

MARKET WEDDINGS WITH A UNIQUE DIGITAL SPACE

> It's a great time to grow your wedding business, given that expert wedding sources have estimated there will be up to 2.6 million weddings this year. Considering most of these couples are likely millennials, you need a solid digital strategy to increase your business's online presence. That way, when a couple starts researching venues and vendors on social media or the internet, they'll find and choose you over the competition.

Divide and Conquer

If you're a traditional retail florist, consider segmenting and promoting your wedding work as a distinct business outside of the shop's everyday business. From a digital perspective, this strategy is highly effective because having a marketing focus on weddings enables better

search exposure and results. To take this approach, you'll want to have a separate website and social media accounts exclusively for weddings.

Don Coleman, of Mayfield Florist in Tucson, Arizona, has followed this example with great success. His wedding site ranked second in a recent search for "Tucson wedding flowers," while his shop site ranked seventh. In addition to providing strong online exposure, Coleman says his wedding website also captures information from only serious couples via a submission form that asks for information such as budget, venue, guest count, and poses the question: "What is your vision for the floral and décor package for your event?"

"You will always need to have a conversation with the bride," he says. "It's important your [wedding] website captures their information for consultation. They'll never pick their wedding flowers from your shop website. Whatever site they visit, it's more of a brochure for them to give them ideas."

Persistence of Pinterest

When Coleman's staff connects with a lead, they are sure to ask for a link to the couple's Pinterest board. This helps them quickly gauge the couple's expectations. "We live in Arizona, and need to deal with heat," Coleman says. "We're also currently dealing with supply challenges. If we see they're wanting tulips, peonies or another unavailable variety, we can talk them off the ledge."

Aside from the great consultation intel Pinterest provides, florists can also use the platform to increase visibility of their wedding website. Pinterest allows users to categorize pins, which are photos from a website, onto boards. The pins link back to the website, which boosts the site's search engine optimization (SEO).

Start pinning your wedding photos on Pinterest by categorizing wedding

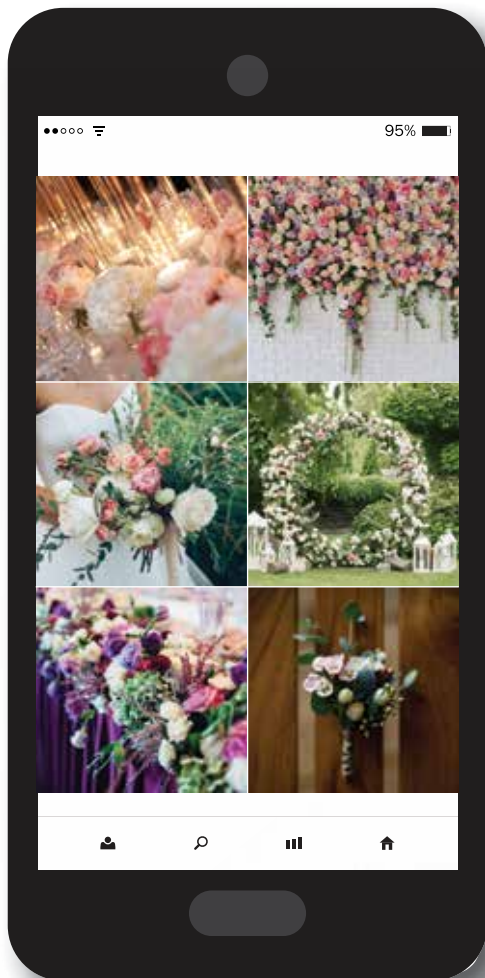
photo galleries to match typical keywords, styles, or trends that wedding couples may use in search, such as "rustic wedding," "bridal bouquets," or "groom boutonnieres." Then use those photos to create pins on your Pinterest account. It is important to write thoughtful descriptions about the photos that are loaded with keywords and relevant links. This will help other users find your pins, and when your pins are saved to other users' boards, it can potentially drive even more traffic to your website.

Leveraging Social Media

Beyond Pinterest, the biggest social platform millennials use is Instagram. Just as with your wedding website, create a new Instagram account for your wedding business and be sure to link to your wedding website in the bio and start posting photos with relevant hashtags.

Do the same with Facebook. The advantage of using Facebook is you can embed relevant links back to the website. So, if you're sharing photos featuring a popular wedding trend, your post can link back to your web page featuring that trend. If photos feature a venue or a vendor you partner with, be sure to tag them to expose your posts to their audiences as well. 📍

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