

# To plan or not to plan?

How do you know if you need a wedding planner? Where do you start? Ali Klaver talks to Sara Sabey from Chameleon Events to find out more.

## Why would a bride need a wedding planner?

In my experience, there are four reasons why brides need wedding planners:

**They are time poor.** In reality, few couples are able to spend the amount of time required to plan a wedding. It can feel like a full-time job because there are so many little details that need to be taken care of.

**They live interstate or overseas.** Whether couples are planning to get married in the city they grew up in or at a holiday destination, they will find having someone local looking after their interests can be invaluable.

**They would like a short engagement.** If a couple gets engaged in winter and have their hearts set on a spring or summer wedding, they often need help, even if it is for only part of the planning.

**They want perfection.** Brides who want a well-organised event often turn to an expert. A wedding planner will make sure the event is successfully executed and managed on the day.

## What kinds of services do wedding planners offer?

Most wedding planners offer a wide variety of services and will get involved as much or as little as you want. Chameleon Events offers full-service wedding planning, partial planning and on-the-day co-ordination. We also help plan engagement parties, hen's and buck's nights and kitchen teas.

## What questions should a bride ask when choosing a wedding planner?

- How long have you been in business?
- What are your credentials, including professional events experience?
- Why are you passionate about event management and weddings?
- How many weddings do you organise a year?
- What services and packages do you offer?
- How do you charge? Percentage, flat fee or hourly rate?
- What quality suppliers do you have good relationships with?
- Ask for a contract.

## What value does a wedding planner offer a couple?

A professional wedding planner can provide a couple with a wealth of creative ideas, connections with the best suppliers in Melbourne and outstanding negotiation skills. The good ones are skilled in wedding etiquette and dealing with difficult situations.

Professional wedding planners can recommend suppliers

*(Right) Chameleon Events planned footballer Trent Croad's wedding last year; (this photo) the stylish reception set-up at Trent Croad's wedding.*



that match a couple's vision and style, saving them hours of research.

They can also assist with making budgets and developing timelines and checklists so that no detail is overlooked. They know what is expected of suppliers and what is fair and standard practice.

Couples are often surprised at how affordable wedding planners are. Often the money a wedding planner can save a couple because

of their events experience far exceeds the cost of their service.

By far the biggest value a wedding planner offers a couple is alleviating the stress of planning a wedding.

## Can a wedding planner organise one part of the event and leave the rest up to the bride?

While some wedding planners will only organise the entire job, many will get involved as much or as little as the couple wants. Chameleon Events is often employed four to eight weeks from the

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wedding day to pull together the final touches and provide on-the-day event management. This is a cost-effective way to have a wedding planner involved because you've done some of the hard yards yourself.

## How can a bride find a good wedding planner?

It's a good idea to start by asking brides who have had well-planned weddings for recommendations. Reputable wedding suppliers might also have suggestions.

Bridal magazines and websites are also good, because many wedding planners advertise or are listed in these. ◊

For more information on Chameleon Events call Sara on 0408 558 219 or visit [www.chameleonevents.com.au](http://www.chameleonevents.com.au)