

VOLUME 7

# MAKE ENGAGEMENT SEASON WORK FOR YOU

Discover how to stand out this engagement season by learning what couples are looking for after they say “Yes!”

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# INTRODUCTION

The WedInsights Series is designed to provide wedding professionals with relevant consumer and business insights. Each month, we'll focus on a particular topic – drawing on data from consumer behaviors and opinions, and provide actionable insights for your business.

This month, we focus on **standing out this engagement season** by offering insights into questions such as:

- When do most couples propose?
- What is the most popular wedding day?
- How do couples search for their vendors?
- What is the best way to differentiate your business?

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, engaged and newlywed couples across the country. Together with behavioral data analyzed by our dedicated team of data scientists, WeddingWire uses internal data to calculate overall estimates which we present throughout this report, unless otherwise noted.

## NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MARKET INSIGHTS:

*"It's the most wonderful time of the year, engagement season! Soon-to-be brides and grooms everywhere are popping the question and saying "yes" to 12-13 months of wedding planning (well, at least that's the average). While some couples may be focused on celebrating their big news with family over the holidays, many others will jump right into the planning process - looking for a wedding planner, scoping out venues, building a budget and choosing a date. With only 52 weekends in a year, there is significant competition for those highly prized Saturdays. As couples start planning their vendor team they are looking for three key items about you: pricing, reviews and photos. Good luck meeting all of your new clients!"*



**Andy Whittaker**  
**Director of Market Insights**  
**WeddingWire**



For questions or to submit future topic suggestions, please email [wedinsights@weddingwire.com](mailto:wedinsights@weddingwire.com).

## THE MOST POPULAR DATES COUPLES GET ENGAGED AND WHEN THEY SAY “I DO”

### 17% OF ALL ENGAGEMENTS HAPPEN ON THE SAME 10 DAYS EACH YEAR

- Nearly forty percent of engagements occur between Thanksgiving and Valentine’s Day (November - February).
- The most popular day to get engaged in 2014 was Christmas Day, followed by Valentine’s Day!
- When it comes to selecting the engagement ring, 47% of individuals ‘popping the question’ select the ring on their own, while 46% of couples make the decision together. The remaining few let the recipient of the ring make the decision on their own.



### MOST POPULAR DATES TO GET ENGAGED

Source: New User Survey // 2015

1. CHRISTMAS DAY (12/25)
2. VALENTINE’S DAY (2/14)
3. CHRISTMAS EVE (12/24)
4. NEW YEARS DAY (1/1)
5. DECEMBER 20<sup>TH</sup> (SATURDAY BEFORE XMAS)
6. DECEMBER 13<sup>TH</sup> (2 SATURDAYS BEFORE XMAS)
7. NEW YEARS EVE (12/31)
8. DECEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup> (FRIDAY BEFORE XMAS)
9. DECEMBER 23<sup>RD</sup>
10. INDEPENDENCE DAY (7/4)



*“I decided to propose on Christmas because it is our favorite holiday. There is something about the holiday season that just brings warmth and joy. We had been together five years already, living in our first apartment, and I thought that Christmas morning would be a perfect time to pop the question.”*

- Val D., North Carolina

### ENGAGEMENT EXPERIENCES DIFFER BASED ON LENGTH OF ENGAGEMENT

- **On average, couples are engaged for 12 – 13 months before getting married.** However, it’s important to keep in mind that engagement lengths can vary greatly from couple to couple.
- In fact, data shows that 29% of couples have an engagement length of less than 9 months and 33% of couples are engaged for over 16 months. Those who have less than a year to plan are going to have very different wants and expectations, compared to a couple with 2 or more years to plan.



*“We got engaged on Thanksgiving and our wedding is coming up in May! We just prioritized what was most important to us in case we ran out of time, but we’ve both pitched in to the planning process and we haven’t been as picky as couples who have a long engagement period – time is not a luxury we have!”*

- Annie H., Toronto

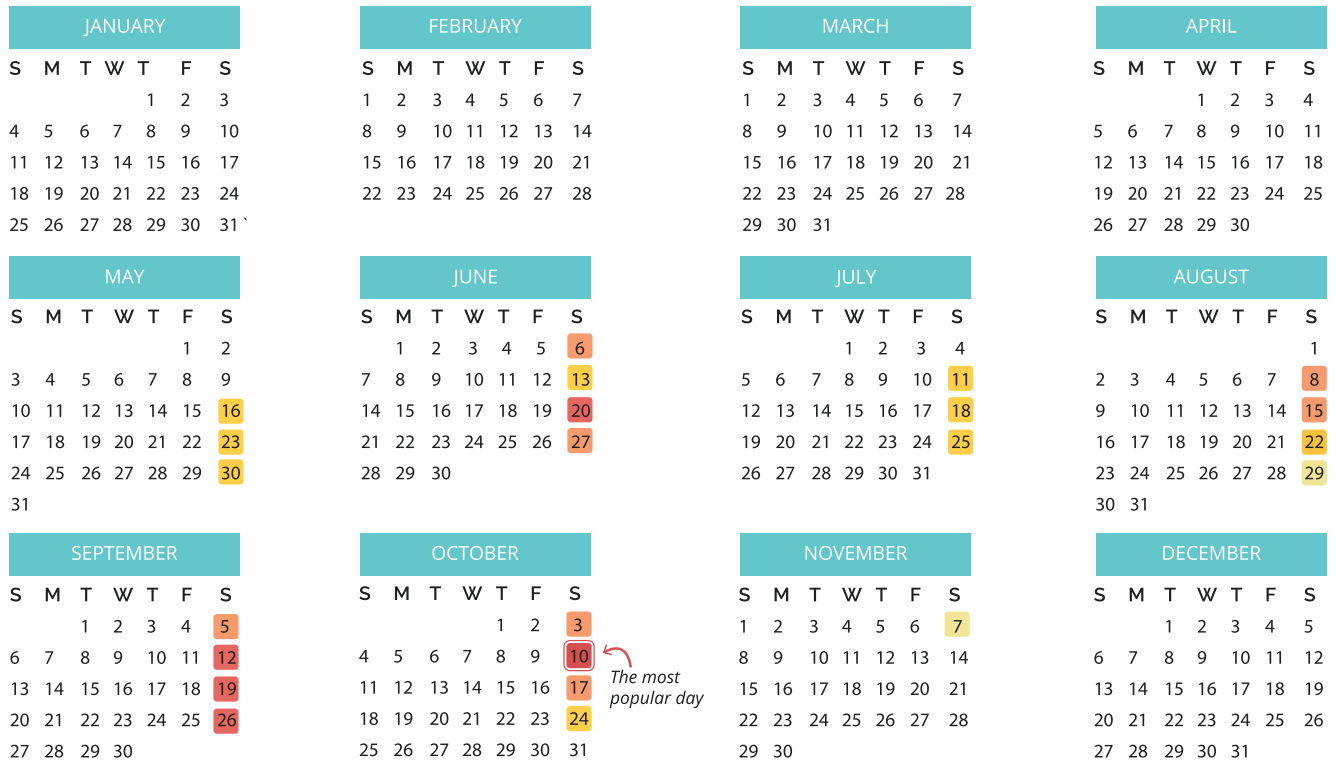
## THE MOST POPULAR DAY TO GET MARRIED IS SATURDAY DURING A FALL MONTH

- Although weddings take place year-round, 76% of weddings occur during the Summer and Fall months. **In fact, 25 dates make up 50% of all weddings in 2015.** (You guessed right, they are all on a Saturday!) Keep these dates in mind as we head into 2016, as trends will stay the same and you can anticipate which weekends may be your busiest.



### MOST POPULAR WEDDING DAYS 2015

Source: WeddingWire behavioral data // 2015



#### MOST POPULAR WEDDING DATES



*"I already booked my July 2015 date in New Jersey [over 18 months in advance] since we went to a couple of venues that said their summer Saturdays were quickly booking up."*

**- Nicole O., New Jersey**

- The most popular locations in the United States to get married are: Las Vegas, Chicago, Los Angeles, Dallas and New York City.
- Approximately 14% of U.S. couples have a destination wedding - of those, 11% have a wedding at a destination within the U.S. and 3% travel internationally (mostly to the Caribbean).

# HOW COUPLES NAVIGATE THE PLANNING PROCESS

## MOST COUPLES GET INSPIRATION ONLINE BEFORE THEY ARE ENGAGED

- Forty-one percent of couples start planning within the first month of engagement. **Prior to getting engaged, an average of 8% have already looked at wedding planning sites and more than 50% of couples report having at least 1 secret Pinterest board or other secret account on social media** – proving it's never too early to get your business in front of potential new clients.
- Couples spend around 15 hours a week during their busiest time planning, with the majority of that spent online. Due to an uptick in mobile search, 30% of couples spend their time planning from a smartphone or tablet device, mainly during the evening hours. We expect that number to continue to increase, as consumers become more comfortable using mobile throughout their planning process.

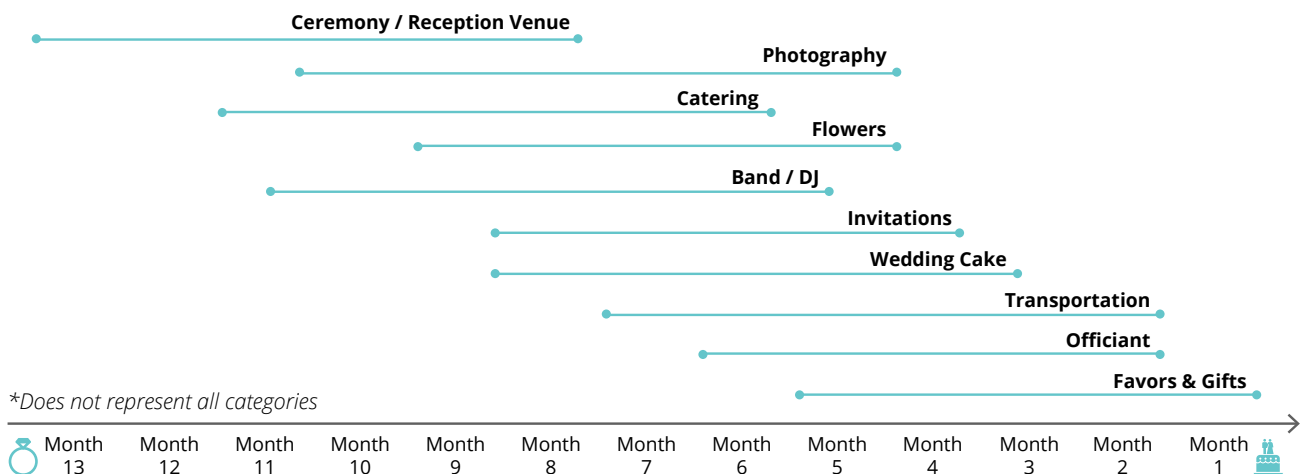
## NEWLY ENGAGED COUPLES START SEARCHING FOR THEIR VENDORS IMMEDIATELY

- When jumping into the planning process, couples begin by setting a timeframe and budget. Next, most research venues, create a guest list and choose a color scheme.
- **Based on the average 13 month engagement, most couples search for the majority of their vendors 7-9 months prior to their wedding.** However, data shows that certain categories such as venues, caterers, bands, and DJs are often researched as early as one year prior to the wedding.
- As research suggests in [WedInsights Volume 2](#), **50% of couples getting married use products and/or services from at least 10 different vendors;** therefore, now is the time to ramp up your marketing so that you can attract newly engaged couples while they're searching for a vendor like you.



### SUMMARY SEQUENCE OF VENDOR RESEARCH

Source: WeddingWire Behavioral Data // 2014



## THREE WAYS TO INCREASE YOUR VISIBILITY

When choosing which vendors to contact for their wedding day, couples look at a number of factors including price, reviews, location, availability, photos and responsiveness. Although these might not all be within your control, give yourself the best chance of standing out and attracting new clients by highlighting the key information couples are looking for.

### 1. SHOWCASE PRICING UPFRONT

#### » Why is it important?

Eighty-eight percent of couples want to see pricing before reaching out. While displaying a starting price or price range on your website is helpful, couples [prefer seeing packages](#) to understand how your prices vary.

#### » How can you stand out?

Share at least some pricing details. Not only will it save you time, but it also allows you to truly sell yourself and connect with the customer when they submit a lead, since the estimated price point is already on the table.



#### How can WeddingWire help?

WeddingWire Pros know the impact pricing has on generating leads, which is why over 65% of Premium professionals on WeddingWire have already added their pricing information to the FAQ on their WeddingWire Storefront. Give prospective clients the information they need to make a booking decision by [adding initial pricing details](#), or by uploading a pricing sheet or rate card.

### 2. COLLECT REVIEWS REGULARLY

#### » Why is it important?

Eighty-seven percent of engaged couples read reviews while searching for wedding vendors. And more than 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.

#### » How can you stand out?

Ask past clients for reviews! The biggest obstacle for receiving reviews is not asking for them. Request reviews as part of your process, so that clients won't be surprised when you ask for one down the road. Plus, don't forget to showcase your reviews across your marketing channels (i.e. your website, social media pages, third party review sites) to make sure prospective clients find the information they need to contact you.



### How can WeddingWire help?

Managing your online reputation is important, which is why WeddingWire made it easy to collect and manage your reviews from everywhere you go with the [Review Manager for Pros app](#). Instantly get notifications, respond to or send review requests from the palm of your hand to make sure prospective clients see your rave reviews from past clients.

## 3. DISPLAY HIGH QUALITY PHOTOS

### » Why is it important?

Featuring high resolution, professional photos that showcase your business is an important way to make your website and listings more appealing to visitors. According to Airbnb, listings with professional quality photos (rather than those from their phones or with poor lighting, for example) are booked 2.5 times more frequently than those without.

### » How can you stand out?

Start collecting professional photos to showcase your business and start letting your work speak for you! While browsing for vendors, couples view an average of 22 photos on WeddingWire's Storefront photo carousel; so snap some quality photos or make it a point to meet the photographer at each wedding so you can request images from the day. The more high quality photos you have the better sense the couple will get of your venue, product or service.



### How can WeddingWire help?

Not only are photos important for couples searching for their vendors, they're also important for real wedding submissions. All types of wedding professionals can be [featured in WeddingWire publications](#), but we do require at least 75 high quality images for each event submission. Our Editorial Team also seeks out Pros on WeddingWire by reviewing Storefronts for whenever they need to provide examples for our consumers, giving your business additional opportunities to stand out!

To access past volumes, visit [WedInsights.com](http://WedInsights.com).

