

VOWS:

The VOWS Profile:

Brides of Florida

**Building a Miami destination
by refusing to stand still.**

PAGE 102

**50 ways to elevate her experience...
without breaking the bank!**

PAGE 54

**Reminder: It's also after the sale
that counts...**

PAGE 66

**Be the boutique that
AI recommends!**

PAGE 84

Macky Diaz
CEO, Brides of Florida

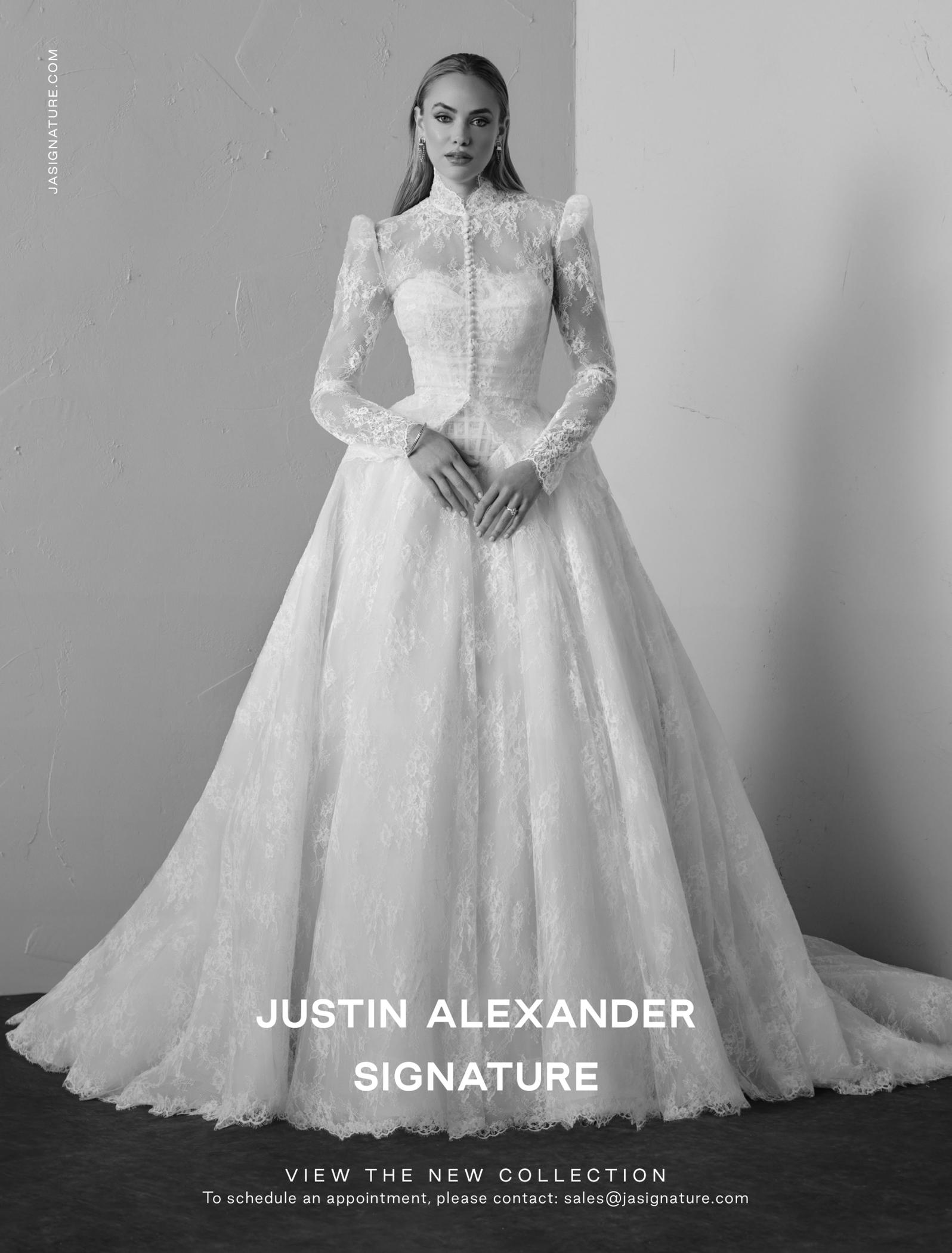
justinalexander.com



JUSTIN ALEXANDER

VIEW THE NEW COLLECTION

To schedule an appointment, please contact: sales@justinalexander.com



**JUSTIN ALEXANDER
SIGNATURE**

VIEW THE NEW COLLECTION

To schedule an appointment, please contact: sales@jasignature.com



a new
collection,
redefining
timeless
elegance



EddyK



IDAN
HOUSE OF IDAN

CHICAGO
March 15-17 | Booth 7030

Runway Showtimes
Sun, March 15 & Mon, March 16
9:30 AM • 1:30 PM • 4 PM

Tuesday, March 17
Spot Modeling

houseofidan.com

for sales inquiries email
sandra@houseofidan.com
james@houseofidan.com





CASABLANCA®

BRIDAL

CELEBRATE FOREVER.



JOIN US FOR MARKETS

National Bridal Market of Chicago
Booth #3094

Formal Markets Atlanta
Showroom: 12-W122

RSVP to sales@casablancabridal.com

LE BLANC COLLECTION



JOIN US FOR MARKETS

National Bridal Market of Chicago
Booth #3094

Formal Markets Atlanta
Showroom: 12-W122

RSVP to sales@casablancabridal.com

BELOVED

UNCONDITIONALLY YOURS
BY CASABLANCA BRIDAL





CHICAGO
March 15-17 | Booth 7030

Runway Showtimes
Sunday, March 15 & Monday, March 16
9:30 AM • 1:30 PM • 4 PM

Tuesday, March 17
Spot Modeling

ATLANTA
March 30-April 1 | Showroom 10S117

martinthornburg.com

for sales inquiries email
sales@moncheribridals.com

martin thornburg



SOPHIA TOLLI

A U S T R A L I A





CHICAGO
March 15-17 | Booth 7030

Runway Showtimes
Sunday, March 15 & Monday, March 16
9:30 AM • 1:30 PM • 4 PM

Tuesday, March 17
Spot Modeling

ATLANTA
March 30-April 1 | Showroom 10S117

sophiatolli.com

for sales inquiries email
sales@moncheribridals.com

CHICAGO
March 15-17
Booth 7030

ATLANTA
March 30-April 1
Showroom 10S116

for sales inquiries email
sales@moncheribridals.com

moncheribridals.com



MONTAGNE
by MONCHERI®







Princesa

by ARIANA VARA

CHICAGO
March 15-17 | Booth 7030

ATLANTA
March 30-April 1 | Showroom 10S343

for sales inquiries email
sales@moncheribridals.com

arianavara.com

MON CHERI

ACADEMY

JOIN US FOR THE NEXT IN-PERSON MCA | **MARCH 14 IN CHICAGO**

Mon Cheri Academy is an immersive, hands-on training program designed specifically for bridal and special occasion retailers.

Through live role-play, modern selling techniques, and real-world scenarios, your team learns how to connect with today's shopper, overcome objections, and turn appointments into loyal customers – all in one energizing session.



Steve Lang

CEO + Founder of Mon Cheri Bridals



SCAN TO REGISTER FOR THE
IN-PERSON MCA IN MARCH

ENCHANTING

ENCHANTINGBYMONCHERI.COM



CHICAGO
March 15-17 | Booth 7030

Runway Showtimes
Sunday, March 15 & Monday, March 16
9:30 AM • 1:30 PM • 4 PM

Tuesday, March 17
Spot Modeling

ATLANTA
March 30-April 1 | Showroom 10S117

for sales inquiries email
sales@moncheribridals.com





VENI INFANTINO

L O N D O N

veni-infantino.com |

[@veniinfantinobridal](https://www.instagram.com/veniinfantinobridal)





DEMETRIOS

For sales inquires contact sales@demetrios.com

www.demetrios.com @demetriosbride





BA
BELAIRE
BRIDAL
♥

BECAUSE YOUR VEIL SHOULD BE UNFORGETTABLE

Let's meet in Chicago as we unveil a collection worth saying yes to!

National Bridal Market

March 15 - 17

Booth 6037

VEILS | HEADPIECES | JEWELRY | BELTS

www.belairebridal.com

info@belairebridal.com ♥ (800) 992-9225



VOWS:



Credit: DIPP PHOTOGRAPHY, Lead Photographer/CEO Eba Dipp

Getting to Yes

Tiny Tweaks, Big Difference

50 practical ways to elevate the bride's experience, build trust and boost sales - without a costly overhaul.

by Daniel P. Smith **54**

Win After the Yes

What great retailers do after the sale to earn trust, referrals and raving fans.

by Katie Roberts **66**

Turn Fun Holidays into Boutique Wins

A month-by-month guide to engagement, gratitude and growth.

by Shannon Hurd **76**

Taming Tech

Become the Boutique AI Recommends

Why Generative Engine Optimization is the next must-have strategy.

by Amanda Baltazar **84**

Trending

Accessories... Your Boutique's Secret Weapon

Margins for you, personalization for her.

by Peter Grimes **90**

The VOWS Profile: Brides of Florida

"Be The River"

How Macky Diaz built a 15,000-square-foot Miami destination by refusing to stand still.

by Shannon Hurd **102**

Continued on page 32

MADI **10** YEARS LANE
BRIDAL

Be part of our legacy
Celebrating 10 years, live on
the runway

This is Legacy. Our Fall 26 collection namesake is a tribute to 10 years of the very best of Madi Lane design with intention at its heart and generations of grace stitched into every seam. Experience her hallmark lightness and floral layers as this season's new-age soft glamour, in Chicago and NYC.

Plus, don't miss stunning new collections; HALO by Evie Young, and Eden from Serene by Madi Lane.



CHICAGO

March 15th to 17th
NATIONAL BRIDAL MARKET
222 W Merchandise Mart Plaza
Chicago IL 60654

NEW YORK

April 8th to 9th
PRIVATE EVENT | SECOND VENUE
489 6th Ave
New York NY 10001

Spaces are limited. Register your
interest at salesusa@madilane.com





Marionat

THE BRIDAL VEIL COMPANY

Fall 2026

National Bridal Market Chicago

Sunday March 15 - Tuesday March 17

Booth 3093

Merchandise Mart Plaza

www.marionat.com • [@marionat_bridal](https://www.instagram.com/marionat_bridal)

info@marionat.com • 888.403.5255

VOWS:

Continued from page 28



Brides of Florida recently expanded its boutique to 15,000 square feet.

Publisher's Letter

Tariffs. . .Still **32**

Editor's Note

The Power of Small Things **36**

Tidbits

Industry News **42-51**

Resources:

Calendar/Staff Box **40**

Classifieds **111**

Vendor Leads **112-113**



On the cover
Brides of Florida CEO Macky Diaz in her Miami boutique.

Credit: DIPP PHOTOGRAPHY,
Lead Photographer/CEO Elba Dipp

VOWS: (USPS 0012-456) (ISSN 1081-6658) is published bimonthly by Grimes and Associates, Inc., 23120 Alicia Parkway, Suite 200 Mission Viejo, CA 92692. Periodical postage paid at San Juan Capistrano, CA, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER, Send address changes to VOWS Magazine, 23120 Alicia Parkway, Suite 200, Mission Viejo, CA 92692-1212. Subscription rates are \$30 per year. All foreign subscriptions are \$55 U.S. Single copies and back issues are available for \$5.50 each. Please allow eight-to-ten weeks advance notice for change of address. Include former and current address and zip codes.

Tariffs. . . Still



Peter Grimes
Publisher
peter@
vowsmagazine.com
949 388-4848

Tariff situation is far from over. . . or even settled. And it will be with us for some time.

Tariffs imposed last year through the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, which included a 20% Fentanyl tariff on Chinese imported goods, have been rescinded due to February's Supreme Court ruling that those tariffs were unlawfully imposed.

This does not mean all tariffs have been eliminated, as that action was quickly followed by a White House announcement indicating that President Trump invoked his authority under section 122 of the Trade Act of 1974 to impose a 10% ad valorem import duty on articles imported into the United States for 150 days taking affect February 24.

Days later the Administration stated that the 10% would be increased to 15%, though there is some confusion as to when that increase will be official and to what countries applied.

Near as I can determine, current tariffs and duties for goods imported from China are at 33.5%; 26% for goods imported from Vietnam and Myanmar.

As of this writing, the last day in February, I can only report that tariffs are here to stay, as the President has several options to legally maintain and impose them. And that talks of refunds to importers, boutiques and/or brides is very premature, problematic and unrealistic. There are no set guidelines yet offered stipulating what companies or categories could qualify for a possible refund, with suggestions that lengthy court actions would require years to conclude.

Boutiques that added tariff surcharges on their invoices to brides with a disclaimer that any amount would be refunded if and when the tariff fee was eliminated need to protectively determine exactly what that potential liability amounts to and develop an authentic statement to advise those brides that paid for their gowns prior to the February decision.

One such statement:

Tariffs have not been eliminated, and the possibility of our receiving a refund and of offering you a refund from those we paid remains fluid, complicated and uncertain. But once we have clarity from both our vendors and Administration regarding the official next steps, we will review the process and follow the given instructions. We also recognize that this process will take time, possibly years according to President Trump, and we ask for your patience.

Any such statement does not sidestep your responsibility/commitment as it directly addresses the bride's concerns. . . and you will probably receive a similar statement from your resources as well.

One final note: going forward this decision and its after-effect does not result in a significant reduction in tariff expenses. I don't expect brands or stores to lower prices to reflect a very small cost differential.

No part of this magazine may be reproduced without the written permission of the publisher. Copyright 2026 Grimes and Associates, Inc. All rights reserved. Not responsible for any unsolicited material. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the publisher. For questions regarding all aspects of the magazine, please call 949 388-4848.



jh
BRIDAL

www.jimmehaungbridal.com





Maritza
BRIDAL VEILS

Edward Berger
COLLECTION

 Paisley B Designs

SYMPHONY
By Maritza's

COME SEE US AT THE
CHICAGO NATIONAL
BRIDAL MARKET

MARCH 15 - 17, 2026
BOOTH: 7-6073

COLLECTIVELY CELEBRATING MORE THAN 37 YEARS IN BUSINESS!

2470 NW 102 PL., UNIT 202, DORAL, FL 33172 + TEL: 305.221.5308

WWW.MARITZASBRIDAL.COM + WWW.SYMPHONYBRIDAL.COM

ORDERS.MARITZASBRIDAL@GMAIL.COM



Shannon Hurd
Editor In Chief
shannon@vowsmagazine.com
720-936-3326

The Power of *Small Things*

Why refinement, clarity and consistency matter more than reinvention.

There are certain parts of putting together each issue of VOWS that feel predictable.

The deadlines. The layout tweaks. The back-and-forth on headlines.

But every once in a while, an issue surprises me – not enormously, but subtly. This was one of those.

I found myself pausing more than once while editing these stories, thinking, *Huh. I didn't know that.* And in an industry I've spent years immersed in, that's an interesting feeling.

For example, per our “*Turn Fun Holidays into Boutique Wins*” story (pg. 76), I had no idea there are now more than 2,000 fun holidays, many of which were intentionally created as marketing tools. I've always viewed things like National Compliment Day or Thank You Note Day as fun, light-hearted celebrations. But when you step back, they're actually structured opportunities to stay visible, show gratitude and connect with customers in a way that feels human instead of transactional.

That word – human – kept surfacing for me.

Our “*Tiny Tweaks, Big Difference*” story (pg. 54) reinforced that meaningful change doesn't have to be big or expensive to be effective. It might simply be using warmer lighting, displaying fewer dresses on a rack, polishing your door handle or shifting from asking about a bride's “budget” to her “investment.”

Small, intentional moves.

I was also genuinely struck by our “*Become the Boutique AI Recommends*” story (pg. 84). I absolutely knew AI was growing; I did not fully grasp how popular it now is or how dramatically it's reshaping search behavior. Not only are HALF of all online searches now done via AI as opposed to on regular search engines, but brides aren't just typing simple keywords anymore – they're asking

full, nuanced, conversational questions. And AI is rewarding the boutiques that answer clearly, completely and consistently.

Not the flashiest or the loudest, but the clearest.

That felt important.

Then there was our retail standout, Macky Diaz, CEO of Brides of Florida (pg. 102). She didn't grow up dreaming of bridal, want to open a boutique due to a personal gown-shopping experience or attend fashion school. Rather, Macky approached this industry analytically – almost mathematically – and built something extraordinary through disciplined decisions and constant adaptation.

And yes, as a fellow cat lover, I'll fully admit that the fact she occasionally brings her British longhair, Veronica, into the boutique made me smile big time – not just because I love cats, but because it reflects something deeper. Macky has woven her personality into her business. The boutique feels like her.

There's no single “right” path to success in bridal. No required origin story. That realization feels freeing.

But perhaps the biggest shift for me came from our “*Win After the Yes*” story (pg. 66).

We all love the “yes” moment. The tears, the hugs and the photos never get old. But what struck me is how much of long-term success lives in what happens afterward.

- Your follow-up text the next day.
- That clear timeline explaining alterations.
- A handwritten thank-you note.
- Structured communication that prevents confusion before it starts.

After all, if a bride is calling with questions that should've already been answered, our story points out, that's not just a systems issue. It's a trust issue.

And trust, more than anything, is what this industry runs on.

This issue didn't convince me bridal needs reinvention; it highlighted the fact bridal thrives on refinement.

- Clarity instead of clutter.
- Consistency instead of chaos.
- Small, disciplined improvements instead of big, dramatic overhauls.

Progress doesn't always look like expansion or trend-chasing. Sometimes it looks like answering brides' questions more clearly, limiting options to reduce overwhelm or sending that thank-you note even when you're tired.

Sometimes it looks like bringing your whole self – even your love of cats – into the space you've built.

If there's one main theme this issue quietly reinforced for me, it's this: you don't have to change everything to be better. You just have to keep moving – thoughtfully, intentionally and with your brides' trust at the center of it all.

And that kind of progress, while subtle, is powerful.

Boutique Contributors

(+Instagram handles – give them a follow!)

Brides of Florida, Miami, Fla.

@bridesofflorida

Charlotte's Weddings, Portland & Ashland, Ore. @charlottesweddings

Hello Beautiful Bridal & Formal Wear, Kearney, Neb. @hellobeautifulbridal

Monica's Bridal, Chattanooga, Tenn.

@monicasbridal

Poffie Girls, Gastonia, N.C. @poffiegirls

The One Bridal Salon, Charlottesville, Va.

@theonebridalsalon

Swoon Bridal, Reno, Nev. @swoonbridal



NEW YORK
DESSY GROUP

EST. 1939

For more information email lori@dessy.com or call 646-638-9617.

dessy.com | [@dessygroup](https://www.instagram.com/dessygroup)

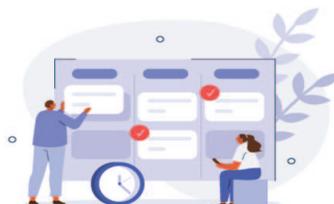
FOR THE BRIDE WHO
OWNS THE SPOTLIGHT.

CHRISTINAWUCOLLECTIONS.COM



CHRISTINA WU





Also check the VOWS online calendar for updates and additions:
<https://www.vovsmagazine.com/events>

2026 International and Domestic Market Dates

March 15-17

National Bridal Market Chicago
 Merchandise Mart, Chicago, IL
www.nationalbridalmarket.com

March 22-24

London Bridal Week
 London, England
www.bridalweek.com

March 22-24

Rome Bridal Week
 Rome, Italy
www.romebridalweek.com

March 28-30

European Bridal Week
 Messe Essen, Germany
www.europeanbridalweek.com

March 30-April 1

ANDMORE Formal Markets
 Apparel Mart, Atlanta, GA
www.atlanta-apparel.com/markets/formal-markets

April 8-9

New York Luxury Bridal Fashion Market
 Design house members of The Bridal Council showcasing bridal collections at individual showrooms, New York City, NY
www.thebridalcouncil.com

April 8-9

Melange de Blanc NY Bridal Market
 Starrett-Lehigh Building
 New York, NY
www.melangedeblanc.com

April 8-9

One Fine Day Bridal Market
 CANOE STUDIOS
 601 W 26th St, New York, NY
<https://onefinedaybridalmarket.com/pages/our-events>

April 8-9

The Fringe Collective
 Starrett-Lehigh Building
 New York, NY
www.melangedeblanc.com

April 22-26

Barcelona Bridal Fashion Week
 Barcelona, Spain
www.barcelonabridalweek.com

August 3-7

ANDMORE Formal Markets
 Apparel Mart, Atlanta, GA
www.atlanta-apparel.com/markets/formal-markets

August 16-18

National Bridal Market Chicago
 Merchandise Mart, Chicago, IL
www.nationalbridalmarket.com

September 13-15

Harrogate Bridal Week
 Harrogate Convention Centre
 Harrogate, England
www.bridalweek.com

October 2026 TBA

NY Luxury Bridal Fashion Week

Designers at the Essex House

JW Marriott Essex House NYC
 160 Central Park South
 New York, NY
www.designersatthessex.com

Melange de Blanc NY Bridal Market

Starrett-Lehigh Building
 New York, NY
www.melangedeblanc.com

One Fine Day Bridal Market

CANOE STUDIOS
 601 W 26th St, New York, NY
<https://onefinedaybridalmarket.com/pages/our-events>

The Fringe Collective

Starrett-Lehigh Building
 New York, NY
www.melangedeblanc.com

Union Square Couture

The Lotte New York Palace Hotel
 455 Madison Ave, New York
www.unionsquarecouture.com

To share your industry-specific news releases in our **Tidbits** section, e-mail Shannon@vovsmagazine.com

Press Release

Peter Grimes
 Publisher

Shannon Hurd
 Editor In Chief

Kori Grimes
 Business Manager

Allison Deerr
 Katie Roberts
 Daniel P. Smith
 Senior Writers

Karl Nazarro
 Creative Director

Colin Farrell
 Photographer

CONTACT US!

Readers are invited to submit letters via mail, email or fax. VOWS: reserves the right to edit for length and grammar. Wedding-product vendors also may submit material, 250 words or fewer preferred, for our Marketplace section. Opinion pieces of 1,300 words or less are always welcome for our Perspectives column. All materials can be returned if requested.

VOWS: Magazine
 23120 Alicia Parkway,
 Suite 200
 Mission Viejo, CA 92692
 (949) 388-4848
info@vovsmagazine.com

Note: Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the publisher or the magazine.



JL Johnson

BRIDALS

The JL Johnson Difference:

- Custom options provide that personal touch. . .
- Handcrafted fabrication in US factory. . .
- Rapid Delivery program for close wear dates!
- Convenient Online Ordering App!

See us at
National Bridal Market Chicago
Booth 2054

Cathedral Veil style C624 shown

800-378-4431 • www.JLJohnsonBridals.com • JLJohnsonBridals@gmail.com

Heard Around the Industry...

Products/Services

IDAN by House of Idan Spring 2027 campaign showcases precision, artistry

House of Idan is expanding its IDAN collection with a high-energy campaign shot by iconic fashion photographer **Walter Chin**. The collection, which balances the brand's couture DNA with a fresh, accessible price point, will be a focal point for retailers at the **Chicago Bridal Market** at the Mart on March 15-17.

IDAN by House of Idan's Spring 2027 bridal collection unfolds as a continued celebration of couture made attainable, defined by designer **Idan Cohen's** trademark artistry, precision and an unwavering commitment to exquisite craftsmanship. It is highlighted by a campaign that moves away from traditional, static bridal imagery, opting for a "wink and a nod" to the bridal experience.

By pairing Walter Chin's high-fashion photography with playful taglines, the expansion covers a stylistic range from "girlish charm" to "sexy coquette."

"This collaboration exists at the intersection of two shared instincts: a love of fantasy and a refusal to be limited by reality," said designer



Idan Cohen, noted designer and creative force behind IDAN by House of Idan bridal collections.

Cohen. "Walter Chin and I speak the same visual language. What unites Walter and myself is a shared devotion to fantasy – creating images that feel imaginative, intentional and unapologetically removed from reality. Couture lives in fantasy and so does this collaboration; we share a devotion to imagination, crafting worlds where artistry leads and reality quietly falls away."

IDAN by House of Idan's Spring 2027 collection, produced by Mon Cheri Bridals, has been expanded

partly in response to the impressive showing at last season's Chicago and New York Markets where select buyers committed to his Fall '26 fashions.

"This collection reimagines traditional silhouettes through a modern lens, pairing timeless forms with refined design details that resonate with today's bride," explained **Cohen**, "while offering salons distinctive, forward-thinking pieces they are excited to showcase in store."

IDAN by House of Idan targets a \$2,500-\$5,000 retail price point with 12-16 week standard delivery. Additionally, standard changes are available with a modified delivery timeline, with rush options offered on select styles.

Boutiques interested in additional details can view the collection at <https://houseofidan.com> and/or by contacting the IDAN by House of Idan sales team of **Saundra Chung** and **James McAlvanah** at Saundra@houseofidan.com and james@houseofidan.com.

To view the expanded IDAN collection and experience it firsthand, visit the National Bridal Market at TheMart, Chicago, booth #7030.



Audrey, featured as The Gift: "Love is a gift. Dress like it."



Ava, featured in new campaign as "The Playmaker: I'm the girl your coach warned you about."



GenTux showroom within Kleinfeld is a dedicated space for formal wear options.

Kleinfeld partners with GenTux with in-store showroom

Kleinfeld Bridal, the leader in bridal fashion retail and home of TLC's iconic "Say Yes to the Dress," has entered into a partnership with **Generation Tux** to deliver premium luxury suits and tuxedos through an exclusive in-store showroom within Kleinfeld's flagship Manhattan store.

The collaboration marks a signifi-

Heard Around the Industry...



Showroom featuring 25+ suit and tuxedo styles plus hundreds of accessory colors.



Banu from Lazaro's Fall 2026 collection

cant step in Kleinfeld's continued evolution, expanding beyond bridal gowns to offer a complete and dedicated shopping experience for every couple on their journey to say, "I Do."

Through this partnership, Generation Tux will open its first-ever Manhattan showroom inside Kleinfeld's on the store's second level in an expansive space featuring 25+ suit and tuxedo styles plus hundreds of accessory colors.

"We are thrilled to welcome Generation Tux to the Kleinfeld family," said **Ronnie Rothstein**, CEO of Kleinfeld Bridal. "This partnership allows us to provide Kleinfeld's luxury experience to couples, bringing high-quality menswear and dedicated service to our brides, grooms and guests under one roof."

The partnership introduces Generation Tux's stylish and convenient approach to the suit and tuxedo process into the Kleinfeld experience. With dedicated stylists, grooms will be able to explore a curated assortment of suits, tuxedos and in-store exclusives.

Generation Tux suits and tuxedos seen online will be available at the Manhattan showroom for rent or purchase.

"We're honored to partner with Kleinfeld, an iconic name in the wedding world that has helped define the wedding experience across generations," said **Jason Jackson**, president and Chief Operating Officer of Gener-

ation Tux. "Opening our first Manhattan showroom inside Kleinfeld allows us to pair our modern approach to menswear with the elevated, high-touch experience couples expect when they walk through their doors."

Kleinfeld is committed to redefining the wedding shopping experience, offering brides and grooms everything they need to say "yes." This leans into the modern trend of couples doing many of the wedding milestones together, such as shopping for the ring, wedding planning, venue scouting, etc. Now with this new partnership, couples can shop for their wedding day looks at one convenient stop.

Lazaro Perez: a very intentional evolution

Note: read the full interview with Lazaro at Vows-Magazine.com.

Lazaro Perez, widely respected and admired designer of elegant, fashion-forward bridal gowns with an impressive history of more than 30 years, is in the midst of his next chapter with only the second season release of **Maison Perez** and **Lazaro** collections as a division of **Ashdon Brands**.

Lazaro, with a retail price point of \$2,000-\$5,000, and Maison Perez, with a higher price point of \$4,000-\$8,000, will both be showcased at Chicago National Bridal Market, which also marks Lazaro's first full collection from his limited debut last season.

For this season, both collections



Anya from Maison Perez's Fall 2026 collection

lean further into architectural silhouettes, dimensional embellishments and couture-level finishing in order to provide a fuller story for boutiques to present to their brides, explained Lazaro.

"We're not simply adding dresses," he said. "We're expanding the world of the brand. In many ways, we're refining and rebuilding from the foundation up. With Ashdon's infrastructure and resources, I now have the ability to develop collections with greater depth."

For additional details on Lazaro and Maison Perez collections, visit the Lazaro showroom at the National Bridal Market Chicago, booth 6093, visit www.lazarobridal.com or contact **Cyndy Starer**, 646-398-4850, cyndy@lazarobridal.com.

Tidbits continued on page 44

Continued from page 43

Heard Around the Industry...

Hayley Paige gown worn during Super Bowl Halftime event

The wedding held during **Bad Bunny's** Halftime Super Bowl show in January was an actual ceremony, with the bride wearing the *Becoming Jane* gown from **Hayley Paige's** Twice Upon a Time collection.

"Still in awe! What a blessing to watch love take center stage in such a big, beautiful way. And somehow, quite unbelievably, the bride wore Hayley Paige," posted Paige to her Instagram account [@misshayleypaige](#).

"Grateful beyond words for the stylish and talented Joleen Garnett, my supportive sister; the absolutely radiant bride, my HP team working magic behind the scenes, and Bad Bunny for reminding us that love will always be the winning play."

Becoming Jane has a fitted lace-on-lace textured and sexy fit, with an optional big overskirt to enable the bride to have a fitted look and also a ball gown. Brides can also customize the gown with half sleeves or a detachable bolero, and/or it can be worn in six dif-



Hayley Paige's *Becoming Jane* dress worn during the Super Bowl Bad Bunny halftime event without the skirt; and shown with optional skirt.

ferent ways.

The dress and event has now been covered by more than 130 media outlets and was trending over social media.

For the full story about how this dress was chosen, and Hayley's reaction, visit www.instagram.com/misshayleypaige.

Formal Apparel Healthcare Association to help bridal retailers compete for talent

Independent bridal and formalwear retailers struggling to offer competitive health benefits have a new industry-backed option: **Formal Apparel Healthcare Association**.

Driven by **Mon Cheri Bridals** following years of feedback from retailers, the newly launched **FAHA** introduces an association-based benefits model available to independent bridal and formalwear retailers nationwide regardless of vendor affiliation.

"With the Formal Apparel Healthcare Association, independent retailers finally have a practical way to offer meaningful health coverage without the cost and complexity of traditional group insurance," said **Ryan Bradley**, Head of HR and Chief People Officer at Mon Cheri Bridals.

"FAHA is designed to help boutiques compete for talent, strengthen retention and build more stable, high-performing teams," he added.

FAHA is tailored to independent bridal's operating realities, providing:

- Optional employer contributions
- Year-round employee enrollment (no qualifying life event required)
- No participation minimums
- Centralized administration and compliance support
- ERISA protection for participating retailers

Through association membership, eligible employees can access multiple plan types, including visit-limit plans, comprehensive major medical PPO options, HSA-compatible plans, and ancillary benefits such as dental, vision, life and estate planning.

Plans also include prescription coverage, telemedicine services and nationwide PPO networks.

According to the FAHA, the ability to offer healthcare access for boutiques may:

- Strengthen recruiting conversations
- Improve employee retention
- Enhance team stability and client experience
- Reduce the high cost of turnover

As labor market competition remains intense – and as Gen Z and Millennial employees increasingly view benefits as baseline – accessible healthcare solutions are expected to play a growing role in boutique workforce strategy.

Enrollment in FAHA is open year-round. Participation is subject to medical screening.

For more information, visit www.membershipplusbenefits.com/faaha and/or e-mail ryan@moncheribridals.com.

ALYCE x IVONNE: Couture Special Occasion and Bridal Gowns for Modern Luxury Clients

ALYCE Paris is debuting **ALYCE x IVONNE** for Fall 2026, a striking new collection of couture special occasion and bridal gowns created to command attention both on the rack and in the fitting room.

Designed by Ivonne Dome, this collection blends statement silhouettes with couture-level embellishment and trend-forward design, and is crafted to help retailers attract today's fashion-driven shopper.

Additional features: 3X margins on special occasion, 5X margins on bridal. "With ALYCE x IVONNE, retailers now have a collection designed not just to inspire, but to deliver results – helping stores attract more appointments and drive meaningful sales," said Claudine C. Hamm, CEO of ALYCE Paris.

Built on the trusted legacy of ALYCE Paris, the ALYCE x IVONNE collection reflects decades of expertise in prom, eveningwear and couture design, and is thoughtfully developed for modern luxury clients across Gen Z, Millennial and Gen X demographics seeking individuality, drama and high-impact style for their most important

Tidbits continued on page 46



MOONLIGHT®



VAL STEFANI

CHICAGO

National Bridal Market

Merchandise Mart

March 15th-17th

Booth #7080

*For appointments and market
incentives contact us at*

1-800-447-0405

or

info@moonlightbridal.com

www.moonlightbridal.com



Continued from page 44

Heard Around the Industry...

moments, explained Hamm.

In addition, ALYCE x IVONNE offers size inclusivity and flexible ordering to confidently serve more clients; retail marketing support to drive traffic; social-media visibility; and ALYCE Paris' fit and construction.

For additional details, e-mail ap-concierge@alyceparis.com, and visit www.ALYCEParis.com.

Morilee returns to independent ownership, strengthening retail partnerships

Morilee recently announced a significant leadership and ownership transition that returns the company to an independently owned, owner-operated structure. The move marks a strategic shift away from an external investment model and reinforces the brand's commitment to long-term stability, design leadership and retailer support.

"In an industry driven by passion and personal trust, I believe it is essential that the ownership of a house reflects those values," said **Nathan Serphos**, CEO and owner of **Ivory Studios, Inc.**, the new corporate umbrella for all Morilee brands and collections. "By moving to this independent, owner-operated model, we have removed the corporate pressures of the past and secured a stable, long-term foundation for the brand."

The transition enables the company to focus fully on the priorities most critical to retail partners: design excellence, uncompromising quality and reliable on-time delivery.

What this means to Morilee partners, according to Serphos:

- Production is uninterrupted: All current orders remain in production and on schedule.
- Strengthened financial position: The transition represents a successful management buyout that enhances the company's financial independence.
- Greater accountability and agility: A streamlined internal structure allows for faster response and closer partnership with boutiques, with ownership

more directly involved in day-to-day performance.

He also emphasized that the shift reinforces the company's direct relationship with specialty retailers across the bridal and occasionwear markets. Under the new ownership model, Ivory Studios, Inc., serves as the parent holding company, reflecting the organization's evolution into a multi-brand design house. The portfolio includes Morilee New York, Veni Infantino, MGNV, Vizcaya and Party collections, with global design leadership under Veni Infantino, SVP of Global Design.

"Our commitment to you is stronger than ever," Serphos added. "We are no longer a 'corporate' brand; we are a dedicated design house and we are honored to be a part of your store's success."

Jimme Huang Bridal unveils Fall/Winter 2026 Collection with four distinct bridal visions

Jimme Huang Bridal has announced the launch of its Fall/Winter 2026 collection, introducing a comprehensive lineup designed to captivate today's diverse bridal market.

The new release showcases four distinctive collections, each created to resonate with a unique bridal aesthetic, according to designer **Jimme Huang**. Specifically:

Amore celebrates romance with never-before-seen lace patterns and timeless detailing.

Luna targets the modern, chic bride with an array of luxurious fabrics, including an innovative wrinkle-resistant material.

Pure underscores the brand's commitment to environmentally conscious design through a focused sustainability story.

Completing the offering, the **Private Label** collection delivers budget-friendly options without compromising style or quality. All gowns across the collections are fully customizable, empowering retailers to help every bride create her dream dress.

In total, the Fall/Winter 2026 launch introduces 85 brand-new styles. Buyers are invited to preview the full as-

sortment at Booth 7-6105 at the National Bridal Market.

Following the Chicago showcase, Jimme Huang Bridal will travel to Barcelona to debut an all-new line created exclusively for the European market. Retailers can experience this special presentation in Hall 1, Booth B228.

For additional details, call **972-247-1414**, and visit www.JimmeHuangBridal.com.



Style JH 2539 from JH Couture's Luna collection.



From JH Couture's Amore collection, style HG10339.

Tidbits continued on page 48




S O L E I L
www.soleilbridal.com

CHICAGO
 MERCHANDISE MART
MARCH 15th-17th
Booth #7080

PRIVATE COLLECTION

- ♥ NO MINIMUMS
- ♥ NO PLUS SIZE CHARGE
- ♥ WHOLESALE PRICING STARTING AT **\$159**
- ♥ **PRICE INTEGRITY: NO HIDDEN FEES**

info@soleilbridal.com



Continued from page 46



Words That Can Derail the Sale

In every selling environment, the words used can trigger both positive and negative reactions, either moving the bride through the process, or short-circuiting the sale.

Consider the following list of words that more often offend your clients than support them:

1. But.

You shouldn't use it, but why not?

"But" is negative and gets in the way of building relationships because of the negative feelings it triggers. It's also a common habit, a regular way of explaining rules and procedures to customers.

So practice coming up with new ways to respond without using this utterance, possibly words such as "however".

The reality is that when you use the word "but" it negates whatever positive or helpful statement preceded it.

Make it a sales-training exercise in your next staff meeting, or challenge your staff to count how many times they use the word in one week's time with customers. Remember that creating awareness of the bothersome "but" is the first step to eliminating it from your sales vocabulary.

2. You're going to have to wait.

It's always a turnoff. But if there's no way around servicing your customer more quickly, make sure you're acknowledging them with more than this flippant comment.

Instead, talk to the bride, or ask another staffer to step in and start the process or a friendly conversation. (How'd you get engaged? How'd you hear about us? Where are you getting married?)

Offer this customer a drink of water or hot tea if she wishes. Do something hospitable, anything, that makes her feel like the waiting will be worthwhile.

3. Well, that's our policy.

People don't like to read or hear about policies. True, you have them for a reason, but rules are meant to be broken, and it's common practice for consumers to question standards.

So understand that your brides may question your policies and be prepared to answer appropriately. Suggestion: Praise customers for their negotiating skills and offer the classic, "I wish I could ..." response. This will both compli-

ment the customer and, hopefully, nip negotiating in the bud.

4. You're not listening; listen to me; and I told you that.

If you're making such remarks to a bride, you've probably moved from helping her to competing with her.

It may not be intentional, as it is difficult to avoid when dealing with a very demanding, controlling type of bride who is directing everything, however you have to accept she wants control and needs to have it.

Instead of reacting negatively, stay calm and composed to avoid escalating the situation. Listen actively and let the bride express her concerns. Try to understand the real issue. Empathize with her frustrations. Offer clear and multiple solutions to give her the option how to resolve the issue.

5. I can't do that because our manager isn't here.

In this day and age, you have to be on the moon not to be able to reach someone when necessary. So in the customer's mind, such a response is really disingenuous.

Be aware of what you can and can't do according to your store's policies to address this request. And at the very least, make some effort to show your good intentions.

6. I'll try.

How many times has someone promised to "try" for you and failed? Trying has become a half-hearted way of doing things, and even if you know you're intending to fulfill a promise, the bride doesn't know that.

Keep in mind that they don't know or trust you - yet. So focus on what you're going to do to build that trust and relationship, and eliminate the words "I'll try" from your vocabulary.

7. Sorry (If it's not heartfelt).

Apologizing and not meaning it can cause more damage than good. Insincerity is so easy to spot. The solution is easy enough: Make it sincere.

8. You're wrong on that one.

Ouch! Could you possibly actually be telling the bride, who has done hours of research, visited numerous salons and gotten the low-down from her married friends, that she's wrong?

It may be true that she's dead wrong, but you must find another, more delicate and polite way to deliver the news.

9. Laughing, which excludes the customer.

The storefront is a public place of business, so private jokes among your working friends on the floor can make customers feel awkward, self-conscious and uncomfortable.

If you're going to laugh, share the good humor with your new best friend: your customer.

Tidbits continued on page 50

IVOIRE

by KITTU CHEN

National Bridal Market **Chicago**

March 15-17

7th floor, Booth 6029

For more information:

Contact: cs@kittychencouture.com

909.483.4739

www.kittychencouture.com



Continued from page 48

Justin Alexander celebrating 80 years of love



Vintage T&G from 1989.



Justin Alexander 2011

Justin Alexander Group celebrates its 80th anniversary in 2026, marking eight decades of continuous evolution, craftsmanship and partnership within the global bridal industry with a heritage-driven campaign and portfolio additions.

"Eighty years is both humbling and energizing," said **Justin Warshaw**, CEO and Creative Director. "I'm incredibly proud of our family history, and it fuels a deep passion and commitment to the work we do and the partners we do it with. We are constantly striving not just to continue, but to improve, to grow, and to become a better version of ourselves while honoring everything that got us here."

Founded in 1946 as T&G Bridal in Brooklyn, New York, the company has grown from a bridal accessories business into a globally recognized bridal portfolio distributed through more than 2,000 retailers worldwide—while remaining family-owned and design-led.

"The secret to our longevity has been consistency in our presence, our relationships, and our understanding of our retail partners and the brides they serve," added Warshaw. "We've always believed in building something enduring by prioritizing quality and genuine partnership over short-term thinking."

To commemorate the milestone, the company unveils its anniversary campaign, "**Eighty Years of Love – In Love Since 1946.**" Inspired by the wartime letters exchanged between founders Shirley and Ted, the

campaign celebrates enduring partnership, craftsmanship, and authenticity.

A limited-edition mark featuring Shirley's original handwriting anchors the storytelling, which weaves together the founders' letters, the symbolism of precise stitching, the strength of the oak tree, and the debut of Fable, the brand's first flower girl collection for the next generation.

Justin Alexander's evolution through the generations:

1946–1970s: Founded as T&G Bridal in Brooklyn, the company built its reputation in bridal accessories under inclusive, female-led leadership.

1970s–1980s: The second generation expanded into gowns with the launch of Sweetheart Gowns, formally entering bridalwear.

1990–2008: International growth accelerated under Sincerity Bridal, strengthening global infrastructure and service.

2008–2016: The third generation ushered in a designed era, adopted the Justin Alexander name, and opened the U.S. headquarters.

2016–2021: Strategic investments in technology and digital systems enhanced efficiency and the modern bridal experience.

Justin Alexander celebrating 80 years of love



From Justin Alexander's 2014 collection.

2021–2026: The company deepened social impact, expanded its portfolio, and advanced toward a broader lifestyle vision.

To mark the milestone, Justin Alexander further expands its portfolio with **Poeza**, a new quiet-luxury label within the Luxury Group, and **Fable by Justin Alexander**, extending the brand's multi-generational vision.

A long-term environmental initiative with the International Tree Foundation has also been launched entitled "**The Year of the Oak**," a program reinforcing the company's commitment to responsible, sustainable growth.

The 80-year milestone will be celebrated through integrated global touch points, including international trade shows and in-house pop-ups in Chicago, Atlanta, Rome, London, Barcelona Bridal Fashion Week, and European Bridal Week; runway storytelling in Barcelona; dedicated retailer activations; the "80 Years / 8 Decades" social series; and immersive showroom installations.



Justin Alexander's March 2025 'Delivering on a Dream' event at Castello di Tor Crescenza in Rome, Italy, mirrored each stage of a wedding day, allowing each chapter of the wedding story to showcase a different facet of the Justin Alexander family of brands and launch its autumn/winter 2025 and spring/summer 2026 collections.



Kelsey Warshaw (Justin's wife), fourth generation (Justin and Kelsey's son), Justin Warshaw, third generation, and Lawrence Warshaw, second generation.

The Allure

FAMILY OF BRANDS

CHICAGO | ATLANTA

Join us as we debut our Fall 2026 Collections



Tiny Tweaks, Big Difference



With stationery and a 78-cent Forever stamp, you can send a thank you note to brides following their visit. In the digital age, a handwritten note stands out for its personal touch and drives good vibes, if not a follow-up visit from a bride who did not purchase on her first stop in the boutique.

50 practical ways
to elevate the bride's
experience, build trust
and boost sales—
without a
costly overhaul.

As much as beautiful dresses and a sophisticated shopping environment capture outsized attention in the bridal retail game, sustainable success often comes down to hitting on key details over and over again – a pleasant welcome, a clean environment, thoughtful sales practices and an organized process among them.

Approachability, intimacy and professionalism matter in bridal retail, separating high-performing independents from big-box competitors or online vendors seeking their slice of the wedding pie. Exhibiting such traits inspires confidence, stimulates memory-making moments and creates positive vibes as brides prepare to make what will most likely be the most expensive and emotionally charged clothing purchase of their lives.

And there's always room for improvement, opportunities to enhance the experience for anyone who interacts with your shop. While a full-scale remodel, inventory overhaul or move to a larger space in an A-plus location isn't an immediate possibility for most, there are nevertheless low-cost, low-effort adjustments any bridal shop can make to increase impact and energize the shopping experience. From store merchandising to marketing, the sales process to staffing, VOWS highlights

tiny tweaks capable of sparking big improvements.

Store Exterior Tweaks

Sparkling Glass: Regularly cleaning exterior windows provides an unblemished look into your storefront. By contrast, streaks or dust on a window can subconsciously signal “unkept.”

Limit the Litter: As a daily practice, remove debris from the shop's premises, as empty potato chip bags, cigarettes and fountain drink cups sitting outside your front door don't exactly scream “high-quality operation.”

Less is More with Front Windows: Saying more with less – with words as well as visuals – creates a sense of luxury, so resist the urge to crowd the store windows with multiple mannequins and dresses. Even one styled mannequin in a sparkling, steamed dress can impress and set a sophisticated tone.

Illuminated Exterior: As the sun sets, make sure your store is visible with high-wattage lightbulbs, which deliver safety as well as drama.

“Green-framing”: Flanking the door with two tall, sleek planters featuring evergreens or boxwoods frames your front entrance and makes it feel established and welcoming. Additional greenery or flowers in planters, albeit

*Curate every detail to
create a premium
bridal experience.*

thoughtfully curated, further elevates curb appeal.

Stylish Door Hardware: The door handle is the first physical thing a customer touches at your store. Replacing, or even polishing, the door hardware can freshen the front door's look and create a positive first touchpoint.

Store Interior Tweaks

Lovely Lighting: Swap out cool-toned or fluorescent bulbs for warm temperature (2700K-3000K) LED bulbs, which will make white gowns pop. With main pedestals, prioritize "theatrical" lighting, which means hitting the bride with light from multiple sides rather than directly overhead, which tends to create shadows.

Subtle Scents: Pick one scent – vanilla, lavender and baby powder are three universally accepted options – and scatter discreet diffusers around the shop. Scent evokes memories and triggers emotions, both of which remain valuable currency in bridal retail.

Mirrors as Artwork: Framing mirrors with decorative molding painted in a metallic or neutral tone creates a custom furniture-like look, which sharpens the appearance of the mirrors and your shop.

Cleanliness is Next to Godliness: Dust bunnies, debris, litter and the like fail to create the premium experience brides desire and, quite frankly, expect. Keep your showroom and fitting rooms tidy with a regular cleaning schedule and make sure staff understands store cleanliness is a team-wide responsibility.

Perfect Reflection: Keep that glass cleaner handy and wipe all mirrors daily – and as needed

throughout the day. Brides want a perfect reflection, not one packed with smudges and dust.

Musical Moments: Ditch generic FM radio and create a sophisticated playlist featuring light, serene music. Acoustic covers, instrumentals or light jazz can do the trick and create a calm, nurturing environment.

Store Merchandising Tweaks

Declutter the Racks: If you have dresses on the sales floor for guests to peruse, be mindful of overpacking the racks. A slimmer, curated selection adhering to the two-inch rule – at least two inches of space between every hanger – creates a more premium look than a crowded rack. Even if you're an open-inventory operation, might you remove some dresses from the floor and lean on stylists to pull out applicable dresses for brides?

Universal Hangers: Hanging all dresses on the same hangers, particularly those made of sturdy wood or wrapped in satin or velvet, provides visual uniformity and

signifies higher quality.

Showcase Solutions: When applicable, dress the mannequin from head to toe with a veil, footwear, clutch and other accessories. This creates a full wedding day look and shows the varied solutions you have available in store.

Respect Your Samples: Steam your samples and repair and clean them as necessary. When you treat your samples with respect, it puts your primary items in the best possible light, fuels customer confidence in the operation and shows you mind the details. In addition, your samples are potential moneymakers down the line as well, so it's important to treat them with the utmost care.

Customer Service Tweaks

Refined Refreshments: While bottled water does the trick, up your game by serving water in a glass pitcher filled with ice and sliced lemons. Present the pitcher on a tray alongside glass tumblers. Another alternative to generic bottled water: offer cold and flavored sparkling water.

A Custom Welcome: A simple chalkboard or elegant frame near the entrance that welcomes brides by name into your bou-

Continued on page 58

The pristine, well-kept exterior of Poffie Girls in Gastonia, N.C., invites brides into an upscale environment and generates confidence in the boutique's professionalism.





BRIDAL COLLECTIVE

Beyond the Dresses

At Bridal Collective we offer



Bridal Collective HUB

An all-encompassing digital resource portal providing in-depth product information, selling tools, social media and marketing materials, online inventory and ordering, program bookings, and so much more.



The Full Collective Program

Personalized product and sales training through 'The Full Collective' program. This one-of-a-kind program consists of sales and product training sessions which can be found on our app, The Full Collective, as well as virtual and in-store training.



Marketing & Digital Support

We have a dedicated social media team in-house for each brand to ensure the best social media content possible.



Sales Force

It's more than just sales; it's a symbiotic relationship. Each of our Account Executives has a dedicated territory to better service you.



Product Quality Assurance

Every product that passes through our doors gets a thorough inspection before it reaches your hangers. This is something we take pride in.



Client Success and Engagement

It's personal (no, really). With a dedicated in-house Account Manager assigned to you, this means you know exactly who to go to. We're here for you.



Just for You Events

We host exclusive partner events making buying events as enjoyable as possible.



Territory Exclusivity

So you never have to worry about our brands being too saturated in your local market.

ENZOANI

Blue
BY ENZOANI

love

PEN·LIV

PRIVÉ

ÉLYSÉE

ÉTOILE

Portrait



Continued from page 55

tique makes them feel like a VIP from the start. You might even collect photos of the bride and her groom and create a custom slide show to run on televisions or monitors in the shop to further personalize the experience.

An Immediate Greeting: When brides walk in, they should be greeted immediately, not left wondering where to go or what to do. Having a standardized process for welcoming brides into your store underscores your professionalism and sets an inviting tone that says, “We’ve done this before and are ready to help you.”

A Fitting Room Kit: Setting a small tray in the fitting room filled with hair ties, bobby pins, breath mints, tissue and other essentials provides a bride little items she might need throughout her appointment. It also proves you’re a pro who’s prepared and ready to help.

Engage the Entourage: The bride is the priority – there’s no debating that – but her guests, such as mom, grandma and bridesmaids, can greatly influence an appointment and swing a sale. As a standard practice, address them by name and value them as prized guests who are a part of

Focus on hospitality, not sales, to win lifelong advocates.

the experience.

Turn “Yes” into a Celebration: Many bridal shops create “I Said Yes” moments with signage or other cute offerings, like taking a photo in front of a floral backdrop or in-store mural. Or perhaps a bride rings a bell or signs a wall commemorating her purchase. Creating a celebratory environment around the “yes” heightens the spirit of the day and creates a memorable moment.

Marketing Tweaks

Permission to Post: When a bride purchases a dress, ask if you can take her photo. These authentic moments become social-media gold – and promotion for your store.

Ditch the Sales Pitch: On social media, it can be enticing to simply showcase all the new dresses in your store and think that’s enough. But the truth is brides have choices on where to shop, and they’re most likely to visit stores they feel will deliver a high-quality experience alongside high-quality inventory. On social

media, then, it’s best to prioritize your expertise and educating the bride. Videos like “How to make most of your appointment” and “The 411 on wedding dress silhouettes” establish your credibility. Demonstrating a genuine willingness to help, you become more bridal fashion sherpa than salesperson. In addition, behind-the-scenes videos showcasing personnel at the shop and the work they do humanizes your store and underscores your team’s passion and care.

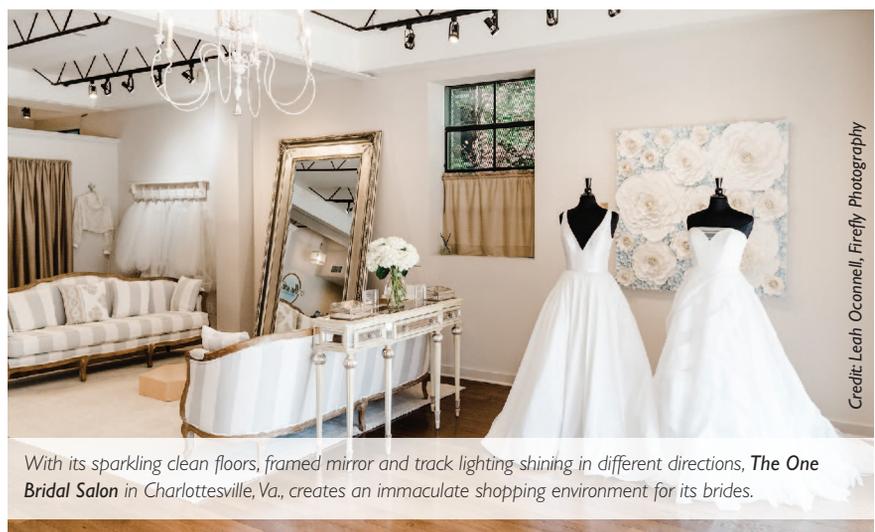
Team up: It’s certainly possible to capture photos of your store, staff and brides yourself. However, creating styled shoots in collaboration with local florists, venues and other vendors builds each other’s respective networks, delivers high-end content without a massive bill and creates a referral loop capable of benefiting everyone.

Get Right with Google: Your Google Business Profile is arguably your most important salesperson outside of your store. Make sure your store information, including location, hours and contact information, are correct and your photos are fresh.

Ask for a Review: After a wed-



At Hello Beautiful Bridal & Formal Wear in Kearney, Neb., brides sign “The Bricks” when they say “yes” to their gown, a unique add-on to the celebratory moment.



With its sparkling clean floors, framed mirror and track lighting shining in different directions, **The One Bridal Salon** in Charlottesville, Va., creates an immaculate shopping environment for its brides.

Credit: Leah Oconnell, Firefly Photography

ding, when brides are likely to be brimming with a post-wedding glow, send a follow-up email with congratulations and well wishes. At this same time, you can ask the bride if she might share an online review on sites like Google or Facebook. Peer reviews remain valuable currency in today's world, as brides do a significant chunk of their research online.

Put Proof on the Walls: Having a wall displaying photos of real brides who bought from your shop shows you can deliver on the dream. Posting any notes from brides sharing their gratitude also contributes to your credibility.

Acknowledge Every Communication: If a bride reaches out via e-mail or social media, set up an automated reply saying you received the message, appreciate her reaching out and will be in touch soon (you should precisely define what "soon" means in your world) with a reply. This simple tech-enabled move provides peace of mind to customers and lets them know you're on it. Then, of course, you must execute and behave just as your automated message says you will to further build trust.

Sign Off: Send a physical, handwritten thank you note on branded stationery to every bride following her visit. In the digital age, a handwritten note stands out for its care, time and distinctiveness. For the bride who purchased, share excitement for next steps. For the ones who didn't say "yes," welcome them to revisit the boutique and tuck in a personalized comment referencing their visit.

Sales Tweaks

Ask and Listen: With stylists,



Partnering with other local vendors, from florists to venues, can create stunning photos of bridal gowns and spur cross-marketing opportunities.



Spacing out dresses and using uniform hangers creates a more polished, curated and luxurious look heightening the perceived value of the gowns.

Put real bride success stories front and center.

train and emphasize asking open-ended questions like “What kind of vibe do you want for your wedding?” and actively listening to replies. Such inquiries will help stylists gather more information and understand the bride’s vision and what – or who – will affect her decision making. Roleplaying the first minutes of an appoint-



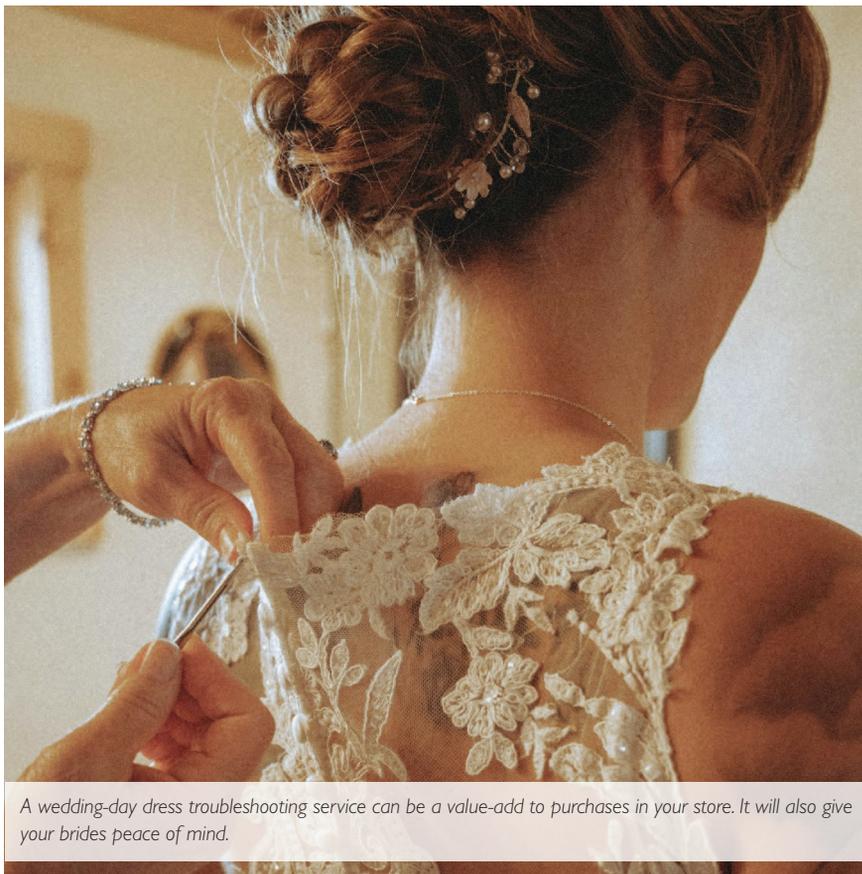
Replacing shoddy door hardware or polishing existing hardware so it shines gives customers a refined physical touchpoint with your store.

ment can also help stylists understand how to build rapport and

earn trust.

Add in Accessories: The dress holds outsized attention during appointments – and rightfully so. However, accessories are important to your bottom line. Implementing a “Plus-One” policy in which stylists must bring one accessory (a veil, belt or necklace, for example) into the fitting room can bring a bride closer to her wedding day vision, compel a confident “yes” and increase the sales ticket.

Incorporate the Same-Day Incentive: Without feeling you’re begging for the sale, simple offers, such as a free garter or a credit toward gown preservation at the store, can push a bride to make a purchase during her first appointment.



A wedding-day dress troubleshooting service can be a value-add to purchases in your store. It will also give your brides peace of mind.

Develop a Wedding Day 911 Service: Most veteran bridal retailers have faced panicked calls on a Saturday morning from a bride rattled about a rip or stain on her dress – and then swooped in to solve the problem because, well, that’s what you naturally do. You can provide your brides peace of mind – and added value to entice a purchase – if you formalize and promote a wedding day emergency service to troubleshoot day-of problems with the dress. It lets brides know you’re there with them until the end.

Limit Options: Decision fatigue – the feeling of being overwhelmed by options – kills many a bridal sale. Limiting options in the dressing room to three at a time encourages focus and drives clarity.

Take a Moment: Before stepping out for the reveal, when guests’ opinions can overpower a bride’s private thoughts, take a moment in the fitting room to ask the bride how she feels in a particular dress. This arms you with knowledge to inform additional selections or redirect conversation in front of the entourage. If you know the bride is happy, ask directly, “How do you feel in this dress?” in front of the group. Such a question re-centers attention on the bride and her emotions, helping to curb outside noise.

Remind Brides of Reality: With respect to bridal gowns, there’s a timeline in which decisions need to be made to accommodate shipping and alterations. Reminding brides of this reality is not a scare tactic to force a purchase; it’s a necessity providing brides with a logical impetus to resist wandering and commit. A simple card at



MARSONI

www.marsoni.com

Style MVI396

the welcome desk or signage in the lobby or fitting room illustrating the timeline can be enough.

Shift Your Words: Rather than using the word “budget,” which is a limiting and negative term to many, adopt the word “invest” when speaking of the dress purchase. Invest speaks to a calculated, thoughtful decision in something quality. “What investment have you set aside for your gown?” is a more polished question than “What’s your budget?” Similarly, swap words like “expensive” for “luxurious” or invite brides to “step into a look” rather than “put on a dress.” These changes, while subtle, speak to an elevated experience instead of a transaction.

We, Not Me: Stylists are a bride’s allies, and it’s important brides feel that. Use the bride’s first name and talk in terms of “we,” as in “We are going to find the perfect look for you today.”

Sales Perks: In any retail environment, including bridal, languishing inventory is a cash flow killer. Consider a higher commission percentage or bonus structure for stylists who sell “old” inventory as well as those who sell high-margin accessories.

Operational Tweaks

Appointment Efficiency: Instituting a pre-appointment interview with a bride allows stylists to know a bride’s budget, style preferences and other pertinent details before her arrival. This reduces trial and error and allows stylists to hit the ground running with rapport and knowledge to inform the appointment, including having a few choice dresses already selected.

Prioritize Money-Saving Op-

Guide decisions with empowering words, not limiting ones.

portunities: As the saying goes, “Small leaks sink big ships.” Audit subscriptions for software, marketing tools or other monthly purchases that are not delivering the necessary ROI or, worse, sit unused. Then, cancel services accordingly or seek higher-value alternatives.

Ask for Revised Terms: If you have strong relationships with specific designers or new labels looking to break into your shop, ask for more favorable payment terms. This will allow you to keep cash in your bank account longer.

Keep Your Ears to the Ground: Holding a monthly meeting to cover what stylists are hearing on the sales floor and in the fitting rooms can help you address friction points hampering your performance and empower you to double down on things that are working.

Staffing Tweaks

Cross-Train Employees: Staff members trained across multiple areas, from alterations to the point-of-sale system, help ensure your business keeps humming along regardless of the personnel on site.

Take Care: Spend a pinch more time getting ready in the morning, eating well and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. When you look good, you feel good, and this translates to an improved attitude and increased productivity in the business.

A Uniform Color: Asking staff to wear a specific, cohesive and non-white color palette, such as all black or shades of blush, looks

professional and serves as a dynamic contrast to the white and ivory bridal gowns packing the shop.

Mimic the Runway: As a stylist leads a bride from the fitting room to the viewing area with her guests, announcing the bride’s look – “Alyssa is wearing a stunning A-line design with a sweetheart neckline, a corset top and floral embroidery” – creates an elevated moment that makes the bride and her guests feel special.

Reduce the Rush: Yes, bridal retail can be a hurried, chaotic affair, but it’s vital everything a customer sees appears calm and orderly. Hustle in the back of the store, of course, but maintain composure in all customer-facing areas, so brides feel they’re in the hands of a capable professional who has everything under control.

Recognize Staff Publicly: Shouting out staff members’ successes on a breakroom bulletin board or in monthly meetings helps boost employee engagement, sets a standard for customer care and contributes to a lively store culture. 

Join the Conversation!

E-mail your thoughts about brides, the industry, VOWS...



whatever is on your mind to:

Shannon@vowsmagazine.com

Editor

Peter@vowsmagazine.com

Publisher

Rina di Montella



Style RD3233
WWW.COLORSDRESS.COM

ESSENCE
of AUSTRALIA®
essensedesigns.com



D4563



D4541



SY8345



SY8340

Stella York®

stellayork.com

martina liana®

martinaliana.com



ML2062



ML2037



Sedona



Jovi

ALL WHO
WANDER™

allwhowander.com

Win *After the Yes*



What great retailers do after the sale to earn trust, referrals and raving fans.

The post-sale experience matters just as much as finding the dress.

The moment a bride says “Yes!” to the dress never gets old.

Seeing the tears in her eyes, the blush on her face, the beam in her smile, her soft twirl in the mirror; the adoration of family and friends – the happy signs are unforgettable. Not just for the bride, but for you, too.

However it’s important to remember all the touchpoints that come after that amazing “yes!” moment. These are equally as important to winning over the customer and turning her into a long-term advocate for your brand and store.

Following is what you should be doing post-sale to leave a lasting impression.

Let’s Get This Party Started

Technically, celebrating a bride’s Yes is the first touchpoint you have with a bride post-sale – and it’s an important one.

“In a world feeling more disconnected, we really value trying to make our brides feel seen and celebrated in an authentic way, while being mindful of the need of the customers to collect the imagery they need for social media,” says Michelle Depoali, owner of Swoon Bridal in Reno, Nev.

For that reason, celebrations at Swoon Bridal aren’t random; there’s

some strategy behind them. This enables the bride to be fully present, enjoy the moment with her friends and family, and confirm the relevance of that highlight in a way Depoali feels truly matters to today’s customers.

“We prepare (brides) for what a celebration looks like if she says ‘yes’ (such as) a toast and pictures with our sign. . . and we do ask the question ‘Are you saying yes to the dress’ or some form of it that feels right for the customer to give her the moment she and her group need to then enter into



Swoon Bridal in Reno, Nev., makes a point to celebrate brides in picture-perfect ways that feel authentic yet ensure all the photos they want for social-media sharing, an activity that matters to many of today’s customers. Credit: Henrichsen Media

Celebrate authentically – but set clear expectations.

a celebration,” she says. “We encourage hugs and give the group a few minutes to have the personal interactions they need, and then we lead a toast for the customer with champagne.”

Staff at Swoon Bridal also take pictures of the bride in her dress, both with and without the store’s sign, and customers are permitted to take all the pictures they need. The store has a little patio, where the group can continue to celebrate, or “we have a champagne bar in our shopping center where many of our brides will go,” Depoali says.

“We try to lead the bride and group and keep it feeling celebratory, but communicate expectations since there is paperwork coming and often another party coming in. Customers do well when they know what to expect.”

Point is, it’s not a haphazard celebration. While being 100% authentic, this moment in the experience comes with guardrails and structure that support the emotional and visual expectations of the bride while ensuring she walks out with the memories and pictures she’s expecting to have as well. The planning behind it goes a long way to not just wowing the bride but moving her joyfully into the next phases of the shopping experience.

Magic in the Making: Mini-Milestones After the “Yes”

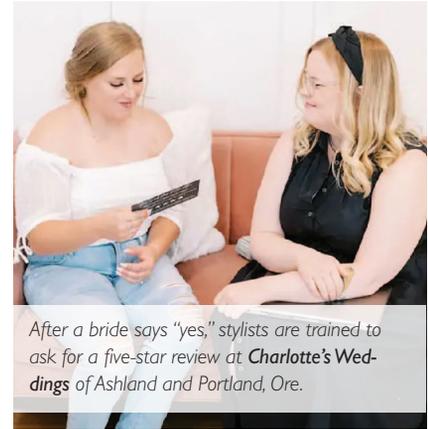
Right after the “yes” and once payment is confirmed is another mini-milestone that’s worth recognition, as this “sealing of the deal” means this customer is officially “your bride”.

This should feel wonderful yet some brides and families may feel

mixed emotions over paying for the gown as it may be one of the most expensive personal luxury items they’ll ever buy.

So follow the lead of retailers like Allie Holland and Stephanie Palmer, who co-own Monica’s Bridal in Chattanooga, Tenn., and keep the focus on what matters – the beauty and bonding around the experience, the fact this bride is now part of your “tribe” and store’s history.

To celebrate, they give each bride a personalized gift after she has said yes (and paid!), as well as a fun little treat. They also make a big production of that bride



Celebrate and Share

We are so excited that you have found your dream dress and are now a Charlotte's Bride!

There are so many amazing benefits about being a Charlotte's Bride:

- Being a part of a community in our Private Facebook Group
- Invites to Exclusive Charlotte's Events
- Special Promotions
- Featured Bride Opportunities
- Special Pricing on Additional Services
- The chance to help future brides Say Yes to the Dress at Charlotte's

Share your Charlotte's Experience

Join our Charlotte's Facebook Page **Charlotte's Weddings Brides**
Tag us in your Say Yes pics and give a SHOUT OUT to your Stylist

Leave a **5 STAR REVIEW** on Google, The Knot or Facebook

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Refer your newly engaged friends and family to Charlotte's
Post and Tag us in your wedding day photos so we can share and
feature you on our site

With two locations in Oregon, **Charlotte’s Weddings** provides brides with a welcome packet, outlining all services, offerings and expectations so they know what to expect at each step of the process.

signing their dress, as all brides do, and of the 'yes' pictures. And, of course, they post and tag brides' pictures on their Instagram story.

"Stephanie and I have owned the store for over a decade now, and we've definitely learned the value of treats and surprises," Holland says. "Brides these days want to be celebrated, and it's been important to give them something to take home since they don't have their dress yet. We've learned to keep the party going as long as possible for them."

As for what comes next?

Break post-"yes" info into digestible messages.

Having been in business for 18 years, Depoali says she's learned that most brides can't process too many next-step details when they're in celebratory mode. There's just too much emotion and excitement going on.

For that reason, Depoali – and other retailers – move into the next phase of the customer experience with intention and direction. Depoali, in particular, sends out a text the following day

with details about what to expect next. And she's learned that it's best to break down any communications into digestible texts, although she does send a couple of longer e-mails about post-yes details related to alterations, delivery and next steps they can reference.

Staying on Track When the Real Work Begins

After the bride says "yes" and the in-store celebrations have passed, that's when the real work of getting to "I do" begins.

That pivotal moment gives way



Securing Wins With Second-Stage "Wows"

As you move through each touchpoint after the yes, turn each aspect of this second stage in the process into a win, not just for your brides but the store!

Here are some pointers to consider in this anything-but-second-best phase of the bridal retail experience:

- **Order Confirmation & Setting Expectations** – It's great if you want to call your brides personally to confirm you've placed the order but always follow up with this information in writing (e-mail, texts, brochures/packets) so there are no misunderstandings and you can set expectations around what they need to do after the "yes" and what you'll be doing for them. Suggestions include giving them a packet of nuts-and-bolts expectations, timelines and other resources (such as recommended seamstresses or where to shop for undergarments), and early tips for success at upcoming appointments (such as limiting the number of friends/family brides bring along for the fitting). Get confirmation signatures to confirm agreements, expectations and consensus.

- **Post-Purchase Follow-Up** – Every stylist should send a thank-you note, not just to express gratitude and support the customer-stylist relationship, but to take a minute to pause, reflect on the unique wins in the experience, and find the why behind the joy in the sale. This helps reinforce for your stylists the meaning of the experience and value behind their job. Use pretty paper. . . maybe scented. . . and definitely branded to align with your store's look and feel. Make every thank-you count!

- **Gown Arrival Notification** – Ensure that whatever communication method you use, whether automated or personal, it notes the time and date the gown arrived. Follow-up with a text or e-mail outlining next steps, including iCal and Google Calendar downloads for the first fitting. If any snafu comes up, or your bride fails to accept

the calendar invite, immediately follow up with a personal call from someone in the store so the customer gets that personal touch in addressing any scheduling issues or concerns. This is also the time to revisit any alterations appointment details, if you do alterations and those aspects of service have not been covered and confirmed already.

- **First Fitting/Alterations Consultation** – Offer options, customizations and add-ons that cater to this bride's needs and dreams. Resist the desire to treat this experience as transactional; don't just jump into how and what to alter. . . have your alterationists get to know the bride a little bit, surface information that may be weighing on her mind, and provide solutions for any concerns, striving always to have the foresight and genuine desire to address unforeseen challenges. Discussing topics like the time, date and location of the wedding can help you get ahead of any potential problems the bride could unknowingly encounter with her gown. Also, keep in mind this fitting could be a long appointment. Have some refreshments and treats on hand, and have the customer's original stylist pop in to visit with the bride for a bit, asking questions about how the wedding planning is going, how she's feeling, etc. Keeping that stylist-bride relationship going at different touchpoints after the "yes" will support the authenticity and personalization of the total experience.

- **Ongoing Alterations Appointments** – The goal should be as few appointments as necessary to save busy brides time whenever possible. Particularly for out-of-town brides or those who have to break from work to make it to multiple appointments, strive to find ways to work around their schedule, provide resources for saving time and money, such as lumping in two appointments over a weekend versus making them return on two occasions. But the biggest tips are to take excellent notes about what's being done to the dress, make sure to review those prior to the

Sidebar continued on page 70

UNLISTED

COUTURE

NOW AVAILABLE Unlisted Couture

Our best program just got better!

Unlimited Margins

Maximize your profitability with
extraordinarily high mark-up.

No Label, No Photography

We keep it private so you can too.

Designed by our talented U.S. based
design team ensuring unique and
high-quality gowns.

for sales inquiries email
sales@moncheribridals.com

Chicago

March 15-17 | Booth 7030

Atlanta

March 30-April 1 | Showroom 10S117

Turn her gown pickup into a cherished memory.

to ordering, timelines, fittings, accessories, alterations, gown prep for the big day and more. And key to making all this happen is consistent, clear communication and systems, so brides remain engaged, informed, on track with, and trusting both the process – and you.

As Krysta York, owner of Charlotte's Weddings in Portland and Ashland, Ore., says, "Brides do expect more than they have in the past. As long as you are transparent and follow through with what you say you will do, that consistency will give you

credibility."

Her stores get a jumpstart on communication the moment after the bride has said "yes." The stylist gives the bride a handout with a QR code on it for a digital download to a welcome packet outlining what's next, recommended seamstresses, access to their Facebook page, and even a link to where brides can leave a detailed five-star review.

Personal touches immediately follow as well – a handwritten thank-you note and a call from their stylist, confirming ordering and estimated gown arrival date and asking the brides to leave a review, if they haven't done so already.

Through BridalLive, a series of customer-management emails rolls out related to their Generation Tux services, fitting and accessory appointments with possible upgrades, gown preservation, and, again, posting a review.

Reviews are another oppor-

Continued from page 68

Securing Wins With Second-Stage "Wows"

appointment, and keep the bride with the same seamstress throughout the process to support rapport and minimize potential errors.

- **Accessory Styling** – Use this opportunity to learn more about your bride's style, asking for pictures and ideas before she comes in the store. If the bride leans more toward dainty and delicate, avoid pulling big bling for the appointment as this could make her feel instant disconnect with you. Make suggestions based on who she is, her style and the dress before introducing her to alternate options. Consider bringing in Mom or a friend who is familiar with the wedding venue and can make suggestions about accessories that might align with any logistical needs or aesthetic elements tied to the wedding's location, style or décor.

- **Final Fitting & Quality Check** – Your bride is getting excited and nervous, most likely, at this point in the journey. So when she comes in for her final fitting, she's apt to be emotional and seeing that image of herself, in her altered gown, accessorized and complete, can be overwhelming in the most wonderful of ways. Be prepared and make sure your fitting room, demeanor and approach feel comfortable and safe from the standpoint that it's ok to be excited and a little teary. Also, encourage brides to bring in a bridesmaid, family member or friend who can help her get dressed properly. Take the time needed - don't rush in this appointment and carefully cover instructions related to slipping the gown on, bustling, corsets, trains and accessories. Help ensure any and all dressing details get communicated clearly so that there's no question as to how the gown should look and feel on the bride's special day.

- **Gown Pickup** – As you hand over the gown to the bride, consider what else you can slip into her hand, ways to memorialize the moment, such as by giving her a sketch of her gown, a picture frame with your store's logo, a rose to take with her, a spa or beauty product, a wedding-day

survival kit, a cute tote bag with your branding on it, a ring dish, a thanks-for-being-our-bride notepad and pen for recording last-minute reminders, or even a dainty jewelry bag with a little piece of sparkle inside. The ideas are endless! Find ways to keep the celebration going and leave a positive, lasting impression on the bride's mind!

- **Post Wedding Follow-Up** – Many brides feel extreme nostalgia or downright post-wedding grief after their big day and the honeymoon have come to an end. So keep celebrating with them by checking in with a personal phone call. Ask for wedding-day photos (if they're willing to share), request a review if they haven't given you one yet, and explore whether they'd be open to you using their pictures on your website, social media or even in store. Make them not just celebrated brides but celebrity brides! Oh, and don't forget to remind them about gown cleaning and preservation, providing resources or options for protecting their gown over the years to come.

- **Relationship Continuation** – How about a bridal alumni club, where your brides get to come back once a year for an alum cocktail party? Or sending out congratulatory e-mails or notes on important anniversary milestones? Or creating a focus group to bring in your brides for post-I-do ideas on how to strengthen the customer experience for future brides? You could also create a referral program, where they get a percentage off jewelry or a gift card to a local wine bar, for example, for referring a new customer to you. If you carry formalwear, make sure your brides are kept in the loop about the latest special occasion arrivals, specials and events. And if you're one of the fortunate stores that has spanned multiple generations of customers, consider having programs set up for daughters of former brides — a "cherishing traditions" program where new customers receive special treatment or incentives to come create their own memories and traditions with you!



Unlimited Margins

Maximize your profitability with extraordinarily high mark-up.

No Label, No Photography

We keep it private so you can too.

Designed by our talented U.S. based design team ensuring unique and high-quality gowns.

for sales inquiries email
sales@moncheribridals.com

Chicago

March 15-17 | Booth 7030

Atlanta

March 30-April 1 | Showroom 10S117

UNLISTED

YOUR COLLECTION, YOUR RULES, YOUR HIGHEST PROFIT

*Flag them early:
post-sale questions
signal process gaps.*

tunity to not just continue engaging with customers but empower these brides to share their experience with other brides, which helps them feel relevant and supported, even long after the sale.

“We want to make sure we are hitting all the touchpoints and following our processes that are clearly in place to make sure our brides get everything they need after they have said yes,” York says.

It’s a red flag that the post-yes experience is off the mark “if a bride is calling in and asking lots of questions that should have been addressed after that purchase,” she adds, something they strive to avoid at all costs.

To keep that in check and uphold accountability with the bride and her expectations, Charlotte’s Weddings doesn’t just rely on BridalLive for its customer-relationship management. All stylists have follow-up procedures that they implement each week to communicate with their brides.

One sticking point they’ve noticed is that because they refer brides to seamstresses, they have to be crystal clear about how quickly brides need to plan for

those appointments based on the gown’s estimated arrival. Yearly trainings with their top recommended seamstresses ensure everyone is aligned on needs, timing and what to communicate to brides.

However, for all the post-yes milestones big and small, they have spreadsheets to keep track of their brides and the items that they have communicated with them on.

“We use a lot of checklists,” York says. “You can lose trust with your bride if you don’t clearly communicate with her all of the next steps. Things like not calling them with the order confirmation or not sending a hand-written thank-you card can ruin your credibility as a reliable and trustworthy place to make such a large purchase.”

In truth, success around the post-yes touchpoints starts and ends with the staff. They must be trained to embrace the mindset that it’s just as vital as everything pre “yes” moment.

At Monica’s Bridal, the co-owners have trained their staff to grasp the importance of “after the yes” – it’s been ingrained in their cultural DNA.

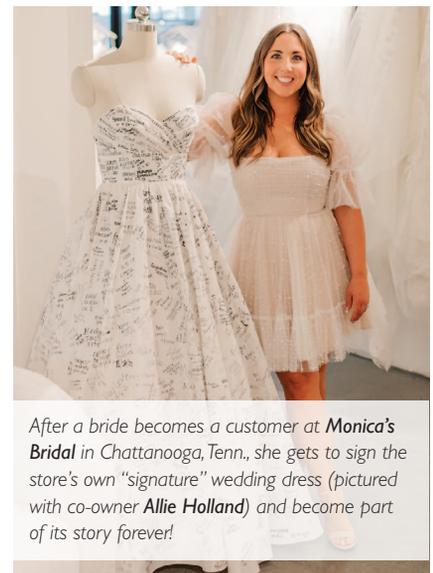
“Our girls know that our customers have history with us and that most of our business comes from referrals, so the experience after the ‘yes’ is just as important,” Holland says. “We sold them on an idea and a promise as to how they would be treated, so they know from the beginning that it is expected that they keep the service level up.”

Ultimately, the magic of the “yes” moment is just the beginning. What follows is where trust is proven and thoughtful mini-celebrations, clear communication and consistent follow-through transform the experience from simply a sale into a memory that will last for life.

Train your staff to give every post-yes touchpoint their best, and they’ll do more than deliver top-notch service – they’ll boost their odds of building real rapport and the potential for referrals, turning joyful customers into lifelong fans and even advocates for your store



Monica’s Bridal in Chattanooga, Tenn., focuses on special touches, such as little personalized treats that wow brides after they say “yes”.



After a bride becomes a customer at Monica’s Bridal in Chattanooga, Tenn., she gets to sign the store’s own “signature” wedding dress (pictured with co-owner Allie Holland) and become part of its story forever!

Unlimited Margins

Maximize your profitability with extraordinarily high mark-up.

No Label, No Photography

We keep it private so you can too.

Designed by our talented U.S. based design team ensuring unique and high-quality gowns.

for sales inquiries email
sales@moncheribridals.com

Chicago

March 15-17 | Booth 7030

Atlanta

March 30-April 1 | Showroom 10S116

UNLISTED

YOUR COLLECTION, YOUR RULES, YOUR HIGHEST PROFIT

LAZARO

Couture, Within Reach

The New Lazaro Collection

Signature drama.

Exceptional craftsmanship.

Now offered at an upper-moderate tier.

Wholesale \$1,095 - \$1,950

Limited, Selective Distribution

Chicago Bridal Market | Booth 6093

cyndy@lazarobridal.com | 646-397-4850

sharon@lazarobridal.com | 516-244-9035

lazarobridal.com



Turn Fun Holidays into Boutique Wins



A month-by-month guide to engagement, gratitude and growth.

Nearly every single day of the year has five to 10 fun holidays attached to it

You've almost certainly heard of the fun, quirky holidays that exist – stuff like Talk Like a Pirate Day (Sept. 19), National Donut Day (June 5) and Dress Up Your Pet Day (Jan. 14).

What you may not realize is just how many there are. While there's no official count (fun holidays aren't regulated like federal ones and new ones are constantly being created), estimates run as high as 2,000+. Nearly every single day of the year has five to 10 fun holidays attached to it, creating a steady stream of opportunities to connect with brides, energize your team and keep your boutique top of mind.

Even better: these moments don't require big budgets or elaborate planning, just a little creativity and intention.

Following is a curated list of fun holidays most relevant to boutiques, along with simple ideas for how to use each one to build engagement, boost morale and spark growth.

Some important caveats:

- None of the 11 federally recognized holidays are on this list
- Some fun holidays are redundant – for example, January 24 is National Compliment Day and March 1 is World Compliment Day. In these cases, only one option is listed
- Special weeks or months are not included (i.e. Breast Cancer Awareness

Month in October)

– This list isn't complete. Browse a database of fun holidays at your leisure to see which others speak to your interests/brand (i.e. a charitable cause you support)

January

(note: dates are for 2027)

Jan. 4 - Trivia Day: educate brides on the dress-shopping process while having fun! Post a mini quiz on social media and draw a winner among all who answer correctly.

Jan. 11 - International Thank You Day: post a heartfelt video message thanking your customers for their support and loyalty throughout the years. Showing gratitude boosts your attitude!

Jan. 17 - Customer Service Day: role-play tricky customer scenarios with your team, then reward everyone with coffee or pastries. Great training + morale boost.

Jan. 20 - Take a Walk Outdoors Day: take 20 minutes in the middle of the day to enjoy the fresh air. This simple change can drastically boost mood and productivity!

Jan. 21 - Thank Your Mentor Day: send a written thank-you note with a small gift card to someone who has been instrumental to your success in



the bridal world.

Jan. 24 - National Compliment Day: ask staff to write anonymous compliments for each other and read them aloud at the end of the day. Feel-good vibes guaranteed!

Jan. 26 - National Spouses Day: shout out your partner (or a staff member's!) on social and share how they support your business behind the scenes.

Jan. 29 - National Fun at Work Day: let everyone dress in comfy clothes, play upbeat music and bring in treats. Bonus: share behind-the-scenes photos on social.



February

(Note: dates are for 2027)

Feb. 3 - National Wedding Ring Day: ask customers to show off pictures of their gorgeous rings and tag you.

Feb. 13 - Galentine's Day: host a special event or promo for the girl gang! Think mini massages,

Use Write Your Story Day to humanize your brand.

hair demos or a special photo booth.

Feb. 17 - Random Act of Kindness Day: do something kind for a stranger. It doesn't have to be big to be effective.



March

Mar. 1 - Plan a Solo Vacation Day: you work hard and deserve some "me" time. Mark some days off on your calendar and commit to taking them.

Mar. 1 - National Wedding Planning Day: share your top-three planning tips on social or host a quick IG Story Q&A for newly engaged brides.

Mar. 2 - Old Stuff Day: ask brides to share what their "something old" will be on their Big Day - a fun chance for storytelling and picture sharing!

Mar 6 - Employee Appreciation Day: show your staff how grateful you are for their hard work by surprising them either with a group outing (spa day anyone?) or individual gifts tailored to their desires.

Mar. 6 - National Dress Day: highlight one standout gown on social and explain what makes it

special. Bonus points if stylists vote on their favorite!

Mar. 8 - International Women's Day: spotlight your all-female team (or female vendors you love) and share what empowerment looks like in your store.

Mar. 11 - National Promposal Day: ask your customers to share their promposal stories. You could even run a contest for the best one.

Mar. 14 - National Write Your Story Day: telling your story is a huge part of helping customers connect with your brand. Update your About Us and also film your story for social media.

Mar. 20 - Proposal Day: ask your brides to share their proposal stories, and share your own via a quick video.

Mar. 21 - Flower Day: shout out a local florist and give everyone who comes in that day a mini bouquet or single rose.

Mar. 29 - National Mom and Pop Business Owners Day: tell your boutique's origin story and celebrate independent retail with a throwback photo or short Reel.

Mar. 31 - Prom Day: feature prom-friendly gowns or accessories, or share flashback prom pics from your team for a fun engagement post.

April

Apr. 5 - Self Care Day: encourage staff to take extended breaks, bring in healthy snacks or share one self-care habit everyone swears by.

Apr. 10 - Siblings Day: ask brides to tag siblings they'll have by their side on the big day - or share team sibling stories.

Apr. 16 - Wear Pajamas to Work Day: let staff wear cozy



loungewear before opening and snap a playful behind-the-scenes photo.

Apr. 23 - Take Our Daughter and Sons to Work Day: invite kids in for a short visit and capture sweet moments for social.

Apr. 25 - National Mani Pedi Day: consider doing a cross promotion with a local spa near you or giving away a gift certificate to one lucky customer.

Apr. 29 - National Supply Chain Day: give a shoutout to designers and reps who help keep your racks full – gratitude goes a long way!



May

May 1 - Global Love Day: share a powerful bride moment or testimonial that celebrates love in all forms.

May 6 - Beverage Day: ask your staff what their favorite non-alcoholic drinks are and restock your fridge to surprise them all!

Showcase your store pup on Take Your Dog to Work Day.

May 8 - Military Spouse Appreciation Day: offer a small thank-you (discount or note) to military families in your community.

May 10 - Mother's Day (second Sunday in May): share a sweet fitting-room moment, spotlight mother-daughter appointments or offer a small flower or handwritten note to every mom who visits that week.

May 10 - National Small Business Day: post a behind-the-scenes Reel, thank your community for supporting local and highlight one way shopping small directly impacts your staff or town.

May 24 - Scavenger Hunt Day: hide wedding-related items (fake rings work well) in various places and have employees find them throughout the day. The person who finds the most wins a prize.



June

June 1 - Nail Polish Day: ask staff to wear their favorite shade and let brides vote on the prettiest polish.

June 2 - Leave the Office Early Day: close 30 minutes early and

treat your team to coffee or ice cream.

June 5 - National Donut Day: bring sweet treats for your staff!

June 8 - Best Friends Day: invite brides to tag their Maid of Honor or bestie in your comments.

June 13 - National Sewing Machine Day: spotlight your alterations process or share a quick behind-the-scenes tailoring video.

June 21 - National Selfie Day: take a team selfie in front of your dresses and invite brides to post mirror selfies from their fittings.

June 21 - Father's Day (third Sunday of June): share a funny or heartfelt "dad at the fitting" moment, invite brides to tag their fathers or father figures, or spotlight the emotional role dads play on the wedding day.

June 26 - Take Your Dog to Work Day: if you have a store pup (and we know many of you do!), shares pics of him or her online as well as the "gotcha" story.

June 30 - Social Media Day: audit your platforms: refresh bios, update highlights, review what content performs best and challenge your team to film one authentic behind-the-scenes clip to post that day.

July

July 1 - International Joke Day: post your favorite bridal industry joke or pun and invite followers to share theirs in the comments.

July 9 - Sugar Cookie Day: surprise staff with cookies - or partner with a local baker and give one lucky bride a sweet treat.

July 9 - Fashion Day: feature your most fashion-forward gown or accessory and explain current

MONICA LORETTI

NATIONAL
**BRIDAL
MARKET**
CHICAGO

Stand 1050

website: monicaloretti.com

instagram: [monicaloretti_official](https://www.instagram.com/monicaloretti_official)

STARR COLLINS, US Sales Director

starr.collins@ymail.com

(562) 303-6777

**MARIA DE SANTIAGO,
Customer Service Representative**

maria.monicaloretti@gmail.com

(562) 274-6604

**Jenna Diemunsch
Southeast and Midwest Sales**

Jenna.monicaloretti@gmail.com

(937) 469-5495

Lori Lanagan Northeast Sales

L2elletoo@gmail.com

(774) 279-2885



bridal trends in a quick post.

July 9 - International Emergency Kit Day: what would you put in a wedding day emergency kit and why? This could make a great social-media post or blog topic.

July 12 - Indie Retailer Day: celebrate being independent - post what makes your boutique different and thank your loyal customers.

July 15 - Give Something Away Day: everyone loves a random giveaway. Surprise your brides with a fun, free chance to win something great!



August

Aug. 1 - National Girlfriend Day: encourage brides to celebrate their tribe by sharing a group photo or tagging their besties.

Aug. 1 - Start-up Day Across America: share your origin story

Surprise brides on Giveaway Day to boost engagement.

- how your boutique began and what inspired you to open.

Aug. 2 - Sisters' Day: highlight sister-owned businesses or ask brides to share pics with their sisters.

Aug. 2 - National Friendship Day: tag a fellow retailer or local business friend and show some love.

Aug. 9 - Book Lovers' Day: share your favorite business or inspirational book, or ask followers for recommendations.

Aug. 17 - Thrift Shop Day: spend the day searching for discounted, repurposed treasures or donate a few items you no longer use to your local thrift store.

Aug. 17 - National Makeover Day: give something in your store a mini refresh - restyle a mannequin, update a window display or rearrange accessories - and share a quick before-and-after on social.

Aug. 19 - World Photography Day: share a favorite professional wedding photo from a real bride (with permission), tag the photographer and spotlight how powerful imagery helps tell the wedding story.

Aug. 28 - Bow Tie Day: style one on two different mannequins and invite followers to vote for their fave.

September

Sept. 1 - National Little Black Dress Day: show off bridesmaid styles or rehearsal dinner looks.

Sept. 6 - Fight Procrastination Day: you know that thing you've been putting off? Now's the



time to tackle it!

Sept. 10 - Swap Ideas Day: schedule a call or coffee date with an industry friend. Alternatively, post a question in an on-line retailer group to get mass feedback.

Sept. 19 - National Cleanup Day: tackle one overlooked area of your store - stockroom shelves, windows or accessory displays.

Sept. 21 - National Gratitude Day: write thank-you notes to recent brides or post a gratitude message to your community.

Sept. 22 - National Women's Business Day: celebrate women entrepreneurs - tag other female-owned businesses in your area.

Sept. 25 - National Daughter Day: share mother-daughter appointment moments or ask followers to tag their moms.

Sept. 26 - Love Note Day: leave handwritten notes in fitting rooms or send surprise DMs to recent brides.

Sept. 28 - Good Neighbor Day: do something nice for a nearby business. Bonus: it's a chance to make a new friend!

Sept. 29 - National Coffee Day: give a \$5 gift card to a local coffee shop to each bride who comes in that day. Ditto for staff.

Continued on page 82

NATIONAL
**BRIDAL
MARKET**
CHICAGO

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS



50th Anniversary
Masquerade Gala

Sunday, August 16, 2026

7:00 pm - 10:00 pm

Offshore Rooftop (at Navy Pier)

1000 East Grand Avenue

***Transportation will be provided.**

Tickets: \$85

You're invited to the Bridal Industry event of the year!

This August, the National Bridal Market Chicago celebrates 50 years of design, retail, and history within the Bridal Industry.

Join us in your finest black-tie attire and embrace the mystery of our masquerade - please wear an elegant mask for an unforgettable evening of skyline and lake views, dancing, live music, an open bar, & exquisite cuisine.

nationalbridalmarket.com



SCAN TO PURCHASE TICKET

THE MART
A VORNADO PROPERTY



October

- Oct. 1 - National Hair Day:** highlight favorite bridal hairstyles or feature a local stylist partner.
- Oct. 6 - Plus-size Appreciation Day:** spotlight inclusive sizing in your store and reaffirm that every bride deserves to feel beautiful.
- Oct. 9 - National Shoe Lovers Day:** feature your bridal shoes or favorite footwear trends.
- Oct. 10 - Handbag Day:** show off bridal clutches or day-of bags and explain what every bride should pack.
- Oct. 21 - Get to Know Your Customers Day:** ask on social: what is one thing about you people would be surprised to know?

Celebrate your team's hidden talents on Nov. 24.

Oct. 25 - National Mother-in-Law Day: share a sweet or funny story about moms helping with dress shopping.



November

- Nov. 12 - Happy Hour Day:** treat staff to mocktails after closing or surprise them with their favorite drinks.
- Nov. 13 - World Kindness Day:** perform one intentional act of kindness and encourage followers to do the same.
- Nov. 24 - Celebrate Your Unique Talent Day:** have each

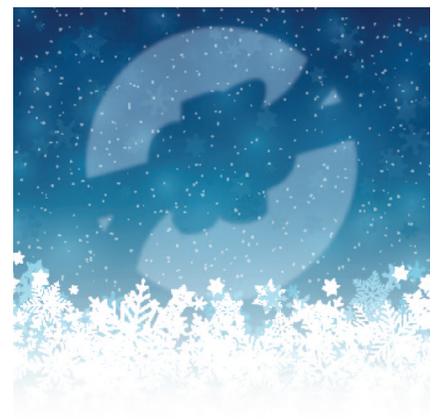
team member share one hidden skill (personal or professional). This would make a great social video!

Nov. 25 - Shopping Reminder Day: post gift ideas for newly engaged couples or wedding party members.

Nov. 26 - Cake Day: share your favorite wedding cake photos or ask followers their dream flavor.

Nov. 27 - Black Friday: offer a limited-time accessory discount, gift-with-purchase or special booking incentive.

Nov. 28 - Small Business Saturday (Saturday after Thanksgiving): go all in on storytelling. Highlight your team, your history and the impact of shopping small. Consider a festive in-store event, light refreshments or a local vendor pop-up to create a community feel.



December

Dec. 3 - Make a Gift Day: create a simple DIY bridal emergency kit or holiday thank-you bags.

Dec. 5 - International Volunteer Day: volunteer locally or highlight a nonprofit your boutique supports.

Dec. 26 - Thank You Note Day: mail handwritten notes to vendors or top customers who made your year better.



BRIDAL COLLECTION
DESIGNED TO FIT. PRICED TO PROFIT!

ALYCE
SINCE 1967



VISIT US MARCH 15 TO 17 AT THE
CHICAGO MERCHANDISE MART
BOOTH 10078 & 9078

-
- ❁ NO PLUS SIZE FEE – EVER!
 - ❁ EXTRAORDINARY 5x MARGINS
 - ❁ CUSTOMIZATIONS
 - ❁ INVENTORY ALWAYS
 - ❁ WHOLESALE STARTING AT \$140
 - ❁ 4-6 WEEK RUSH CUTS ONLY \$25

WWW.ALYCEPARIS.COM | 847.966.9200 | AP-CONCIERGE@ALYCEPARIS.COM

The more those phrases are used in meaningful, authoritative copy, the more they're valued by the AI search engine.

Become the Boutique *AI Recommends*

Why Generative Engine Optimization is the next must-have strategy for bridal retailers.

Have you heard of GEO or Generative Engine Optimization?

GEO is to AI searches what SEO is to regular internet searches. But it works very differently.

With the increasing use of AI searches on the internet – an estimated 50 percent of online searches are now conducted via AI as opposed to traditional search engines like Google, and this percentage is exploding quickly – it's vital your store knows what GEO is and how to use it, in order to be found.

GEO Versus SEO

First, a review. We've all heard of SEO, or Search Engine Optimization. This is the process of embedding certain keywords within your website and content to increase your chances of being found. The more key words you include and the more frequently you include them, the likelier it is that your store will float to the top of a bride's Google search.

GEO, on the other hand, is what AI searches use to return answers to a user. It asks what task a searcher is trying

to complete and focuses more on topics. These tasks could be booking an appointment or finding a store with plus-size gowns.

GEO picks up words differently. Instead of looking for specific words, it looks for phrases and how they're used. And the more those phrases are used in meaningful, authoritative copy, the more they're valued by the AI search engine. This is because AI search engines – also called generative search engines – can understand natural language processing. AI search engines include Google's Gemini, ChatGPT, Claude and Perplexity.

So, instead of mentioning a term many times, you want to fully cover a topic as well as you can to satisfy the end goal of visitors, says Kevin Indig, a growth advisor who helps companies define growth strategies.

So keep the SEO, but layer GEO on top of it.

Why Focus on GEO?

According to a report from last Oc-

tober by McKinsey and Company, 50% of all internet searches are now conducted through AI. That's a huge number, which means if you don't optimize for GEO, you could be losing half of your potential customers.

GEO is more precise than SEO, designed to match users' searches more precisely, and to pick up on nuances as they use more natural language – especially in verbal internet searches, which are also increasing, incidentally, and now account for about half of searches, according to Statista.

This means well-optimized content will show up more frequently for more complex searches. In fact, GEO values trusted and authoritative content the most.

How to Optimize Your Website for GEO Searches

First and foremost, your website needs to show you are the authority in everything bridal.

Find out exactly what brides are searching for and write copy that answers their questions and solves their problems. AI search engines can find what they want through long-form writing, in lists, in charts, even in videos.

Use long-tail keywords. Rather than the single keywords you focus on for SEO, long-tail keywords are phrases of three or more words and are very specific. Instead of “dream dress” you might include “find your dream wedding dress in Chicago.” Instead of “tuxedo” you might write “modern tuxedo for summer wedding.”

But you can take it further and think about how brides might really be searching because AI is more question-based and AI prompts are on average five times

longer than classic searches. Brides might ask an AI search engine “How many people can I bring to my bridal appointment?” or “When should I start shopping for my October wedding?”

“GEO wins when your site answers the full intent, including constraints like budget, timeline, style, size range and location,” ex-

plains Duane Forrester, AI expert and author of *The Machine Layer*, which was published in December.

Focus on Google's E-E-A-T standards. This acronym means:

Experience: Clearly detail the experience at your boutique and show you're the expert in every-

Analyzing Social

Your website is your primary level of connecting, especially for the first time with brides, but you can, and should, optimize your social media for AI searches, too, and this can complement your website.



Your social-media posts have a subtle yet impactful role in the way AI search engines find content and increasingly, they're focusing on shares, comments and trends on social sites, some of which can be paraphrased in answers they generate.

Content that gets a lot of eyeballs and is shared many times signals to an AI search engine that it's relevant and authoritative. The search engines trawl social-media sites so the content they provide is up-to-date. And the more diverse the content you offer on social media, including text, audio, photos and videos, the more AI understands about your store.

Social media can reinforce consistent messaging, credibility and real-world proof through reviews, says Kevin Indig, a growth advisor. But, he points out, the core rules still apply and you need “clear positioning (what you offer), consistent naming, proof (reviews, testimonials), and content that answers common questions. The goal is consistency across channels.”

On social media, repeat your core facts often: where you're located, appointment process, price ranges, designers carried, size range, lead times and alteration options.

“Social content can influence what people ask AI, what gets shared and what gets referenced indirectly,” says Duane Forrester, AI expert, who says it's most important to be clear and consistent.

He suggests using captions to describe what's happening in straightforward language; building highlights and pinned posts around tags so add “book an appointment” or a link to your FAQ within social media. And he suggests linking to specific pages on your website, not simply to your homepage.

It's slightly different than your website, Forrester says.

“On your site you structure for machines. On social you reinforce the storyline and send people to the webpage that finishes the job,” he says.

Tips for achieving strong GEO through your social media:

- Create sharable content.
- Be timely. Use trending hashtags and new posts to be relevant.
- Encourage user interaction so brides want to comment and share.
- Cross-link back to your website as frequently as you can.

And don't forget to listen on social media. Monitor what brides are talking about and create content that specifically answers their questions or solves their problems. This also confirms you as an authoritative source.

Answer brides' questions in your website subheadings.

thing bridal.

Expertise: Ensure your content is accurate and goes into depth about what you sell and the experience you offer.

Authoritativeness: To show your authority, include quotes from satisfied customers and demonstrate your authority as bridal pros. You could also include industry statistics here, or quotes from bridal authorities (like VOWS!) and designers.

Trustworthiness: Be completely transparent about everything, from what an appointment looks like to payment and the vendors you work with.

"In GEO, your goal is to make your site easy for AI systems to understand, trust and use when answering real questions," For-

rester says. "Keywords still help because they anchor meaning. They signal what you sell, who it's for, where you serve and what problems you solve."

Topic clusters can also help with keywords. These are interlinked articles to more comprehensively cover a topic within your website. So you might have an article on tuxedos. A linked, sub-topic page might cover how a tuxedo should fit; how to care for a tuxedo; how to match tuxedos with bridal gowns. These are very helpful to the brides (and grooms) reading your website and are prized by GEO searches.

Writing Your Website

AI search engines appreciate clearly written articles that are easy to understand, are organized and offer important information under simple headings.

Keep your writing concise, eliminate flowery and vague language and break up long sentences and paragraphs.

Be descriptive in your subheadings, which helps AI (and brides) find the information they want and generates trust. Your About Us page, for example, could have headings such as Our History; Our Stylists; and Designers We Carry. Eliminate the subheading "Homepage," which doesn't answer any questions from brides.

Forrester suggests going through your website and pasting the text from each page into an AI engine then asking it "What questions would a bride still have after reading this?" Based on that, provide short, direct answers on the page.

The top three moves Forrester suggests to remove any website uncertainty are:

- Build or improve your appointments page, answering everything a bride needs to know including how long an appointment takes, what to bring, who can come and cancellation policy.
- Create a dress-shopping timeline and include its link throughout your site. This page can earn huge trust because it answers the common question: Am I too late? Include timelines for ordering, shipping, alterations and rush options.
- Make your designers page truly useful. List your designers, detail styles they're known for, how their dresses can be adjusted, your typ-

Tips From AI Search Engines

No story on how a bridal store should optimize its website to be found by AI search engines would be complete without asking an AI search engine.

So, in the interest of being thorough, VOWS asked Google's Gemini AI: *How should bridal stores create their websites to optimize for GEO searches?*

Here are some of its suggestions:

- Ensure your name, address and phone number are included as a footer at the bottom of every page and make sure this matches your Google Business Profile exactly.
- Be precise. Don't title a page Wedding Dresses but instead Romantic Wedding Dresses in Kansas City boutique Wedding Bells.
- Embed a Google map on your Visit Us page, which helps brides and AI search engines find your exact location.
- Caption every photo, otherwise it's a lost opportunity.
- Use low-resolution photos, which load quickly. Tools like TinyPNG or WebP can compress images while maintaining quality.
- Include local backlinks. Partner with others in the wedding industry, such as florists, caterers and photographers, and ask them to include a link to your website on their preferred vendors page. Offer to do the same for them. This shows you're a trustworthy store.





FORMAL MARKETS
AND MDCORE®

DISCOVER MORE IN ATLANTA

Le Blanc, Halston and Mia Paluzzi



Bariano Australia and Helsi



The Joyous Bride

Runway Shows | Complimentary Food & Drinks | Easy Travel | Convenient Hotels
Additional Apparel and Accessories Collections – All Under One Roof

March 30 – April 1, 2026 | August 3 – 7, 2026
Register now at [FormalMarkets.com](https://formalmarkets.com)

ical price range per designer, and a note about what's in-store.

These three changes, Forrester says, "do not require constant blogging. They require clarity. Clarity is what both humans and AI reward."

Other Website Enhancements

Use lists and tables on your website. You might want to compare salient features from different designers in a table, for example. Maybe one features more romantic dresses; another focuses on elaborate bodices. Not only does this make it easy for a bride to make comparisons, it makes it easy for AI, too. And AI can understand that these tables make your website very user-friendly.

Other factors to consider include how fast do your website's pages load? Google prioritizes fast-loading pages and for AI search engines this is even more important.

"Crawlability" is also essential. Crawlability refers to how easy your site is to navigate. It needs to have an obvious hierarchy of pages, and be simple for brides to move around and find the information they're looking for.

"This matters for GEO because AI systems learn faster when your information is structured," Forrester says. "It also helps traditional SEO because internal linking becomes clearer and stronger."

For good crawlability, each page should have a clear purpose (Designers, Booking an Appointment); clear titles and headings like Pricing or Prom. Keep sections small, with helpful subheads to enhance crawlability, and offer

Use AI for competitive analysis to improve your store.

direct answers to questions you know brides ask.

Also, keep your URLs as simple as you can: Use **myweddingshop/appointments** over **mywedding-shop/page?id34=7**.

The most important aspect of a bridal store's website is accuracy and whether it answers every question a bride might have, Forrester says. But keeping data current can also be a factor. Adding in periodic updates such as trunk shows, new collections, new hours for a different season and fresh quotes from brides can help you show up in AI searches but it's less important than being a reliable source.

"Reliability comes from consistency, completeness and not contradicting yourself across pages," Forrester says. "Updating key pages quarterly often beats posting a new blog every week."

Multi-Media Content

Videos don't impact SEO searches because the search engines can't decipher them but AI search engines can. This is also true for images, so ensure they're accompanied by authoritative captions that give brides more information.

Multi-media content like video, audio, podcasts, photographs, tend to lead to more engagement from users, and as a bonus, AI search engines consider them additional layers of information that provide more depth to your website's content.

Videos, such as a store tour, also ensure brides stay longer on your website. And here's the important part: The more time a

bride spends on your site, the more the engine will boost your ranking.

AI also understands that by demonstrating information in a video, you're making it easier to understand, especially if you're detailing something more complex like gown alterations or how to coordinate accessories.

Video, images, graphs, infographics are all must-haves for GEO.

Competitive Analysis

Now you've got the hang of AI, you can use it for another purpose: competitive analysis, or comparing yourself with other local bridal stores.

It's important to know what brides think of other boutiques and AI can analyze reviews online to see what's being said and give you helpful information to act on. If reviews of Competitor A are often mentioning rushed appointments, make it clear yours are the opposite.

Similarly, AI can see what your competitors are selling, largely through what they post online. If there's a sudden surge in sweetheart necklines, it might be time to include them in your posts and put some in your front window.

AI can also discover which designers and styles are resonating with local brides by tracking social-media mentions from other stores. And if a bride brings in a photo of a dress she found in your competitor's store that was almost right, an AI-powered visual search can help you find a close match.

Finally, AI can track brides' movements around the internet. If they're looking at your competitor's booking page and your pric-

ing page, you need to hook them, maybe by sending them an offer – this can be automated – for free champagne or snacks if they book an appointment.

Measuring Success

Once you've optimized your website for GEO searches, it's important to confirm it's working. Check how many appointments, calls and direction requests have come through your website. See how many people have emailed or texted you through it.

Then, using your website analytics or in Google Search Console, check what brides have been looking at, how long they've spent on different pages and which links they followed.

Finally, act like a bride. Using an AI search engine, input some questions, such as a real bride might enter, and see if your store factors in the responses. Also look at which pages are being linked through the AI search engine from any questions you ask.

After all, the bridal retailers who win in this next era won't simply be the ones with the most beautiful stores or the biggest designer lists – they'll be the ones whose expertise is easiest to find, understand and trust.

GEO isn't about chasing algorithms. It's about translating what you already do best – guiding, educating and supporting brides – into clear, structured knowledge that both humans and AI can recognize. In a world where brides are no longer just searching for stores but asking AI who can help them, the boutiques that show up will be the ones that answer real questions with real authority.

Accessories.

Your Boutique's Secret Weapon

Margins for you, personalization for her.

Accessories are
more than an
add-on.

While wedding gowns take center stage, accessories quietly drive revenue and elevate the bridal experience. Boutiques across the U.S. approach accessories in three ways: some avoid them entirely, others tuck them in the background, while a select few integrate them strategically as part of a full-service experience.

Hidden Goldmine or Missed Opportunity?

You may see accessories as optional or distracting, and it's common to place items on a far wall, letting brides discover them on their own. Your sales team might hesitate to introduce them, worried about overwhelming the bride or creating a sense of pushiness.

But accessories are more than add-ons – they're some of the highest-margin products in your boutique. Including a veil, headpiece or jewelry with a gown sale can add hundreds of dollars to the transaction. Even a brief, intentional conversation with a stylist can generate meaningful revenue.

You can make accessories work for your boutique by:

- Creating a dedicated accessories section with visible, accessible displays
- Assigning staff to interact regularly with brides and gown consultants
- Encouraging finishing touches appointments to complete the look
- Promoting items through social media and e-mail campaigns

When you execute these strategies thoughtfully, your accessories become more visible and accessible, increasing both

sales and customer satisfaction.

Accessories Close the Sale

Accessories don't just drive revenue – they help brides visualize their wedding-day look. You can use veils, headpieces, sashes and belts to turn hesitation into commitment. In many cases, a well-chosen accessory is the final nudge that gets the bride to say yes to her gown.

High-profile bridal media confirms this effect. On shows like *Say Yes to the Dress*, stylists pair gowns with accessories to inspire a complete look and finalize the sale. You can replicate this in your boutique, giving brides an experience that online-only retailers can't provide.

The Modern Bride Demands Personalization

Today's brides want individuality, customization and a vision of their wedding-day look. You can use accessories to deliver this, creating combinations that feel personal rather than cookie-cutter.

Even modest accessory sales can make a big difference. If you've ever pulled back on selling veils or headpieces, you've likely seen the revenue impact. Reintroducing accessories can restore and boost profitability, sometimes adding tens of thousands to your bottom line. Many boutiques routinely sell \$400 or more in accessories alongside a \$1,000 gown.

Managing the Risks

Accessories trends are cyclical. Cathedral veils may fall out of favor, statement

belts may surge and once-popular items may sit in inventory. Still, accessories lower price point and high margin makes them easier to manage than gowns.

Challenges also include tight budgets and appointment fatigue. Brides may arrive focused on the gown, and you may hesitate to push extra items. You can overcome this by offering finishing touches appointments, hosting accessory-themed events and running targeted promotions.

Your Boutique's Brick-and-Mortar Advantage

Competition from online marketplaces and national retailers is fierce, but your boutique has an edge: you can show, style and dress brides with accessories firsthand. This tactile, curated experience can turn browsing into a purchase.

You can highlight the versatility of a veil, the sparkle of a headpiece, complementing jewelry or the impact of shoes in a way photos alone cannot convey. For brides who see their wedding day as a once-in-a-lifetime event, this personalized service is invaluable.

Make Accessories Part of Your Strategy

Accessories aren't just revenue boosters - they're tools to complete the bridal experience. When you train staff, curate inventory and integrate accessories into every appointment, you create a more engaging shopping journey, satisfy today's brides and grow sales without the space or investment required for gowns.

In today's bridal market, accessories aren't optional - they're essential. If you embrace them fully, you'll elevate your bride's look and your bottom line.

Continued on page 92

Selling Accessories Tips

Stock to Sell

To sell accessories, your boutique first needs to carry them. This is an investment, but it's the only way brides can try on and experience different options firsthand. Accessories are easy to acquire quickly and typically have high profit margins, making them a smart addition to your store.

Curate a Unique Collection

Mix established designers with niche or emerging brands to create a collection that stands out. A distinctive, hard-to-find assortment positions your boutique as a destination and gives brides options they won't see anywhere else.

Buy for Your Brides, Not Yourself

Focus your purchases on what your brides want, not personal taste. Stock items that complement your gown inventory and appeal to the clients visiting your boutique.

Follow the Dresses

Accessories should complement your gowns, so track trends and adjust your selection accordingly. Longer trains require extended veils, lace gowns pair beautifully with lace headpieces and seasonal shifts in gown style should guide your accessory choices. Always buy with your current inventory in mind.

Stay Current with Inventory

Invest consistently in new accessory styles while managing existing stock. Sell samples that aren't moving and remove items that consistently underperform. Keeping your selection fresh and relevant encourages sales and aligns with bridal trends.

Integrate Accessories into Events

Use trunk shows and other in-store events to showcase a wide variety of accessories. This keeps your collection exciting and gives your team insight into what resonates with brides.

Display with Purpose

Thoughtful merchandising elevates perception. Showcase necklaces and earrings in glass cases with lighting, hang belts for visibility and accessibility, and arrange headpieces and jewelry in polished, coordinated displays to suggest complete bridal solutions.

Plant the Idea Early

Highlight accessories wherever possible - mannequins, windows, social media and fashion shows. Pair accessories with gowns to subtly communicate a complete look, planting the seed in brides' minds.



Engage and Excite Brides

Bring energy and enthusiasm to every interaction. Listen, provide guidance and use accessories to help brides visualize their full bridal look. This approach is especially effective with undecided clients.

Be Proactive, Not Passive

If a bride leaves with just a gown, she may shop elsewhere for accessories. Introduce complementary pieces during appointments or schedule a dedicated session to maximize the opportunity to sell a full ensemble.

Guide with Intent

Accessories can easily fade into the background. Stay deliberate about presenting them. Suggest veils, belts or jewelry to help brides see their complete wedding-day vision and make confident purchasing decisions.

Show, Don't Just Tell

Demonstrate accessories in action. Style a bride's hair, add a veil or headpiece and let her see herself fully accessorized. Even if she initially declines, this is often the best chance to illustrate the impact of a piece. Extend this approach to bridesmaids, mothers and other wedding attendees.

Coordinate Thoughtfully

Train staff to match accessories with gowns, body types, venues and budgets. Encourage experimentation with combinations to build excitement and expertise that drives sales.

Highlight Quality and Value

Brides may be surprised by accessory prices. Emphasize craftsmanship, durability and overall quality to show why investing in these items is worthwhile.

Leverage Boutique Talent

Use your team's skills and your resources strategically. Stylists can provide expert guidance, seamstresses can offer customizations, and digital tools like social media, POS data and real-bride photos can inform purchasing and marketing decisions.

Motivate Your Team

Tie accessory sales to commission bonuses or incentives. Motivated staff are more likely to actively introduce and upsell items, boosting both engagement and revenue.

Encourage Brides to Buy Now

Use pricing flexibility to incentivize immediate purchases. A "buy now" discount leverages high margins while encouraging brides to complete their ensemble during their visit.

Continued from page 91

**By Eric Smith
Bel Aire Bridal**

Continuing and emerging accessory and veil trends:

Veils remain one of the most powerful styling statements in bridal, with a strong return to drama – particularly in cathedral lengths. Foldover circular veils are gaining momentum for their soft fullness without added bulk. Mantilla cathedral veils continue to stand out, ranging from delicate Chantilly and Alençon laces to dramatic all-over lace designs. Brides are clearly leaning into romance and presence, and longer silhouettes deliver both.

Glitter tulle veils edged with simple beading or scattered pearls and subtle rhinestones are resonating strongly, especially when paired with shimmer-infused gowns. At the same time, classic cut-edge and horsehair-trim silhouettes in waltz and cathedral lengths remain steady performers for the minimalist bride.

Another notable shift is the rise of the accessory change. Brides increasingly choose a dramatic cathedral veil for the ceremony and transition to a shorter style for the reception. Updating accessories is one of the easiest and most cost-effective ways to refresh the look for key moments.

In headpieces, tiaras are having a clear resurgence - particularly lower-profile designs featuring pearls and soft sparkle. Delicate headbands, clips and combs also remain strong sellers.

Belts continue trending toward refined simplicity, with thin tonal styles featuring subtle beading or pearls especially popular. Jewelry is leaning toward Old Hollywood glamour, with statement earrings often replacing larger ceremony headpieces.

Tips for merchandising:

Accessories should be merchandised as a curated styling experience, not storage. The most successful stores edit their displays thoughtfully, featuring best sellers and new arrivals rather than overcrowding racks. When veils and headpieces have space to breathe and are organized by length or style, perceived value rises. Veils in particular require height, movement and proper care. Cathedral veils should cascade naturally rather than being folded into cubbies. Accessories should also be integrated into the gown experience and introduced early in the appointment.

Sales tips:

Successful accessory selling comes down to timing and presentation. Secure the gown decision first, then transition seamlessly



Emerging trend: Continuing trend: cathedral-length cathedral-length circular fold-over veils. Mantilla veils for a traditional look.

into styling. Instead of asking if she would like a veil, say: "Now let's finish your bridal look."

Accessories must be shown, not explained. When the stylist places the veil and gives the bride a quiet moment with the mirror, the emotional connection often drives the sale.

Stores that postpone accessories to later appointments frequently lose revenue. The most successful retailers prioritize styling immediately after the gown decision with three go-to veil options ready: lace, embellished and clean.

In-store promotions — Trunk Shows:

Accessory trunk shows are powerful drivers of incremental sales, especially for brides who did not initially purchase a veil. Position events as exclusive, limited-time experiences and enhance them with value-added elements such as on-site hairstyling demonstrations.

Social media:

Social remains underutilized for accessories. Effective content includes:

- "Veil of the Week" features
- Before-and-after transformations
- Educational clips on veil lengths and lace types
- Style-swap videos showing one gown styled multiple ways
- Featuring real brides is especially impactful. Wedding-day imagery, testimonials and first-look moments reinforce the emotional power of a fully styled bridal look and drive in-store demand.

Continued on page 94



As a Veteran, when someone raises their hand for help, you're often one of the first ones to respond. But it's also okay to get help yourself. Maybe you want or need assistance with employment, stress, finances, mental health or finding the right resources. No matter what it is, you earned it. And there's no better time than right now to ask for it. **Don't wait. Reach out.**



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Find resources at [VA.GOV/REACH](https://www.va.gov/reach)

theBridalOutlet

PROM 2026

New Arrivals

Visit our website to see
our full collection



Prom Night

Disco

MEGA Bag

Featuring a
HUGE
24 inch
boxed bottom
gusset

1 (800) 758-8779
www.thebridaloutlet.com

Continued from page 92

By Ariel Taub
Ariel Taub™
Modern Accessories

Continuing trends:

Pearl accessories continue to be highly requested across all categories, from veils to jewelry to belts. They're timeless, but when styled in modern silhouettes, they still feel fresh. Earrings remain the top-selling jewelry category for brides because they work with every gown style and instantly complete a look. Personalization also remains strong, especially through monograms, handwritten phrases and custom details that make a piece feel one-of-a-kind.

Emerging trends:

Dramatic lace veils are having a moment. From cathedral lengths and mantilla cuts to all-over lace and bold lace trims, it's truly all about the lace. There is also growing demand for veil alternatives like capes and dramatic wraps for brides who want impact without wearing a traditional veil. Birdcage veils are making a comeback; we saw a strong number of retailer requests for them last season. Gold jewelry is another notable shift, particularly among modern, fashion-forward brides.

Retailer recommendations:

Versatility is key. Offering jewelry styles in both gold and silver colorways allows retailers to tap into current trends while still serving the timeless bridal customer. Silver will always be a staple. Pearl jewelry remains a must; consider carrying styles that mix pearls with crystal for a modern touch. Carrying a range of veil lengths and details gives stylists flexibility on the floor and creates more opportunities for meaningful upsells that truly transform a bride's look.

Suggestions for promoting in-store and online/social:

Introduce accessories early in the appointment. Let brides know from the start that while they're waiting, they're welcome to browse jewelry and headpieces, place anything they love in a tray and try it on during their appointment. This naturally weaves accessorizing into the experience. When a bride is close to saying yes to her dress, that's the moment to style the full look. Putting the veil on is often when she truly feels like a bride. Another effective technique is having her close her eyes while you style her and then open them – it creates an emotional moment that can help close the sale.

*Brides can try it on...
 that's where sales happen.*



Emerging trend: Birdcage veils.

By Judy Johnson
JL Johnson Bridal Veils

Continuing and emerging veil and headpiece trends:

A broad trend we have observed over several years is the steady increase in average veil length. Waltz, chapel and cathedral veils are more popular than ever.

Mantilla veils are experiencing growing sales across every region, no longer remaining niche. Mantillas featuring Chantilly lace and cathedral lengths are especially strong performers.

We are also seeing exceptional results from what we call statement veils – long, dramatic styles designed to make an impact. These veils often become the focal point of the bridal look. They stop traffic in store windows, photograph beautifully and stand out on social media.

Most brides ultimately choose one veil, making the selection process especially important. When stores actively place veils on brides, sell-through improves dramatically. Veils remain one of the most transformative, versatile and high-margin accessories in the bridal category. Encouraging hands-on try-ons helps brides connect emotionally with the look and confidently invest in a standout piece.

Brides are increasingly choosing veils based on how they photograph and move – not just how they look standing still. Flow, train length, lace placement and edge detail matter more than ever in an era of professional photography, videography and social sharing.

Our beaded-edge fingertip and waltz-length veils also continue to perform consistently due to their versatility across a wide variety of gown styles.

*A 10-minute
 accessory chat can
 transform your sales.*



Continuing trend: Long, dramatic styles to make an impact.





enVogue Bridal Accessories



enVogue Bridal Accessories

By Liz Hamilton
enVogue Bridal Accessories

Emerging/continuing accessory trends:

Continuing trends in the hair accessory category include hair jewelry, with tiaras and headbands beginning to make a comeback. Earrings and belts also remain strong contenders in the accessory category.

Our advice to stores is to try to place some type of accessory on every bride when she has a dress on. Accessories tend to be an afterthought, so making them part of the initial try-on typically leads to greater success in selling those pieces with the dress.

Emerging and in-demand accessories include scarves, after-market straps, gloves and statement sleeves. Most brides are looking to make an impact on their wedding day. Adding multiple accessories enhances the look and draws more attention. Brides are your walking billboard for other soon-to-be brides. With the number of brides planning multiple dress changes, stores can also encourage accessory changes to complement each look. In this case, less is not always more.

Tips for merchandising headpieces and veils:

Showcasing accessories is critical to selling them. They need to be

Emerging trend: hair jewelry, tiaras and headbands.

Emerging trend: scarves, after-market straps, gloves and statement sleeves.

front and center so brides see them immediately upon entering the store and begin thinking about how to pair them with their dress.

We recommend using neutral display colors: linen, ivory, clear and gold are our top choices. Remember, the focus should remain on the piece, not what it's sitting on. The display should still look beautiful and draw attention, but the accessory must remain the star.

Suggestions for promoting in-store and online/social:

We have found that Reels perform significantly better than stand-alone images on social media. Consider creating a short Reel showing different accessory options paired with one particular dress.

Help brides understand that the pieces they purchase from your store are higher quality than items found at the mall or online. For example, our pieces are rhodium plated (white gold) and, when properly cared for, will last for years.

Some stores offer a special discount when accessories are purchased at the same time as the dress. This provides added value, ensures coordination and gives the bride one less thing to worry about later. As we often say at market: "Whatever you love, you're going to sell." Find pieces you truly believe in and sell them confidently!

Continued on page 96

Breastcancer.org is a nonprofit organization
DEDICATED to providing the most
reliable, complete and **UP-TO-DATE**
information about breast cancer.

Our mission is to **HELP WOMEN**
and their loved ones make sense of all the
complex medical and personal information
about breast cancer, so they can make the
BEST DECISIONS for their lives.

Visit us at: www.breastcancer.org



BREASTCANCER.ORG

**KNOWLEDGE.
CLARITY.
CONFIDENCE.**

Continued from page 95

By Dorothy Silver, Head Buyer and Director of Merchandising

Kleinfeld's approach/ philosophy regarding accessories and headpieces/veils:

We believe the perfect wedding dress deserves equally thoughtful accessories. The right finishing touch can transform a look. Kleinfeld offers hundreds of accessories, from headpieces and veils to jewelry and gifts, ensuring every bride can find pieces that reflect her individual style and complete her bridal vision for her and her bridal party.



Our philosophy on bridal accessories centers on individuality – believing every bride should have the freedom to personalize her style through thoughtfully curated details.

Accessories are a great way for a bride to showcase multiple looks throughout the day without having to change the dress. For example, you can wear a long cathedral veil down the aisle and remove it and replace it with a comb or headpiece for the reception.

Another option is wearing a bolero or long-sleeve body suit for the ceremony, and removing it for the reception or selecting a dress with a detachable overskirt and removing that for the afterparty. With accessories, the options are endless!

Besides the tradition of the veil and the beautiful photo content it creates on the wedding day, it is often the



closing factor in the dress purchase. When you add a veil to a dress that a bride loves, it often seals the deal with a YES! {Yes to the dress!}

Suggestions for displaying/merchandising:

Within our showroom, we have accessory displays that showcase items such as headpieces, veils, jewelry, etc. It is immersed within the shopping experience so the bride can see and try-on potential options as she shops for her wedding dress.

Kleinfeld stylists always help the bride to complete the full look and provide accessory options to complement the wedding look while she is shopping for the dress.

Many designers create matching veils to complement their dress collection. Often time, we will carry the matching veil or during a trunk show brides can view and try on the full look from head to toe.

It can be difficult to photograph veils; at Kleinfeld we find that video content showcasing the veil on an actual bride (or model) performs best on social media.



By Julie Levitt Marionat Bridal Veils

Continuing and emerging headpiece & veil trends:

Veils remain a major focus for today's brides, with demand leaning toward both traditional and statement-making styles. Chantilly mantillas continue to be highly requested, while pearls remain a top trend for both veils and headpieces. Crystal-beaded cathedral edges and leafy lace edges are also strong sellers. Among headpieces, bands and tiaras continue to perform well as brides seek elevated finishing touches.

How boutiques can take advantage:

Stock a balanced mix of clean classics and statement veils, and introduce veils early in the appointment to help brides visualize the full look. Rather than asking if a bride wants a veil, confidently say, "Let me grab a veil that would look beautiful with this dress," and style it during the fitting.

Belts

Belts remain an easy way to customize a gown, especially for brides seeking subtle sparkle or waist definition. Slim, refined belts are particularly popular for modern silhouettes.

How boutiques can take advantage:

Merchandise belts near gowns and style them during fittings to demonstrate an instant transformation.

Jewelry

Bridal jewelry is no longer understated. Statement earrings and drop clusters, modern pearl designs and layered necklace stacks are trending, with brides embracing bolder finishing pieces that still feel bridal.

How boutiques can take advantage:

Curate a focused selection and present jewelry as the final styling touch. Jewelry can also be introduced during alteration appointments as an additional sales opportunity.

Other Accessories

Gloves continue to make a comeback, including satin gloves, tulle fingerless styles, lace finishes and pearl-accented designs. For brides opting out of a veil, tulle capes -especially styles with sleeves – are becoming a popular alternative when paired with clean, simple gowns.

Merchandising Tips

Keep accessories near dressing rooms and style them during the appointment. Rather than asking, simply add a veil or headpiece while the bride is trying on gowns - seeing the complete look often drives the sale.

In-Store & online promotion

Once brides leave the store, many begin shopping online. Encourage same-day accessory purchases with in-store incentives, such as a discount when accessories are purchased with the gown, and build that value into your overall pricing strategy.



Emerging trend:
Crystal-beaded cathedral edges and leafy lace edges are also strong sellers.



Emerging trend: Statement earrings and drop clusters, modern pearl designs and layered necklace stacks are trending.

Continued on page 98



Melange de Blanc

The premier destination at
New York Luxury Bridal
Fashion Week



APRIL 8 - 9, 2026

OCTOBER 13 - 15, 2026

Starrett-Lehigh Building
601 West 26th Street
New York, NY 10001

REGISTER NOW:



Melangedeblanc.com



Continued from page 96

By Jackie Deoleo-Thomas Maritza Bridal Veils

Continuing and emerging headpiece and veil trends:

Brides continue to love veils in multiple lengths, with increased interest in waltz and royal cathedral lengths. They are also highly interested in additional accessories such as gloves, scarves, capes and straps. There is a growing emphasis on creating a personalized look by layering accessories with the gown.

We have seen a decrease in headpiece sales, likely due to brides managing budgets across the bridal shopping experience. However, there remains strong interest in tiaras and crowns.

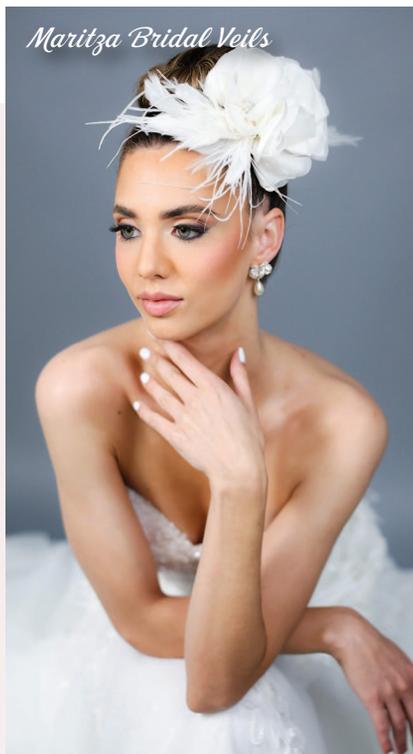
Retailer recommendations:

Headpieces and veils should be kept in close proximity to where the bride is presenting the dress she is wearing and should be thoughtfully matched to specific gowns. Consider color-coding veils to corresponding dresses for easier styling.

As with our children, we should show every veil some love instead of repeatedly selecting the same styles. Consider rotating featured pieces weekly - perhaps creating a "Veil of the Week."

Suggestions for promoting in-store and online/social:

One of the most effective ways to secure accessory sales is to always place a veil



Continuing trend: Creating a personalized look by layering accessories with the gown.

on the bride during the initial dress appointment and not hesitate to showcase one of your most elaborate and beautiful styles - ideally something she cannot easily find online.

Another strong strategy is scheduling a follow-up accessory appointment within two to three months. This keeps the bride engaged and reinforces the full bridal experience, which we know is key.



Continuing trend: Strong interest in tiaras and crowns.

Ti Adora Jewelry



Continuing trend: Pearls remain a key bridal jewelry trend, now with a modern update.

by Maria Ruggieri Ti Adora Jewelry

Continuing Accessory Trends:

Bridal jewelry is moving away from overly delicate styles and toward pieces with real presence - particularly statement earrings that feel intentional and heirloom-worthy. Today's bride is confident in selecting jewelry that frames the face, photographs beautifully and feels meaningful rather than minimal.

Pearls, reimagined:

Pearls remain a key bridal jewelry trend, now with a modern update. While the classic round pearl is timeless, brides are increasingly drawn to organic, baroque shapes that feel fresh and individual.

Sculptural Crystal:

Where form meets function:

Alongside pearls, sculptural crystal designs are emerging as a defining trend. Clean silhouettes, architectural crystal shapes and refined settings allow form to take center stage rather than embellishment.

Accessories complete the bridal experience.

Pearls & crystal in conversation:

Sculptural pearls are thoughtfully paired with refined Austrian crystal in rich hues such as emerald, aquamarine and Montana, creating pieces that transition seamlessly beyond the wedding day.

Mother of the Bride & bridal party:

Accessories for mothers and bridal parties continue to grow in importance. Today's customers seek elevated pieces with thoughtful coordination rather than overly matched sets.

Merchandising tip:

Create a dedicated Mother of the Bride and bridal party accessory display organized by color family to simplify coordination and streamline styling.

Promoting jewelry in-store and online/social:

Storytelling is key. Accessories sell best when brides can see their transformative effect. Focus on styled, real-life moments rather than product-only imagery. Short-form video is particularly powerful – showing earrings being tried on, styled with different necklines or paired with various hairstyles helps brides understand scale and impact.

Continued on page 100



NOW IS THE TIME TO JOIN NBRA

- ✓ Strength in Numbers
- ✓ Have your Voice Heard in Washington
- ✓ Support your Fellow Bridal Shop Owners

NBRA's Mission

EDUCATION
ADVOCACY
EMPOWERMENT



NBRA is a 501(c)6 trade association for independently-owned brick & mortar bridal shops in the US.



Visit our website for more details and to join for free:
nationalbridalretailersassociation.com



Looking for more immediate news of the industry? Visit Vows Magazine's NEW news blog:

www.vovsmagazine.com

And sign up for the RSS feed to be notified of the latest postings! Posting of company news, bridal e-headlines, and links as it happens!

Continued from page 99

by Kaitlin Smith
Veil Trends/J Picone

Continuing and emerging headpiece and veil trends:

Our brides are all about detailed edging, whether that's a dainty Chantilly or Alençon lace edge, cording, ribbon or horsehair braid. We're also seeing strong interest in two-layer styles – the blusher is back! While trends come and go, maintaining a healthy stock of classic styles will always keep assortments relevant and stylish.

Veils remain a staple for completing the full bridal look. However, we've seen a sharp decline in demand for headpieces and belts.

Tips for merchandising headpieces and veils:

We find most stores clip their veils. We recommend clipping at the comb and securing the bottom edge for long veils. Clipping in the middle can cause tears, and veils should never be pulled off the clip.

When folding and clipping veils, display key details so stylists and brides can clearly see what you carry. We also recommend grouping top sellers together for quick access and merchandising other veils by similar style.

Suggestions for promoting in-store and online/social:

We've seen retailers achieve strong results with accessory nights: offer a discount, provide snacks and drinks, and invite brides to return with family and friends to finalize the finishing touches of their look.

We also highly recommend that stores tag their designers in social posts and invite them to collaborate. We love showcasing our brides and retail partners whenever possible, and accessories are often the most frequently missed tags.

Veil Trends/J Picone



Continuing trend: it's all about detailed edging.



Credit: Something New Boutique, Colorado Springs, Colo.

Continuing trend: Focusing on aesthetic accessory displays.

by Andrea Alvarez
WW Displays, Inc.

Suggestions for promoting in-store and online/social:

Having worked closely with the bridal industry for more than a decade, one of the most common topics we hear from clients is the challenge of effectively displaying accessories. The primary constraint is often space. Bridal store layouts typically prioritize gowns and photo moments, making it difficult to create efficient yet aesthetic accessory displays.

With our focus on space planning and customer flow, we strongly recommend vertical displays. For hanging items such as belts, jackets and veils, rotating spiral racks, wall bars at varied heights and ceiling-hung displays maximize visibility. Smaller items like earrings and necklaces attract strong attention when presented on elevated display cards paired with distinctive wall shelving that doubles as artwork.

If your store features a seating area, coffee tables and side tables can also function as display cases. For stores carrying extensive inventory, customized wall systems are both efficient and highly effective for brand amplification.

Standard tables and shelving can work well, but when space is limited and the vision is specific, custom solutions significantly enhance the customer experience and inventory visibility. If you have nowhere to display it, it becomes much harder to sell it. Investing in visual merchandising directly impacts sales success.



Credit: Something New Boutique, Colorado Springs, Colo.

In-store merchandising: Glass accessory table displays.



Credit: Something New Boutique, Colorado Springs, Colo.

Quick Tips

Do: Strategically decide where accessories should live in the store – near fitting rooms, in the viewing area for the “I said yes” moment or near checkout for last-minute additions.

Don't: Invest heavily in inventory but underinvest in presentation. How merchandise is displayed directly shapes perceived value.

We need you!

**MILESTONE FASHION
IS BEING MISCLASSIFIED
AND UNDERREPRESENTED.
HELP US FIX THAT.**

We have **one clear goal:**

Reclassify milestone fashion from "daywear" to "one-time wear."

This small change will have a massive economic impact.

It's the first step toward fair standards, proper recognition,

and a stronger future for our entire industry.

Join us. Scan the code below and help secure a financially viable, stable future—for all of us.



Join here!

**TOGETHER, WE CAN BUILD A FAIR STANDARD
FOR THE ENTIRE INDUSTRY.**

nafa.com for more information

NAFAA

North American Formal Apparel Association





“Be the River”



How Macky Diaz built Brides of Florida by refusing to stand still.

Where Is It?

Brides of Florida is located in Kendall, one of the largest neighborhoods in Miami with 80,000 residents comprising a mostly Hispanic community. Kendall is widely considered a great, family-friendly place to live, offering a popular suburban-urban mix of top-rated schools, extensive shopping and dining and numerous parks. It is conveniently located only 20 minutes from Miami International Airport, making it easy for brides to visit from everywhere. In addition to local traffic Brides of Florida receives brides from Europe, Canada and throughout south and central America.

As a child, Macky Diaz’s mother used to ask her: *Do you want to be a lake or do you want to be a river?*

A lake stays still. A river keeps moving – adapting, carving new paths and finding ways forward even when obstacles appear.

Macky chose the latter. That mindset has guided the now 55-year-old through every stage of building Brides of Florida, transforming what began as a 950-square-foot gamble into a 15,000-square-foot Miami destination. This boutique has excelled due to disciplined decisions, strong instinct and a clear understanding of exactly who its bride is – and how best to serve her.

“Brides of Florida is a reality of someone who had no idea how to do a bridal shop and didn’t go to school to be a business owner,” Macky says. “Out of sheer determination I have not allowed myself to get stuck in one thing and just continue to grow and grow. Growing is living!”

Diving In

This story begins with an overheated housing market. In 2006, Macky, who’d spent the past decade working for time-

share exchange company Interval International, was saving up to buy a house.

It didn’t take long for her to abandon the idea, as housing prices soared. So, she pivoted and asked herself: maybe it’s time to start my business?

Immediately, Macky sprang into action, attending several markets to explore industries that interested her. She had strong sales skills and felt confident in any business where she’d have to move product. She considered textiles and launching a cosmetics line, though both carried higher risk.

Ultimately, when all analysis was said and done, Macky had two finalists: a car dealership or a bridal shop. The dealership intrigued her but the capital required – and subsequent need for a partner – made it less appealing.

Ultimately, Macky wanted something she felt comfortable with, where she could make enough money to keep going, pay it off and not have a huge chance to lose.

“So, I was very mathematical about it, and that’s how I ended up with a bridal store,” she says.

Originally, Macky wanted to open her bridal shop online, but after attending

A forced move tripled rent – and accelerated growth.

market in Chicago, abandoned that idea. Instead, she went the brick-and-mortar route, carefully selecting a modest 950-square-foot space in Kendall and opening Brides of Florida with a careful five-year plan.

"I took my time; I wanted it to be my own," she says. "I didn't want to ask for loans that would've left me with a bunch of debt if things didn't work out."

The boutique originally carried 100-150 samples, offering not just bridal but also quince, prom and mothers, although "nowhere near enough to be able to be like super successful in those." Nonetheless, Macky had found a niche – Kendall is heavily Hispanic and she became known for serving this customer. Traffic began to slowly build.

Then, as Brides of Florida's sixth year was about to begin, the landlord sold its building and Macky was informed her lease wouldn't be extended. She had to move.

She found a much bigger 2,500-square-foot space about five blocks away. However, it tripled her rent and caused immediate anxiety over whether she'd get enough customers to justify the difference.

"It was a very scary moment for me being the lone ranger but it was definitely a blessing in disguise," Macky says. "If that would not have happened, I think it would've taken longer to be where we are right now."

After expanding, in 2011, Macky made another pivotal decision: she eliminated all other niches and focused solely on brides. Brides of Florida now carried about 500 wedding gown samples and became known for size inclusivity – a rarity in Miami at the time. The

boutique also leaned heavily into social media, which "no one" was doing yet, and the strategy started to pay off – especially on Instagram.

Several years later, another expansion added 2,000 square feet and the first private fitting room, called the white room, which "was

a huge hit." Paid appointments were introduced as a means of dealing with increasing no-shows – again, a bold move – and they worked. Another expansion of 3,000 square feet brought the boutique to 8,000 square feet.

Last June, Brides of Florida took over the upstairs of its location, adding another 7,000 square feet for a current total of 15,000.

As the boutique grew, it returned to its roots, re-adding



Brides of Florida's charming greeting area.

Most Memorable Moment

It's difficult for Brides of Florida CEO Macky Diaz to pick one specific story, considering the fact she meets so many wonderful brides. However, she does remember one girl who came in by herself to get her gown.

She was quiet and only tried on a couple of gowns and wasn't really feeling any of them. Macky had been watching the whole appointment from her office, and took it upon herself to go grab this one dress and take it to the bride.

As she brought this dress to the bride's fitting room, Macky pointed out to the bride how much she loved it because it had the biggest "lashes" at the end of the lace.

The bride started to cry and hugged Macky.

"I was super confused, but she said her momma had just passed away and her nickname for her was 'lashes' since she was a baby with big lashes and it just stuck," Macky says. "We all cried with her, feeling that her momma wanted to let her know she was there and not alone."





Brides of Florida caters to mothers, special occasion and prom as well as brides.



Brides of Florida's boss lady single-handedly picks every gown in the store.

prom, special occasion and mothers' dresses.

"It's different now because we have a lot more employees, understand the concept better and wanted to give that option," Macky says. "Especially because in Miami we don't feel there was a place moms could get their dresses. They'd always be like: *I can't find anything around here. I've ordered 100 dresses online and nothing fits.*"

The expansion aims to serve this niche – and all is going smoothly, with one exception: every square foot of the store is rented.

"In Miami it's very hard to find buildings you can actually buy; nobody wants to get rid of their commercial space," Macky says. "That's one of my daily prayers: *please let this man sell me this building!*"

Riding the Current

Brides of Florida takes care of customers from beginning to end. This includes the entire sales process, alterations, dress cleaning and preservation, and keeping in contact after the fact to maintain a relationship.

The boutique, which caters to the very international Miami bride, is inclusive. It features 1,500 different wedding dresses in all sizes and styles.

"We have 100-150 dresses for every single different group so everyone feels they're able to try on what they're looking for and find what they want within their price point," Macky says.

Their number-one rule is that once a bride vocalizes a budget – as about 70% do – stylists aren't allowed to show her anything over.

Great vendor relationships help deliver exactly what brides want.

Great vendor relationships are also key.

"I think that's the most important thing any bridal shop should have," Macky says. "It's the biggest reason I'm successful."

Rather than spreading her inventory too thin, she believes in carrying just a handful of designers and buying in larger scales from them.

"That way I'm helping my vendor as well as bringing in things that actually work for my niche," she says. "For example, we do a lot of veils and the vast majority of our brides want LONG veils. Whenever we find veils we know are going to do well we'll buy lots of them. It's worth putting money into that so we have enough in the store."

As well, good vendor relationships allow you to really understand what a particular designer can offer, which better serves the customer and helps you out.

"I have the joy of being able to know that I can ask my designers: *are you guys making something like this because I need it now; people are asking for it!*" Macky says. "Usually, they'll be like: *yes and we'll try to get it in faster.* And that's awesome because then you can have something for everyone. I refuse to have someone walk in with a picture and not be able to show them something."

Equally important is a robust social-media presence.

Brides of Florida boasts impressive numbers – 187K followers on Instagram, 158K on TikTok and 55K on Facebook. Even more impressive, however, is the fact Macky runs every aspect of these accounts herself.

"I have no life whatsoever," she jokes. "I'm type A. I wish I could find somebody I'd feel comfortable enough to release that to, but I haven't been able to. I think having a bridal shop is like owning a restaurant. If you don't want to be in it 24-7 then you shouldn't even try because nobody is going to do it better than you."

Macky puts in an estimated 15-18 hours a week on social, reserv-

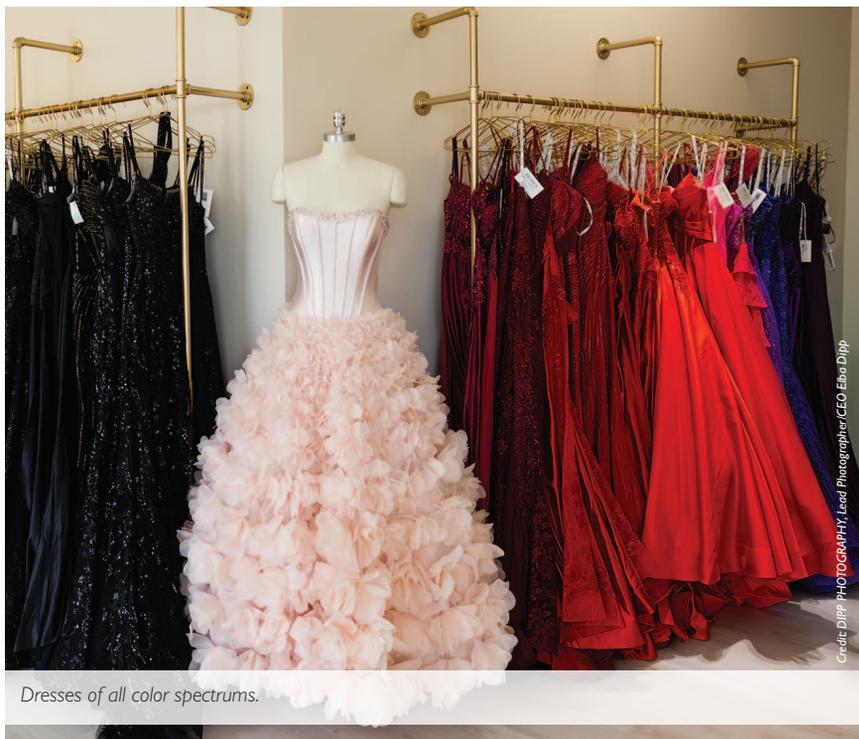


Brides of Florida model Chelsea with British longhair Coco.



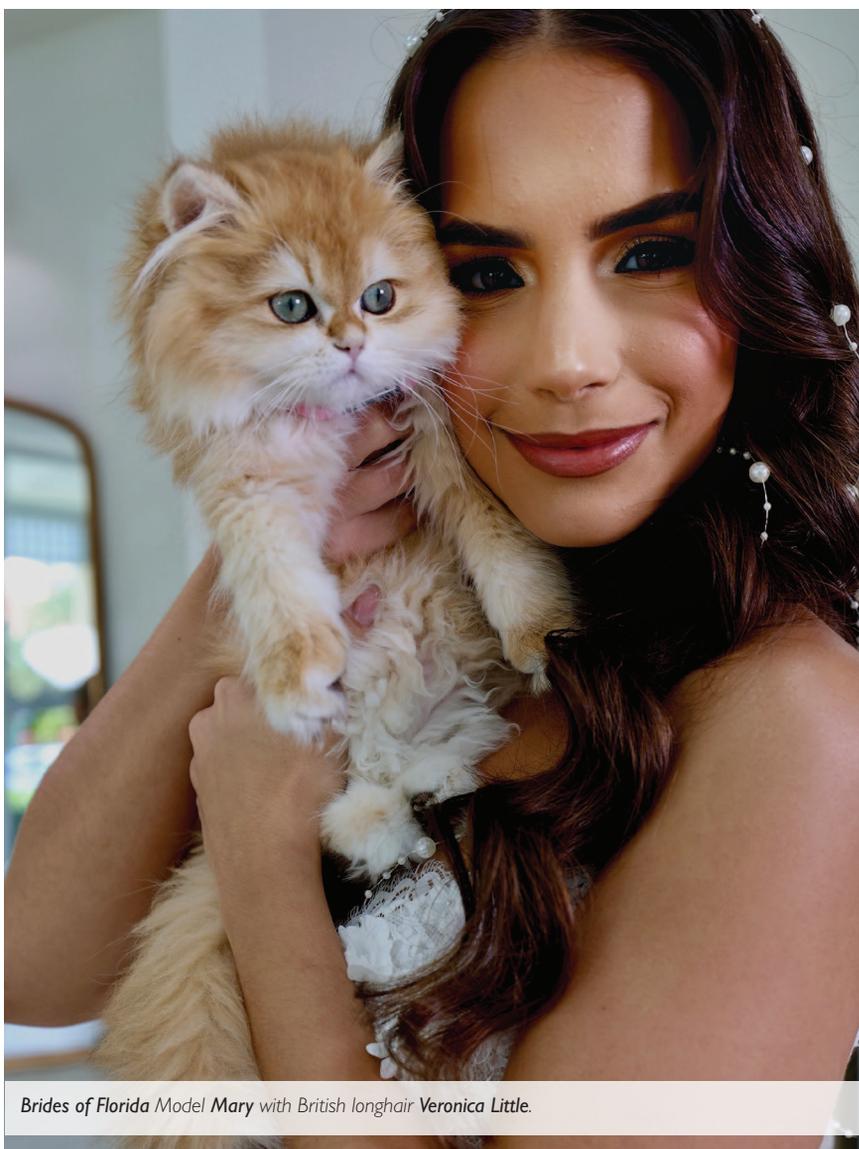
The crew that makes it all happen at Brides of Florida.

Credit: DIPP PHOTOGRAPHY, Lead Photographer/CEO Elba Dipp



Dresses of all color spectrums.

Credit: DIPP PHOTOGRAPHY, Lead Photographer/CEO Eiba Dipp



Brides of Florida Model Mary with British longhair Veronica Little.

ing Wednesdays for photoshoots, and has never purchased a single follower or ad. Her secrets to success include being real (“We use actual people instead of models and I think people feel connected to that”); resisting structure (“it just doesn’t work; the more structured the less it’s going to catch on”); and tuning out the algorithm (“you don’t know when it’s going to change, so you have to kind of ignore it and just do your thing.”)

Right now, TikTok is working best for them.

“One of the great things about it is some random post from months ago can start getting heat out of nowhere and go viral,” she says. “So the goal is to post different types of dresses because you never know which one will take off.”

To date, Macky’s most successful post has about 10 million views.

“It’s literally a dress that people find different and they’re all just commenting how much they dislike it,” she says. “It’s kind of funny. So my advice is to feature a unique dress and let it bring you customers!”

In addition to social media, Macky does the store’s website, which is designed to show off inventory by silhouette and style rather than designer.

“Most people don’t really seek out designers; they want to see if you have particular shapes of dresses,” Macky says. “So that has worked out for our benefit.”

To be honest, however, that benefit is limited.

“I’d love for (customers) to go to our website first but no - they find us through social media,” Macky says. “And backend data shows they’re going straight from

Flat-rate alterations became a powerful closing tool.

our home page to book an appointment. I have so many dresses on our website and most people aren't even seeing them!"

No Standing Water

Not only does Brides of Florida offer alterations – something Macky feels is necessary to service customers properly – but it charges a flat fee for them.

"A lot of my friends who own bridal shops call us crazy for this, but many people buy from Brides of Florida specifically for that," she says. "It makes a difference, brings a lot of relief and is a point of closing also."

This way, they can tell brides: *listen, we're not ordering X size so we can charge you an arm and a leg on alterations; you pay the same flat fee no matter what you need done.*

"It makes people a lot more comfortable buying their dress because they know they're not going to have some super-expensive surprise at the end," she says.

Appointments cost \$40, a fee that's assessed whether someone makes an appointment (encouraged, especially on weekends) or walks in.

"It's made a huge difference in our quality of customer," Macky says. "My customer is a serious customer who is shopping for a wedding dress, which is what I need."

That said, people are allowed to browse inventory before deciding whether to commit to an appointment and the fee is credited toward a gown purchase. If a customer shows resistance to paying it, Brides of Florida has learned to respond without a response.

"We should be able to make decisions for our business simply

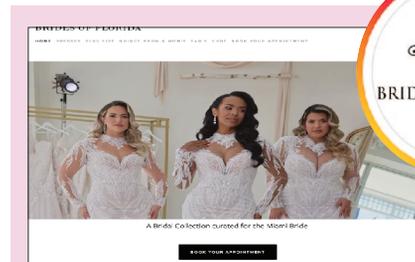
because it's our preference," Macky says. "Girls will usually say: *but other stores only charge if you don't show up.* And I'm like yes, *but that's not the way we work. If you're not okay with a fee you're welcome to visit other stores.*"

Speaking of costs, Macky is a big believer in paying people livable wages.

"I'm not in this business to be

rich; I want everybody to feel they're getting paid their fair share," she says. "I think that makes a difference and is why our employees don't want to leave - they feel safe in what they're being offered for their time. We try to take care of everyone."

It shows in her retention rates – about 60% of employees have been there for more than five years. When she does need to hire, Macky saves up resumes and tries to find people she knows, such as past brides. Google



In The Spotlight: Brides of Florida

Established: December 2006

Owner: Macky Diaz

Size: 15,000 square feet

Rent or Own? Rent

Number of Dressing Rooms: three

private rooms, seven standard rooms

Price Range of Gowns: \$1,000-\$6,000

Average Bridal Sale:
\$2,500

Percentage of Sales from Bridal: 80

Other Niches Carried:
mothers, prom, special occasion, quinces

Total number of staff (full and part-time): 14

Compensation Structure: hourly, commission and bonuses

Database Management System: Bridal Live

How are alterations handled: in-house, affordable flat-fee options

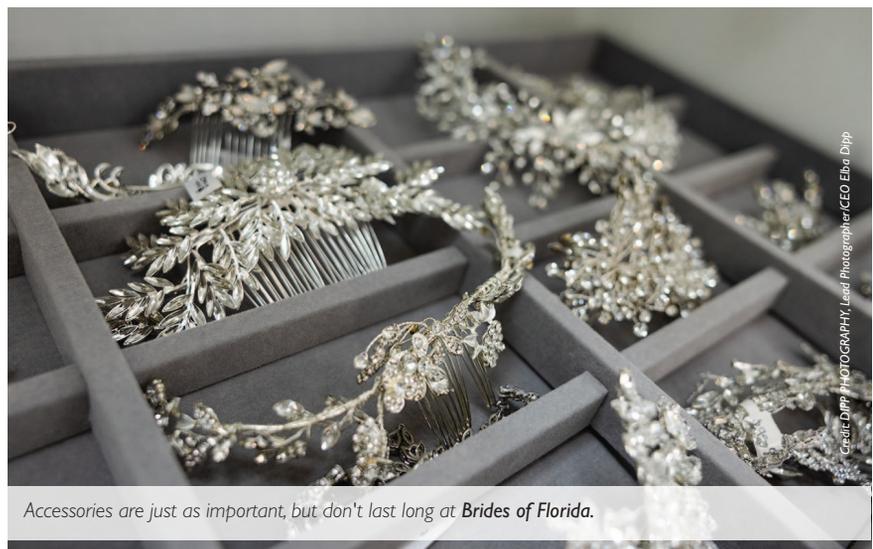
Website: www.bridesofflorida.net

Social-Media Stats:

Instagram: 187k @bridesofflorida

Facebook: 55,000 followers

TikTok: 158K @bridesofflorida



Accessories are just as important, but don't last long at Brides of Florida.



Brides of Florida's newest expansion area in the second floor.

Credit: DIPP PHOTOGRAPHY, Lead Photographer/CEO Elba Dipp



Front of the store rack for the newest trends.

Credit: DIPP PHOTOGRAPHY, Lead Photographer/CEO Elba Dipp

and Facebook are also helpful tools.

Boutique culture is super supportive. Seasoned employees are willing to help anyone struggling with sales, and one-on-ones are common. Macky and her sister actively pitch in too, picking dresses, assisting with closing – whatever is needed.

"We always talk about how we're all part of this big chain and if one of us isn't closed together properly, we're not going to be as strong as we can be," she says. "So, if anyone needs help, tell us! We're going to help you and it helps us be a stronger team."

Always Moving Forward

Brides of Florida is a very family oriented, with multiple family members assisting Macky. Her sister is general manager; her son-in-law is CFO and even her ex-husband's wife, with whom she is close, works at the store. Although Macky divorced at a young age and remains single by choice, her family, including daughter and two grandchildren, makes her very happy.

There's also another purrfect addition to the store: Macky's cat, a one-year-old British longhair named Veronica. She visits Brides of Florida at least once a month, always on a weekday in case someone is allergic or scared.

"Veronica is a total lap cat who'll just hang out and let everybody pet her," Macky says. "People love her!"

Macky also has three other cats at home – three-year-old white British longhair Coco, who used to visit the store when she was younger; 13-year-old Egyptian Mau Brad, who "is just a lover and the best!"; and 11-year-old

Changing window displays provides instant momentum.

tabby London, who was found in a dumpster and “is scared of everything.”

“I love cats so much; I am sincerely obsessed,” Macky says.

Incorporating aspects of her purrsonality into the boutique helps strength the Brides of Florida brand. Something else that has strengthened with time is Macky’s patience.

“You understand as time progresses that people are going through their stuff and you don’t know what’s behind closed doors,” she says. “You learn to not take things personal and I think that has made me a better human overall. I wish I would’ve learned that a lot sooner.”

That said, when the difficult moments inevitably hit, Macky chooses to “be a river.”

“Remember that frustrations or feeling stuck are temporary,” she says. “There’s always a way to move through these particular things.”

She has found that changing window displays is a great antidote to stress.

“You have no idea the difference that makes,” she says. “For some reason you feel like: Oh, that looks so much better! And it

brings you a little bit of an oomph and you can always move forward.”

Speaking of moving forward, Macky is currently focused on making her expansion, which added six more fitting rooms and a lot more space, really special.

“It feels like she’s going to be a moms’ store, which I love,” she says. “So we’re working on that.”

Long term, she plans to offer a school for seamstresses.

“I feel it’s a lost art and this generation wants to learn how to sew,” she says. “I’d love to be able to offer that.”

It’s all part of her five-year plan – which, like a river, constantly adapts.

After all, two decades in, Brides

of Florida hasn’t grown by standing on a single good idea but rather a consistent willingness to make deliberate decisions, even when they ran counter to industry norms.

Charging for appointments before it was common. Prioritizing size inclusivity early. Building a strong social presence long before it was expected. Offering flat-fee alterations despite skepticism. Each move reflected a belief that progress comes from adapting rather than waiting for certainty.

That same mindset will continue to shape the future because, in a business rooted in tradition, Brides of Florida has thrived by evolving - proving that long-term success isn’t built on standing still, but on the discipline to keep moving forward.



Q&A with Brides of Florida CEO Macky Diaz

Q: What approach do you take to market buys?

A: Market can definitely be overwhelming. We do our best to keep an organized timeframe.

Q: How is your business dealing with increased cost of goods (due to inflation & tariffs)?

A: We have been able to continue to offer our same price points thanks to our designers that were able to bring in gowns that stayed within what our brides ask for. We did not raise prices outside of MSRPs nor raise our alterations.

Q: What advice would you give small stores for thriving long-term?

A: Create relationships with your designers and commit to 2-3 instead of 10. Being a partner will always benefit you in the long run, especially when you get to know what works for the bride in your area.

Q: What is your advice for dealing with the indecisive bride?

A: Recognizing what is causing the indecisiveness helps to give out the response. Also offering payment plans before someone leaves might give you a surprise sale.

Q: What do you like to do outside of bridal?

A: On my time off I enjoy life with my kitties!

Looks & Lines

Bridal

Maggie Sottero, Sottero & Midgley, Rebecca Ingram, Enzoani, Elysee Bridal, Pen Liv, Kitty Chen Couture, Colby John Bridal, Sophia Tolli

Prom

Mon Cheri

Mothers

Mon Cheri

Quince

Mon Cheri



Our Vision Is Simple:

A world where no child is ever a bride.

BECOME A VOW PARTNER AND CHANGE THE FUTURES OF GIRLS EVERYWHERE.

Let's craft a custom partnership that supports VOW and resonates with your brand and community. Then, double your impact by introducing VOW to your clients and couples.

Join the movement to end child marriage!

Learn More: VOWforGirls.org/partners



vow
w for
Girls

To get your classified ad into VOWS' online and print magazine, e-mail info@vowsmagazine.com with the subject line "Classified", or call 949-388-4848.

Work Available

Opportunities from Established Headpiece Brand

Established headpiece manufacturer seeking driven sales reps. Multiple territories available. Submit your resumé to: bridalsalesrep@gmail.com.

European Bridal Collection Seeks Representation

Established European Bridal Collection is looking for talented U.S. Sales Representatives. Territories open with top commission package and local support. Call or text Starr Collins at 562-303-6777 for more information.

Jasz Couture Territories Available

Jasz Couture prom, pageant, evening wear is seeking representation. Contact Pam Nierenberg 561-722-6189 or e-mail Pamelasfashions@gmail.com for details.

National Representative Opportunity

Bianco Evento, European designer and provider of an extensive collection of bridal and social occasion dresses and accessories with no minimum order, no customs fees, delivery in 4-6 days with 95% of its collections in stock, is seeking an experienced individual to act as its U.S. National Representative. Duties would include acting as primary contact between U.S. accounts and Germany-based headquarters. Submit resumé to Bartosz Wodecki, bw@biancoevento.de. View the collections at <https://bianco-evento.com/de>; or call 347-609-4951.

Couture Bridal Designer Seeks Global Sales Rep

Amoretalla designs timeless, opulent wedding gowns using hand-sewn haute couture techniques. Fabrics, laces, pearls and genuine Swarovski crystals, including precious stones, are curated from around the world.

Amoretalla Bridal seeks successful sales representation for national and international markets. Commission-based position. The right candidate must have extensive experience and relationships in bridal markets. View the collections here: www.amoretalla.com. Serious inquiries to g.tallah@amoretalla.com and 603-685-8478.

Adornato Couture Bridal Seeking Representation

Adornato Couture Bridal collection is a bespoke, made-to-measure, customized experience for the bride.

As bridal retailers are searching for bridal lines with low minimums and primary market education, inquiries to carry Adornato Couture are increasing. As a result, we need more commissioned sales reps to service retailers. Contact Marie Adornato at info@Adornatocouture.com or 315-263-1712.

West Coast Territory Rep Opportunity

Major bridal manufacturer seeking experienced Sales Representative for the West Coast Territory. Qualified candidates must have a minimum of five years' experience and established relationships in the bridal industry.

Submit resumé and introductory letter to info@vowsmagazine.com.

Bridal Haute Couture Brand Seeking Reps

Bridal haute couture brand is looking for reps or distributors for multiple territories. Two to three years of bridal market experience with established contacts is preferred. E-mail your CV to ashleymccartney759@gmail.com.

Opportunity

Private Haute Couture Collection- Wholesale Opportunity

Luxury evening and bridal gowns available from a Private Collection of 100+ one-of-a-kind pieces. Ideal for boutiques, designers and resellers.

Available as full or partial lots at well below

couture pricing based in Miami. Inquire for detailed selection, catalog and quantities: Jaqueline at jaquelinesbridal@gmail.com or 305-443-6977.

Need a Designer?

Paula Varsalona, renowned Seventh Ave. fashion designer of bridal and social occasion, has been an Adjunct Professor at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) in NYC for many years. After each FIT school year she helps to place her top students into design positions in the industry. If you have a need for a bridal, bridesmaids, cocktail, prom or social occasion designer, contact Paula Varsalona at her NYC Showroom at 212-570-9100 or via e-mail at askpaula@paulavarsalona.com.

Policy Statement

VOWS Classified Ads are free to retail subscribers and advertisers. All others pay a \$200 flat fee for up to 25 words. Ads will be run twice, in two consecutive issues, and must then be renewed.

Note VOWS new mailing address:
23120 Alicia Parkway, Suite 200
Mission Viejo, CA 92692



Free Classified Listings

VOWS: Classified Ads are free to retail subscribers and advertisers.

Fax your requests to VOWS: Classifieds 949-388-8448
info@vowsmagazine.com



Identify your risks. Know what disasters are most likely to affect your business.

#BeInformed

<https://www.ready.gov>

Ready 

Company Name	Page Number	Company Name	Page Number
Allure Couture..... www.AllureBridals.com	52-53	Eddy K..... 877-678-3235 www.EddyK.com	4-5
All Who Wander..... www.AllWhoWander.com	65	Edward Berger Collection by Maritza's Bridal Veils.....	35 305-221-5308 www.MaritzasBridal.com
AlycePARIS..... www.AlyceParis.com	83	Enchanting by Mon Cheri Bridals.....	21 sales@moncheribridals.com www.EnchantingbyMonCheri.com
ANDMORE Formal Markets..... www.Atlanta-Apparel.com/Markets/Formal-Markets	87	Essense of Australia.....	64-65 800-941-1550 www.EssenseDesigns.com
Ashdon Brands/Lazaro..... 646-398-4850, cyndy@lazarobridal.com www.LazaroBridal.com	74-75	IDAN by House of Idan.....	6-7 www.HouseofIdan.com Saundra@houseofIdan.com
Bel Aire Bridal..... 800-992-9225 www.BelAireBridal.com	26-27	JH Couture.....	33 www.JimmeHuangBridal.com
Beloved by Casablanca..... 800-531-6494 www.CasablancaBridal.com	11	JL Johnson Bridal Veils.....	41 800-378-4431 www.JLJohnsonBridals.com
Bridal Collective..... 714-862-2755 www.Bridal-Collective.com	56-57	Justin Alexander.....	2 sales@justinalexander.com www.JustinAlexander.com
BridalLive..... 888-764-2605 www.BridalLive.com	89	Justin Alexander Signature.....	3 sales@justinalexander.com www.JustinAlexander.com
Casablanca Bridal..... 800-531-6494 www.CasablancaBridal.com	8-9	Kitty Chen Couture.....	49 909-483-4739 cs@kittychencouture.com www.KittyChenCouture.com
Christina Wu Bridal..... 800-732-8077 www.HouseOfWu.com	38-39, 114-115	Le Blanc Collection.....	10 800-531-6494 www.CasablancaBridal.com
Demetrios..... sales@demetrios.com www.Demetrios.com	24-25	Madi Lane Bridal Group.....	29 salesusa@madilane.com www.MadiLane.com
Dessy Group..... 646-638-9617 www.Dessy.com lori@dessy.com	37	Marionat The Bridal Veil Co.....	30-31 888-403-5255 www.Marionat.com
		Maritza's Bridal Veils.....	34-35 305-221-5308 www.MaritzasBridal.com
		Marsoni by Colors.....	61 www.Marsoni.com
		Martina Liana.....	65 www.MartinaLiana.com
		Martin Thornburg.....	12-13 sales@moncheribridals.com www.MartinThornburg.com
		Melange de Blanc New York Market.....	97 www.MelangeDeBlanc.com
		Mon Cheri Academy.....	20 www.MonCheriAcademy.com
		Monica Loretti.....	79 562-303-6777 star.collins@ymail.com https://MonicaLoretti.com



**When Heartbreak Turns to Hope,
You're There**
Down the street, across the country, around
the world – you help save the day. Every day.

Company Name	Page Number	Company Name	Page Number
Montage by Mon Cheri Bridals	16-17	Stella York	64
<i>sales@moncheribridals.com www.MonCheriBridals.com/Montage</i>		<i>www.StellaYork.com</i>	
Moonlight Bridal	45	Symphony Bridal by Maritza	35
<i>800-447-0405 info@moonlightbridal.com</i>		<i>305-221-5308 www.MaritzasBridal.com</i>	
Morilee New York	Back Cover	The Bridal Outlet	93
<i>877-946-6674 www.Morilee.com</i>		<i>800-758-8779 www.TheBridalOutlet.net</i>	
National Bridal Market Chicago	81	Unlisted Bridal by Mon Cheri Bridals	71
<i>www.NationalBridalMarket.com</i>		<i>sales@moncheribridals.com</i>	
National Bridal Retailers Association	99	Unlisted Couture by Mon Cheri Bridals	69
<i>www.NationalBridalRetailersAssociation.com</i>		<i>sales@moncheribridals.com</i>	
North American Formal Apparel Association	101	Unlisted Social by Mon Cheri Bridals	73
<i>www.NAFAA.com/join</i>		<i>sales@moncheribridals.com</i>	
Paisley B Designs by Maritza’s Bridal Veils	35	Val Stefani	45
<i>305-221-5308 www.MaritzasBridal.com</i>		<i>800-447-0405 info@moonlightbridal.com</i>	
Princesa by Ariana Vara	18-19	Veni Infantino	22-23
<i>sales@moncheribridals.com www.PrincesabyArianaVara.com</i>		<i>www.Veni-Infantino.com</i>	
Rina Di Montella by Colors	63	VOW For Girls	110
<i>www.ColorsDress.com</i>		<i>www.VowforGirls.org</i>	
Soleil by Moonlight Bridal	47		
<i>info@soleilbridal.com www.SoleilBridal.com</i>			
Sophia Tolti	14-15		
<i>sales@moncheribridals.com www.SophiaTolti.com</i>			

To obtain additional information on any of the advertisers in this issue, simply use the phone number and/or visit the website listed in this index.



Identify your risks. Know what disasters are most likely to affect your business.

#BeInformed
Ready.gov/business



FOR THE BRIDE WHO
OWNS THE SPOTLIGHT.

CHRISTINAWUCOLLECTIONS.COM





CHRISTINA WU



morilee.com

MORILEE

NEW YORK

TOSCA | STYLE 1010063