



Wedding Wisdom

Tech Tips That Get Couples From “To-Do” To “I Do”

(NAPSA)—Getting married? You probably have a million things to do to prepare for the big day. If your to-do list is stressing you out and making you wish you could afford your own personal wedding planner, let technology make the process a little easier and more enjoyable.

If you have access to a computer at work or at home, take advantage of what software can do for you. Microsoft Office XP includes programs you may already be familiar with that can help you get a handle on wedding tasks. Save time and even money, and enjoy the excitement as you approach your special day. Here are some tips to help you plan the big event:

- **Create a new kind of address book**—Get rid of the handwritten address book you’ve been carrying around, and enter information for your guests, new family members and vendors such as your caterer or florist in the Contacts folder of Microsoft Outlook. Not only can you easily update information without erasing it or crossing it out, but you can store it in one central location. You’ll have no more worries about accidentally losing your address book.

- **Get organized with a to-do list that almost does the work for you**—Of course you have a list of hundreds of things to do. Instead of keeping track of them on paper, put them in a central place using the Tasks feature in Outlook. You can set deadlines and monitor your progress. If you haven’t checked a task off by its assigned date, Outlook sends you a reminder that it hasn’t been done. Remember, you don’t have to do everything yourself; you can assign tasks to others with follow-up reminders as well.

- **Let your calendar keep you on task**—As you schedule appointments for things such as dress alterations and cake tasting, enter your appointments in the Calendar in Outlook. And be sure to set a reminder so you won’t forget. Send your maid of honor an e-mail meeting request with the time and date for an appointment such as dress shopping. If she accepts, the appointment is automatically entered into her Calendar with the reminder you have set.



Something old, something new...computer programs can help organize wedding plans.

- **Make your own invitations and stand out from the rest**—If you are having a tough time rationalizing paying a professional printer to do your invitations, stand out from the rest and create your own. Microsoft Word lets you add photos, clip art images and special formatting to make your invitation shine. Not only will your invitations look unique, but you can keep a consistent theme by creating the rest of your wedding documents, such as engagement announcements, ceremony programs and thank-you letters, in the same design. To make it even easier, you can also use wedding-themed templates available for download on the Office Template Gallery Web site.

- **Develop an interactive budget**—Ah, yes—everything costs money, and it sure adds up fast. Get rid of the calculator, and let Microsoft Excel track your expenses for you. By creating a budget in Excel, you can automatically calculate your total expenses as you go. You can compare your expenditures against your budget and easily determine what you have left to spend. If you would rather not take the time to create your own budget spreadsheet, check out the Office Template Gallery for templates you can use.

For a wedding guide with more helpful tips, visit <http://office.microsoft.com/assistance/2002/articles/otoptenwed.aspx>, and for wedding-related and other templates, visit the Office Template Gallery at <http://officeupdate.microsoft.com/templategallery>.