruch BBA to good use. "My marketing knowledge was very helpful in putting together packages, knowing how to sell myself and my band," says Smith, whose first project was *Ella! The Song Is You*, a tribute show to Ella Fitzgerald. This year, Smith released *c-Ella-brate*, her second CD of songs honoring the music of Fitzgerald. (Her admiration for the legendary vocalist, who died of complications from diabetes in 1996, led to a recent fundraising show for the Diabetes Research Institute Foundation.) Smith is also something of a resource for local musicians in New Jersey, who appreciate her music biz expertise—and, no doubt, her willingness to share it.



Smith, who performs regularly in New Jersey- and New York-area clubs, restaurants, and other venues, has worked with a variety of prominent musicians (including Bucky Pizzarelli and Joe Battaglia's New York Big Band) in venues such as Tavern on the Green and Don't Tell Mama. Yet, she also sings frequently in local nursing homes. According to Smith, these performances—which began during visits to her grandmother in such a facility—keep her grounded: "These people know Big Band-era music firsthand; it's nice to see their reactions."

Vickie Smith's career is a perfect combination of heart and business smarts. For information on upcoming shows, visit www.vickiesmith.com. —Marina Zogbi