



Webinar Q&A: Attracting the Destination Wedding Market

Our most recent webinar on “Attracting the Destination Wedding Market” inspired some GREAT questions, so I thought I would share all the Q&A! The webinar, in it’s recorded version, is available for viewing on our website at www.beverlyclarktraining.com, in the “learning center”. Keep those questions and comments coming!

Q: What do you consider as examples of "inspiration boards"?

A: In the special events industry, we are always looking for the trendiest new *everything* - we need inspiration! Funny thing is, the brides and our clients are looking at the same thing, and with the incredible amount of info on the internet waves, brides get tons of great ideas, then it's the job of the industry professionals to bring it all together and make it all happen! Brides rarely know what all those great "looks" will cost them, though, so it is our job to also be an educator as well as someone who can help them prioritize. And remember what I always say - "trends = upsells"! Think about how every trend can translate into an upsell for your business or service.

Inspiration boards come in many different forms, but most commonly refer to a theme or idea that is played out in pictorial format to “inspire” the reader to duplicate the same type of look. I'm often asked about my favorite blogs, or where I think brides are getting all these wild and wonderful ideas. . . wow. . . there is no lack of great blogs, but here are a few of my "faves" where I always see great inspiration boards. . .

www.stylemepretty.com

www.junebugweddings.com/blogs/what_junebug_loves/

www.greenweddingshoes.blogspot.com/

www.juliannesmith.wordpress.com

www.ilovelolliblog.com

Q: We have a new venue in Mexico and I would like to create a theme wedding named "Mercado Theme Wedding". Where and with who should I advertise in order to target this special market. It is a Mexican hacienda theme designed wedding.

A: For destination weddings, any theme that showcases the local area and surroundings will be a popular choice because brides choose a destination, they want their wedding and their guests’ experience to reflect the local culture. As for advertising, nothing new is needed to showcase your new themed packages – make the information readily available on your website and in materials that are emailed out. When sending a proposal, you can use that theme as a “sample”. Most brides and wedding planners appreciate the inclusive, themed packages for simplicity of costs involved as well as the ease of planning.

Q: Can I have Alison Hotchkiss’ email -I missed it!

A: Alison Hotchkiss is the Creative Director of Alison Events and was interviewed as a resource for the webinar (she’s just an all-around awesome person, too!). She is also the author of *The Destination Wedding Planner*, and has designed and executed incredible events all over the world. Her contact information is:

Website: www.alisonevents.com

Blog: www.alisonevents.blogspot.com

Email: info@alisonevents.com

Q: We are located in Mexico. Do you think that charity donations are a good idea even if brides will be donating to Mexican Foundations?

A: If a bride is choosing to donate to a charity in place of favors or some other aspect of her wedding, supporting a local charity that will benefit the area in which she hosted her wedding is a wonderful idea. Some brides, however, may have a favorite charity that they prefer to donate to. Being ready with helpful suggestions is always great, should your brides inquire.

Q: How do we get access to the survey results you mentioned?

A: There are two different surveys that I referred to – The Wedding Report is a great source for all industry vendors (www.theweddingreport.com). The surveys conducted by Beverly Clark are available free of charge to our advertising clients. For more information on advertising your location, product or service on one of the Beverly Clark websites, please contact 800.933.3434

Q: Can you please send us the list of the destination wedding activities you came up with...pub crawl, wine tasting, snorkel outing etc

A: Again, Alison Hotchkiss was the resources for these fun activities for the guests to enjoy during a multi-day wedding event. MOST important is being clear about what is “included” (hosted) by the bride & groom and what is an additional charge. For events that only a select few are invited to, such as a bridesmaids' luncheon, you'll want to send separate invitations, send an e-mail, or invite guests personally. Events that everyone is invited to can be listed on the RSVP card. If you include an event on the invitation, you're saying that you're the host--in other words, you're paying for it. If it's an event that you're just organizing but not hosting, you can either add a price--like "Snorkeling expedition, \$60 per person"--or just put that information on the Web site with a note in the invitation saying, "Check our Web site for additional wedding week activities." Great activities to consider include: Hiking, museum visit, breakfast, yoga, golfing, local tours, wine tasting, horseback riding, fishing, high tea, frisbee golf, spa day, kayaking, picnic, ping-pong tournament, sightseeing tour, garden tour, snorkeling, beach volleyball, barbecue, surfing lessons, trolley tour, boat trip, pub crawl, cooking class. . . be creative and take advantage of local culture and activities.

Q: Can you please send us the names of the top destination wedding planners?

A: First, let me be clear that this list is in NO WAY inclusive! Our industry boasts some of the ridiculously talented people I have ever seen! The ones I mentioned in the webinar include: Michelle Rago, NY; Marcy Blum, NY; Alison Hotchkiss, San Francisco; Lisa Light of Destination Bride; Mindy Weiss, Los Angeles; Beth Helmstetter, Los Angeles; Todd Avery, Texas.

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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