

Wedding Planner

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2016

MAGAZINE

Inspired by the Association of Bridal Consultants



TRENDING WEDDING DESIGNERS...CLIENT WELCOME GIFTS...
THE LATEST DESIGN TRENDS...SUCCESSION PLANNING...
SELECTING A VENDOR TEAM...COMMUNICATING COMPANY CHANGES

contributors



DANIELLE ANDREWS is a professional, certified wedding planner and has owned and operated The Wedding Planners in Toronto since 2000. Danielle is also the President and Co-founder of The Wedding Planners Institute of Canada and The Wedding Planners Institute of Coordination. Her article about client welcome gifts can be found on page 15.



COLLEEN BAUER dreamed of owning a business with a storefront that would allow her to help others. Never did she dream that she would be in the party planning business. After coordinating countless events for the bank she works at, and serving as chairperson for the Bakersfield Women's Conference, she was encouraged to venture into event planning. In 2009, Fairy Godmother was born. As its success steadily climbed, Colleen was able to focus back on what she really wanted to do, help others. She writes about the importance of collaboration on page 17.

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DINA EISENBERG, JD, is a professional problem-solver and outsourcing strategist, who loves helping solopros achieve more, earn more, and realize decreased stress by delegating effectively. You can grab your copy of her Rapid Start Guide at <http://OutsourceEasier.com/guide>. Dina talks about selecting the best vendor team on page 25.

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MEGHAN ELY is the owner of wedding PR and wedding marketing firm OFD Consulting. Ely is a sought-after speaker, adjunct professor in the field of public relations, and a self-professed royal wedding enthusiast. She talks communicating company change

on page 30.



BETH ERICKSON is the editor of *Wedding Planner Magazine* and owner of Jobe Communications, LLC, a writing, editing, and creative concept company. Beth is an award-winning writer who works within multiple industries. Her article on trending wedding

designers is on page 8.



BONNIE FEDCHOCK, CAE, is the executive director of the National Association for Catering and Events, and she currently serves as the chair of the Convention and Industry Council. Her article on the art of including wine in your events is on page 20.



As Senior Style Editor of *The Knot*, **LAUREN KAY** scours the globe for of-the-minute wedding trends and design secrets. She enjoys writing about stunning florals, tasty cakes, and tabletop wonders, like proper china and dazzling crystal. She has a strong affinity

for good etiquette and red lipstick, and thinks a good pair of heels can transform any day. Lauren lives in New York City with her husband Adam and their son George. Her article on the latest trends is on page 18.



As a senior vice president at Trust Point, Inc., **BRIAN KOOPMAN, CFP®, CPA, CTFA**, works with a variety of clients to help them realize their financial and investment goals. He assists clients with financial and retirement planning and has extensive experience in income,

estate, and gift tax planning as well as individual, estate and trust tax preparation. See his article on succession planning on page 24.



TINA MORAN, founder of Oh So Swank!, is one of California's most creative and innovative designers in the industry. Since 1988, Tina has brought her talents to product launches, non-profit gala events, fashion shows, corporate events, and high-end social

events. Looking to share her knowledge with brides, Tina created her DIY seminar, *The Bride's Academy*. In addition to her work with clients, Tina has been featured on WE Network's *Platinum Weddings* and as a featured speaker at many industry conferences. She is the author of *The Oh So Swank Soiree*, written for industry professionals and recently relocated from Fresno, Calif., to Santa Clarita, Calif., with her husband and two children. She looks forward to expanding into a second California market. Read about her approach to designing weddings on page 26.



MONIQUE STUDAK has been selling wine for more than 20 years with a focus on hotels and catering accounts. She specializes in developing wine programs that help drive profit while elevating the guests' experience. She is a Certified Sommelier with the Court

of Master Sommeliers, Certified Specialist of Wine, and Certified Specialist of Spirits. Monique is the 2009 recipient of the National Association for Catering and Events National Event Professional of the Year. She is based in Houston. Her article on the art of including wine in your events is on page 20.

Statement of ownership, management, and circulation

1. Publication title: *Wedding Planner Magazine*
 2. Publication number: ISSN 2160-3286
 3. Filing date: October 7, 2016
 4. Issue frequency: Bi-monthly
 5. Issues published annually: 6
 6. Annual subscription rate: \$36
 7. Complete mailing address: *Wedding Planner Magazine*, 400 Main Street, La Crosse, WI 54601
 8. Complete mailing address of Known Office of Publication: same
 9. Full names and complete mailing addresses: Publisher: *Wedding Planner Magazine*, same address; Editor: Beth Erickson (dba Jobe Communications, LLC) 3502 Meadow Lane Place, La Crosse, WI 54601

10. Owners: Nancy Flottmeyer, 2120 S 32nd Street, La Crosse, WI 54601; David Wood, 10 Mountain View, Ridgefield, CT 06677
 11. Known bondholders: none
 12. Tax status: N/A
 13. *Wedding Planner Magazine*
 14. Issue date of circulation data: September/October, 2015
 15a. Total number of copies: 3200
 15b. (1) Mailed outside-county Paid: 2259
 15b. (2) Mailed in-county paid: 0
 15b. (3) Paid distribution outside: 0
 15b. (4) Paid distribution by other class: 941
 15c. Total paid distribution: 3200
 15d. (1) Free / nominal rate outside county: 0
 15d. (2) Free / nominal rate in-county: 0

15d. (3) Free / nominal rate mailed at other classes: 0
 15d. (4) Free / nominal rate distribution outside the mail: 0
 15e. Total free/nominal: 0
 15f. Total distribution: 3200
 15g. Copies not distributed: 0
 15h. Total: 3200
 15i. Percent paid: 76%
 16a. Paid Electronic Copies: 0
 16b. Total paid print copies: 3200

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GOODBYE, COMPETITION; HELLO, COLLABORATION!



Have you ever wondered how vendors become more than just acquaintances? Rather than see each other as competition, we should view each other as small business owners, better yet, as “friendors.”

While some local, and not-so-local, “friendors” primarily work solely in their industry, others have full-time jobs and follow their passion on the side. While this doesn’t mean one is less busy than another, it does mean that finding time to socialize can be difficult. What is the best way for vendors to come together? Through collaboration.

A COLLABORATION OF CREATIVE PARTNERS

At an Inspire Smart Success Experience I attended with one of my lead planners, Cassandra Patrick, there was a great deal of discussion about professionals working together versus competing. Lifestyle guru and celebrity planner, Colin Cowie, was a speaker at the conference, and he said something that resonated: “We do not work with vendors, we work with creative partners.”

After returning from the conference, I had a brainstorming session with Cassandra, in which the idea for a Collaboration of Creative Partners Luncheon was born. I wanted to create an opportunity for business professionals to come together, share the same air, and have casual conversations in which they could open up and bounce ideas back and forth, in which they could brainstorm and share past experiences to build new ones. Creating these

luncheons created magic. Our collaboration opens doors to a whole new world of possibilities for vendors—whether inspiring new projects, styled shoots, or other fabulous ideas.

GETTING STARTED

Each month, we hold these luncheons at a different venue, with different guests made up of local vendors. The attendees are handpicked based on compatibility in order to advance in their professional field and expand their circles. As the luncheon begins, guests are asked to introduce themselves with three questions in mind: What is your name? What company you are representing? And how did you get to where you are today?

Collaboration is just part of what is created at this luncheon. During the event, partners anonymously answer prefabricated personal and business-related questions to understand each other’s beginnings, dreams, and goals on a much more intimate level than the casual conversation in passing—questions like, “Whom do you admire in the business world and why?”

Next, the group, as a whole, attempts to pair answers with the correct attendees’ photos. These photos are displayed on your board of choice to facilitate a more organized discussion. Although, organization is not a key factor. The goal is to create tangents among the group’s conversation. This brings about inquisitive minds and creates a more thought-provoking atmosphere. Watching our partners meet for the first time and watching the networking in action is rewarding.

COMMUNITY OVER COMPETITION

With the great friendships made and strengthened from the luncheon, endless possibilities abound, and collaborations are set into motion. Cards are exchanged and new contacts are made, which encourages guests to partner on future projects. When the collaborative partners luncheon facilitates a successful “Creative Collaboration,” we ask them to let us know. “Friendors” do this through the use of a coinciding hashtag (i.e.: #COCP2016) linking photos and posts of their post-luncheon success.

Scheduling and creating styled photoshoots is also a byproduct of these luncheons. Going into a styled shoot, all vendors should be aware of the stipulations and guidelines put in place to ensure a production done at maximum precision. Follow-through is important to guarantee a beneficial outcome for all parties. Therefore, we highly recommend creating contracts outlining individual responsibilities. Once all collaborative partners have agreed on the terms of the ultimate goal, the magic begins!

On the creative side, an overall concept is helpful. Assigning parameters to each “friendor” within their area of expertise guides you toward a more cohesive vision. Make sure to base your themes on your current target markets and submit to blogs and publications that would be beneficial to all of the partners involved across the board. Paying close attention to submission guidelines will enlighten you on many things, such as limiting post previews. Editors do not care to see content that they have seen before on different media outlets. Refreshing outlooks on up-and-coming trends is always appreciated.

CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

Crediting those invested in any partnership is a high priority, bringing us back to our collaboration of creative partners. You rise when you lift others, and this has never been truer. So, take time to chat and dream up ideas larger than life. Be sure to spend time building up relationships, as opposed to competing and focusing on the social media contest. Remember, growing your community of creative partners can promote flourishing success for all. **WPM**

—
Colleen Bauer, Fairy Godmother Events, Bakersfield, Calif.