



To Make and to Hold

With more and more brides designing their own wedding stationery, get some ideas and tips on how to tap into this lucrative sector of the market

Everything about a bride's special day has to be perfect and the process of planning a wedding can be very stressful. From finding the right dress and arranging the cars, to making sure everything is colour coordinated or follows a set theme, and that includes the invitations. Following a popular trend, many brides now design and make their

own wedding stationery right down to the place settings. This is partly to save money but more importantly to add a personal touch to their very special day.

Trend spotting

We have seen many classic trends in wedding stationery over the years, from plain and simple, to something a little more individual, but notably

the do-it-yourself trend is one that is continually growing. Donna Biggs, managing director of The Handcrafted Card Company says: "The trend for 'DIY' is strong and growing with the on-trend look of something being homemade with a slight sense of nostalgia."

Wedding invitations are the first official element of a wedding, and at this stage of the process, many couples have the time to source the materials required to make their own. "Our Enfolio brand of pocketfolds, wallets, enclosures and invitation wraps is growing as the trend to include itineraries, CDs, gift lists and more, becomes increasingly popular. Since most people also have access to, and know how to use computers and printers, the whole process is simplified. The hardest part being the choice of design, board stocks and embellishments," Donna explains.

Wedding stationery no longer just consists of wedding invitations though, brides are now looking to make a range of items including place cards, order of service cards, table numbers, menus, and table plans to support their chosen theme.

Dare to embellish

One of the most called upon parts of the making process is embellishments. "The nostalgic element is key as is coordinating stationery with an overall theme to the day. To coordinate with the ever-popular vintage style we find that pearls, diamantes, florals and lace are really strong," says Donna.

Cheryl Graham, sales director from Courtenay Design UK says: "Our most popular embellishments remain to be flowers such as lilies and gerberas. However, hearts keep recurring as a theme because, of course, they are the epitome of love and marriage."

It definitely pays to stock up on embellishments, as they can truly add the finishing touches to any project and are also a great way to carry a theme through an entire design. That's why it is important that you stock an array of different embellishments as well as those common ones that promise to never go out of style.

Stocking up

Starting off, your customers will require a basic kit to design and make their own stationery. You can upsell some of the tools your customers will need, such as adhesive glues,



A Little Something Extra

Feather butterfly embellishments are always a popular wedding stationery decoration and can be used throughout a wedding as a theme. Made from delicate sanitised feathers and decorated to a high standard, they are more robust than you may first think.

E-crafts imports the butterflies direct from the manufacturer ensuring large stocks at any time. The versatility of the butterflies means they can be used on all stationery through to cake decorations, flower arrangements, table settings and even in head dresses.

DIY BRIDE

Joanna Drake is an account manager and got married in May this year

"The decision to make our own wedding stationery was born from me being fussy! I couldn't find anything that was 'just right' and ready-made, and I didn't have the budget to commission a design either. Our colours were navy and ivory and I really struggled to find any stationery in those colours, so in the end I took myself off to Hobbycraft and scoured the internet for craft websites. I unearthed some beautiful navy blue mulberry paper hearts, tiny stick on ivory pearls and gorgeous ivory hammered paper. The invites, order of service and menus were all made in the same theme with a blue heart in the top right hand corner with three ivory pearls dotted around it. For the place

settings, I found some indus paper studded with dried blue cornflowers in Hobbycraft and handwrote our guests' names on slips of this, securing each to a wine glass with a navy blue heart glued to a miniature wooden peg. I absolutely loved all the stationery we created for our wedding – it was very satisfying to know that we had made it ourselves and gave the whole day a personal touch."



Creative Kits

The Couture Floral Collection from Cranberry Card company, is totally different in its design and offers customers a variety of colours and designs away from the norm. Not only are the designs elegant, but the vintage collection of pocket-fold wallets add another dimension to the increasing demand for something different. Brides are not only looking for the whites and creams that have always been popular and will continue to be so vibrant designs and eye catching colours are now in great demand



and Cranberry has a rainbow in its collection to perfect any wedding colour theme.

Visit the website at www.cranberrycards.co.uk

Display and inspire

Some of your customers may look to you for inspiration and ideas, and this is why it is so important to be up to speed on the latest trends and what other brides are asking for. Display all your products in one area; don't scatter them around the shop, so the customer has to go hunting for each product. Make it easier for your customers to get what they need by creating a display dedicated to wedding craft.

If you stock wedding stationery kits, your customers will also appreciate seeing some ready-made versions, so they can see exactly what their finished product might look like.

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