

Lifting the Veil
Secrets to Bridal Show Success Revealed

A Seminar by Julia Markel
September 23, 2009
Wedding MBA
Las Vegas Convention Center - Las Vegas NV

1st Key Element of Bridal Show Success

- Marketing at bridal shows is different.



- Time & how you use it is biggest factor.

2nd Key Element of Bridal Show Success

Think of exhibiting as leasing space in a shopping center.



3rd Key Element of Bridal Show Success

Consider how the bride is feeling.



Bridal Shows – Why?

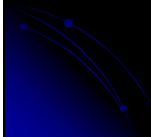
- Where else can you have that much of a captive, qualified audience?
- Where else can you advertise where you come face-to-face with the bride – and can answer her questions?
- No matter what the turnout – you can't lose.

How this Seminar Will Help You Succeed

- Before the show – planning & promoting.
- During the show – what you do & how you do it.
- After the show – following up & measuring results.
- Questions & Answers?

Make a Bridal Show Success Plan

- Set a goal.
 - Gives you the mind set to succeed.
 - Helps you to plan for costs.
 - Use the Goal Setting Worksheet – online.

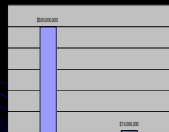


Make a Bridal Show Success Plan

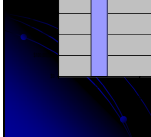
- Develop a "theme".
 - Carry through from pre-show promotions to show activities and décor to follow-up
 - Can be as simple as your motto or as involved as a "gimmick."
 - Make it relevant to your type of business.
- Use the Planning Guide that is online:
Afwpi.com/ShowSecrets/WedMBA09
- Attend the pre-show mixer.



Pre-Show Promotions



- A survey conducted by the Center for Exhibition Industry Research showed that the average company that uses pre-show promotions reported 50 times the annual sales of those companies that do not use pre-show promotions!



What Are Pre-show Promotions?

- Basically, getting brides to come see you at the show.
- Inviting them directly through email, phone calls, letters or social networking.
- Giving them an incentive to attend.
 - "Bring this invitation to my booth to get a gift or enter a special drawing."
 - Send something they can bring to "match up" to something you have.

Why?

- The show producer may have missed your customer in advertising.
- To close the sale. Brides are more comfortable in a neutral environment.
- To help her choose. If she can compare in one day, she'll make a decision.
- To make your booth more attractive by making it busier.

Project a Professional Image



K.I.S.S (Keep it Simple, Simon)

- Brides are overwhelmed – easily confused.
- What is the exact size of your booth?
- Avoid clutter.
- If you can't bring your product or service in (example, facility) bring photos or videos of it/them.
- Arrange display so that the traffic flows easily.

Your Booth *is* Your Business

- Plan your booth the same way you would plan your space in a shopping center.
- Would you put a table in front of your store or office, blocking your customers from coming in?
- Try to make the booth as comfortable for yourself as possible. Bring parts of your business that make you feel at home.

Who Are You?

- Your booth should reflect the type of business you have!
- You have 6 seconds or less to get their attention!
- Restrict the use of items that may confuse the brides and grooms (and other guests).
- Your largest sign should tell them who you are and what you do!
- If you can't bring your product or service, bring a poster-size photo.

You Know Who They Are



Catch Their Attention

- Best way is some type of motion.
 - Videos – make sure the monitor is at eye level.
 - Games, activities (such as presentations, demonstrations or seminars).
 - People – make sure it is obvious they are alive!
- If you are comfortable, reach out to her.
- Use a banner as your primary sign.

The Heartbeat of Your Booth

- You and your staff give the booth life!
- Dress professionally, but comfortably.
- Stay standing.
- Avoid “booth-sitters.”
- Train everyone who is working the booth.
 - Product and services.
 - Show rules & regs.
 - What you expect from them.
 - Offer incentives

Law of Attraction

"If you think you can do a thing or think you can't do a thing, you're right." -Henry Ford

"If you think you will get bookings, or think you will not, you're right." -Julia Markel

Size Does Matter!

- Show attendees are three times more likely to remember your booth based on its size.
- Gives an impression of success.
- More room to display, or more room to conduct demonstrations.

Networking at the Show

- Every show is good – even the “slow” ones – as long as you network with other exhibitors.
- Booth Etiquette
 - Questions to ask yourself
 - *Where* is your booth?
 - How big is your booth?
 - How loud are you?

Booth Etiquette

- Visiting other exhibitors.
 - Always allow them to conduct business first!
 - If you're selling – take their card and call after the show.
 - Visiting caterers & cake shop exhibitors.
- Follow the Golden Rule
- Carry extra tools and supplies to share.

Interacting With the Bride

- Bring your appointment book/calendar with you!
- Show Specials
 - Work for some, not for others.
 - Offer more for the money – not “discounts.” FREE works!
- Educate instead of selling!

Qualify the Brides &/or Grooms

- Interview & interact.
 - *Questions* you need to ask:
 - When is her wedding date?
 - Has she already booked the service you provide?
 - Where is she getting married?
 - What is her budget?
 - Who's the boss?

Educate the Bride &/or Groom

- Tell her/him about show specials.
- Get her/his name, address, phone, etc.
 - Door prize drawings.
 - Sign-in book.
 - Just ask for the information.
 - No matter how you collect it – get their permission to contact them.
- Be open to the possibility they may want to book you.

Don't Let Them Walk Away Empty Handed!

- Printed material.
 - Brochures should be professional and attractive.
 - Use them as an added reminder.
 - Before you hand it out, write on it.
 - Not as likely to throw it away.
 - Will remind them of what you talked about.
- Giveaways/gifts.
- Coupons, gift certificates.

Follow Up or Foul Up!!

- It takes seeing your name at least 12 times to make a lasting impression.
- Each bride has her own timeline – you need to keep in contact.
- How?
 - Mailers – post cards work best
 - Email & Blogs
 - Social networking – Facebook, MySpace, etc.
 - Phone calls – have a reason to call.
 - Show Program

Follow Up or Foul Up!!

- When?
 - Within 48 hours after the show.
 - Three times.
- How will you measure your results?
 - Have to ask how they heard of you.
 - See "Bridal Show Results Tracking Log."

Using What You Learned

- Start by incorporating one or two of the ideas you got from this seminar.
- Remember, it's a different selling environment.
- Share everything you learned today with everyone involved in your company.
- Remember to set goals and track results.
- Look for the BSPi logo.