



The Definitive Guide to **Wedding Exhibition** **SUCCESS**

By Richard Wilson

Welcome

The Wedding industry is one of the few that is and always will be, a thriving one which remains unaffected by outside influences, time of year, recessions and it's growing year on year.

Once you understand the wedding industry, you will understand why.

A wedding is generally seen as an expected expense and as such, is either planned and saved for well in advance, or part / fully funded by parents.

Traditionally, this funding would have come from the bride's father, but it is now more common to see help coming from both sides of the couple.

However, where the funding comes from isn't really the issue here; what matters is the fact that couples getting married have set aside a considerable budget to spend on their wedding day, regardless of what is going on in the world around them.

There is no other industry that has a customer base with such a high level of disposable income, period. Business is booming.

Whilst budgets for weddings are set aside as a disposable amount, it is worth knowing that these budgets vary considerably. Some brides may only have a £1000 to spend on a small reception, while other couples may have set aside tens of thousands. It is very important to note that all couples have different priorities about their wedding.

One thing worth noting here is that whilst I have mentioned couples in the above text, it is important to note that there is really only one person that really makes most of the decisions regarding the wedding day and that person sometimes may not even have the cheque book.

That person is The Bride!

It is because of the unusual way in which a wedding is funded that makes it so unique and unlike any other industry. Therefore, the relationship you have with the brides you encounter are of the utmost importance.

Life as a bride is very short lived, usually around 18 months on average. Within this time, she will spend on average £22,000 with wedding suppliers from her local area.

Understanding the Wedding industry

The wedding business is a cottage industry mecca with more than 80% of the businesses within it run from home and 80% of those run as a part time concern.

Many of these businesses start up because they have either helped with a friend's wedding and then think they can turn this idea into a business, whilst others turn an interest or hobby into a business.

There are also many companies that have persisted in the wedding business, some for many years and have built a very successful lifestyle for themselves. The fact remains that many of these businesses do not have shop fronts and to people outside of the wedding industry, these companies don't even exist.

About the Bride

Throughout my research, it has become apparent that almost all women have a keen desire to get married, the wedding seeming to be an obvious and inevitable goal.

Throughout her life she is silently preparing for when it is her time. It is only when her time comes however that she changes, her whole focus shifts.

Now she has become a bride.

She will begin by purchasing national bridal magazines, downloading wedding apps and generally trawling the internet busily getting ideas about her wedding. She is on countdown and will probably have an app to keep reminding her of the fact.

She will always have an idea of what she wants but as previously said, as the wedding industry is relatively underground at this stage, she'll struggle to find suppliers.

Once she starts making her wish list, she will then start to research where to get these items, and whilst all this information will be available online in some form or another, due to the nature of the service, it will soon become apparent that it's local suppliers that she will require.

Life as a bride is very short lived, usually around 18 months on average. Within this time, she will spend on average £22,000 with wedding suppliers from her local area.

Within your area there are a network of wedding fairs in operation. These fairs or exhibitions are not dissimilar to craft fayres in their presentation. But it is these fairs that give wedding businesses the chance to display their goods and explain their services to brides which, without a shop front would otherwise be almost impossible.

Wedding fayres on average get an attendance of about 50 to 200 brides, whereas the larger shows like I Do Wedding Exhibitions attract over 1000 brides in a single day!

Industry Background

The wedding industry in England and Wales is big business and although the actual number of people getting married is falling, the value of the industry is growing.

Despite a 7% fall in the number of weddings between 2001 and 2007, the value of the industry has grown 25% and latest figures estimate the industry to be worth around £10 billion per annum. Nevertheless, the industry is mainly driven by small independent businesses – such as venues, caterers, florists, stationers – and as a result, its value is often overlooked at destination level.

There are two types of wedding ceremony in England and Wales; religious ceremonies which take place in a Church or place of worship, and civil ceremonies or partnerships which take place in a Registry Office or Approved Premises.

Approved Premises (or Venues) are buildings licensed by local authorities under the Marriage Act 1994, for the solemnization of civil marriages.

Except in special circumstances, anyone choosing a religious ceremony is required to get married in the area where they or their would-be spouse lives.

Civil ceremonies are non-religious and are conducted by the local Superintendent Registrar. They can take place within or outside the couple's district of residence.

Trends in the number of weddings

There were 245,513 marriages in England and Wales in 2015, the most recent year for which data is available. Of these, 153,960 were civil ceremonies (66%) and 77,490 (34%) were religious ceremonies. There is a general downward trend in the number of people getting married and since 1997, more civil weddings take place than religious weddings each year. This reflects the fact that, since 1997, civil ceremonies have been permitted to take place in Approved Venues as well as Register Offices.

Civil partnerships

The Civil Partnership Act came into force on 5th December 2005. The first year saw about 17,000 civil partnerships take place in England and Wales, with numbers falling to around 8,000 in 2007 (3.5% of all ceremonies). The number is expected to decline slightly in 2008/9 and then level off.

Ceremonies in approved venues

Since 1997 the proportion of civil ceremonies taking place in Approved Venues has been growing steadily. Although the total number of ceremonies has been gradually falling, the total number taking place in Approved Venues has continued to grow. In 2015, 89% of all marriages took place in approved premises, of these only 26% were religious ceremonies.



The wedding industry is worth **£10 billion**



Facts and Figures

Table: Regional marriage statistics 2011 (Source; Office of National Statistics)

Region	Total no of weddings (2011)	Civil Marriages	Religious Marriages	First Marriage for both partners	Remarriage for one or both partners
North East	10,285	7,037	3,248	6,717	3,568
North West	28,179	19,172	9,007	18,725	9,454
Yorkshire & The Humber	21,694	15,189	6,505	13,721	7,973
East Midlands	19,601	13,277	6,324	12,519	7,082
West Midlands	23,380	15,283	8,097	15,477	7,903
East	27,608	18,952	8,656	18,065	9,543
London	34,997	29,001	5,996	25,565	9,432
South East	41,627	28,648	12,979	27,532	14,095
South West	28,584	19,516	9,068	18,572	10,012
Wales	13,167	8,595	4,572	8,571	4,596

'Figures estimate the industry to be worth around £10 billion per annum'

Regional variations

The number of weddings varies from region to region, and will depend on a number of demographic factors.

As can be seen in Table 1, over 41,000 marriages took place in the South East region in 2011, approximately a third more than the rest of the country.

Office of National Statistics (ONS)

London has significantly higher proportion of civil weddings than elsewhere in the country (29,001 compared to 28,648 in South East, which is the next highest).

North East has the lowest proportion of civil and therefore highest proportion of religious ceremonies.

London also has the highest proportion of civil weddings taking place in approved premises (29,001).

The South East also has a high proportion (28,648). West Midlands has the lowest proportion (44.7%) and Wales is also low (46.8%). This probably reflects the supply of premises in each region (there are considerably more in London and South East than elsewhere in the country) as well as demographics.

Saturday is the most popular choice for wedding ceremonies to take place, followed by Friday.

Time of year

Weddings are extremely seasonal, with around 70% taking place in the Spring / Summer months. Over 40% take place in July, August and September and nearly 30% in April, May and June.

In 2006, August was the most popular month (37,128 weddings) followed by July and September, which saw similar numbers of weddings (34,501 and 34,505 respectively). Again this has not changed over time, although in years when September has five weekends it tends to outdo August in terms of the number of weddings.

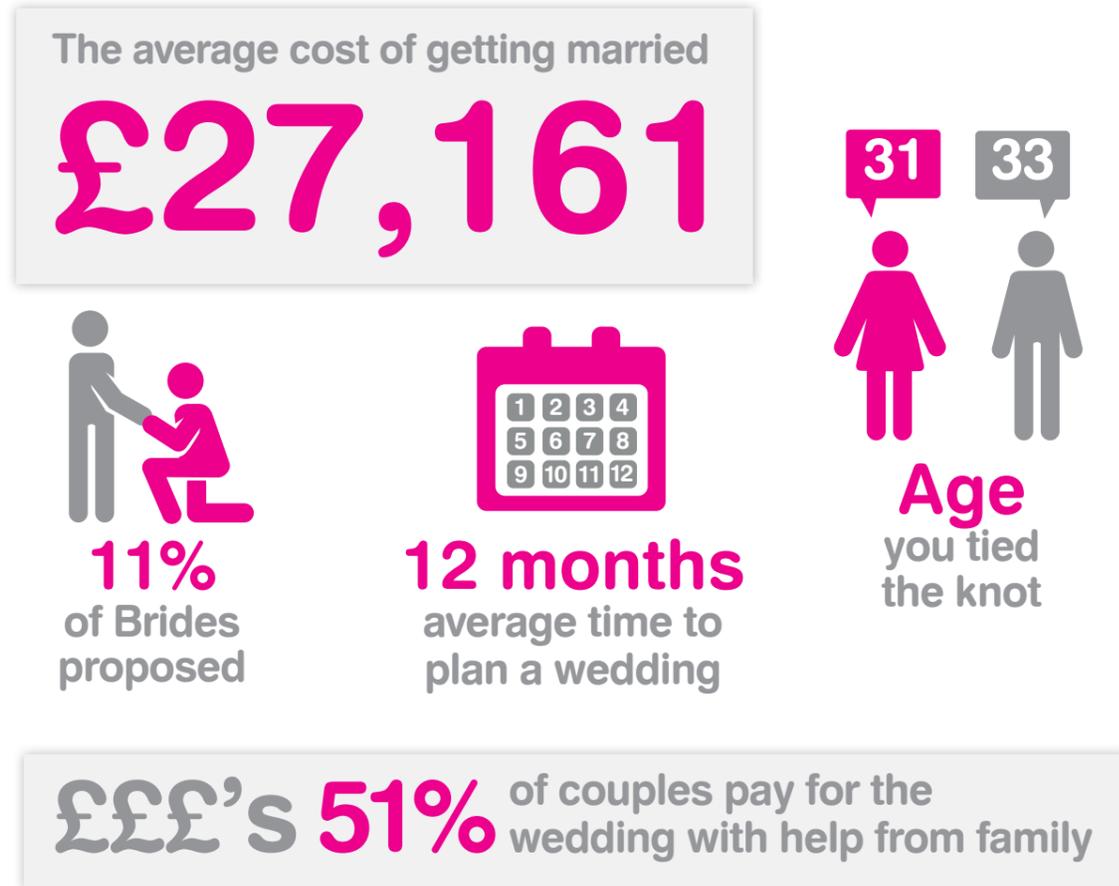
Day of the week

Saturday is the most popular choice for wedding ceremonies to take place, followed by Friday.

In a recent survey, 63% of ceremonies were held on a Saturday and 18% on a Friday.

- 5% Sunday**
- 3% Monday**
- 3% Tuesday**
- 3% Wednesday**
- 5% Thursday**

Civil and religious weddings by day of the week (2006) (Office of National Statistics)



Wedding planning

There is little formal research available on the weddings market and most surveys are undertaken by bridal and wedding magazines, which, as a result, reflect the dynamics of their readership rather than the nation as a whole.

However, they do provide some interesting insights.

The Hitched 2017 Wedding survey indicates that:

- The average cost of getting married is £27,161
- The average length to plan a wedding is 12 months
- The average age for a bride is 31 and for a groom is 33
- 51% of couples pay for the wedding with help from family

A slightly older survey, undertaken by The Condé Nast Brides 2008 Wedding Industry survey suggests that:

- The average cost of getting married is £22,858 (rising to £23,932 in the South East and London)
- The average length of engagement is 18 months
- The average age for a bride is 29 and for a groom is 31
- 93% of couples live together before the wedding

Factors affecting the choice of locations and venues for weddings

There is no formal research available on this subject, however it is important for destinations and new venues to have an understanding of the basic dynamics affecting location and venue choice. The following insights have been gained through The Tourism Company consultancy projects and discussions with registrars, venues and recently married couples, as well as by monitoring web forums on the subject.

Choosing a wedding venue is an extremely personal choice and each couple will have specific requirements depending on where they are from, the number of guests they plan to invite, budget and personal taste. Here, some key factors are considered with regard to venue choice, and the extent to which a particular venue or destination can influence them.

Location / destination

Although there is an increasing trend towards 'destination' weddings, these largely take place abroad in places such as the Mediterranean and Caribbean.

Domestically, the choice of location is mainly dependent on factors specific to a particular couple – where they live, where one or both sets of parents live, a place they already have personal ties to (e.g university, anniversary, previous holiday), or somewhere which is convenient for guests coming from far and wide to get to – rather than a destination as such. That said, an exceptional venue will be able to attract couples to a destination they may not have previously considered.

Venue-specific factors

Where a couple choose to get married will also depend on whether the venue (or venues in a destination) can fulfil their requirements in terms of size, budget, accommodation provision and service offered.

Type of venue

Since changes in the law in 1997 which allowed civil ceremonies to take place outside the Register Office, there has been a huge growth in the number and type of licensed venues across England and Wales.

Hotels, country houses, art galleries, tourist attractions, boats and football stadiums are just some of the types of venue available.

Many couples will have some sort of idea of the type of venue they would like to get married in, but many will also be looking for ideas and inspiration.

Hotel provision

Transport to a venue and accommodation nearby can also be important factors. Some couples will want to hold their wedding in a hotel where all their guests can stay, and for others, information on nearby hotels and B&Bs will be sufficient. It is therefore important for venues to set out clearly the transport options, parking and local accommodation facilities.

Religious or civil ceremony

Couples choosing a religious ceremony will probably still need a venue to hold the reception. Proximity to their place of worship will determine whether a venue is suitable or not, although recent relaxation of the laws means that couples can choose a church or other place of worship which is not in their local area, and in this case an exceptional venue may be able to influence their decision on where to marry. Good links with local places of worship can therefore benefit a venue.

Photo opportunity

A unique and beautiful setting for photographs can often be a deciding factor.

Again, this can largely be down to the taste of individuals but venues should have a clear idea of where photographs can be taken and those which can offer something special will be at an advantage.

Marketing weddings at a destination level

Very few destinations in England and Wales, or indeed the whole of the UK, market themselves specifically as wedding destinations. One exception to this is Gretna Green. However, as the wedding market becomes more competitive and destinations look for more ways to differentiate themselves and attract visitors, marketing destinations as places to get married will become increasingly important.

The brides are the key decision makers

Although times are changing, research shows that it is still largely the brides who tend to make the key decisions regarding wedding venues, rather than the groom. This is reflected in all wedding magazines and websites, which are clearly targeted at brides.

Conclusion

While the number of marriages in England and Wales is decreasing year on year, the number taking place in Approved Venues is growing. This is creating more opportunities for destinations and venues, and you.



Definitive Guide to Wedding Fayre Success

It's fair to say that most people get started in the wedding business with the illusion that it is an easy business to be in. They see it as an easy way to supplement an existing income or as an escape route from the 9 – 5 day job.

This is especially true of people who have a hobby and wish to turn this passion into a business. This is where a lot of people see the wedding market as an obvious place to turn to. Most people have been to more than one wedding and so understand the basics of what is required.

Quite often in fact, a wedding business is sparked not by having an existing hobby and turning it into a profession, but by the bride who has done some aspect of her own wedding herself and has now seen the opportunity to turn this new found skill into her own wedding business.

I would say - before entering the wedding business, there are things that you should take into consideration.

Weddings are seasonal

If you've done a forecast based on doing 5 weddings a week every week all year, then I'm sorry to say you are going to be disappointed. Weddings are seasonal, the majority are carried out in the Spring and Summer months and then these are mainly done on a Friday and Saturday. (see previous chapter for more info)

You need to base your business on doing up to 50 weddings per year (which is good by the way)

How much does your product or service sell for?

Think about this - 50 weddings at £500 each = £25000 turnover – once you have taken off your costs, what does that leave you with; Profit.

Unsociable hours

Especially if you're providing a service, Friday, Saturday and Sunday are the big 3 when it comes to popular wedding days. In fact, more weddings take place on a Saturday night than all the rest of the week put together. Needless to say if you like your weekends to yourself you won't last long in the Wedding Business.



It's hard to get started

Brides plan their wedding months and years in advance, which means if you take a booking today and she gets married in a year, chances are you're not going to get paid for at least 11 months. This is not uncommon; in some cases it may take longer and then it's going to take time to build up to having a full order book. That means you're going to have to have enough money behind you in the beginning to cover all your marketing costs, your stock and all other expenses, before you see any income. Most people forget about this and it's the No1 reason many businesses fail in their first couple of years.

There are various ways to promote and advertise your wedding business just like in any other business, but for the sake of clarity, this book will concentrate on one of the most popular forms of marketing – [wedding fayres and exhibitions](#).

But the wedding industry is very different and unique in many ways when compared to other industry types.

B2B exhibitions are a way for companies to build long term relationships with their customers with ongoing sales that can last for years.

Likewise, many B2C exhibitions that are interest or hobby related businesses that exhibit can build up relationships with customers that are multi-purchase over the years to come.

However, the wedding business doesn't benefit from ongoing custom due to the nature of the business. You are in effect a one stop purchase, there is no repeat business, so you need to make sure you get it right and get the maximum from the exhibition.

Here's a few pointers to getting started

Ask the venue how they will be promoting the show – will this advertising reach your ideal target market. Look for clues as to who will attend by looking at the other exhibitors – are they your customers or your competitors?

How is the exhibition being advertised? The venue organiser will give you this information and this will give you a good idea who will attend and in what numbers. Ask how many brides did they get through the door at previous fayres?

This is vital and often overlooked but is essential to your exhibiting success.

Choosing your stall

Ask the organiser for a floor plan. This will show you an aerial view of the entire exhibition, you will be able to see where the entrances and exits are, the possible dead areas and in some cases, where other exhibitors are stood.

- Which area will work best for you?
- Ask the organiser questions – Never assume
- Don't take for granted that everything you expect to be there will be.
- What are the dimensions of the stall?
- Is there an electrical supply?
- Are there height restrictions?
- Find out who is a point of contact (get their phone number, mobile is even better)
- Where do you unload, where do you park, are refreshments provided.

If possible visit the venue. It will give you a massive advantage.

Book early, most if not all exhibitions work on a first come first served basis.

If you leave it to the last minute you will have less choice and may be left with a poor stand.



The key to this book however, is implementation, merely reading it will not bring you any extra customers. Success will come from adapting the strategies and tactics offered and implementing them to your business.

Gaining new leads

Wedding Exhibitions and wedding fayres can be a fantastic way to gain new leads and increase interest in your wedding business.

They allow you to showcase your company and your products to brides, who we hope are very interested in what you have to say or offer.

So, as many businesses in the wedding industry don't have a high street presence, it gives them the unique opportunity to have a shop for the day to engage in passing custom, which they wouldn't be privy to in normal every day running of their business.

In most cases it is because of this lack of front line experience and a misconception of what they are trying to achieve, that most businesses come away from a show thinking everything has gone really well.

The unfortunate reality is they have given away 500 leaflets that will get glanced over at best, come away with a few contacts they won't chase up, and end up with a huge bill they will struggle to pay. That said, if done correctly these shows can deliver a predictable number of highly profitable new customers time and time again. Whether you're new to exhibiting or a seasoned pro, this book will help you avoid some common mistakes, give you some helpful tips and more importantly, give you a step-by-step guide to dealing with your potential visitors and give you a distinctive edge over your competition.

The key to this book however, is implementation, merely reading it will not bring you any extra customers. Success will come from adapting the strategies and tactics offered and implementing them to your business.

The best way to use this book is with highlighter in hand, make notes, highlight parts that you like and the areas that you will act on. The strategies I will suggest will radically change your business; you may think some of the suggestions ridiculous or it may seem like hard work. You must not fall foul of this and dismiss these principles and tactics. I have been using these very same tactics and ideas to build my own business into a 6 figure business, as well as helping many others do just the same.

Different Types of Exhibitions



Shell Scheme System

Most large exhibition halls provide a shell scheme system. This is a series of boards, (usually around 1mtr wide x 2.5mtr high) which are linked together to form a wall around your designated area to create a booth.

Shell schemes usually (but not always) have header boards on them, which can be used to house fascia boards and attach lighting.

One of the best ways to decorate your shell scheme is to use graphic panels.

These panels are purpose made to fit each of your shell scheme panels and are made of heavy duty, lightweight material which can easily be attached to these panels using Velcro strips.

The great advantage with using graphic panels is they don't take up any of your floor space and instantly give your booth a very professional and branded look.

These panels can be rolled up for transportation and as shell scheme systems are generally universal in size, these panels can be wiped clean using a damp cloth and used time and time again.

You can also cover your shell scheme with draped material, which is a very cost effective way of covering what would normally be a very unattractive backdrop.

Open Plan Exhibitions

Other smaller fayres commonly found at hotels, simply provide a table and an area with which to display your products. These type of wedding fayres can be far less restrictive and much can be gained by arriving at these shows early and taking advantage of this laid back approach.

With this type of show, there are quite a variety of display solutions available with which to design your stand and some are better suited than others depending on the space available.

Again, with this type of show, it will give you a great advantage to visit the venue beforehand, as positioning of exhibitors can be less rigid and sometimes a little negotiation with the organiser can move you to a position better suited to your type of display.

If there is quite a bit of space available (3mtr Sq or more), then a Pop-up display stand is an ideal solution.

Your Exhibition Display



Pop Up Stand

There are a wide variety of Pop-up Displays available on the market today; generally, they all follow the same principle but some are considerably better than others.

Pop-up stands are a series of graphic panels that are attached to a collapsible wire frame to form a seamless graphic wall to the back of your stand. This gives your stand a shell scheme feel and instantly gives you a massive visual impact. They also have an option to attach lights, which can further enhance your display and attract visitors.

The entire system is transported and stored in a small wheelie bin sized container and can be easily set up by one person.

If space is at a real premium and a pop-up system is too big, then either one or a series of Roller Banner stands are a great solution.

Roller Banner

These stands can be set up by one person in less than 2 minutes and will provide you with an eye-catching display or back drop without taking up much floor space.

Whilst these stands tend to vary slightly in price and size, generally they are around 600mm x 2000mm.

This guide has only touched briefly on the types of display solutions available as there are a wide variety of other available solutions to help you with your exhibition, other than the options covered in this guide.

So now you have chosen your venue, and designed your exhibition stand, all that's left is to meet your visitors and squeeze as much from your day as you possibly can.

The Job of your Stand

Too many companies try to cram too much information onto these displays, thinking that they need to get their entire sales pitch and every product they offer, onto them, whilst others design their stand so obscure that you have to ask the vendor what it actually is that they are offering.

This is not the job of your display.

Display the main benefits that your company can offer, but keep these short and to the point.

Your stand should try and create curiosity or scratch an itch, it should, from a distance arouse curiosity to make the bride want to push through the crowd to see more about your business.

If your stand can do this then it's doing a great job.

Your stand is a direct representation of your business, this is your catwalk, the cream of your crop. This is the standard that, at a glance, a bride who looks over your stand will judge you on.

It should be perfect – here, attention to detail is crucial. Broken pieces, forgotten items and dirty products will all reflect directly on you.

It will give off a “I can't be bothered approach and the bride will see it.”

You can promise her the world and assure her that everything will be so perfect on her day, all the while her eye is being drawn to the grubby marks on your display or the broken items.

She will automatically think – will you forget, will it be dirty, will it be broken at my wedding?

Your stand is a direct representation of your business, this is your catwalk, the cream of your crop. This is the standard that, at a glance, a bride who looks over your stand will judge you on.

Your display is your hook and should be designed accordingly. Its aim should be to catch a visitor's attention and entice them to your stand.

The most important display item on your stand by a mile is YOU.

Getting everything perfect on your stand is one thing, but do not forget that the bride is deciding whether or not she can trust YOU to deliver on your promises, but more than that, she is deciding whether or not she likes you.

Believe me, I have seen some amazing products on display at wedding shows and when I have enquired about them I have had to prise any enthusiasm about them from the owner.

These business owners are often sat behind their stand reading a book, playing on their phone or eating a sandwich, sometimes at the same time.

This just gives off the impression that brides have disturbed them!

You are part of the design of your display.



Designing your Stand

Dress Accordingly

By this, I mean try to dress to fit your business.

For example:

If you are a seamstress, dress like a seamstress,
If you make cakes, dress like you make cakes,
If you are a photographer, dress like a photographer,
If you are a jeweller, then dress like a jeweller.

Remember, you are part of the display – if you make cakes and you think that because it's an exhibition, you must put on a suit – why?

Does that fit with what you do?

Is the bride ever going to see you in a suit again, I doubt it, so why do it?

Now I'm not saying that you shouldn't smarten yourself up a bit for an exhibition, you should, but try wherever possible to match the style of your business.

I have seen some great examples of just this kind of showmanship and here are a few examples:

Casino Hire – as the name would suggest, they hire out casino tables for weddings, they display casino tables on their stand and they dress as croupiers.

Another good example is Wedding Car Hire companies and the staff all dress as the chauffeurs.

Wedding cake makers dressed in whites or even just a simple apron, sometimes the apron is branded, adding even more branding and professionalism.

There are businesses that do not have an instantly recognisable uniform yet even in these cases a subtle prop can work wonders. Bridal wear owners with a measuring tape simply draped around their neck, giving instant recognition that they are a seamstress, that is their profession, they gain trust and with it, credibility.



Why do you think doctors wear stethoscopes around their necks?

Is it just for convenience or more perhaps to enlist trust and confidence in a nervous patient by making themselves instantly recognisable as the doctor.

I do however appreciate that not all businesses lend themselves to a specific attire that would be instantly recognised and associated with that business type and my advice in these cases would simply be to fit in with your business. This could be in the way of a uniform or simply a style that befits your business.

Just remember, you do not need dress up for the occasion and totally remove yourself from the character of your business.

I hope you get the idea – you are an integral part of your display and you must fit in accordingly. It's all a part of good showmanship.

But I will drive this point home one last time. You and your stand are a direct representation of your business, this is your catwalk, the cream of your crop, a bride's first impression of you, this is the standard that at a glance, a bride who looks over your stand will judge you on.

Just remember this – As consumers, before we make any buying decision, we first look at all the reasons not to make the purchase, before we decide to make the purchase.



Getting Brides to your Stand

Advertising in the event programme

During the event, the programme is a very well-thumbed piece of literature, it is the first thing a bride receives as she enters the show and is used and referred to more than anything else.

All the leaflets and company brochures can be looked at later, but for now, the programme guide is her only reference, a what's on guide, a map to her day at the show.

The guide will almost always give you a small section in which you can say a few words about your business.

Programme advertising

Programme advertising is often cheap and grossly underused and misused and because of this, can be a massive advantage if done correctly.

Sold in half and full pages, advertising within the programme does not come with any of the restrictions that your free listing will. This means you can take full advantage of your space and whilst your basic message may be the same as your free listing, because there will be little competition for space, you can really drive your point home.

STAND E1

Ace Party Casino Table Hire

Yorkshires #1 Fun Casino Hire and Wedding Supplier. Full-size, Luxurious Casino Tables and Professional Croupiers.

Ace Party guarantees a competitive price for an authentic, fun casino experience.

Our other products and services include; Magic Mirror Photobooth, Carnival Stalls, Candy Cart, Popcorn Cart, Candyfloss Machine and more...

Email: info@aceparty.co.uk

Tel: 07403 677750

www.aceparty.co.uk



Your Database of Brides

You will probably have a good list of brides on your database, some will be hot leads, some will merely be names of interested brides who you have had contact with along the way and have since gone cold. Some may even be past customers.

The main point here however, is to let them know that you will be at that particular show, offer to send them free tickets, offer them an incentive, even just the fact that they can meet you in person to answer any questions they may have could be all the incentive they need.

Even past customers whilst they will need a slightly different approach, should be notified about your attendance at the show, if you have done a good job for them, they may know of friends who are getting married and will happily promote your business and even bring them along to meet you.

Here's what I see at most wedding fayres; Someone stands at the front of their display, giving out leaflets and other expensive literature, this is usually after the less than enthusiastic question of whether the person receiving the literature would actually like it.

Usually but not always, this is accompanied by a nervous question to attain whether or not the bride has use of their service. Asking this question is at least heading in the direction you should go, but most of these people aren't really that interested in the response and really only engage in a bride who starts to make the first move and starts asking questions back.

The brides coming to the exhibition are looking for something that gets them excited, that something could be you, but, if all you do is give them a leaflet, then they're never going to find that something out.

On the same token, as mentioned previously, brides are also looking for a reason not to listen to you; they arrive at your stand curious but with barriers raised, the minute they arrive, if they don't see something in that first few seconds that gets their attention, that gets them excited, they start looking for a reason to leave.

The brides coming to the exhibition are looking for something that gets them excited, that something could be you, but, if all you do is give them a leaflet, then they're never going to find that something out.

Much of the time giving them a leaflet or information is like saying,

"Here's some information about us for you to read somewhere else away from our stand... goodbye".

Now the bride doesn't even have to look at your stand in detail because you've given her all the information she thinks she needs to make her decision about your business and she can do this when she gets home.

Therefore, your job is to systematically work that time to your advantage to lead and not be led, to get all the information you need to help you with the remainder of your sales process and it is exactly that sales process that I am going to explain to you now.

You must engage the passing brides directly and not merely help them or to make them understand how your product or service can really help make their wedding day special.

But in order to stand out and be remembered, you have to get a bride excited.

Getting the Most from the Exhibition

Staffing your Stand

Depending on the size of the show and the number of brides expected, it is essential to have enough people to accommodate the numbers in order to make the most of your time.

If you don't, there is no way you will be able to take full advantage of the number of potential custom on offer, so whilst you may enjoy a busy day speaking to a never ending line of brides, all the while potential custom is passing you by.

Here's some figures to illustrate the point:

If you spend on average 15 minutes with an interested couple and let's imagine that couples are queuing up to speak to you, you can still only speak to 4 couples an hour. Multiply that by the number of hours the show runs for –shows are about 7. This means that at best, you will only ever speak to between 20 – 30 brides in the day.

Now if that is a hotel type wedding fayre, that brings in 80 brides, then you have done very well, but as in the case of an I Do Exhibition that attracts over 1200 brides, then you've not even scratched the surface on the potential business that a show like that could bring you.



This is why it is so important to use the tactics in this guide to squeeze the absolute most from the show. You, as one person alone can only speak to a set number of people in the allocated opening time of the show. If you use the old normal approach, it really doesn't make a difference to you how many brides turn up, so to combat this you are going to need to bring extra team members.

These extra team members need not be experts in your line of work, they just need a little product knowledge and bags of enthusiasm. But as I will explain, by enlisting these extra team members you will get the absolute most out of the exhibition.



Stage One

Identifying your Market

All brides are not created equal; you must identify your market. What I mean by that is all the brides attending the exhibition will be at different stages of preparing their wedding. Some will be newly engaged and at the beginning of their search and would have nothing booked or planned. Others may be just looking for that last little add-on or extra.

As well as this, brides will have a different priority for different services or products. To some, it is the photography, to others the cake, to some the dress, whilst to others, the jewellery matters the most. The most important thing to remember is every bride is different.

So whilst you may have thought in the beginning that you just want to speak to brides wholesale, when you think about it now, who you really want to speak to is;

(a) brides that haven't already booked your service type

and

(b) your product or service is on their priority list.

This will enable you to make the most of your time at the exhibition and is the job of your front line staff. It is these staff members that will filter out all the casual browsers and leave you, the expert, to only deal with highly qualified prospective brides that your staff have identified that actually need your services.

Using this technique means you can filter out a much greater number of brides that fit your ideal customer and spend much more time with this person rather than spending your time trying to find them in the first instance.

It is therefore imperative that you identify which of these brides you are interested in from a very early stage. You do this by using our front line staff members, so now instead of just giving out leaflets to any bride who will take them, you now need to devise a questionnaire that quickly identifies and categorises your prospective brides so that you can find your ideal bride.

This may all sound a bit regimental and serious, or it may even sound a bit obvious, but you would be amazed at the amount

of times I have seen businesses speaking with brides, only to discover half an hour into the conversation that the bride had already sourced that company's services from another supplier, but was happy to speak with the company either just out of politeness or because she was genuinely interested in the business and just wanted to hear what the company had to say.

But why waste time speaking to brides that don't need your services whilst the ones that do are walking by?

Don't expect everyone to stop at your stand and start asking questions; you must be proactive and your results will triple. Having a good front person is key; they should be outgoing and friendly and able to identify and filter your visitors.

Use a front man / woman to meet and greet your visitors. Have them lead the conversation with your visitor, not with a non-descript question, but a leading and intriguing question or statement. The question or statement should always be designed to raise curiosity and desire in the visitor to know more about your product or service. Do this right and you will have your visitors undivided attention.

Please remember that you are at this stage still trying to filter out the brides that meet your exact bride type match. You are only interested in speaking to brides who haven't already booked your product service type and show at least some interest in what you're trying to promote.



Stage Two

Process your visitors – have a sales funnel

Have a clear goal of what you want to achieve from the exhibition and plan this out in advance. By doing this you will avoid wasting time with visitors that don't match your ideal customer.

Once your front man/woman has brought in your prospect, you need to process him or her.

Lead the visitor into your space, then follow a predetermined set of questions that filters out visitors that don't match your ideal with the ones that do.

Hot prospective customers can be passed over to your expert, better suited for further in depth consultation and relationship building.

It is not impossible, but it is quite rare to sell with any degree of success at an exhibition.

Generally, people are visiting the show to gain information about new and innovative products or services.

Therefore, it is better to use your time at an exhibition to showcase your business, showing services and products and gather information about your new prospect, with the view to continuing the relationship after the exhibition has ended.

Remember, you are not the only person exhibiting. By the time your prospect has left the show, she will have two bags full of leaflets and gifts and a head full of sales messages.

It is the business that continues the conversation long after the show has ended that will prevail and win the day.

This questionnaire will be used by everyone on your stand to identify your ideal customer.

This is not for the bride to fill in like some kind of exam paper, but more of a "bride user guide" which will keep you on track whilst dealing with your potential customer and stop you drifting off course or waffling to incompatible brides.

Remember, we are trying to extract as much from the short space of time we have at the show, therefore it is imperative to follow your own pre-set guidelines throughout the day.



Inevitably, what we are trying to achieve from all this, is to get the contact information from an interested bride, so that we can continue to market to them and build a relationship long after the show has finished.

There are various ways you can do this and here are a few examples you could try.

You could lead by saying that you obviously cannot exhibit all your products at the show today, but you can send some further information through the post about the entire range.

Offer to send them the link to your website (if you have an online shop, increase the value of this by offering to send them a "secret promo code" which will give them a discount on anything they buy).

If you're a photographer – why not take their picture on your stand (with your logo in the shot) and offer to send it to them after.

It is not impossible, but it is quite rare to sell with any degree of success at an exhibition.

Demonstrations, samples & test drives

If your business is able, offering a demonstration is a fantastic method of pulling in a very interested crowd of brides and gives you a distinct advantage over your competition.

Whilst there are some businesses that lend themselves more obviously, as demonstration type businesses, there are still many other ways that you can offer a demonstration or even a customer interaction with your product or service.

If a picture can say 1000 words, then surely the demonstration can say 100,000 words.

Probably the most obvious use of demonstrating products at a wedding fair is by bridal shops and men's hire using the catwalk to best display bridal gowns and groom suits.

This is not done merely to entertain the crowd of onlooking brides for the sake of the show, no; the bridal houses know that the best way to sell their gowns and suits is on a model not a coat hanger.

Hair and beauty products also lend themselves easily to offer a demonstration.

Offering to apply or experiment on the interested bride with various products and techniques, all the while gathering an interested crowd.

Magicians can show magic tricks, Musicians can sing and play.

You may now be thinking "well that works in their business, but what would work in mine?".

OK, here are a few ideas that you could use and maybe adapt into your demos.

A photographer could, using either his stand or another part of the building, to take a photograph of the bride and guests, maybe even applying a technique the bride seemed interested in, then send them a hard copy of the print in the post after the show.

Do you think that would get chucked in the bin with all the other leaflets, I think not, and guess which photographer would be first on their mind?



If a picture can say 1000 words, then surely the demonstration can say 100,000 words.

Jewellers can bring in a mobile workshop showing the expertise of their craftsmen as you talk to the crowd.

Stationery companies could do the same and you could offer to send them a free example personalising it with their details on and then sending it to them after the show. Do you think that would get remembered and cherished?

Décor companies show how you can make, even the most boring table and ugly chairs into a fantastic table setting, giving the ultimate before and after demonstration.

Casino hire companies let customers play roulette or cards with your croupier.

If, however, your business doesn't lend itself to give a demonstration on the day, or you just haven't got a product that cannot be sampled or test drove. Then why not offer a way that the bride can test drive your product after the event.

This is, by the way, an ideal strategy for venues.

Give away complementary vouchers for a candlelit dinner for two, even throw in an overnight stay; this will give you the opportunity to pitch to a captivated audience over a prolonged period. You have their trust and their undivided attention.

The point of all this is for you and your display to be fluid, an ever changing visual, to interest and set you apart from your competition, to get brides involved with your product, to interact with you and your stand.

Samples

If your product lends itself to being given as a sample, why not exchange the bride's email address for the sample and offer to send further samples to them later.

Another word on sampling – there is little value to you to just let anyone have a free sample of your product, therefore, it both cheapens your product and doesn't give any exclusivity to the highly interested bride.

Do you, or could you offer a free CD or DVD about your product? This could be sent as a physical CD or DVD.

Competitions

Run a competition on your stand to win a prize.

For all the brides that don't win, you could offer a runner up prize offering them a discount off your goods / services.

Offer to send them a secret link created just for this show, with special discounts on, not accessible through the normal website.

Offer them a discount voucher that you can send to them in the post via e-mail that they can use on your products and services.

Literature

Your literature should be your silent salesman that follows the bride home and repeats your entire sales pitch, helping her to remember and set you apart from all the other voices she's heard all day.

It needs to be conversational; don't forget, your literature must do the same job as you are doing on your stand. For example, if you are offering a free sample, then use your literature to re-emphasise the point. For instance, if you are trying to promote a certain product and you are wanting to give away a sample of that product, then your literature needs to say the same thing.

Most literature and advertising for that matter, in most cases, usually lists the features of the company in general and more often than not, just looks like an oversized business card. You will have seen this before; the leaflet usually begins with the company's name, a couple of paragraphs about the company, some bullet points about the services of that company and then a phone number at the bottom and sometimes rarely, but not always, a web address.

Ideally, we want the message and our literature to match the conversation we have just had with the bride, so that when the bride is going through her vast collection of leaflets, we stand a better chance of being recognised and remembered from the day.

Probably the worst thing you can do with your literature is, as I just explained, having a leaflet that is very general and used at every show you attend. It doesn't have any personalisation to you whatsoever, yet this is the type I see most often.

For larger shows, I would advise that your literature is personalised for that particular event using subtle changes that make it relevant and specific for that exhibition.

This is especially important if you are running a special offer that only applies to that event. If you were using a general information type leaflet, the bride has no reminder about the special offer.

Run a competition on your stand to win a prize.

Here's a few pointers

Always use a headline - By far the biggest mistake made by companies with their literature is the headline, either they don't put one on at all, or the headline is the company name.

Use a photograph of yourself; this is a great way for the bride to remember you and hopefully recognise you from meeting you earlier in that day, forcing her to recall the conversation she just had with you. It also adds in a more human element. People buy from people.

Don't be afraid to write on your literature, in fact even leave a blank box so that you can write a special offer or discount or your name on your leaflet. Anything that is personalised in this way, will be remembered over other literature in the bride's collection and because the leaflet has been personalised, it will immediately remind the bride and take her back to the conversation she had with you.

Open the bride's show guide and highlight your listing, telling her that this is how she can get in touch with you.

Have a call to action on your literature. Just offering her your telephone number and web address at the bottom of your leaflet is not going to set you apart from everyone else. Tell her what to do next; go here to get this, call this number now to receive your free gift.

Have your offer time-sensitive; again this relates to the conversation you may have had with the bride on the day, so re-emphasise it. Use your literature as part of your pitch; it should be used as a sales aid for the bride to then take away with her and she will understand what she's looking at when she's at home. It is no longer just another leaflet in the pile, it is a direct reminder about the conversation she just had with you.

Have different leaflets do different jobs. Be specific, rather than having a general leaflet about all your products, sometimes having specific leaflets, cards or brochures about specific product ranges or services can work much better.

Now all this is well and good but you are still relying on the bride to do quite a bit of work in order for all your hard work to succeed.

Imagine for a minute, you are the bride; you have met a company that you are very interested in, you have taken some literature away with you to look at.

You really like what they do. You promise yourself that you will have a look on their website as soon as you get home.

However, there was a lot going on at the show, you met a lot of people and businesses that you were interested in and you know what, life is busy, you didn't remember exactly what they said to you and Game of Thrones is on tonight so....

Therefore, the next part of the system is absolutely crucial for the success of your exhibition.

The follow up

The follow-up is one of the most crucial elements to exhibition success there is, yet it is the least used tactic by any of the exhibiting businesses I know of.

Most people when you ask them if they follow up, will say yes of course we follow-up; what this really means is that after the show, they sent the prospects that they did get one e-mail and left it at that.

Second type of follow-up that people do is when the wedding fair organiser freely distributes the registration details of all brides who've attended and again, this is usually a single e-mail sent sometimes weeks after the event.

I know this for a fact, as I commonly put my own e-mail address into registration forms at wedding fairs and sometimes disguised as a groom, register with companies just to see if I will receive some correspondence. I am always disappointed.

I'm going to explain a follow up strategy that will turn any event you attend into a formulaic system, which will always result in success 10 times what you would have achieved before.

When you fail to follow up, you are leaving a **MASSIVE AMOUNT** of opportunity on the table. You're causing yourself more pain and frustration than you should ever have.



Why people don't like to follow up

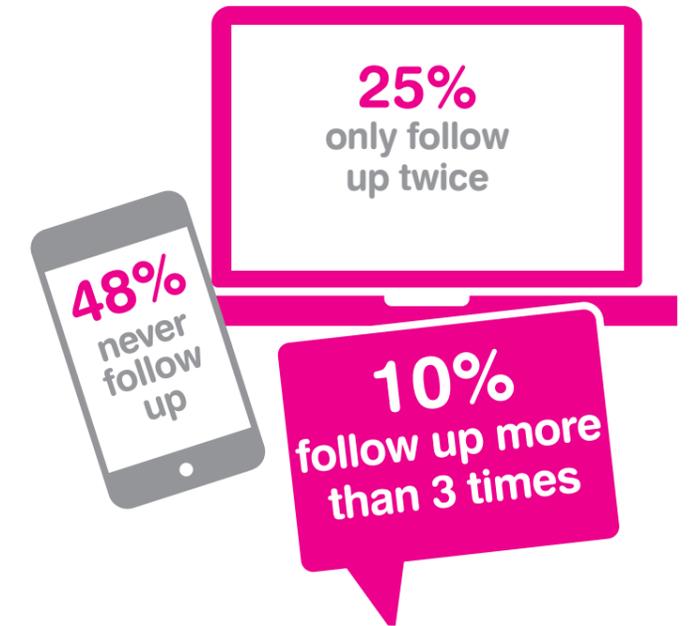
The main objection I hear about following up with the bride is that they don't want to pester or give the hard sell.

I want to make this clear, this system is not about hard selling to the bride. Time and time again your follow-up sequence should be a series of messages that help and assist, even befriend the bride and this should continue until the bride tells you to stop.

We know the bride has a need for your product or service because she has just told you at the exhibition. She is pre-qualified, but don't forget she has also been bombarded with sales messages all day, so by not following up, we leave a lot to chance and if your leaflet is poorly designed and is the same "me too" message as everyone else, you don't stand a chance.

So the follow-up is the absolute key, above all else, to being highly successful at a wedding show.

When you fail to follow up, you are leaving a **MASSIVE AMOUNT** of opportunity on the table. You're causing yourself more pain and frustration than you should ever have.



Still unsure about the power of the follow up?

Take a look at these statistics:

- 2% of sales are made on the first contact
- 3% of sales are made on the second contact
- 5% of sales are made on the third contact
- 10% of sales are made on the fourth contact
- 80% of sales are made on the fifth to twelfth contact

So, according to these statistics, keeping in touch with your prospective customers is critical to closing more deals. So it would make sense that if you want more than a 2 – 3% close rate, then you should keep in touch with your contacts.

Well it may make sense, but that isn't what happens.

- 48% of sales people never follow up with a prospect
- 25% of sales people make a second contact and stop
- Less than 10% of sales people make more than three contacts

(Source: Sales & Marketing Club LA)

This means that if 80% of sales are made after the fifth contact and only 10% of business are following up – guess who's getting all the business!

The 10% who keep following up and building that relationship, becoming a trusted advisor, even a friend perhaps.

People buy when they're ready to buy

One further thing to remember is that because almost all businesses are poor at following up on their leads, the bride has no choice but to do most of the work herself. She has to educate herself on the product or service that she desires, but because of the lack of information she receives, she now buys when she is ready to buy and we can now use the same stats with some alterations to illustrate the point.

- 2% of brides buy from the first business they meet
- 3% of brides buy from the second business they meet
- 5% of brides buy from the third business they meet
- 10% of brides buy from the fourth business they meet
- 80% of brides buy from the fifth to twelfth business they meet

Therefore, if you're not following up, you're leaving the door wide open for someone else to waltz in and steal your lead.

Here are some more stats to further illustrate the point.

- Companies that excel at following up, generate 50% more sales ready leads at 33% lower cost. (Source: Forrester Research)
- Nurtured leads make 47% larger purchases than non-nurtured leads. (Source: The Annuitas Group)
- Relevant emails drive 18 times more revenue than broadcast emails. (Source: Jupiter Research)
- Personalised emails improve click-through rates by 14%, and conversion rates by 10%. (Source: Aberdeen Group)
- Event-triggered marketing can potentially save 80% of your direct mail budget. (Source: Gartner Research)
- Lead nurturing emails get 4-10 times the response rate compared to standalone email blasts. (Source: SilverPop/DemandGen Report)
- Lead nurturing emails generate an 8% CTR compared to general email sends, which generate just a 3% CTR. (Source: HubSpot)

The Fortune is in the Follow Up

Step-by-step guide to creating your follow-up sales sequence.

Your follow-up sequence should be worked out at least in principle before the show.

By doing it this way, it will help you to determine what you are going to say to the bride at the show and give you a clearer goal about how to achieve this.

One of the biggest hurdles many people struggle with, is that they don't know what to say; they think that because they know all about their business, that their customers must also know about it. Believe me when I say, your potential customers do not know hardly anything about your industry type, let alone your particular business.

But still, it can seem hard to think of relevant topics to write about in your follow up emails, so to help you with that, I have listed a few questions that will help you get started.

But first, please remember that at the show, the bride was very interested in what you had to offer and at the time I'll wager that you had plenty to say, now all we need to do is enter the conversation inside her head.

Here are a few pointers that will jump start your brain to help you with your follow up – all these can be applied to any business type.

What questions do you get asked most often from customers?

You can list these, break them down and deliver them in, for example, an e-mail to your prospective customer; chances are she is asking herself the same questions.

- What's your favourite customer testimonials?
Tell your prospective customer about your recent jobs.
- Do you have any funny / crazy stories that have happened to you in your business?
- What's your personal / business philosophy?
- What's the best reason for a customer to not do business with you?
- Do you have a blog? If so what's your most popular blog post?
- Has your company been mentioned in the media?
- What is your greatest non-business success?
- What's the dirty little secret in your industry?

When should the follow-up campaign begin?

Your follow-up campaign should begin as soon as possible from the end of the exhibition. Your potential customer will get colder the longer you leave it and the more chance you have of the bride forgetting who you are.

Remember, she has seen a lot of people throughout the course of the day; everyone competing for her attention, now she is alone and because we know the stats, you have her undivided attention.

How often should I contact the bride?

The simple answer to this, is that you should contact your potential customer as often as you have something interesting to say.

What that means, is that you shouldn't hammer one disjointed sales message after another.

The object of the follow-up campaign, because we are sending on mass, is to get the bride, your potential customer, to engage in a one-to-one conversation with you.

So let's say we use the tips above and we sent to the bride let's say, once per week and we build our campaign using the tips above.

At some point your potential customer will ask you questions about your product or service, this is what I call a kicker.

This is where the customer has kicked herself out of your generic follow-up sequence and into a one-to one conversation with you.

This may simply answer a question she may have had and lead to nothing, in which case she continues with the follow-up sequence, but in many cases, this personal exchange of e-mails will inevitably lead to a sale.

It's important to remember the questions that the bride asks at these stages of the campaign to improve your future campaigns over time.

If one bride is asking the question, then I can guarantee there are others that are asking the same question but were afraid to ask.

In summary, it is well worth your time using the tips I have given you to build a series of at least six follow-up messages that you can send on a weekly basis to all the contacts you have gained from the show.



How long should I keep contacting the bride?

The simple answer to this, is that until she tells you to stop if you are sending e-mails, all your emails should contain an unsubscribe link.

This option can be used if you are using an e-mail delivery service, or simply by stating at the bottom of your e-mail if you do not wish to receive any further correspondence from us, please reply with remove in the subject line.

The simple answer to this, is that until she tells you to stop if you are sending e-mails, all your emails should contain an unsubscribe link.

What media should I use to send to the bride?

There are multiple channels of media that you can use to communicate with your customers and the media that you would use really depends on you and the type of product or service that you offer.

Electronic communication, such as e-mail, Facebook, Twitter and other social channels are, at the moment, the hot topic and are widely used because they are cheap. However, please do not dismiss using direct mail, real paper mail samples that come in the post.

Imagine you are the bride; you're getting random e-mails from the people that can be bothered to follow up, from the shows that you have attended, but now out of the blue you get a personalised hand written envelope and inside there is a personalised letter, some more literature, a voucher, an invitation or whatever it may be, but it is this that will set you apart from all your competition.

Up until now, I have simply said you should follow up with your leads.

Now I will show you how to do this and what media you should use.

E-mail

One of the best and most cost-effective ways you can keep in touch with your leads is by email. Now I'm sure that you are already using email via an email service such as Outlook, Yahoo mail, Gmail or any of the multitude of services available.

The problem with this type of system is that you can only send personalised email on a one to one basis, which is time consuming and means that by default, you only end up following up on your hot leads.

There are programs that are now readily available that, for a small fee, can send out personalised email messages to your entire list and best of all these software programs can do all this for you automatically. This type of software is called an auto responder.



The longer you can maintain this relationship with them, the more likely they are to actually buy from you.

What is an auto - responder?

Quite simply, it's a piece of software that enables you to send emails to people automatically. This doesn't mean that it writes the emails for you and it doesn't involve spam or sending unsolicited email. What it means is that you set up a sequence of pre-written emails that are sent out to prospects on your database at regular intervals.

The importance of this cannot be underestimated. Time and time again internet marketing gurus tell you that the money is in the list. This is not by accident. The online marketing specialists know that this is fact.

The more people you have on a mailing list that are interested in your products or services, the more sales you will make.

You can use an auto responder to essentially send emails out to your prospect list, even when you're not at a computer. What you do is you create a sequence of emails relating to your product or service. Then you can set the intervals for the emails to, say, once a day or once a week and send them one part over the course of each day or week. So you write the emails one time and then anyone joining that list will automatically be sent those emails for the next seven days or weeks.

This doesn't matter if you're online or if you're away from the computer. They will be sent automatically and if they choose to unsubscribe, all of that is taken care of without you having to lift a finger.

This is simply a form of permission marketing.

People will give you their permission to receive emails, in return for you giving them free, quality information. Do not load the messages with over-hyped sales pitches, but give them real quality information with a small mention about your product at the end.

What you'll find is that people come to know you and grow to trust you over time, as you send them more and more information. The longer you can maintain this relationship with them, the more likely they are to actually buy from you.

The beauty of this is that using an auto-responder saves you the costs of printing, posting and packaging and enables you to contact and keep in touch with all your prospects around the clock without actually having to do anything.

Posted mail

If we are agreed that by simply just following up with your prospective leads by email more than 5 times puts you in the top 10% of all businesses, then by adding in some offline communication in your follow up, it will instantly put you in the top 1%.

At first this may seem expensive, but if you do the maths and are selective to whom you send out further samples or mailers, it will become apparent very early on that this is a very cost effective method of communicating with your leads.

Now if this all sounds like too much work or that it could be expensive, let's look at this another way.

The cost to stand at an average hotel wedding fair, let's say, is £100 plus expenses fuel, staff, produce, samples, literature and time away from the family.

The cost of all this is for arguments sake, £250.

You see 100 brides, of which 20 are your ideal customer; you give them a leaflet, you hope for the best and you get two bookings, you deem the whole thing to be a success.

So on the first contact you did very well and got a 10% conversion on the first customer contact.

It has cost you £2.50 per bride to give out your literature, a large majority of which won't be interested or have already sorted your service.

It has also cost you £125 to acquire each of your new customers.

Probably the most worrying thing however, is that you have just let 18 more brides go away and left them to make up their own mind.

If you combine a follow up sequence into this and begin to email the brides and then send them some samples through the post, it is fair to say you would get at least another two bookings from your original 20.

Your follow up sequence consists of some emails which cost you nothing and then you send out some samples or something else through the post.

Remember also that you only need to write these emails once. Then every time you get a new lead from a wedding fayre, you simply plug them into your auto responder and it does the rest.



Let's say you spend £3 on each bride.

18 brides x £3 = £54

£54 divided by your two extra sales = £27 each to acquire your extra customers.

Yet most businesses simply ignore the value of the follow up and just book even more wedding fayres and the whole process continues.

This is a very simplified example, but it does serve to illustrate that simply acquiring one or two jobs from each wedding fayre is both grossly time consuming and outrageously expensive.

Compare this method to adopting and implementing a strategic follow up system and not only will you do less wedding fayres and therefore spend much less money acquiring new customers, but you will see your business double in size.

How to build your follow up sequence

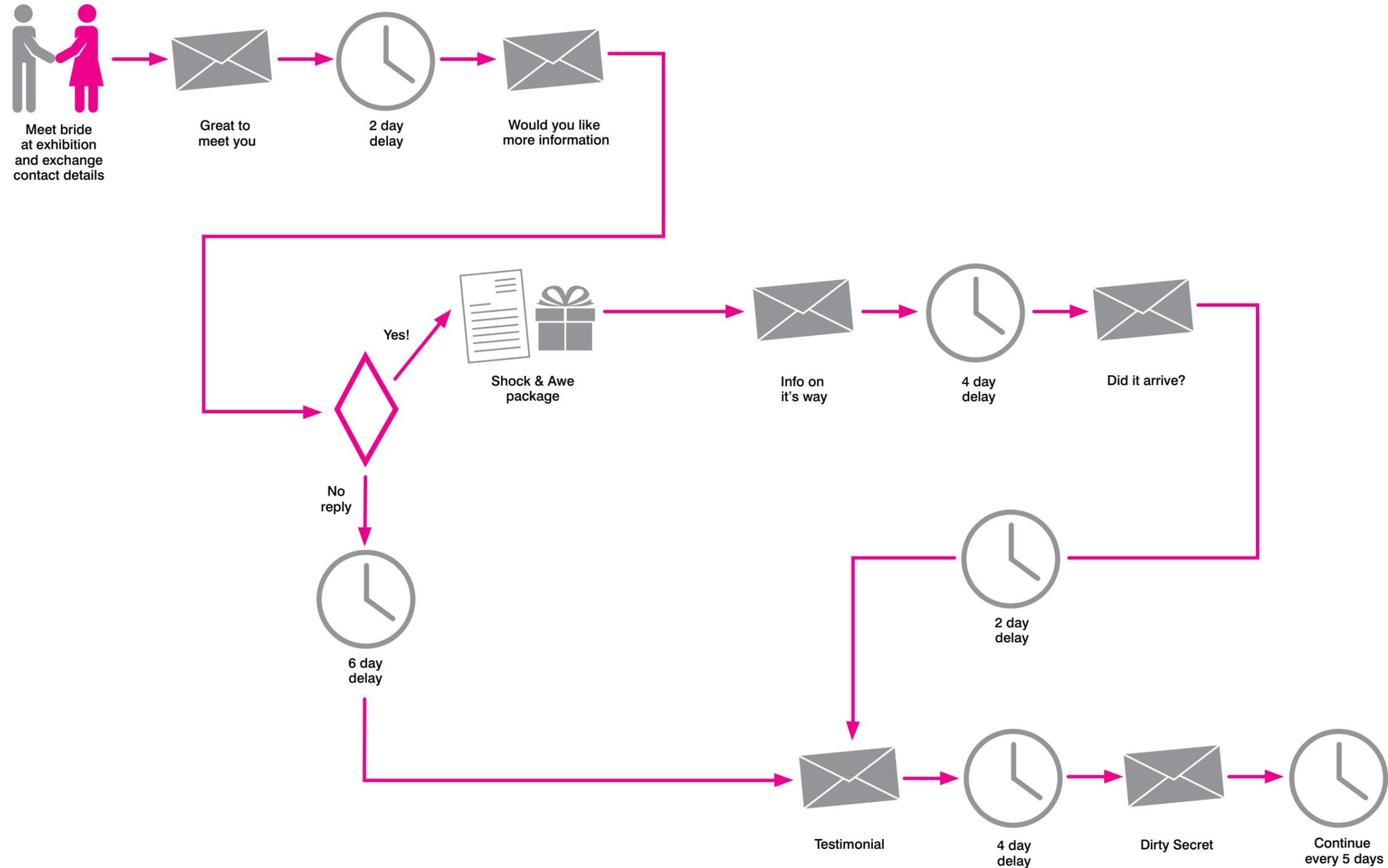
Collect the names and email addresses of your interested leads at the wedding fayre.

As soon as possible (ideally that night), type up your contact names and import them into your auto responder software.

The following six templates are ones that I have used myself in my own business with great success. These templates should be adapted to suit your business, but they will give you a head start and display just how easy following up with your prospective customers can be.

Remember also that you only need to write these emails once. Then every time you get a new lead from a wedding fayre, you simply plug them into your auto responder and it does the rest.

The Follow Up Sequence





Great to meet you

Email straight after the show

Subject – lovely to meet you yesterday

Hi *~Contact.FirstName~*

Its *[insert your name]* from *[insert your company name]*, I just wanted to say how lovely it was to meet you at *[insert hotel name]* yesterday. I hope you had a great time at the wedding fayre.

Here is the link to my website I promised I'd send you.

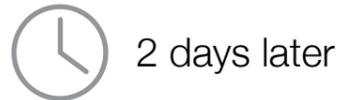
[Insert link to website]

If you have any questions about your *[insert your service]* please let me know, I'd love to help

Best Wishes

[insert your name]

[insert your company details]




Would you like more information

Subject - I'd love to send you this ?

Hi *~Contact.FirstName~*

I hope you got chance to have a look through my website the other day.

Don't worry though, if you're anything like me I much prefer to sit and look through important info in paper format rather than skimming through a phone.

So, if you would like me to, I would love to send you the complete info about us (I'll even throw some goodies in there too)

All you need to do is hit reply and tell me where you would like me to send it.

Thanks again

Best regards

[insert your name]

[insert your company details]

If the answer is YES!



'Shock and Awe' package

Oliver Bower
Flowers for Ever Ltd
Foxgloves House
Selby
Yorkshire
HD3 9YA

June 26, 2018

Hi *~Contact.FirstName~*

Thank you for requesting a printed version of our *[insert product/service]*. I find it's a lot easier to go through in printed format than on a screen.

I've also included a copy of *[insert extra thing here]* for your perusal.

So put the kettle on, and have a good look through the information.

When you're ready to proceed further or if you're uncertain about anything at all, please don't hesitate to give me a call on 01226 123456.

Love and best wishes

[insert your name]

[insert your company details]



Info on its way

Subject – I've just posted your information

Hi *~Contact.FirstName~*

Thankyou so much for requesting our info pack, it really will help you get some inspiration.

It's on its way and should be with you in the next couple of days.

Please watch out for it, it's a biggie.

Best Regards

[insert your name]

[insert your company details]

 4 days later

 **Did it arrive?**

Subject – Did you receive it?

Hi ~Contact.FirstName~

Just want to check in to see if you received your parcel I sent a few days ago.

Please let me know if it hasn't landed and I'll chase it up for you.

Best Regards

[insert your name]

[insert your company details]

 2 days later or
6 days if no response

 **Testimonial**

Subject – This almost made me cry

Hi ~Contact.FirstName~

I just have to share this with you. I put my heart and soul into every wedding I do. So when I get something back like this it always brings a tear to my eye.

Natalie and Ben sent this to me 3 days after their wedding.

[insert best testimonial]

Just wanted to share this with you.

Best Wishes

[insert your name]

[insert your company details]

 4 days later

 **Dirty little secret**

Subject – I'll let you in on a secret

Hi ~Contact.FirstName~

I want to let you into a little secret that I think you should know about.

Have you visited any venue's yet?

If you have, you've probably been told about some suppliers they know who can do XYZ Or that they have an in house [insert your business type] who knows the venue inside and out who will do the bestest, cheapest job.

Some will lay it on so thick that you'll feel obliged or sometimes forced to use their preferred suppliers.

Well I just want you to know that you don't need to use their preferred suppliers.

I'm not saying that there's anything wrong with using a venues preferred supplier, in fact we are preferred suppliers at a number of venues.

I just want you to know you have a choice.

It's your wedding – you can use whoever you want.

Hope that helps

Best regards

[insert your name]

[insert your company details]

 Continue every 5 days

Here are some more suggestions to help your Auto Responder Brain

1. WHAT KEEPS YOUR READERS UP AT NIGHT?
2. Can you describe your PERFECT customer?
3. Your WORST customer?
4. What questions do you get most often from customers?
5. What's a dirty little secret in your industry?
6. What's your favorite customer success story?
7. What's the funniest/craziest thing that ever happened to you in your business?
8. What's your personal business philosophy?
9. What's the best reason for a customer to NOT do business with you?
10. What can you teach your readers to do (for free) that would help them solve a chronic problem?
11. Are there other services, providers, products that you can recommend to your readers?
12. Is there "conventional wisdom" in your industry that is just plain wrong
13. What things is your company NOT good at?
14. How and why did you get into the business you're in?
15. What's your most embarrassing failure story?
16. What lies are told in your industry?
17. What do you find yourself complaining about most?
18. What's your favorite part about coming to work everyday?
19. Look through customer emails for the last 6 months. Do you see any patterns?
Any great stories? Any complaints you handled well?
20. What's the most common reason that customers DELAY doing business with you?
Do you have "I wish I had done this sooner" testimonials?



Resources

Auto – Responder systems

www.constantcontact.com

www.Aweber.com

www.mailchimp.com

www.icontact.com

www.Keap.com



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