

Getting “Engaged” . . . Engagement Season is Here!

From Thanksgiving through just past Valentine’s Day, we in the special event industry **know** what’s coming – when brides and grooms fill the air with that happy question and answer – “Will You?” “Yes!” It’s time to thoroughly “engage” yourself once again in the busiest wedding inquiry and booking time of the year. Are you ready? It’s here!

Preparing your club for this season is critical now more than ever, as the bridal market has proven the most “recession proof” of all catering target markets. Weddings are a great way to build your revenue and contribute to your business’ overall financial health. Being “ready” for the phone calls, questions, bridal shows, questions, tours, questions, contracts and MORE questions is a great way to present a professional image and effectively capture your share of this market.

To make sure that you are ready as can be, some planning is in order.

- ☞ First of all, a thorough plan should be in place that details out the action items and advertising strategies for your wedding season (your marketing plan). Plan ways in which you connect both with brides directly as well as others in the event industry for referral business.
- ☞ A great idea is to start with what you have done in previous years and evaluate the effectiveness. Maybe some ideas were good, but not executed properly. Some “tweaking” may be in order to make some programs more effective. If you did not get stellar results from a certain tactic, try something new! Doing the same things over and over if they are not effective and generating enough revenue is a waste of your precious energy.
- ☞ Make sure your website is “bride friendly” with lots of visuals, and not a lot of text. Brides like high quality pictures!
- ☞ Establish yourself as an expert in the industry. A wedding certification or published articles on weddings and trends is a great way to get yourself noticed and recognized as your area’s “go to” wedding professional.
- ☞ Review pricing and minimums. Make sure you are appropriate for your marketplace and for the bride you are looking to attract.
- ☞ Prepare a “Frequently Asked Questions” section on your website or printed material.
- ☞ Be timely and professional! The #1 complaint from brides who send requests for information over the internet is that she “never heard back”. Follow-up is critical!
- ☞ Be “party ready”. Never be caught off guard with a messy office, venue or waiting area. Brides like to “walk-in” without appointments!

- ☞ Research trends and resources. Knowing the latest in wedding trends and having access to all the latest products and services lets the bride know that you are ready to create the perfect wedding, especially for her.
- ☞ Have a goal. You know what your budget is for 2010, so how many weddings do you want to book to get you there? Have a goal and track your progress. It's not only financially responsible, but it's fun to watch your numbers climb!

Most of all, love what you do and enjoy the time. Brides book with people they trust and feel comfortable with – let your passion show!

For more information on the **Beverly Clark Hospitality Training Programs**, please contact **Lynne LaFond DeLuca** at lynne@beverlyclarkenterprises.com and visit our website at www.beverlyclarktraining.com

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