Bridal Showcase
January 25, 2015 • American News
With so many details needing to be addressed throughout the wedding planning process, some things simply just fall through the cracks. The following are seven things that you should remember when you are planning your wedding.

Gift registries are not one and done. Unlike the bride and groom, who are declaring each other their one and only, products come and go. Stores are constantly changing their inventories. Therefore it is a good idea to review your gift registries and update them periodically.

Pinterest versus Personalization. Some ARE better than others—but something is better than nothing. Whatever you do, don’t overdo the P. How much Pinterest is too much Pinterest? Your wedding details should be an expression of both you and your future husband. Anything more than that—well, you’ve hit “too Pinteresty” on the mark.

Address social media with your wedding party and guests. As popular as social media sites such as Facebook and Instagram are, you might have barely sealed the nuptials with a kiss before your cousin Sally has posted you, in your wedding dress, walking down the aisle. If you prefer to break the social media seal, it might be a good idea to add something to your invitations, wedding programs, or wedding website.

Think about what happens after you celebrate your nuptials. Chances are there pictures to take, food to eat, a cake to cut, and some dancing to do. But what about after the celebration? You should prepare for what follows your day in advance.

THERE’S MORE! CONTINUED ON PAGE 12
When it comes to wedding planning, local professionals advise to plan early and stay calm. Easy to say, not so easy to do. There are a myriad of tiny details that have to be anticipated, planned for and paid for. One of the biggest of which is where to hold the reception.

The Aberdeen area is fortunate in that there are venues that can accommodate receptions of every size from small and cozy to large and elaborate. Brides and grooms can easily plan a classy reception even on a tight budget with just a little bit of time and ingenuity.

One of the most expensive items on a wedding budget could easily be the food – depending on whether you are serving a simple sandwich buffet or a full sit-down meal.

There are only a few places in the area where the bride and groom can provide their own food for the reception – often because the venue does not have kitchen capabilities. Such is the case at the AmericInn, and some couples might appreciate having that option. The AmericInn can accommodate up to 250 guests, which is considered to be a small reception. Costs include a room fee and blocks of rooms can be reserved for out-of-town guests.

The Anchors Away Lodge and Resort at Richmond Lake provides options for those wishing to celebrate their nuptials on their grounds. The resort will either provide the food or the couple can bring in their own. The couple can either rent the whole resort – seven rooms of which two are suites – or just the lodge ($250). The capacity of the lodge is 150, which would be perfect for a small affair.

There is also a shuttle available to make sure all guests get back home safely.

There are two options from which to choose at the Ramkota – the Convention Center, which can hold up to 600 guests, and the Dakota Rooms, which can be combined for smaller receptions. Last summer, the Ramkota saw food themes such as sweet and salty bars and a popcorn bars – a variety that can be appreciated.

The Wakeside Bar and Grill at Mina Lake can accommodate 100 guests on the lower level and 250 if both the banquet area and patio are used. An outdoor/indoor event can be very relaxing because it’s by the lake. In the past, couples have set up wedding tents on the grass. And, it’s not unusual to see the entire wedding party taking a pontoon ride around the lake. The bar and grill also offers a shuttle to make sure everyone gets home safely.

Only 12 miles out of Aberdeen, Tacoma Park Place is a perfect destination for those who want a country-themed wedding. Most couples do their own decorating and provide the food.

 Tacoma Park Place overlooks a small river, which lends itself nicely to the casual, rustic motif.

The capacity at Tacoma is 200, not including the grounds. The lodge can house 40 guests. Some couples book just their wedding and while others hold both their wedding and reception at Tacoma. A bus is available to shuttle guests back and forth.

The DEC (Dakota Event Center) schedule fills up early, so those looking to have a reception there should plan to book well in advance. The venue can hold up to 800 seated guests and provides all the food with the exception of punch, nuts, mints, and cake.

The Moccasin Creek Country Club (MCCC) can accommodate up to 200 people, but the reception winds up being on two levels. Only members may book the MCCC, which will handle everything but the cake – decorations, cloths, and serving food.

*Editor’s Note: Several attempts were made to contact all of the known reception venues in the Aberdeen area. Only those who initially responded are included in this story. To include your information in our 2015 Tying the Knot special section, email vlusk@aberdeennews.com.
The 12 essentials of a dream wedding

NEWSPAPER TOOLBOX

A wedding is the event of a lifetime. This special day has to be perfect, hence the importance of taking care of even the smallest of organizational details. You don’t want to forget anything, whether it’s a reservation, a fitting, or a trial run for your menu and hairstyle.

Here’s a checklist of the 12 key elements you’ll need to take care of along the path to your dream wedding:

☐ 1. The ceremony, the officiant, and the reception
   Are you going to have a civil or religious wedding? Have you asked your best friend to unite you in wedlock? And will the reception be in the country, on a cruise ship, or in a hotel ballroom? Make sure the location you choose can easily accommodate all your guests. You’ll also want to think about signing a marriage contract or prenuptial agreement.

☐ 2. The meal and the wedding cake
   There are loads of things to think about when organizing the meal: the format; the menu; a children’s menu; the bar; and the wedding cake. Say, why not set up a candy bar? And don’t forget to ask about your guests’ food allergies.

☐ 3. The atmosphere
   What theme will you choose to set the tone for your wedding: a color, a culture, a historical period? Which DJ will get your guests out on the dance floor? Will you surprise everyone with a unique first dance?

☐ 4. Flowers and decorations
   Have you chosen a color scheme for your flowers and decorative accessories? What are your favorite flowers? How will the tables be dressed?

☐ 5. Photographer
   How will you immortalize your wedding: photos, videos, or both? Remember to plan for an indoor photo session in case Mother Nature doesn’t cooperate on your big day.

☐ 6. The invitations
   Don’t wait until the last minute to send out your invitations if you want all the important people in your life to be with you for this celebration. Remember to indicate the theme and dress code. And do think about including self-addressed stamped envelopes for those essential RSVPs. Need to know more about invitations? See “An invitation like no other” on page 9.

☐ 7. Guest favors
   A personalized trinket, a gourmet sample, or a home decor object: have you found the perfect wedding favor to thank your guests for joining you? Need ideas? See page 9.

☐ 8. Wedding bands
   Your wedding bands are the symbols of your love; choose them with care. Do you both want gold, silver, or with diamonds? Discreet or extravagant? With or without an engraving? See “The perfect wedding band to tie the knot” on page 9 for a help choosing the right wedding bands.

☐ 9. Beauty appointments
   Hairstyle, manicure, waxing, and makeup: leave nothing to chance if you want to be stunning on your big day. Make your appointments for just the right time; you don’t want your roots to be visible under your veil!

☐ 10. The dress, suit, and accessories
   The outfits of bride, groom, and wedding party should be coordinated. Will you be a vision in white or will you choose to add a colorful note? And will the perfect dress feature something old, something new, something borrowed, and something blue?

☐ 11. Transportation
   Will you arrive by boat, car, horse-drawn carriage, or maybe even by parachute? Whatever your choice, be sure to take your dress and the weather into consideration.

☐ 12. The honeymoon
   A truly idyllic honeymoon shouldn’t break your budget. Are you tempted by an exotic island or a vibrant city? Choose the destination and the timing carefully to stay in line with your means. For more, see “Honeymoons on a dime” on page 6.

Get out your calendar, get set, and reserve!

Make your reservations early in order to secure the top experts in every domain. Remember that their talents are typically in big demand, especially in smaller, more rural areas.
Wedding videos are like motion pictures ~ emotional and replayable

GRETCHEN MAYER
SPECIAL TO THE
ABERDEEN AMERICAN NEWS

“It’s something that I’d been kicking around for awhile,” said Bill Freitag of his new business, WF Cinematics. “People are getting more cinematic with their wedding videos and there isn’t anyone in this region who does it.”

So how does a cinematic version differ from Aunt Susie running around the reception with a video camera in her hand? Quality, says Freitag.

“The approach of a skilled videographer using Ultra High Definition Black Magic Cameras. I cover not just the ceremony, but the entire day – hair, makeup, the first time the bride and groom see each other, the ceremony, and the reception.”

Freitag is an experienced cinematographer – his choice of shot and camera movement will add structure and meaning to any event, particularly weddings.

Freitag said that there are two main concerns that engaged couples have when it comes to a wedding video – cost and time.

“The wedding day is such a crazy time. Couples think that they will be pulled away from the wedding for the video. But I explain to them that I’m in the background – they’ll barely know that I am there because I want the video to be as natural as possible. That way I can capture the emotions of the day. And it maximizes the ‘replayability’ because the video tells a story.”

When it comes to cost, Freitag has several price points available. “All of my packages have me there the full day. The cost effectiveness is the length of the video and the quality of the editing and gear.”

Couples should book Freitag as soon as they set their wedding date and then schedule a meeting to discuss their vision – what they would like the end result to be. “We collaborate at the front as to what they want and then it takes me 40 to 50 hours to complete the editing of a video – a 1 to 6-week turnaround.”

Freitag also does engagement videos. “I sit them down to talk about how they met, what they like about each other and how the proposal went down. And the engagement video can be shown at the reception because the bride and groom are often too busy to visit with each guest separately.

Freitag graduated from Northern State University with a Multi-Media Graphic Design Degree and a minor in Music in 2006. He has been in video production for almost 10 years and enters short film competitions regularly.

Freitag has also been the video director at several ad agencies and is employed at Production Monkeys. He has filmed all over the country, and is currently involved on several television and feature film projects.

He may be contacted at wf-cinematics@gmail.com. Sample WF Cinematics videos can be found on the business’ Facebook page.

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Honeymoons on a dime
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While some newlyweds can still afford to cap off their big day in grand style with a trip for two to someplace exotic, there are many that can’t. Once some couples have paid for the wedding, there is little left for a honeymoon. Fortunately, it is still possible to have a great honeymoon on a shoestring budget.

Here’s how:

Leave at a later date
Who says you must leave for your honeymoon immediately following your wedding reception? Enjoy your big day and postpone the honeymoon of your dreams until you can afford it. Wait six months or a year to book the trip. At that point, you will have more cash to spare and more time to find the best deals.

Go during the off-season
Off-season prices are far cheaper than peak season prices. Schedule your honeymoon during the off-season, and to save more cash, consider going to a less popular destination. The rates will be cheaper, and there will be less people to contend with.

Book way in advance
Generally, the earlier you book your honeymoon, the cheaper the rates will be. Start looking for a destination long before your expected departure date and shop around for the best deals.

Cut costs where you can
You do not have to go all out to have a good time on your honeymoon. Think about your plans and find ways to save. Choose less expensive accommodations, especially if you intend to be out and about much of the day. Pack lunches instead of eating out. Take advantage of all free or low-cost activities.

Stay close to home
If you are really short on cash and can’t afford to go away, stay in. Check out the deals in your area and arrange for a mini staycation.
Book a room at an inexpensive hotel and spend the day checking out attractions and activities you’ve never had time for. If you can’t afford a hotel room, stay at home and have a candlelight dinner. It doesn’t really matter where you are as long as you are together.

Honeymoons do not have to break the bank. You can still have fun and celebrate the beginning of your life together on a shoestring budget. It just takes some advance planning and creative thinking.

The Reception:
Decorating suggestions for your reception
NEWSPAPER TOOLBOX

Whether your wedding reception is set to take place in a reception hall or at home, the decorations are a key element that should never be overlooked.

Here are a few ideas:

Color
Pink, blue, red, or gold: get out your color charts to determine a color scheme that will plunge your guests into your wedding theme.

A whole bunch of ideas
Garlands, topiary, bouquets, or delicately scattered flowers occupy a prominent place at any wedding. Some couples prefer top-quality silk flowers for their longevity, but most opt for natural flowers because of their fragrance and freshness.

Some of the most popular flowers are red and white roses, tulips, lilies, azaleas, and bluebells. Discuss your preferences with different florists before you choose which one to hire for your big day.

Other elements for a beautiful wedding reception
• Monograms. The initials of the newlyweds can elegantly personalize the reception venue and the guest favors.
• Fabrics. Dress the room from top to bottom in theme-inspired fabrics. Ceiling and wall hangings give an imposing touch to your wedding. Use wrinkle-free cotton or satin fabric to dress up the tables.
• Wedding lanterns. Hang these cozy lights high above your guests; rice paper lamps diffuse harsh hall lighting and create magical surroundings.
• Wall hangings. Garlands, pennants, beads, pompons, and streamers add a whimsical touch to walls.
• Table settings. Use fabric bows and slipcovers to transform plain chairs. Disperse bouquets, candle holders, and other centerpiece features along the tables to bring coherence to the whole room.

Creating atmosphere is the secret
NEWSPAPER TOOLBOX

What makes one wedding more fun than another? There’s no need to look far: the secret is in the atmosphere.

Here are some tips on how to organize a memorable wedding reception.

The theme
Begin by choosing the theme that will be the foundation of the wedding. This will guide you through your clothing and decorating choices, and it will even determine the wedding favors you offer and the meal the caterer serves.

The theme can be a color or combination of colors, an era or a season, a country or a culture, vintage or new, an object or a shared passion or a number of other things. Above all, it should reflect both your personalities.

Entertainment and music
If you hire an entertainer along with your DJ or musicians, you’ll have more fun at your own wedding. You will both be able to circulate among your guests, and there won’t be any uncomfortable lulls.

A good DJ is a facilitator who can adapt to the age and tastes of the guests and keep the momentum going. Just be sure that anyone you hire can entertain according to your theme.

Some ideas for surprising your guests
• Plan a unique arrival at the reception.
• Provide a guest book that can be a decorative item in your home after the reception.
• Work out a dance routine to perform together or with your wedding party.
• Have a karaoke machine

for later on, at the reception.
• Set up a photo booth with wacky accessories.
• Release disposable lanterns into the sky when it gets dark, or plan some fireworks.
• Hire a magician, a croupier with casino tables, or a caricaturist to entertain your guests.
• Serve custom cocktails, poured by a professional flair bartender who can juggle bottles and do some spectacular bartending tricks.

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10 questions to ask before hiring your wedding photographer

BRANDPOINT

Some moments are simply too important to trust to a camera phone. Your wedding will be one of the most memorable times of your life and no one can capture it better than a professional photographer.

So how do you find the right one? As you begin the interview process, here are 10 questions to help you determine if you’ve found the best photographer for your wedding.

1. Does the photographer have a gallery of wedding images you can review?
   Reviewing sample work allows you to see the photographer’s strengths and weaknesses – don’t fool yourself, every photographer has them. You will also be able to get an idea of their style.

   Are they formal with an eye for the perfect picture or do they love to capture the hidden moments when no one is looking? Look for images that you can see yourself in. Think of three words that describe you and share those with your photographer.

2. What is the photographer’s working style?
   Some photographers are orderly and operate like wedding planners. Others prefer to sit back and let the events of the wedding unfold. It’s important that you find someone who can understand and meet your expectations. Discuss this ahead of time and ask away, so that you understand how well the photographer’s working style matches your own.

3. Is the photographer available for an engagement session?
   An engagement session does more than provide you with priceless images together before you get married. It’s also your first opportunity to work with your photographer and develop a relationship that will allow you to be completely at ease on your big day. Use this session to confirm if the photographer is indeed the right person to capture your wedding.

4. Will the photographer create a detailed shot list?
   This list will ensure no important photo is missed during the commotion and excitement of the big day. You should be able to create that list together, add to the list leading up to the day and have a copy of that list the day of.

   Take an honest look at what images really matter and fill your photographer in on situations he or she might need to be aware of in order to prevent awkward moments, and to ensure that he or she can get the shots that matter most.

5. What kind of lighting will be used?
   Whether you have an indoor or outdoor wedding, you’ll want to make sure your photographer has professional grade lighting equipment to deliver the images your wedding deserves.

6. Does the photographer have backup equipment?
   A true professional photographer won’t miss your perfect shot because of a technology issue. He or she will always bring one or two backup cameras, lenses, flashes, additional lighting equipment, extra memory cards, and batteries.

7. Does the photographer have liability insurance?
   Accidents happen at weddings and if one of your guests trips over your photographer’s light stand, it’s good to know you both are protected. Your reception venue may even ask the photographer to submit a certificate of liability ahead of time.

8. Will there be one photographer or two?
   A second shooter increases the probability that no shot will be missed, especially if you are having a large wedding. If there will be two photographers, ask to meet them both to get a feel for their personalities and how well they might blend in on your big day.

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THERE’S MORE!

QUESTIONS 9 & 10 CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 10
Announce your love: today and everyday

AFTER you have shown off your shiny new ring to your closest family and friends and set your wedding date, it is time to let the rest of the world know your exciting, life-changing news. Submitting an announcement to your local newspaper is an easy, traditional way to do this.

The Aberdeen American News offers announcements for engagements, weddings, and anniversaries (and further down the road—babies!). Simply visit www.aberdeen-news.com. Click “Submit An Announcement” under 605 Life. Select the announcement type of your choice and begin filling out the form. You may also choose to attach a jpeg image.

Once completed, a customer service representative will contact you to verify the information and collect payment.

Typically, an engagement announcement costs $30, while an anniversary or a wedding announcement costs $20. These costs are based on word count.

The announcement will be published in both the Sunday newspaper and online. Although you should send personalized Thank You cards for those who helped you celebrate your big day, you can also publish a thank you—just in case you accidentally miss someone. These can also be submitted on aberdeennews.com.

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Wedding favor ideas for your guests

Decorative favors

Luxury favors

Gourmet favors

Scented favors

NEWSPAPER TOOLBOX

The countdown has started; sending out your wedding invitations makes it all seem official. It is an important step indeed. In addition to announcing your wedding, this little piece of cardstock, tucked so neatly into its pretty envelope, gives your guests a taste of the celebrations to come. Their curiosity will definitely be aroused.

To show all this promise, your invitation should include:

• the names of the bride and groom (include those of the respective parents if you want to follow the tradition of the parents hosting the wedding)
• the location, date, and time of the ceremony
• RSVP cards and envelopes (encourage your guests to confirm their presence by including a pre-stamped reply card)
• an invitation to the reception (feel free to invite only certain guests to the party following the ceremony; specify the theme, dress code, location, and menu choices); and vise versa — some couples prefer smaller weddings and larger receptions.

It’s a go!

Send one invitation per address, whether it’s to a single person, couple, or family. Invitations should be mailed at least three months before the big day. If you’re inviting your guests to join you abroad for your wedding, or if some of your guests live outside the country, try to send your invitations as early as eight months in advance. Keep a few spare invitations, just in case.

Need some inspiration?

When it comes to invitation design, it isn’t always easy to transform your ideas into reality. You can turn to websites or wedding magazines for help. If you’re not very artistic, choose a template or hire a graphic designer to create a unique wedding invitation.

Since time immemorial, wedding bands have symbolized the continuity of marriage. Legend has it that a wedding ring is customarily worn on the left ring finger because of the vena amoris, or “vein of love”; it was thought to have a uniquely direct connection to the heart.

We know today that all the fingers have similar privileges, but your choice of wedding ring is still as important as ever. After all, you are hoping that it will adorn your ring finger until death do you part. Your tastes, your gender, and especially your budget are the main factors to consider in choosing the right band.

The metal

• Gold. Whether it’s yellow, pink, or white, gold is always a safe bet. The price varies according to the number of Karats (abbreviated by K or kt).
  • Platinum. This metal is attractive and very durable, but more expensive.
  • Titanium. It’s less expensive and doesn’t scratch or fade, but it isn’t as shiny as gold or platinum.
  • Silver. This is typically the most affordable option, but pure silver oxidizes over time.

Discretion vs. extravagance

You might enjoy having a ring that is striated, be-jeweled, or engraved with a personal message from your beloved. There is nothing to stop you from being creative and commissioning tailor-made wedding bands from your jeweler.

Men typically prefer to opt for discretion and comfort;

Your guests have honored you with their presence and it’s now time to thank them.

Ideally, your wedding favors will include the names of the bride and groom and the date you exchanged your vows.

Here is a selection of ideas to give your wedding the perfect finishing touch:

Gourmet favors

Chocolates, sugared almonds, or other treats will delight those with a sweet tooth. You can personalize your assortments by adding your initials or an illustration that represents you both.

For a winter wedding, a hot chocolate mix is a comforting gift that your guests can enjoy to their heart’s content. Hot summer wedding locations will want to stay away from chocolate favors that will inevitably melt.

Favors from Mother Nature

Nature lovers, this gift is for you: a pretty box filled with potting soil and some tiny succulents so your guests will leave with some genuine greenery. Or, opt for seeds to symbolize the beginning of your new life together.

Scented favors

Scented candles are perfect for most weddings, as they’re available in all shapes and colors. You could also consider giving bath salts or shell-shaped soaps for a nautical theme, or rose potpourris for a vintage wedding.

Regardless of which favor you choose to “thank” your guests with, a formal thank you for attendance and gifting is still required.
Grandparents are special people, so special many brides and grooms choose to honor them in their wedding. There are many ways to go about this from having grandparents serve in the wedding party to having ushers escort them into the wedding ceremony to writing a dedication to them in the wedding program.

But, what do you do if your grandparents are no longer with you? How do you pay tribute to them?

Traditions are an important way to honor grandparents no longer living. Research your grandparents’ weddings. Are there any traditions you can carry on? Can you get married on the same date or in the same place? Can you recite a beloved poem or verse?

If not, can you incorporate any of your grandparents’ wedding attire into yours? Following the “something old” tradition, perhaps the groom could wear his grandfather’s top hat or the bride could wear her grandmother’s veil. Can a piece of your grandmother’s gown be sown into yours?

Perhaps the couple could use a family cake topper or feature late grandparents’ wedding rings in your bouquet. Some brides have chosen to hang small photographs of their grandparents (and other late relatives) from their bouquets in small decorative frames.

Photographs are a lovely way to remember grandparents no longer living. You can gather photos of your grandparents, perhaps of their wedding day, and include some in your wedding program. You can display the rest around the reception or use them as centerpieces for each table. You can even set up some photos of your grandparents on the favors table and donate to a charity in their honor in lieu of favors.

Flowers are another way to pay tribute to grandparents no longer living. You can arrange to leave a seat open at the ceremony for each grandparent you want to honor and place a flower in the seat.

You can have your florist insert a special flower into your bouquet for each grandparent you want to honor or have them recreate your grandmother’s wedding bouquet altogether for you to carry or display. You can have your florist create centerpieces from your grandparents’ favorite flowers for use in the ceremony and the reception.

Music and food are also ideas. What were some of your grandparents’ favorite tunes? Perhaps you could include a few in the playlist for your reception. The same goes for food.

What were some of your grandparents’ favorite foods? Perhaps you could include some of them in

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HIRING YOUR WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHER CONTINUED

9. What will happen to the images after your wedding?
Will your images be backed up to a hard drive or the cloud once processed? How long will your photographer keep the images afterward? If you have any concerns about losing your photos, knowing what the photographer plans to do with your images after your wedding is important.

10. When will you get your photos?
No, you won’t get your pictures the day after; no photographer can deliver that quickly. It’s a good idea, though, to get a general idea of the timeline ahead of time.

You might even be able to agree on getting a couple of images ready for social media use very quickly. But obtaining your photos will likely take several weeks. To help with the wait, some photographers will send you a sneak peak with a few images. Just ask ahead of time!

You won’t be able to see everything that happens during your wedding day but the right photographer will capture moments you never knew existed!
For example, do you have an overnight bag at the hotel? Can you check in early? Or will someone else check you in and drop off your bags?

**Be appreciative.** Most people probably do not forget this one, but it happens.

Yes, this is your day. Yes, it’s kind of a big deal. But without the support of the people who you love and who love you in return, it wouldn’t be the big deal it is! Mind your ps and qs; say please and thank you. It will be a much better day for everyone if there isn’t an alert circulating to be aware of the Bridezilla.

**Don’t leave your guests high and dry.** Make sure your guests know where they need to be when and what they can expect. This information can be included on your wedding website or with your invitations.

However, this extends beyond the when and where. Out of town guests might need more direction than the directions to the church. Give them websites or a list of things to do in the area while they are visiting. Consider hosting a social the night before the wedding so you can welcome your guests and so they can get to know one another.

**Give credit where credit is due.** After the big day, take the time to complete online reviews for all of your vendors. It’s a great way to thank them for being part of your day. Also, if their services did not meet your expectations, you’ll be saving another couple from having a like experience. If you cannot complete online reviews, include the vendors on the list of needed thank-you cards.