



FLOOD OF WEDDINGS COMING

Expect weddings to increase by 30% through 2018 says leading insurance research firm. Retail jewelry stores are planning ahead as Generation Y begins to say, "I do" in huge numbers. Average age for brides is 27 which coincides with the first wave of Gen Yers and represents a boon for both photographers and jewelers. But there is a catch. How will those Gen Y brides make their purchases?

Fact: Gen Y grew up with a mouse in their hand not the TV remote. Because of the internet, they have become very "brand-oriented" and comfortable shopping on the internet. Armed with plastic money and by the click of a mouse Gen Yers have great purchasing power right at their finger tips. Photographers take note.

When an engagement ring is purchased, the event planning process begins including the selection of a professional photographer. Niching pros can make that selection process very easy for the bride. Surprisingly, very few photographers take advantage of a net working processing that could include their local jewelry stores. Meaning a direct internet, network path via a data link between your studio and cooperating jewelry stores. The sales promotion: every bride that purchases a ring receives a complementary portrait which provides an opportunity to book their wedding event. And that their engagement pictures could be incorporated into their album. On your web site and that of the jewelry stores, the entire promotion is easily accessed by a click of a mouse. To begin with you could provide the jewelry stores with current gallery prints for their web sites.

Why is networking with jewelry stores so important? Gleam over the data below to find out why.

- ~U.S. "fine" jewelry sales (high priced gems) are now \$45 billion (plus) each year.
- ~On line jewelry sales are expected to grow to \$8 billion in 2008.
- ~Households with incomes over \$75,000 are more likely to purchase "fine" jewelry.
- ~69% of people who visit jewelry sites are **WOMEN**.
- ~**72% of 18-34 year old are online users.**
- ~For Valentine's Day, 32% made purchases on line.
- ~U.S. marriage rate: 6 per 1,000 pop., female median age-25.1, with males at 26.6.

Increasingly, the future competitive battle ground will take place on the internet, not the hard copy yellow pages. Note: a ring purchase is key to your studio's future success. Simply connect the "dots." Ring purchase.....engagement pictures.....booking the

wedding.....sale of on line pictures of the event.....future booking of bride's maids and contacts made at each wedding event.....eventual family portraits.....anniversary portraits and seniors. Fact: by networking with local jewelry stores, a single ring purchase could lead to \$ thousands \$ in future revenue for a wedding photographer and jewelry stores too. Your important selling point to jewelry stores is the fact that hundreds of high school seniors visit your web site and will see the link back to their jewelry store. Obviously, mom's will see the link too. Serious wedding and portrait photographers should fully explore this great profit potential opportunity.

Another lost photographic opportunity (connected to jewelry stores) are anniversaries.

~56 million married couples in the U.S.

~3.4 million spent \$1,200 (last year) on a variety of diamond jewelry equating to \$40 billion.

~Equates to a potential of 112 photo sessions per studio amongst 30,000 yellow page studios.

Given most photographers are reluctant to network with local retailers provides a lucrative opportunity for those that do, especially when marketing to Gen Y who are experienced internet shoppers.

How to proceed. Make contact with several jewelry stores with your proposal. You will need to show them samples of your work which should be on your web site. Your offer must be relevant to their needs, not yours. Emphasize that engaged couples do need a photo for the newspaper. And you will provide that free (no sitting fees, etc.) Most newspapers want a file not a hard copy glossy. You will have no cost except for your time. You may have to provide your retailers with a small flyer (brochure) that you can easily make in your studio explaining your offer to the engaged or anniversary couple. Jewelers should use your offer as a "closer" that saves the couple money on session fees, etc. Consumers appreciate "value."

When the couple calls or emails your studio for an appointment is the time to talk about setting up an appointment to actually book the wedding. Do not wait after you complete the free engagement picture because that might be too late. If you book the wedding beforehand, some of the engagement images could be part of the final album. (Emphasize this factor as a selling point because your competition might not offer engagement sessions for FREE or at all.) Of course, the couple can order finished prints right then from a discounted price list. Same applies to anniversary couples too. ALWAYS keep in mind the concept of VALUE. And do not forget your participating jewelers with annual, free portraits of their families.

Network: work hard at having local retailers place a link to your studio on their web site and you do the same for them. A high hit rate on your site will turn into high revenues. Always keep in mind that Gen Y will only increase their internet spending.

If you think a friend or studio would benefit from our newsletter, have them contact

Pechman Imaging to sign up. <http://pechmanimaging.com/contactpechmanco.html>
Let us know your thoughts.

Email us at: marketing@pechmanimaging.com

Pechman Imaging Management
© Pechman Imaging 2008