



Memorable Celebrations
Wedding Coordinators & Reception Disc Jockeys

Websites with
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information

Memorablecelebra-
tions.com

thebridalhop.com

bridalassn.com

pwg.com

Kentuckianawedding-
planner.com

gotolouisville.com

partypop.com

new.800dj.com

wedj.com

adja.org

TheKnot.com

louisvilleweddingnet-
work.com

louisville.com

louisvillemusicians.org

How To Hire The Right
Entertainment For Your Reception

I urge you to get
comfortable and read
all of this report -
it gives vital
information.

Organizing a wedding ceremony
and reception can be a DIFFICULT and
STRESSFUL job. There are many de-
tails that must be attended to; but here is
the undeniable truth:

THE OVERALL
SUCCESS OF YOUR
WEDDING RECEPTION
HINGES ON
THE ENTERTAINMENT

The right entertainment is the
“key” to a successful and fun wedding
reception, but here’s the problem:

- 1. Hire the wrong entertainment and
your reception may be a flop.
2. Hire someone who’s too outgoing
and they may offend members of
your audience or steal the show.
3. Hire someone too reserved or inex-

perienced and you may be bored
to death.

- 4. Overpay for an entertainer who
delivers an average performance
and you will feel cheated.

Remember who ever you hire, it’s
your reputation on the line.

What people said
AFTER the
wedding day:

These statistics were published in St.
Louis Bride and Groom magazine
2003. Sources includes Simmons,
2001; USA Today, 2002; National
Bridal service, 2001; The Knot,
2002; Brides Magazine, 2001.

72% of all brides say they would have
spent more time choosing their reception
entertainment.

Almost 100% said they would have spent
more of their budget on the entertainment.

78% of brides say they would have made
the entertainment their highest priority.

81% of guest say the thing they remember
the most about a reception is the entertain-
ment.

65% of all couples that choose a band to
entertain at their wedding reception, said, if
they had to do it over again, they would
have a disc jockey.

Memorable Celebrations
502-499-1935
or email
Sharon@
memorablecelebrations.com

Who am I and why am I providing this information?

I am Sharon Bell. I began my career as a wedding reception Disc Jockey. After witnessing several wedding reception which lack planning and organization I started offering reception planning and directing services. As my experience grew I also began full wedding celebration coordination and planning. We now offer full service wedding ceremony and reception planning and directing.

In 1993 our company began it's unique presentation consisting of, wedding planning and great musical entertainment, with moderate audience interaction. I have put together a well-trained team of knowledgeable disc jockeys and expert wedding coordinators. Our wedding coordinators have helped couples in Kentucky, Indiana and Ohio, make their wedding day stress free, fun and successful.

Please give us a call to discuss your special day and how we can work together to create the wedding of your dreams, by calling 502-499-1935

The big question: should you hire a band or a DJ?

The DJ may cost less and play a greater variety of music. However, live bands have a greater stage presence and guarantee your reception will have it's own unique sound.

The DJ will play music from the original artist. The band will have new music as well as covering other artist music.

It may be easier to see a band perform live at a public venue or local bars. Most DJ's only play for private events and may not be able to invite you to see them perform.

Consider the reception site size. Confirm with the reception site manager if there is adequate space and power for the entertainment you are consider-

ing. Review the room layout with your entertainer to determine the best location for the sound system.

Choosing your music may be a bit tricky with a band. If you have special request, request them, but don't expect a great jazz band to cover 50 cent.

Remember bands take breaks once an hour. Ask if they play recorded music to keep the dance floor alive during these breaks. Also confirm that you will have control over the volume of the music. Bands and DJ's both can be guilty of playing just a little to loud.

Get all the details in a written agreement. Ask about fees, including overtime. The band or DJ should have liability insure. Plan to feed the entertainer during the reception.

Popular bands and DJ's often are booked months in advance, so they should be hired as soon as the wedding date is set

Here are 10 things to consider when hiring entertainment for your wedding reception!



CONSIDERATION #1:

HOW MANY ENTERTAINERS DO YOU REALLY NEED

A well trained experienced DJ's or Band leader can single handedly execute all the traditional events during your reception.

The standard wedding reception events are:

- ◆ The Entrance of the Family and Wedding Party
- ◆ The Grand entrance of the Bride and Groom
- ◆ Sending the guest to the buffet or announcing courses
- ◆ The Toasts
- ◆ The Cake cutting
- ◆ The Garter and Bouquet toss
- ◆ The Special dances-
 - First dance
 - Bride and Father dance
 - Groom and Mother dance
 - Wedding party dance

Each professional vendor (caterer, photographer, and entertainer) is hired to perform a service at your reception. These individuals normally work in complete harmony during your reception to make every detail of your affair runs smoothly.

However, for additional insurance that your entire wedding day will flow according smoothly and is stress free, for you and your family; hire a professional wedding coordinator. Wedding coordinators generally offers assistant with the following:

- ◆ Selecting/hiring wedding service providers
- ◆ Planning the wedding ceremony and reception
- ◆ Conducting the wedding rehearsal with your officiate
- ◆ Overseeing all the vendors during your wedding

Bottom line: A professional entertainer, who is *skilled and experienced* in the art of directing a wedding reception will move your wedding reception through the special events effortlessly.

If your wedding celebration require a little more coordination. Consider a professional wedding coordinator, instead of a two DJ or DJ/MC combination; having two DJ's does not mean that one of them is a trained master wedding coordinator.

PS: The two DJ teams are best for receptions that require high energy audience participation and group activities.

CONSIDERATION #2:

A MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

Put your money where your mouth is! This is the ultimate test as to whether the performer really believes in his or her entertainment skills. If a performer really believes in the quality of their program and their people, they should not hesitate to guarantee it.

Bottom line: In most cases, you can avoid falling prey to an inexperienced entertainer by asking for a 100% money back guarantee if you are not satisfied.

CONSIDERATION #3:

USING AN AGENCY TO HIRE YOUR ENTERTAINMENT

Many couples feel they are better off hiring performers from an agency instead of hiring them on their own. While it is true that making one phone call to an agency and letting them do all the leg work is a lot easier than doing it yourself. This practice does not guarantee that you are going to get the perfect performer for your reception.

Agencies have a list of entertainers in different price ranges. The agencies first concern may be to book a performer that is in your price range; however this entertainer may not be the best match for

your reception.

Also, some agencies mark up the talent fees from 100% to 300% or more? If a performer normally charges \$500 for a show, an agency may up charge up to \$1,000 to \$1,500 for the same performer.

However, some agencies require the talent discount their fees to them; so they can charge you the same amount as the performer would have charged if you hired the performer directly. Or they add a nominal service fee on top of the talent fee.

Bottom Line: Take charge and be involved in your entertainment selection! Get referrals for musicians or DJ's from friends, relatives, wedding vendors and newlyweds. Call local high schools, colleges, symphonies and the local musician's union office for the contact information of musicians.

CONSIDERATION #4: PRICE

Now, This is a biggie.

Of course, price *is* a factor when hiring entertainment. If you have a \$350 entertainment budget, you're not going to be able to



hire the best entertainment.

However, many couples place too much emphasis on price and not enough emphasis on the overall impact the entertainment will have on their reception.

Is hiring the highest priced performer always best? *Absolutely not!* In fact, because entertainers know that many people equate a higher price with better quality, some entertainers have simply doubled their fees. Because they have a higher price they may proudly boast, "We are one of the best in town."

Try to forget about price at the beginning of your search. Focus on finding a good match between your requirements and the entertainer's performance style. The style, personality and experience level of the entertainer is far more important than the price.

On the other hand, hiring the cheapest entertainer is not the best way to go either.

Couples who perceive Bands or DJs as a dime a dozen or commodities, look for the lowest priced performer. Bands or DJ's that have prices well below the market average are generally new, inexperienced or survive from one gig to the next and not by referrals from past clients or wedding vendors.

Bottom line: Decide what style and mood you want for your reception, interview a number of performers in all price ranges and choose the entertainer that is best for your reception regardless of price. The average price is \$600 - \$1,500 for a DJ and \$600 to \$2,500 for a good band (allow 8% to 15% of your wedding budget for entertainment).

CONSIDERATION #5: WHO WILL ACTUALLY PERFORM

Whether hiring musicians for the ceremony, or reception realize that some orchestras, bands

or DJ's book a year or more in advance. Begin your search as soon as the wedding date is set. When hiring a band or DJ, try to see a live performance or view an unedited videotape of their performance. This will help you evaluate their stage presence and will give you an overall feel for their style of music.

However, do not be put off if the entertainer can not invite you to see them perform during a wedding reception. A wedding reception is a private event and the wedding party may not approve of their event being used as a audition for the entertainer.

Members of a band or DJs at a large disc jockey company may change from time to time. In a written contract, the band-leader or DJ company manager should provide the name(s) of the assigned performer(s), which will serve for your reception.



Bottom line: Meet with the entertainer for your wedding reception. Have the key performers names listed in your contract along with the names of the persons who will be the backup if the entertainer is unable to perform.

CONSIDERATION #6:

DETERMINE QUALIFICATION

During your reception, the entertainer will be *representing you*. Questions such as "Does the DJ carry back up equipment or what will happen if the lead singer gets sick," are important questions. However, sometimes asking and answering a series of questions can become somewhat like a tennis match. If you ar-

rive at your interview with a grocery list of questions and both you and the entertainer just keep hitting questions & answers back and forth at each other, you may not get a true sense of the entertainer's personality. The initial contact is the best time to get a true sense of the entertainer's style.

Observe his appearance and the way he expresses himself. If he uses broken English and fumbles over his words during the interview, that is very likely how he will speak over the microphone during your reception. During the interview, try to imagine this person in front of all your family and friends, *representing you*.

Good entertainers are experts at entertaining, but you still need to provide information about your entertainment likes and dislikes. You must be able to communicate your vision for

the reception, the style of music you would like and what mood you want to set. The entertainer should take the time to find out about your desires first and then offer their services, only if their entertainment program can fulfill those needs.

Bottom line: Do not become overly distracted by a list of questions. Relax and take time to learn the entertainer's style and personality, while allowing him to understand your desires. If you feel the entertainer's style and personality is a good match for your wedding reception, then ask the questions. Remember if you do not like the entertainer's style, it will not matter if they carry back up equipment.

CONSIDERATION #7:**THE FLOW OF THE RECEPTION**

This is an area where choosing the right entertainment is critical. Even if your reception is only cake and punch, remember your guests have been sitting from before the wedding ceremony until your arrival at the reception. Your entertainer should help things move along and keep the guests energized during their wait at the reception location. If you plan to take pictures after the wedding ceremony, a cocktail hour with appetizers, beverages and the appropriate music is needed. Once you arrive at the reception the entertainer should be ready to help you start the reception activities immediately.

Bottom line: A good entertainer will help you plan the flow of your reception, move the activities along at a nice pace and keep your guests informed and energized. The entertainer should play the correct music before, during, and after dinner; make the appropriate announcements and work with the other wedding professionals to orchestrate the reception formalities in a timely manner.

CONSIDERATION #8:**TESTIMONIALS and REFERENCES**

Testimonials and references are critical. What people say about a performer is infinitely more important than what a performer says about themselves. Get references from vendors as well as from the entertainers past clients.

There are generally only two reasons why a performer does not have a TON of great testimonials or references on hand:

1. The performer is inexperienced and hasn't worked enough to get many testimonials or

references.

2. The performer just isn't very good and *can't get* many positive testimonials or references from past customers. The entertainer is not going to show you any negative feedback they received from past clients, (*which makes sense*), so if they have been in business for many years and only have a few testimonials move on to another entertainer.

Look at the amount of testimonials.

ex: if they have been in business for 10 years, they may have performed about 26 to 48 times each year. Only about 20% of clients will take the time to write a note after the ceremony. As a result, they should have anywhere from 52 at minimum to 300 hand written testimonials from past clients *on hand*.

Key wedding vendors are another great resource to confirm the quality of your entertainment. Photographers, videographers and wedding reception location managers see many entertainers.

Bottom Line: You should put a lot of weight on the performer's testimonials and references when making your decision. If they are truly good entertainers they should be able to show you 3 to 10 testimonials from the previous year as well as provide you with telephone number of past satisfied clients.

CONSIDERATION #9:**A DEMO VIDEO**

A performer's testimonials are more important than their demo video. The problem with a demo video is anyone can make themselves look good on video through editing or retakes. However, a demo video can give you a feel for what the performer does and how they

interacts with the audience. Ideally, the video should consist of unedited clips from more than one wedding reception.

Bottom line: A demo video can be a useful tool in helping you decide whether a performer is right for you, but it should only be one of the factors that contributes to your decision.

CONSIDERATION #10:

ENSURANCE THAT THE PRESENTATION IS COMPLETELY CLEAN

This is so important in today's society to have an entertainer who is professional. Your audience could be offended by an obnoxious entertainers or questionable music lyrics. It is vital that you make sure the performer's material is absolutely clean and that the MC will not offend anyone in your audience.



WOW, you read this entire report!

Obviously, you're serious about getting good entertainment for your wedding reception. I hope that you found a few gems that you can use to ensure your wedding reception turns out exactly as you dreamed.

If I can help contact me directly at 502-499-1935 or email sharon@memorablecelebrations.com

We are members in good standing, with The American Disc Jockey Association, The Association of Bridal Consultants, Greater Louisville Inc., The Convention and Visitors Bureau, and The National Association of Woman Business

Owners.

I am provided this information for two reasons:

REASON #1: If you hire lousy entertainment, this reflects poorly on other competent professionals. Odds are, if the entertainment you hire fails to meet your expectations, you'll be very reluctant to hire a similar type of performer in the future.

REASON #2: I do not like to see performers rip couples off and make brides and grooms worry on their wedding day.

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everlasting memories since 1993*