

VOLUME 1

REVIEWS

Why reviews have become instrumental to every wedding business's success

INTRODUCTION

The WedInsight Series is designed to provide wedding professionals with relevant consumer and business insights. Each month will focus on a particular topic – drawing on findings from consumer behaviors and opinions, and provide actionable insights for your business.

This report focuses on **Reviews** and offers insights surrounding questions such as:

- What information are couples looking for when reading reviews?
- When is the best time to collect reviews from your clients?
- What features are couples looking for prior to contacting a vendor?
- Where are the majority of vendors collecting their client reviews?

In order to provide the most relevant and up-to-date data, WeddingWire conducts a variety of research throughout the year with more than 50,000 wedding professionals, as well as engaged and newlywed couples across the country. Combined with behavioral data analyzed by our dedicated team of WeddingWire data scientists, we're able to calculate overall findings presented throughout this report.

NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MARKET INSIGHTS:

"At WeddingWire, we are continually studying the behaviors of engaged couples (and gathering feedback from our wedding professionals, too!) so we can deliver the best experience for all of our customers. We've seen just how important online reviews have become - and how couples are using this information throughout the entire planning process - from researching prospective vendors to making a final booking."

Andy Whittaker
Director of Market Insights
WeddingWire



HOW COUPLES USE ONLINE REVIEWS TO MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS

COUPLES ARE LOOKING FOR THE BASELINE INFORMATION

- **87%** of engaged couples read reviews when searching for wedding vendors.
- In fact, couples consider **price + reviews** to be the most important features when choosing which vendors to reach out to for their big day.

6 KEY FEATURES COUPLES LOOK FOR WHEN READING REVIEWS

- As common with most big purchases, **83%** of searching couples like to hear what they should expect, not from the vendors themselves, but from past customers who've been in their position. The most important features couples look for in reviews are:

- RESPONSIVENESS**
- CONSISTENCY**
- QUALITY OF WORK**
- TIMELINESS**
- PROFESSIONALISM**
- OVERALL SATISFACTION**

A MIXTURE OF REVIEWS ARE BETTER THAN NONE

- **Over 50% of couples** say they are more likely to consider a vendor who has a mixture of positive and negative reviews, rather than no reviews at all.
- Therefore, it's okay to have a few less than favorable reviews scattered throughout your review history. **72% of consumers find a variety of opinions to be valuable when reading through reviews.** Couple's understand that feedback is subjective and having a few imperfect reviews does not necessarily preclude a customer from contacting you.



"I'm looking for exceedingly positive experiences as well as what negative experiences people have had. I like to put myself in their shoes and see if I could deal with that if it happened to me."

- Christa K., Alaska



MOST IMPORTANT FEATURES WHEN CHOOSING WHO TO CONTACT

#1: PRICE	#5: PHOTOS
#2: REVIEWS	#6: RESPONSIVENESS
#3: LOCATION	#7: PERSONALITY
#4: AVAILABILITY	#8: DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Source: Newlywed Survey // 2014-2015



"[When I read a wedding vendor review, I look for] information that is not just based on that particular wedding. For example if there are several reviews that mention a vendor was late, then I will not book that vendor because more than likely they will be late."

- Cynthia D., Texas

WHEN COUPLES ARE MOST LIKELY TO WRITE REVIEWS

CLIENTS SOMETIMES NEED A FRIENDLY REMINDER TO LEAVE A REVIEW

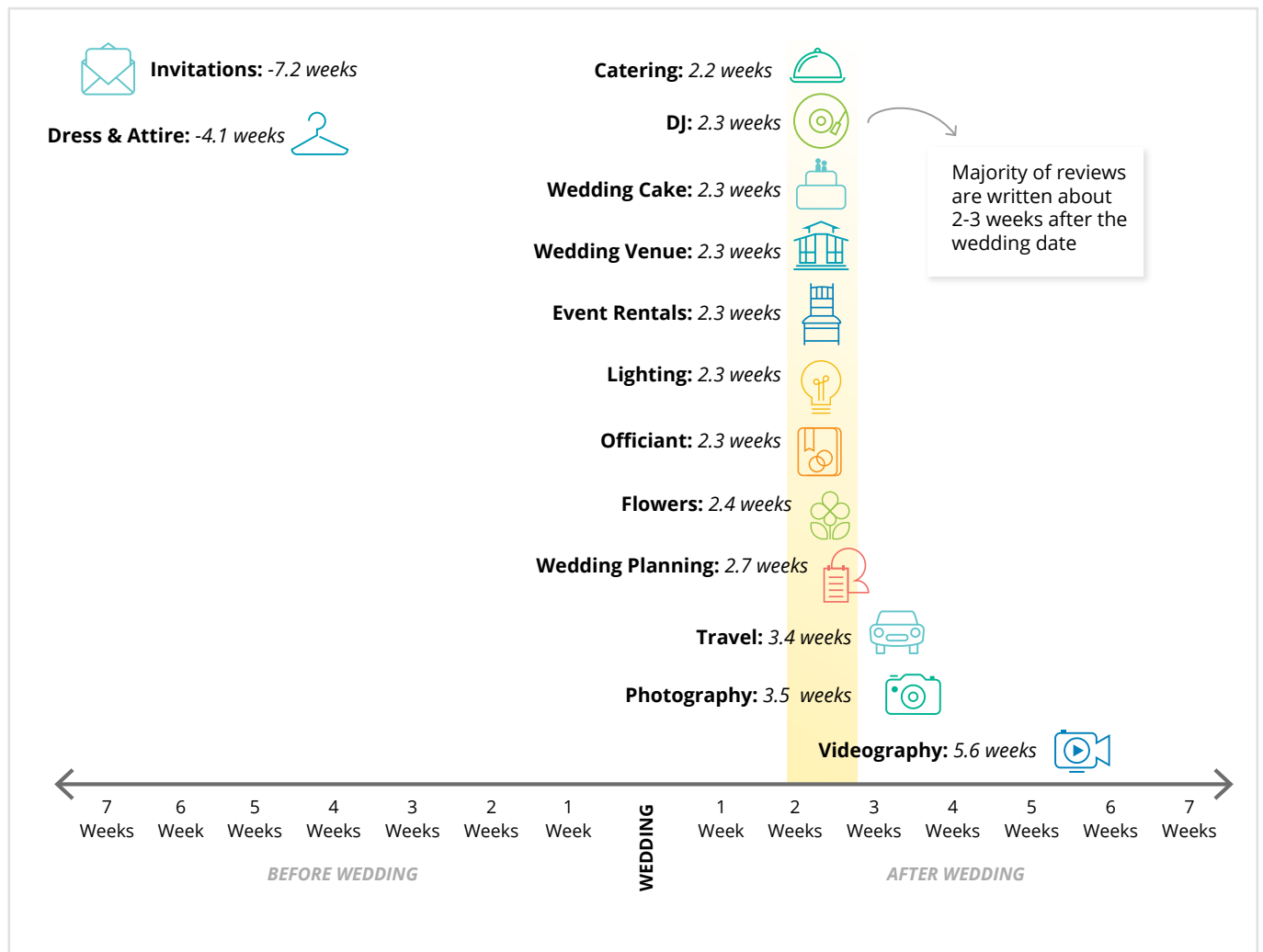
- **1 in 5 couples** will write a review when asked by their vendor. That number **increases to 1 in 3** if they are reminded at least once.
- Couples are most likely to write a review for their:
 1. Venue
 2. Officiant
 3. DJ



"Positive feedback is so important to vendors that I want to make sure I write reviews on as many places as I can to spread the word."

- Ashley M., Virginia

REVIEWS SUBMITTED BASED ON WEDDING DATE



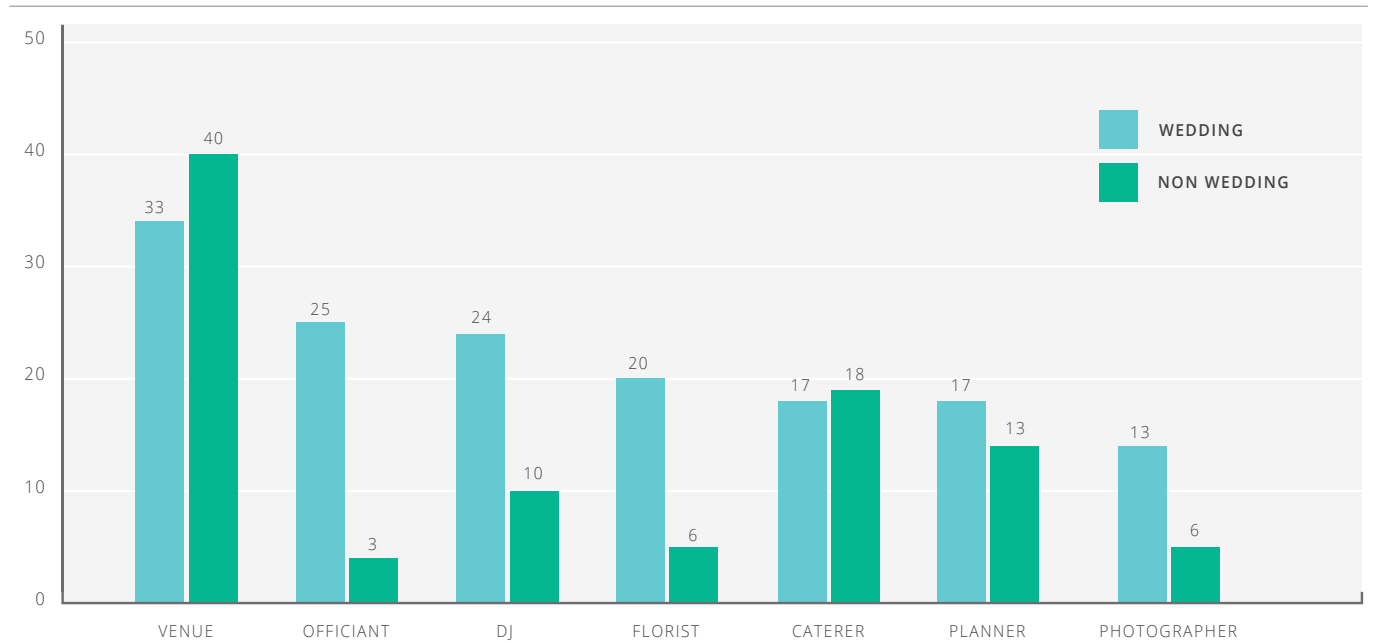
Source: WeddingWire Behavioral Data // 2015

WHY REVIEWS MATTER TO WEDDING PROFESSIONALS

WEDDING PROFESSIONALS RECOGNIZE THE POWER OF REVIEWS

- **79% of professionals say online reviews are critical to their business;** however 48% say collecting online reviews is difficult.
- On average, wedding professionals report that they **receive 16 wedding reviews each year.** This of course varies by category and size of company.

AVERAGE # OF REVIEWS RECEIVED BY CATEGORY PER YEAR

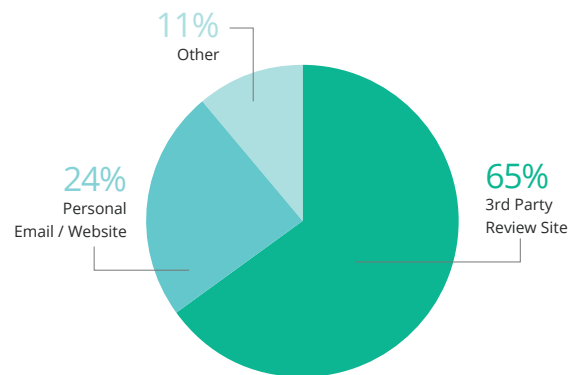


Source: Wedding Professional End of Year Survey // 2014

PROFESSIONALS ARE ACTIVELY COLLECTING REVIEWS

- **77% of professionals have a goal of collecting** more online reviews to help build their reputation and increase their credibility.
- **65% of wedding professionals collect the majority of their reviews on popular 3rd party review sites** like WeddingWire, Yelp, Google, etc.

WHERE PROS COLLECT REVIEWS



Source: Wedding Professional End of Year Survey // 2014

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR WEDDING PROFESSIONALS

Before a couple has even contacted you, they have scoured the Internet looking for reviews from other brides and grooms. They want to hear real stories from real couples so they can gauge whether you can help fulfill their vision and deliver quality service. Online reviews are no longer a “nice-to-have” but a necessity to get your business to be top-of mind for prospective clients.

Key Take Aways:

1

Make collecting reviews a top priority

Start the conversation during your sales process, so that clients won't be surprised when you ask for a review later on down the road. Collecting reviews will ultimately help increase your leads and book more business.

2

Don't be afraid to ask for reviews

When asking for reviews, don't be afraid to remind your clients if they didn't respond right away. Oftentimes, clients were simply busy the first time around or just forgot. Give your clients a gentle reminder via email or by sending a handwritten note.

3

Showcase your reviews

Use your reviews throughout multiple channels to make sure prospective clients are finding the information they need before contacting you. Seeing a glowing review on your website, social media page or a 3rd party review site may be the reason they decide to reach out.



PRO Tip

REMIND YOUR CLIENTS TO REVIEW YOU, ONCE THEY'VE RECEIVED THEIR WEDDING PHOTOS

“I actually have tracked the best response to my SECOND request for a review if they haven't done it the week or two after the wedding.

I keep in touch with the professional photographer for purposes of getting selected photos of our work. Once I know the photographer has opened the on-line gallery . . . CHA CHING . . . the bride revisits the whole day in pictures. It's this emotional state-of-mind that motivates the client to want to give you a good review.”

- Susan S., Caterer, Florida



For questions or to submit a future topic suggestion, please email wedinsights@weddingwire.com.