



## Brides Take To The Web

(NAPSA)—According to the U.S. Census Bureau, about 2.3 million brides proclaimed their “I do’s” and set out to orchestrate their weddings last year. Not only did they accept their new title as a “bride-to-be” but also embraced the roles of financial advisor, event coordinator, stylist, and personal shopper—just to name a few. In preparing for their weddings, many brides will seek out the help of friends, family and even wedding professionals to ensure the process runs as smoothly as possible. All brides ultimately seek less stressful alternatives to pulling off the event they’ve been dreaming about since childhood.

The information age has given brides access to unlimited choices, whether they’re price hunting for low-budget weddings or planning high-fashion weddings from not-so-high-fashion towns. Online shopping for everything bridal—from flowers to dresses and wedding party gifts—gives brides the power to shop faster and smarter in the convenience of their own space, any time of the day. Brides headed for the aisle can even steer friends and family to the Internet to search for registries, eliminating the inevitable “Thanks...what is it?” dilemma.

Unlike brick-and-mortar stores, online shopping sites can now serve as the ultimate wedding tool, allowing for side-by-side product comparisons, reviews of products and merchants, and more. Brides: get ready to venture into the World Wide Web of Weddings, armed with some helpful tips and excellent resources:

- Use a site with comparison tools. Save time and enjoy being a bride! Shopping sites, such as Yahoo! Shopping (<http://shopping.yahoo.com>), take the load off of the shopper by searching for products all over the Web and compiling the information in an easy-to-follow grid. These sites offer everything—product reviews, price ranges and product descriptions, as well as a link to each merchant’s site for a quick and easy purchase.
- Make use of special features. Most shopping sites allow you to create accounts that store payment information for a faster checkout process. E-mail alerts can notify shoppers when the



**Marrying lots of choices with great efficiency, the Web can be a wonderful place to plan a wedding.**

ideal price for the product is reached. Shoppers can also create “wish lists” for personal or public viewing, and utilize “Save and Share” features to e-mail potential items to the family or the wedding party.

- Look for ways to save money. Saving money on wedding supplies can mean more money for the honeymoon. Although some sites have a section for deals and free shipping, shoppers can also search for “free shipping” through any search engine and get a list of merchants or products that offer the service for the not-so-obvious sites.

- Take advantage of reviews and gift finders. With comparison shopping sites at your fingertips, anyone can be a smarter shopper and more efficient planner. Certain sites offer ratings within their shopping communities or through trusted sources, such as Consumer Reports. The number of products available for purchase on the Web is continually growing. Make use of ways to narrow your search, such as gift-finding tools that offer suggestions based on occasions such as weddings, along with age, relationship to the gift-giver and the recipient’s lifestyle. Whether they’re adventurers or urban hipsters, you can find the perfect gift for your attendants, and guests can even use this feature to seek out presents for any couple that they’re sure to love.

With wedding season in full swing, shopping sites are increasingly popular with brides in preparing for that special day. Gone are the days of the obligatory chaotic trunk shows and endless drives from shop to shop. In its place are the online comparison shopping sites—and with the deals available online, it’s a smart move for any busy bride.