

Wedding

PLANNER MAGAZINE

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the publication for wedding planners, professionals, and designers

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WHAT WAS YOUR MOST UNIQUE MARKETING STRATEGY THAT REALLY PAID OFF?

“My best marketing strategy has been partnering with a hotel and wedding designer. They have been referring all of their brides to me. The wedding designer actually has my packages on her website so brides can not only contact her for designing their special day, but if they need my services, she will contact me with their information. It has been a huge success for my business this year!!!

- Vonda R. Parker, *Bella Faire Event and Wedding Planners, Leesburg, Fla.*

“Upon moving our family and business to a small community, we joined the Chamber of Commerce and became involved (and volunteered) in local activities. The cost was nominal, included complimentary advertising, and people soon got to know us and recommend us.”

- Mary Charmoli, *MBC™, Saratoga Weddings, Inc., Webster, Wis.*

“Years ago, we partnered with a photographer and created a series of curated images focused on our most unique event details. Our social media and website conveyed how our designs created one-of-a-kind, memorable experiences for our clients. Over the years, we have become known for experiential events, but in the beginning, we made a concerted effort to convey this. You must tell your story effectively and convincingly so that people know what you are selling and want to buy it.”

- Merryl Brown, *MA, CWP™, Merryl Brown Events, Santa Barbara, Calif.*

“A few of our strategic partners host private events for their clients or potential clients. Because of our relationship, All the Best is invited to participate as a recommended professional. Our table features a slide show depicting the weddings that we’ve done together so clients can see how well the partnership works.”

- Kathi R. Evans, *ABC™, All the Best Weddings & Celebrations, Toms River, N.J.*

“One year, we made hundreds of homemade chocolate chip cookies. We packed them into cute gingham bags and slid a brochure and business card into each one. We closed them with a logo sticker. I hired some young kids to go house-to-house in a few neighborhoods to give them out. We got lots of great responses and even booked a couple of parties from it!”

- Chany Kleinberger, *MiChicas Catering & Events, Spring Valley, N.Y.*

ABC MEMBER PLANNER: Merryl Brown, MA, CWP™, Merryl Brown Events, www.merrylbrownevents.com, merryl@merrylbrownevents.com.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Elizabeth Messina Photography.

ABC MEMBER BUSINESSES INVOLVED: Classic Party Rentals.

NON-MEMBER BUSINESSES INVOLVED: Flowerwild, Full of Life Flatbread, The Mobile Home Boys, Isaac Hernandez Videography, Tina Schlieske, The Stationery Collection, Janice Blair Calligraphy, DJ Mike Ober, Robin Loves Cake, La Tavola Linens.

THE COUPLE: Alaina and Matt are a southern California couple, well educated, well traveled, and very drawn to a bohemian aesthetic, 1960s rock, and the alternative music scene.

INSPIRATION: Sunstone Villa in the Santa Ynez Valley is a remarkable place to produce magnificent wedding celebrations. For this decidedly bohemian chic wedding, we were asked to create something magical, dream-like, and fun—with great music. We incorporated features that celebrated the phases of the moon and other planetary elements, using soft and subtle tones, amazing flowers, gorgeous Italian china, and locally sourced foods from the celebrated Los Alamos Full of Life Flatbread. Along with a DJ that played between sets so that the music never stopped, we brought in The Mobile Home Boys band, for an atmosphere that was reminiscent of Coachella, with non-stop dancing and partying, amazing foods served all night long, and an ethereal, candlelit after party with a palm reader, planetary inspired cupcakes, late-night flatbread cooked in an outdoor pizza oven, and music by Tina Schlieske that went on until the wee hours of the morning. In all, it was a memorable, unique and stunningly beautiful celebration.

COLOR PALLETTE: White, taupe, apricot, blush, with pops of pink.

BUDGET: \$200,000.

GUEST COUNT: 180.

MOST UNIQUE DESIGN ELEMENT: The collateral material was simply divine as was the wedding cake—both celebrating the planetary theme in a stunning and unique way.

BIGGEST CHALLENGE: The wind and a musical glitch, two items that, despite much pre-planning, could not be easily remedied. If I were to do things differently, I would have hired a different musical group for the ceremony and not the band's lead guitarist. It's best to use seasoned ceremony musicians for ceremonies.

LEARNINGS: You are only as good as your weakest link, so never take risks with weak links or unknown vendors on your important events. ••

