

7 Ways to Boost Social Media ROI for Event Venues



Contents

Keeping up with effective marketing tactics for ever-evolving social media trends can be dizzying. But, in today's day and age, it is absolutely critical for your venue's success. Here, we've outlined how to elevate your brand's social media strategy to cause pause in a world of non-stop scrolling.

SECTION 1:

LAUNCH WEDDING-SPECIFIC SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

SECTION 2:

ENGAGE WITH COUPLES ON SOCIAL MEDIA

SECTION 3:

INVEST IN SOCIAL ADS

SECTION 4:

WRITE KEYWORD-RICH PINS

SECTION 5:

REINFORCE TIES WITH YOUR TOP VENDORS

SECTION 6:

ENCOURAGE FACEBOOK REVIEWS

SECTION 7:

BUILD CUSTOM SOCIAL MEDIA FILTERS

89%

of couples now use smartphones to plan their weddings, meaning social media has overtaken the role of wedding planner.



SECTION 1:

LAUNCH WEDDING-SPECIFIC
SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

SECTION 1:

Launch Wedding-Specific Social Media Accounts

We know wedding-centric posts are just a drop in the bucket compared to all the posts your marketing team is pushing out. The solution: Launch wedding-centric social media accounts that stand alone as a part of your broader digital marketing strategy.

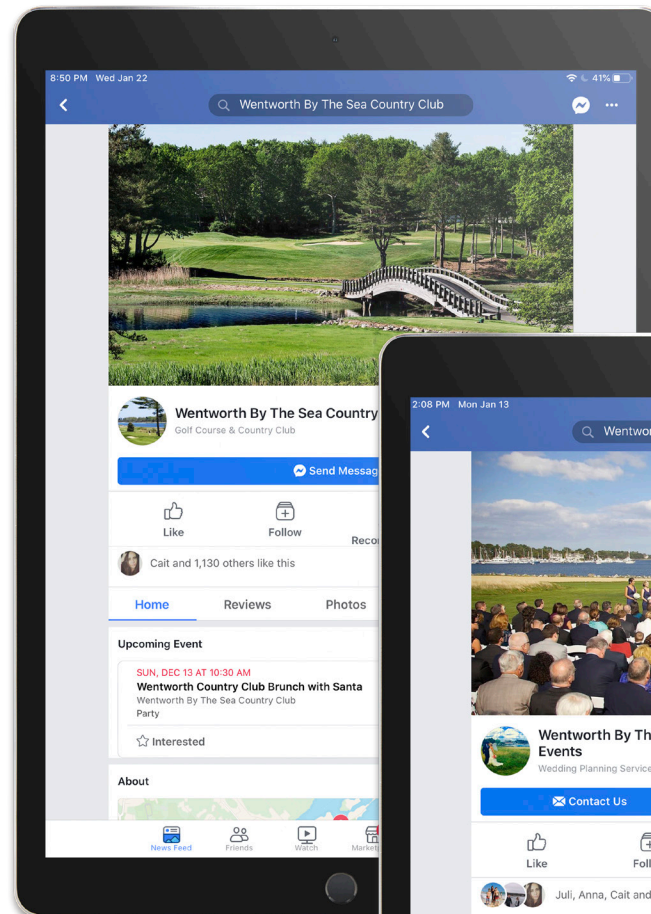
SECTION 1:

LAUNCH WEDDING-SPECIFIC SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

Creating Wedding-Specific Social Media Accounts Will:

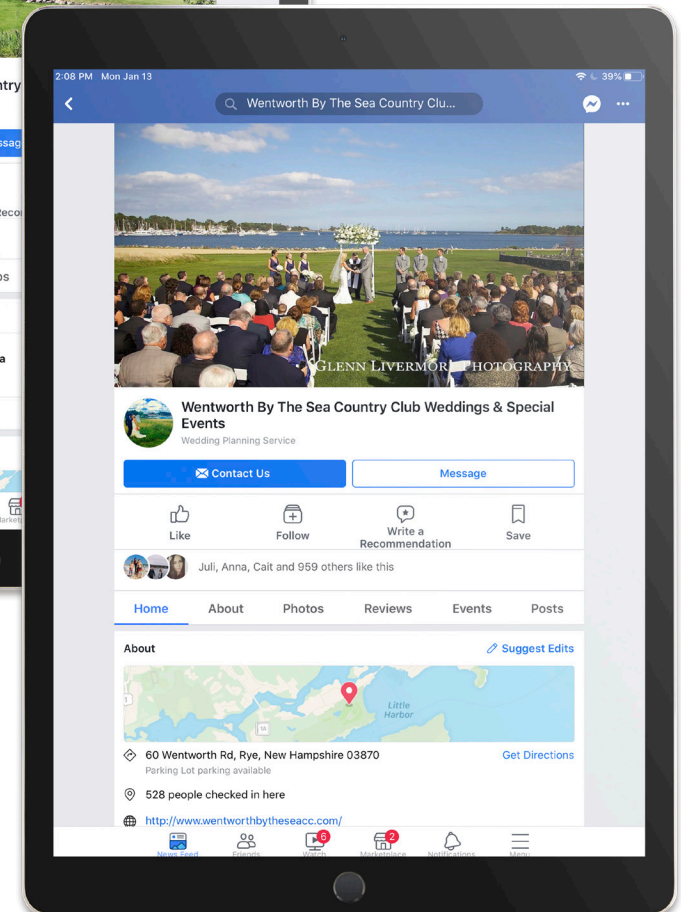
1. Give you a chance to maintain a steady stream of wedding-focused content.
2. Make your contact information more targeted and available.
3. Encourage reviews directly on your Facebook page.

PRO TIP: Don't forget to set up these pages as business accounts!



← Original country club page

Wedding-specific page →



SECTION 1:

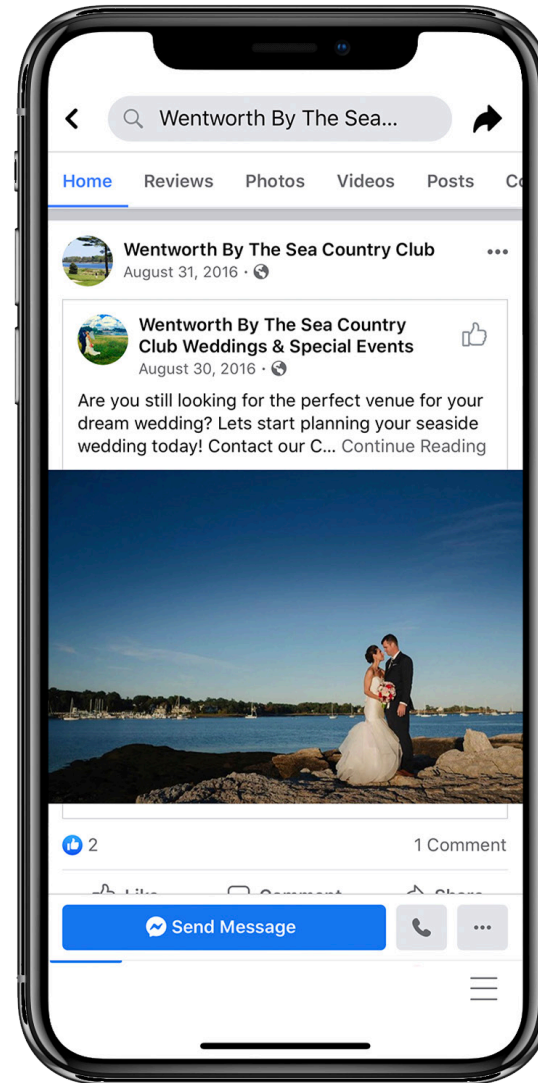
LAUNCH WEDDING-SPECIFIC SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

KEY QUESTION:

How do I drive attention to these new accounts?

Use your venue's main social media accounts to give "shout outs" to the wedding-specific ones every once in a while, and be sure to tag the wedding-specific account in your venue's bio/about section (check out our wedding page @123VenueWeddings).

1. Share the new page's posts on your venue's main Facebook page.
2. Like (and comment on) the wedding-specific Instagram account's posts.
3. Like the new page on Facebook, causing it to show up in the "Pages liked by this Page" section.



← The country club shared a post from their wedding-specific page to their main page.



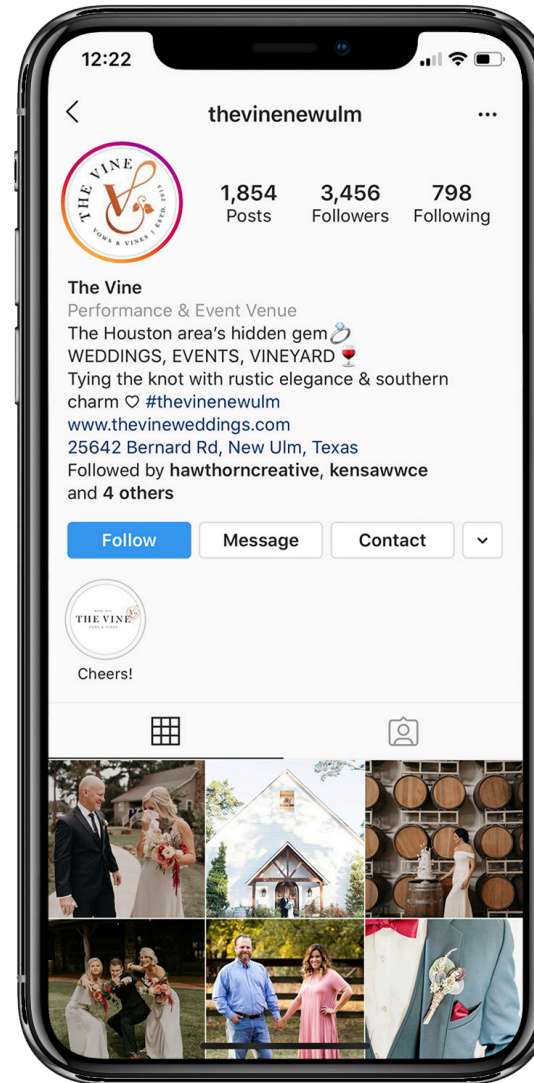
SECTION 1:

LAUNCH WEDDING-SPECIFIC
SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

BOOK MORE WEDDINGS WITH INSTAGRAM

3 Ways to Capitalize on Instagram

Instagram – above all other social platforms – has become the go-to platform for newly engaged couples (and even to-be-engaged couples) to look for, and find, their wedding venue. Rise above the sea of similar content with a few seemingly simple actions that make all the difference. For a solid starting point, use the tactics outlined on pages 7 through 9.



SECTION 1:

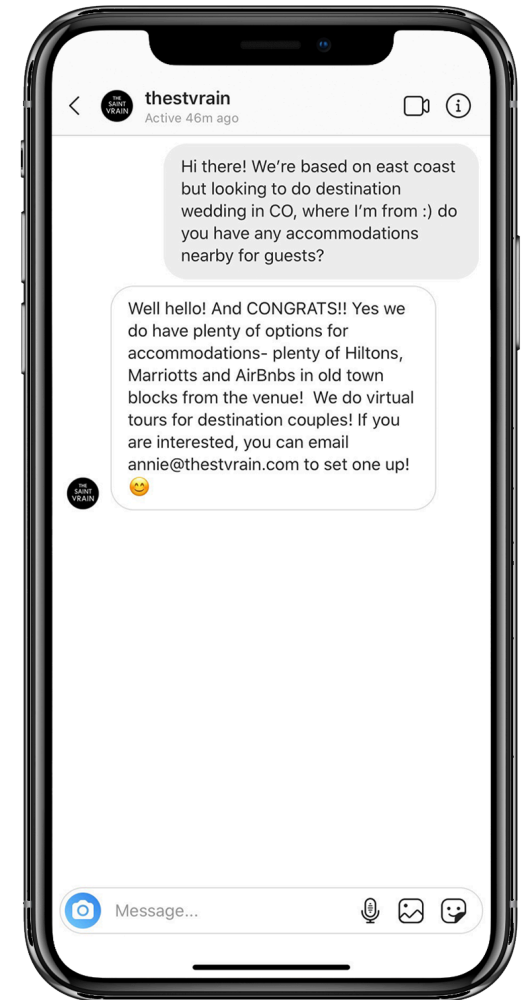
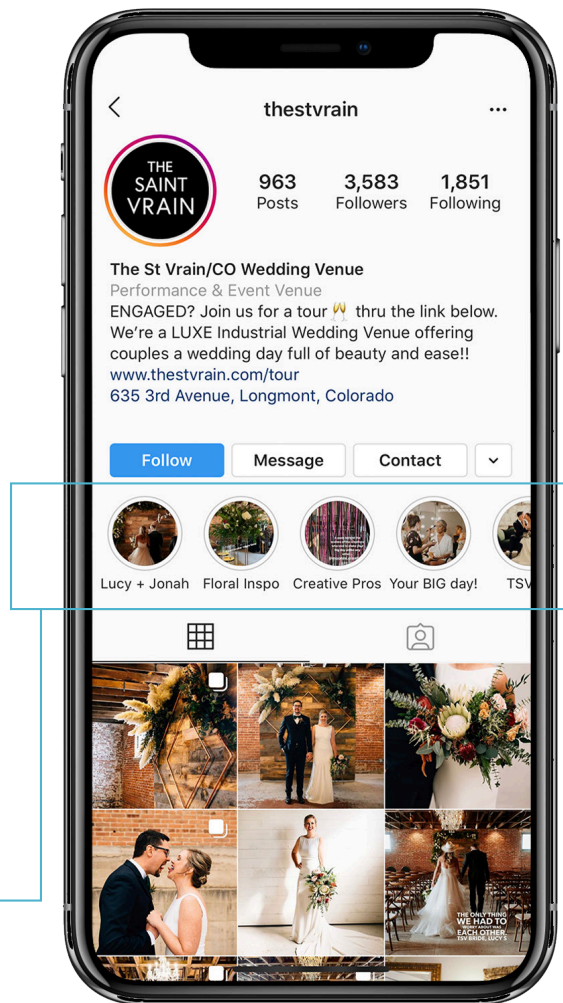
LAUNCH WEDDING-SPECIFIC SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

BOOK MORE WEDDINGS WITH INSTAGRAM

#1: Use App Features to Your Advantage

The Story Highlights feature has transformed how users engage. Use this feature to create highlights that showcase the unique elements of your venue. What would a prospective couple want to see? Think: detail shots, real weddings, behind the scenes, property shots, testimonials, FAQs, etc.

The St Vrain (@thestvrain) uses their Story Highlights to showcase real weddings and their creative processes.



↑ Personalized responses with helpful tidbits will resonate with potential couples and build their trust in your venue.

SECTION 1:

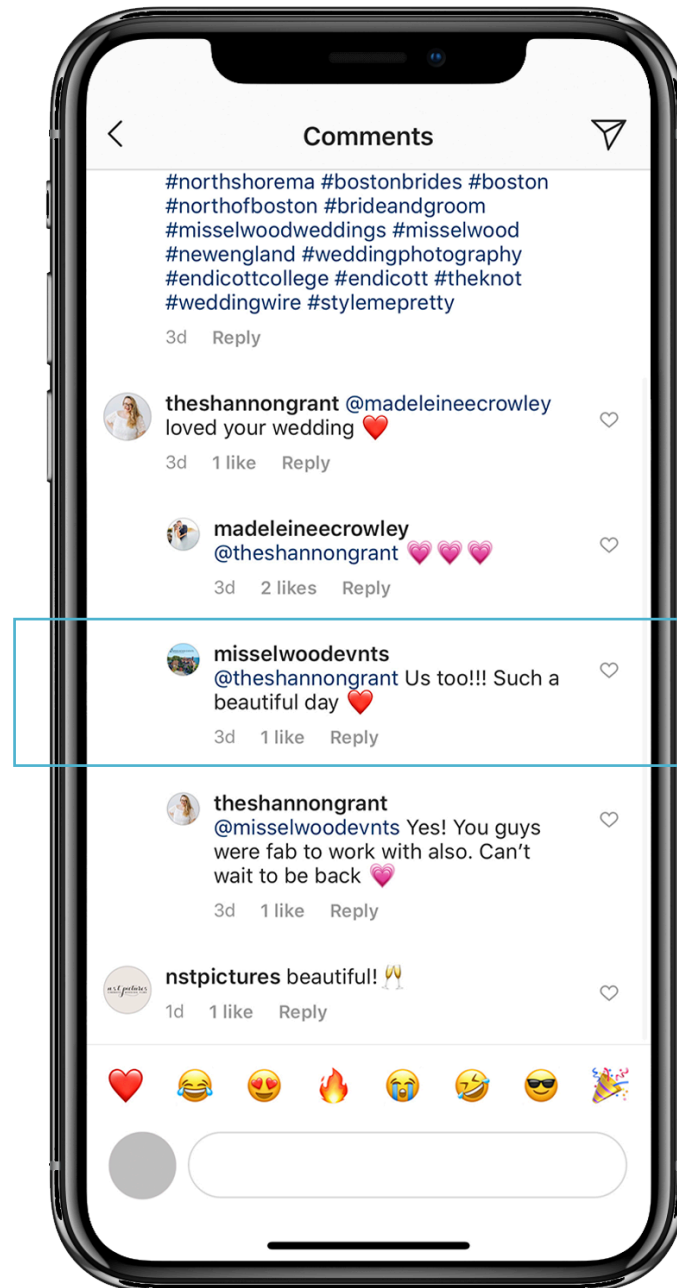
LAUNCH WEDDING-SPECIFIC
SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

BOOK MORE WEDDINGS WITH INSTAGRAM

#2: Be Active & Engage Often

Check direct messages often, reply always. Interact with users by replying or simply liking comments.

Creating that connection will, at once, win over prospective couples and beat out all idle competition. Make sure to engage with comments/DMs/other posts for the first 60 minutes after posting for Instagram's algorithm to favor your content.



← Misslewood Events (@misselwoodevents) interacts often with their followers in the comment section.

SECTION 1:

LAUNCH WEDDING-SPECIFIC
SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

BOOK MORE WEDDINGS WITH INSTAGRAM

#3: Maintain a Cohesive Account Style

Y our individual posts should have variety, but keep your photo grid consistent in color, tone, quality, and frequency (we suggest posting 5 to 7 times per week). It will help users know what to expect when following you, and cultivates your specific brand imaging.



← Twenty Mile House (@twentymilehouse) does a great job keeping their grid cohesive but their images diverse.



SECTION 2:

ENGAGE WITH COUPLES ON
SOCIAL MEDIA

SECTION 2:

Engage with Couples on Social Media

Whenever you post photos of recently wedded couples who celebrated at your venue, make sure you tag them in Facebook and Instagram. It's a simple way to get the couple's friends and family to see the post, and with it, your venue.

SECTION 2:

ENGAGE WITH COUPLES ON
SOCIAL MEDIA

Two Things to Consider for Tagging Couples:

- First, ask for couples' social media handles (and permission to tag them and use the hashtag) as a part of your planning process with them. Most will say yes.
- Remember to use the custom hashtags they had for their wedding (ex: [#ForeverMore](#)). It's the equivalent of digital word of mouth, so make it a part of your best practices within your social media brand guidelines.

PRO TIP: Don't forget to also tag the photographers, caterers, entertainment, etc. See p. 19 for more on this.

#FinallyFarrell

#MeettheMillers

#WoodsYouBeMine

#MeandMrJones

#LiveLaughLynch

#ForeverMore

#ToHaveAndToHolden

#WrightStateOfMind

#OneHaleofaWedding

SECTION 2:

ENGAGE WITH COUPLES ON
SOCIAL MEDIA

KEY QUESTION:

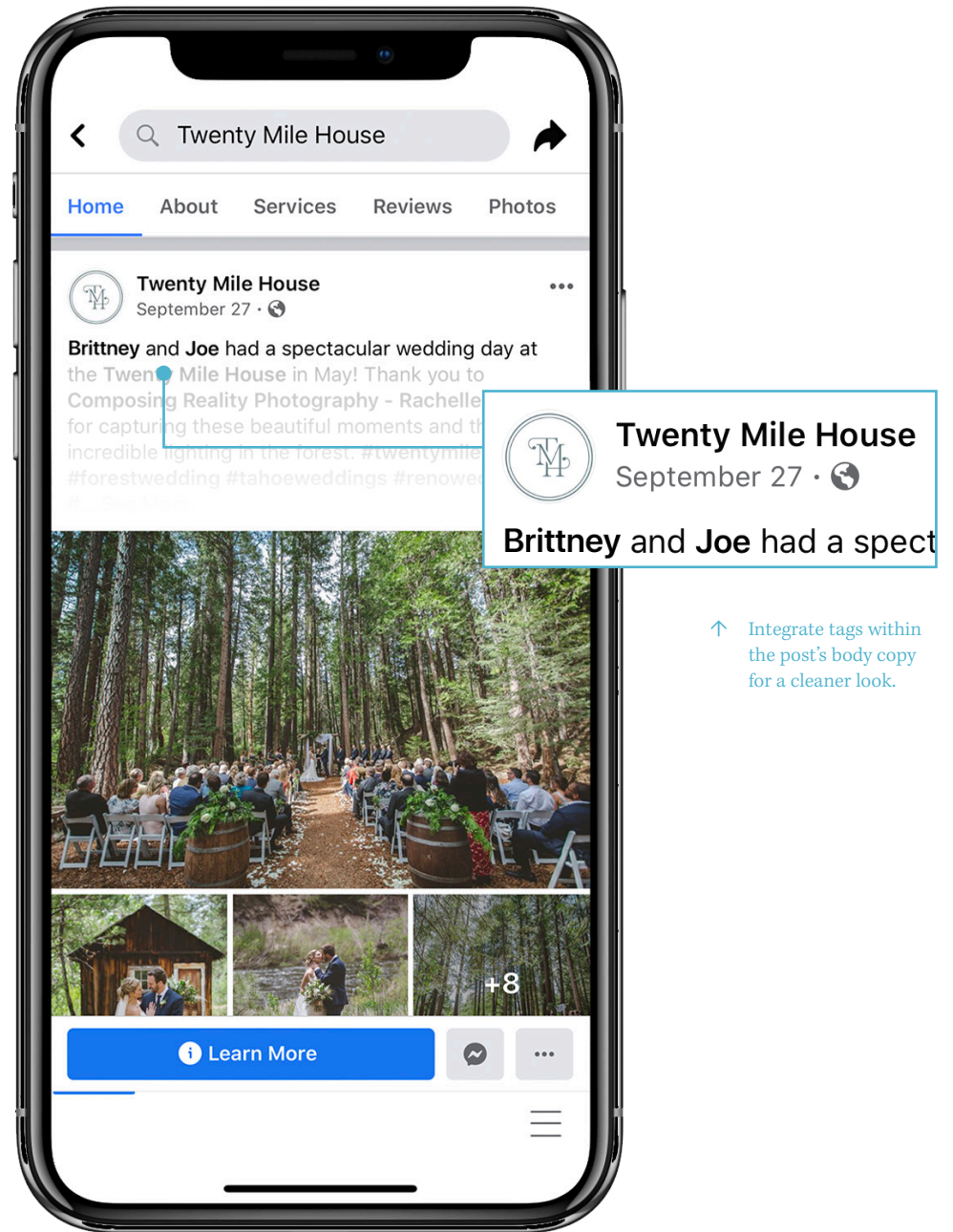
What's the best way to tag couples in posts?

Facebook

Tag them in either the photo or in the caption. There's no benefit to one approach over the other.

Instagram

Instagram's feed doesn't function quite like Facebook's, so their friends won't see that you tagged them. You're better off including their wedding hashtag. Tagging them on the photo will ensure that post shows up in their own tagged photos section of their Instagram page so when their followers look through those, they'll see your venue.



SECTION 3:

Invest in Social Ads

Unfortunately, you can no longer rely on your organic posts to reach your audience on social media. In fact, only 6.5 percent of your followers see your organic posts.

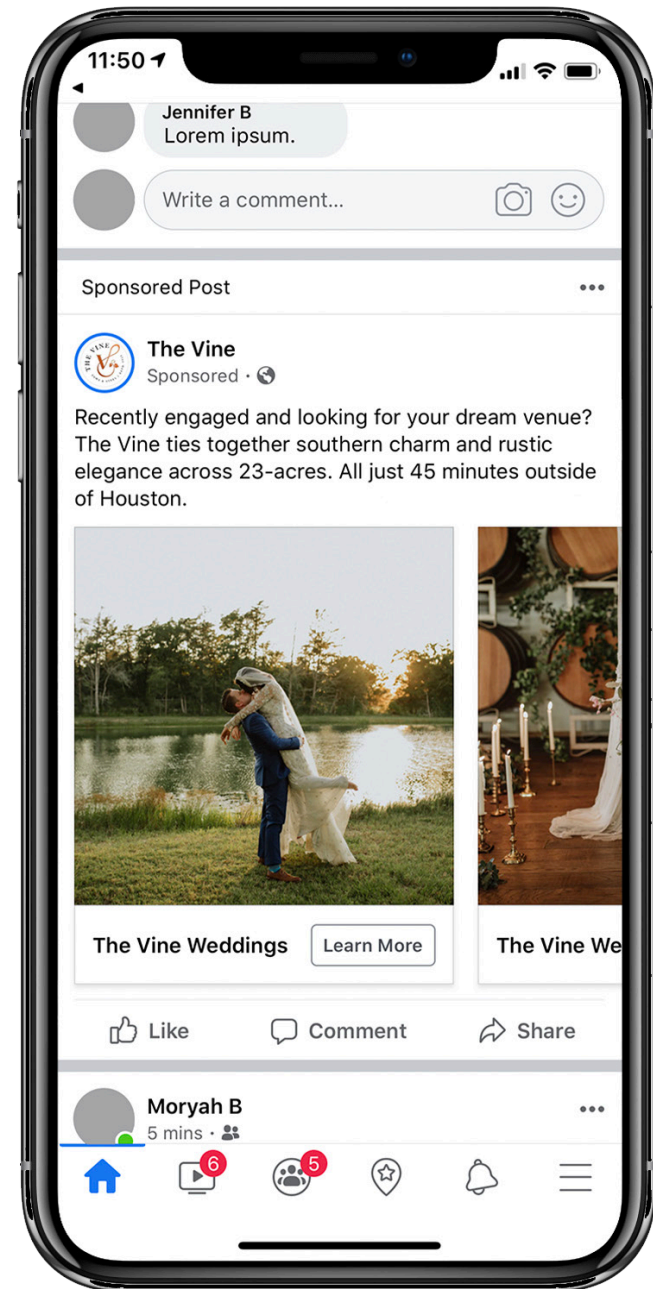
SECTION 3: INVEST IN SOCIAL ADS

Target Newly Engaged Couples through Social Ads

Facebook – and Instagram by default, since it's owned by Facebook – has the most sophisticated targeted ad platform in social. They allow you to target by criteria like [gender, age, location, likes](#) – and marital status. Yes, that means you can target, for example, newly engaged women between the ages of 23 and 45 who live within 40 miles of your venue. How's that for powerful?

Steps to Get Started

Head over to facebook.com/ads. Your budget should be at least \$300 per month to start, and we recommend a Carousel or Slideshow ad type to show off several of your venue's best images. If this sounds interesting but perhaps a bit overwhelming, [Hawthorn offers paid social campaign management and maintenance](#), based on refined targeting we've fine-tuned to reach the couples most likely to convert as well as our design eye to select the ad and image types that will catch their attention.

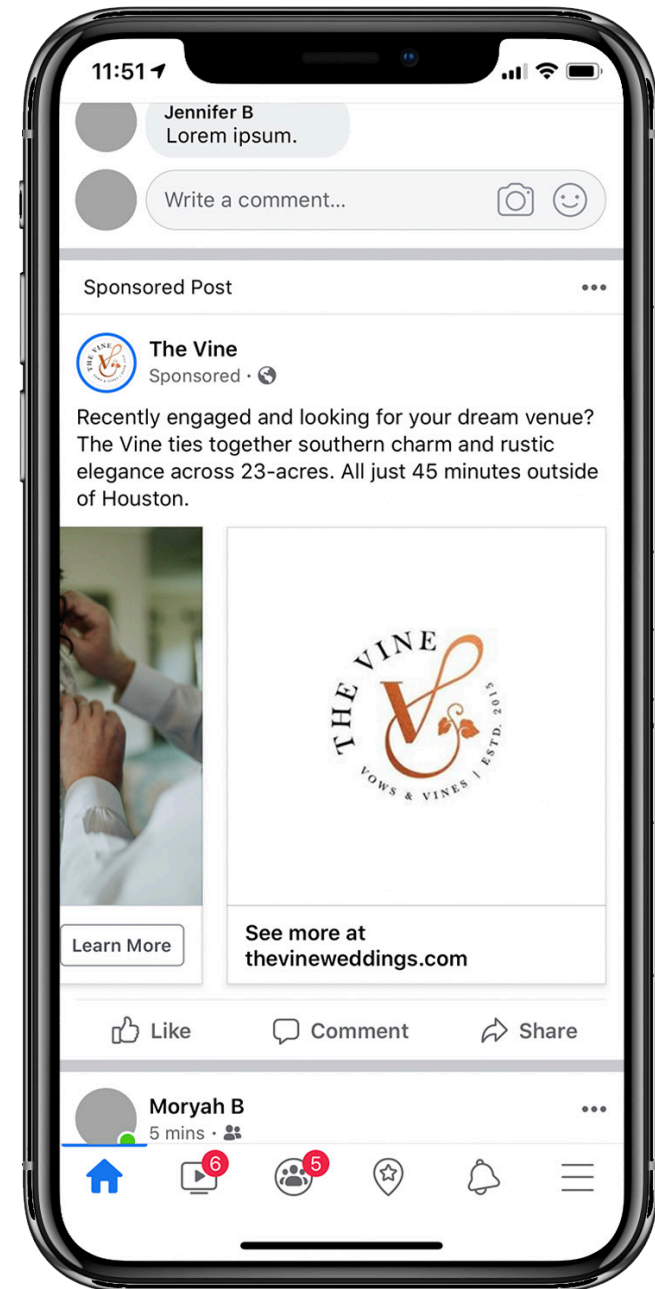


SECTION 3: INVEST IN SOCIAL ADS

KEY QUESTION:

Should I focus solely on Instagram ads, since that's such a visual platform?

Because Instagram is owned by Facebook, you're able to build Instagram ads through the Facebook ads interface – but we suggest leaving it up to Facebook's algorithms to determine how to distribute your ads across their products since they make the most money when your ads perform best.





SECTION 4:

WRITE KEYWORD-RICH PINS

SECTION 4:

Write Keyword-Rich Pins

Pinterest is the third-most powerful search engine in the world, behind only Google and YouTube. It's also the place that brides- and grooms-to-be (and to-be-to-be) start fantasizing about their big day and collecting ideas. So, post to Pinterest so you're part of that planning phase from the start, and make sure your Pins are optimized for the terms couples will be searching.

SECTION 4:

WRITE KEYWORD-RICH PINS

Optimize Your Pins for Searches

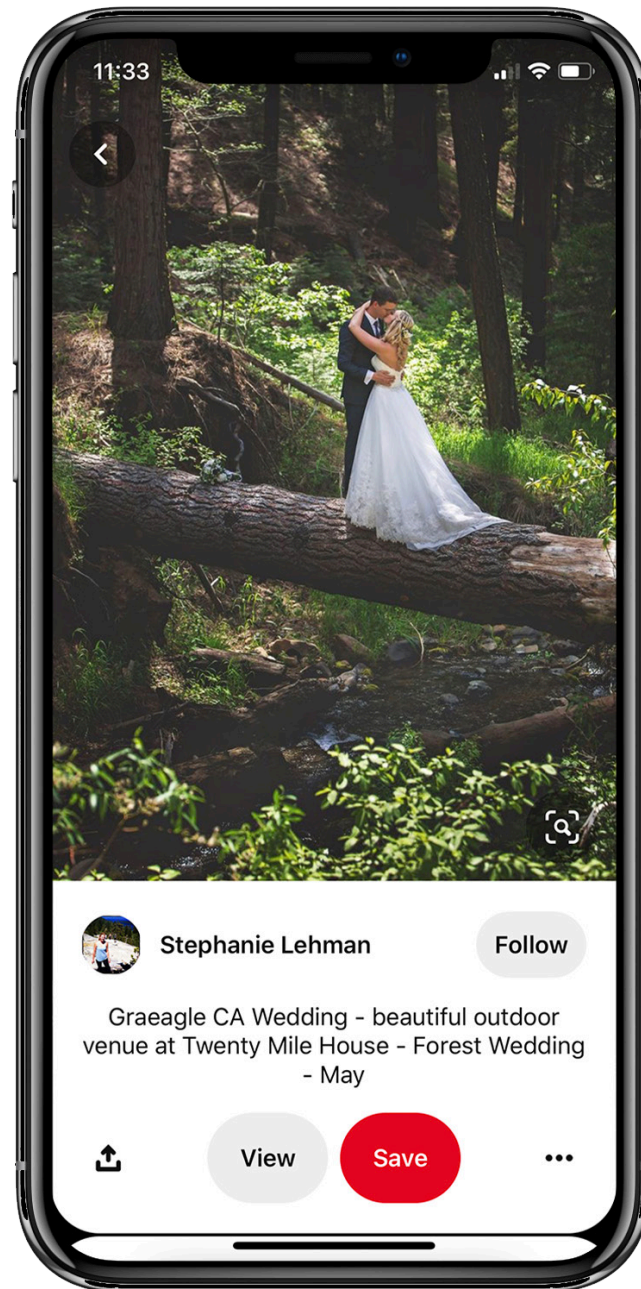
OK caption:

“Amazing wedding at Rosemont Resort”

Better caption:

“Amazing blue-and-silver-themed winter wedding at Rosemont Resort.”

PRO TIP: Include your Instagram handle in the description so people can easily search for you on Instagram



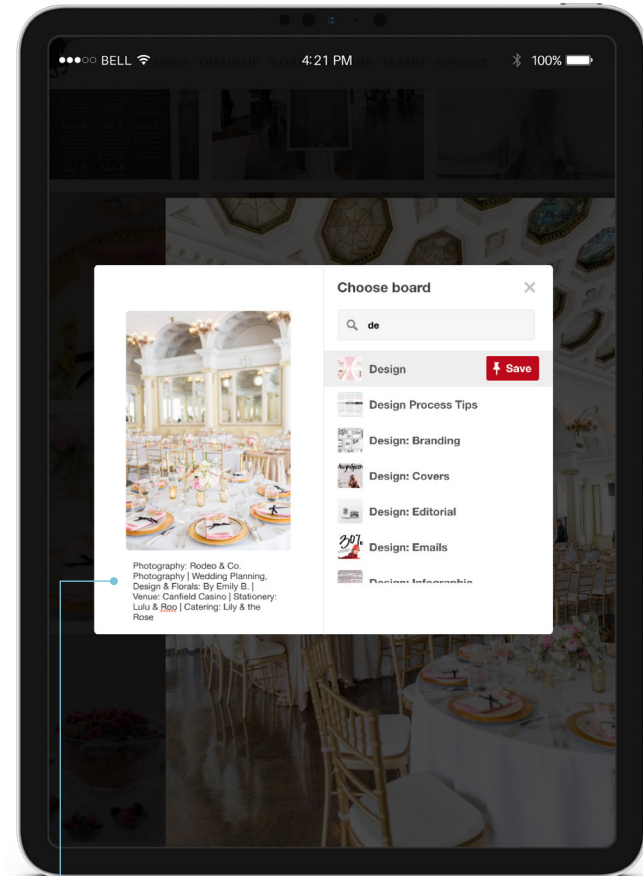
SECTION 4:

WRITE KEYWORD-RICH PINS

KEY QUESTION:

Does it matter where I pin photos from?

Pin these photos from your website instead of uploading them natively to Pinterest. If you upload them straight to Pinterest, Pinterest users finding your content will stay within the walled garden of Pinterest when they click that photo, whereas if you pin them from your website and they click, they'll be taken to your site.



Insert keywords here:

Photography: Rodeo & Co.
Photography | Wedding Planning,
Design & Florals: By Emily B. |
Venue: Canfield Casino | Stationery:
Lulu & Roo | Catering: Lily & the
Rose

SECTION 5:

REINFORCE TIES WITH
YOUR TOP VENDORS

Reinforce Ties with Your Top Vendors

You know this is an industry that relies upon one another for shared success. So make sure you carry that into your social media efforts.

SECTION 5: REINFORCE TIES WITH YOUR TOP VENDORS

Reinforce Ties with Your Top Vendors

In Your Own Posts

Mention vendors whose work is featured in a shot in your captions. It's a simple, two-second task that makes those vendors aware you've got their back. Example: If you mention a florist in a Pin about last weekend's wedding, the florist might be more inclined to use a photo of your venue in their next round of posts.

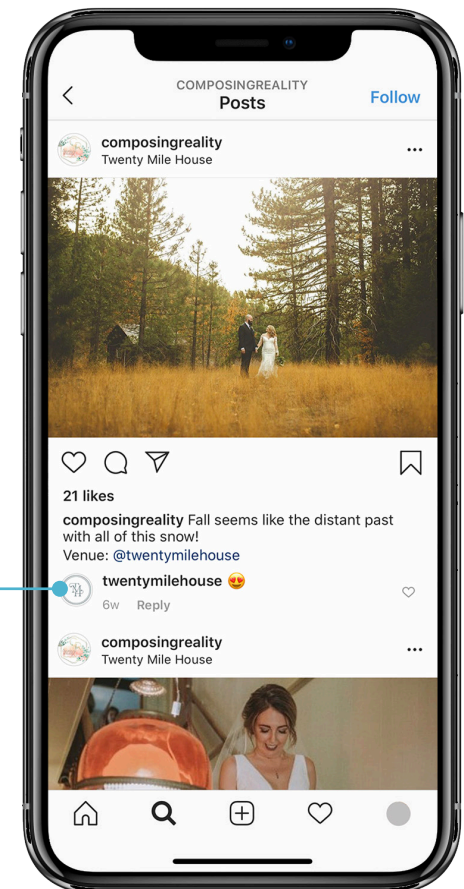
In Your Comments on Vendors' Posts

Commenting on vendors' posts, even when it's not a wedding held at your venue, will reinforce your support of their partnership. Here's an example: If you comment on a photographer's Facebook post and a prospective couple sees it, they'll be driven to your Facebook page where they can click on your website.



📷: @sara_elizabethphotography
🌸: @lotusfloraldesigns

↑ Emojis are a great way to tag vendors in Instagram posts.



📍 twentymilehouse 📍
6w Reply

↑ Commenting on your vendors' posts can increase traffic to your page and reinforce your work relationship.

SECTION 5:

REINFORCE TIES WITH
YOUR TOP VENDORS

KEY QUESTION:

How can I make it easy for photographers to continually share photos with our venue?

Since so much of your social media strategy for weddings hinges on high-caliber visuals, you need a continuous flow of new photos and videos of events at your venue from top professionals.

1. Touch base the day of the wedding to make the initial request and try to get a soft commit for when the photographer thinks s/he can get you low-res files.
2. Build a system that becomes familiar to them for sharing the images with you. WeTransfer is now our favorite simple file-sharing application that we use with hundreds of photographers across the country.
3. Develop a boilerplate email that you can customize quickly for those follow-ups so they're simple for you to fire off.
4. Lastly, it comes back to tagging those photographers in your posts so they know they're getting some marketing benefit out of the work you're asking them to do.



SECTION 6:

ENCOURAGE FACEBOOK REVIEWS

SECTION 6:

Encourage Facebook Reviews

As a component of every client wrap-up, you should gently encourage couples to submit a review. Make it easy by including links to where they can post their reviews. In the case of social, Facebook is the priority, with reviews featured prominently on-page and in Google search results.

SECTION 6:

ENCOURAGE FACEBOOK REVIEWS

Reviews Are Important

Seventy-seven percent of millennials look to online reviews to make a purchase. That doesn't just go for their next phone or pair of shoes, but also bigger purchases, like cars and weddings.

77%

of millennials look to online reviews before making a purchase.



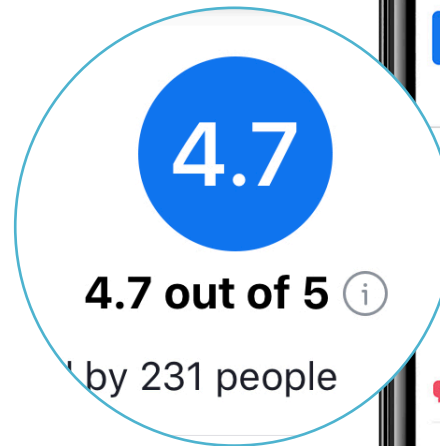
SECTION 6: ENCOURAGE FACEBOOK REVIEWS

KEY QUESTION:

How do I encourage couples to actually leave a review?

It's illegal to incentivize couples to leave a review, so frame reviews as another way to tell their wedding's story. As the glow of the wedding fades in the month or two after, brides and grooms are often still eager to share about their wedding, but there's no natural outlet to do so anymore. A detailed (and honest) Facebook review of your venue is a way that they can re-live the day to get future couples excited about having their wedding with you. Use their testimonials in future social media content to highlight the community you've created.

PRO TIP: Make it standard practice to email couples a few months after the wedding to see how they are doing. Personalize the email with a fond memory from their wedding day (e.g. beautiful vows, fun reception) and at the same time, mention the idea of placing a review on their page and provide the link to follow.



SECTION 7:

Build Custom Social Media Filters

Rumors of Snapchat's demise have been greatly exaggerated, especially for young people. Many of your clients, especially twenty-somethings, use it – and so do their guests. In a stylish way, [a custom Snapchat Geofilter](#) spreads the word about the great events happening at your venue with wedding attendees doing the promotion work for you.

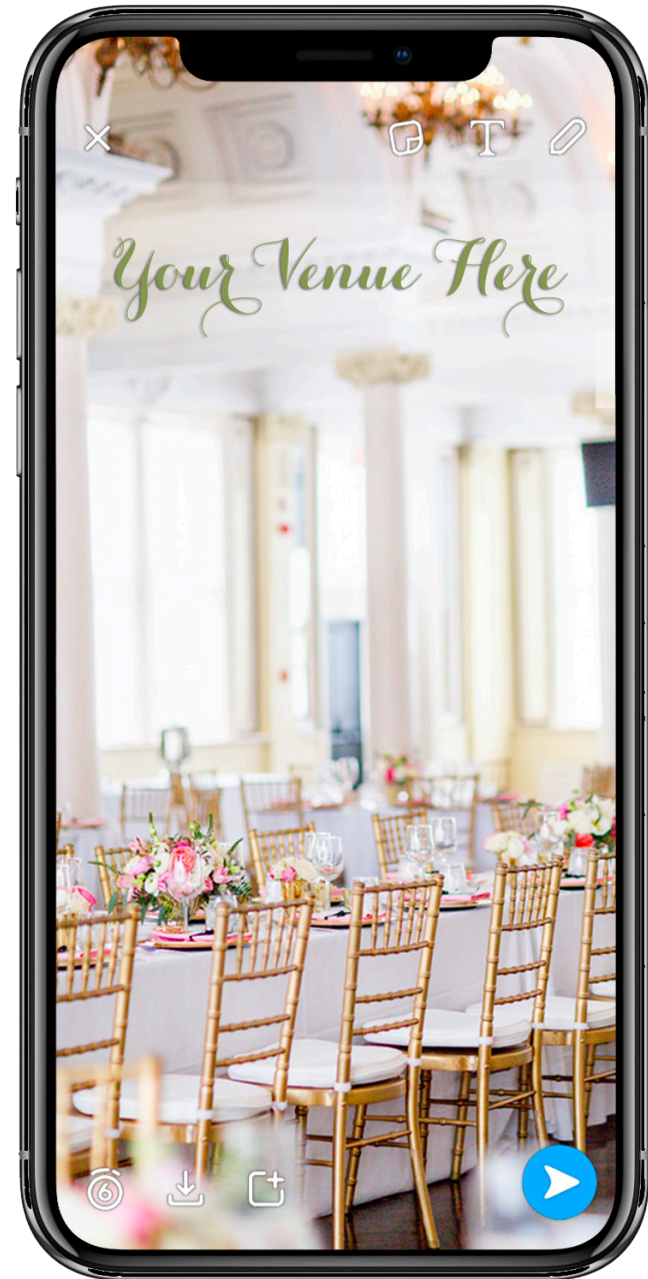
SECTION 7:
BUILD CUSTOM SOCIAL
MEDIA FILTERS

How Snapchat Geofilters Work

When someone sends a “snap” (a photo or video on Snapchat), whether to one friend, a small group, or all their friends, they have the option to add a Geofilter to it – a graphic overlay that goes over the image that’s unique to the geographic area they’re in, and gives their friends and family members an idea of where in the world they are. For example, in London, there’s a Big Ben Geofilter; at Red Sox games, there’s Wally the Green Monster.

Geofilters for Weddings

Snapchat opened up the platform so anyone can pay to create their own temporary Geofilter, and they’ve become particularly popular at weddings. Offer each couple getting married at your venue a Snapchat Geofilter (snapchat.com/on-demand) to use during their wedding – one that celebrates them and promotes your venue. So, when guests use it and snap to their friends, you’re essentially boosting the awareness of your venue by getting others to advertise it for you.



SECTION 7:
BUILD CUSTOM SOCIAL
MEDIA FILTERS

KEY QUESTION:

What should we charge couples for the custom Geofilters?

Nothing! Make it an easy “yes” for the couple. This is a value-add for you and them. The cost of running a custom Geofilter depends on the geographic radius you want to cover and how long you want it to run. For a wedding, which lasts a few hours, it can start at as little as \$5 or \$6 per wedding. Run them for a month of your peak season and check the results on Snapchat’s website (they show you the total number of impressions from each filter) to determine if the experiment is worth continuing, and go from there.

Where to Get Started

You can build your own Geofilter here: snapchat.com/on-demand. Or ask us about designing one for you.





KEY QUESTION

KEY QUESTION:

What are the best tools for reporting?

Each platform has their own reporting dashboards, all of which are worth paying attention to! These dashboards are the most up-to-date and will provide the most accurate data. But if you're looking for an "all-in-one" reporting solution, companies like Buffer, SproutSocial and Hootsuite offer paid plans that will consolidate your social efforts into robust dashboards and reports.

Oftentimes, marketing automation tools such as Hubspot and SharpSpring will offer social media reports as well. So if your company uses any of these, you should check to see if social media report is available.

CONTACT US

Questions? Comments?

Love the sound of all this but intimidated by executing it yourself? We'd love to hear from you and keep the conversation going.

HAWTHORN CREATIVE

33 Jewell Court

Portsmouth, NH 03801

P 603.610.0533

W hawthorncreative.com

Instagram

Facebook

Twitter

LinkedIn

