



A Bright Bouquet Of Bridal Promotions!

Bring In The Bride & Her Entire Wedding Party

By Larry H. Oskin

Every bride loves to be pampered and every salon loves to host bridal parties! Bridal parties are terrific for business and always bring many new clients to your salon. There are many creative ways to promote your business for bridal showers, bridal packages, grooms packages, honeymoon packages and for the actual wedding days. What is amazing is that most nail salons, full-service salons and day spas that we researched – do NOT have special 'Bridal Nailcare Packages'! It's time to take advantage of this sensational opportunity.

Bridal Success Deserves A Party! A New Jersey day spa has one of the best Bridal Programs that we have ever heard of before! The owners take bridal party business very seriously, as it has been a tremendous asset in building their total salon business, reputation and image, besides adding exciting new profitability.

This day spa offers a 'Prenuptial Agreement' Beautycare Packages. These packages are not discounted and actually are slightly higher priced than their normal services. However, they add a lot of extras including their famous extra special personalized customer service for the bride and her bridal party. Under this Prenuptial Agreement, the bride actually sits through a complete consultation in the salon before she is asked to sign the document. This agreement reserves a specific date and time for all of the required services, so there are no last minute surprises. Their Bridal Service Consultant reviews all of their Prenuptial Agreement service options, policies and procedures. The bride is required to place a deposit whether by cash, check or credit card to begin the process. Their Prenuptial Agreement also includes all gratuities for the salon, spa and nailcare staffs.

The owner notes, "We have found that our Prenuptial Agreements relieve a lot of stress for the bride's as well as for our staff. Everything is well planned and documented well ahead of time. Bridal parties can be a last minute nightmare, and they sometimes used to be that way for us. We have designated one specially trained person on our team to work with us as our 'Bridal Consultant'. Our Bridal Consultant has turned around all of the last minute surprises, cancellations, added people, time constraints and financial issues by taking control of the entire process with this type of a bridal service promotion. We begin with thorough bridal party consultations. We definitely attempt to up sell as many extra nailcare, salon and spa services as possible. We ask the bride to be responsible for the entire bridal party with a deposit, so there are no loose ends. Eighty percent of the time, the bride pays for the entire package as a gift to the wedding party while including spa manicures, pedicures, facials, massages and the tips for our staff. Besides nailcare services, they will also often include hairstyles for the bridesmaids, groomsmen, the parents and the grandparents of the bride and groom."

Their Day Spa Salon Service Menu offers complete details on the Prenuptial Agreements as well as all of their nailcare services. They run special advertisements to promote their bridal packages in all of the local newspaper and magazine bridal supplements. The advertisements are designed to look as upscale and high-end as possible. In the future, they plan to work with their marketing services agency and their graphic designer to create more in-salon signage, point-of-purchase materials as well as to pursue some local PR stories on this specialty service area. They further plan to start instituting a telemarketing campaign with bridal registries and for those engagements noted in the local newspapers. Plans are underway for even more cross marketing of bridal party services within the salon for makeup, hair removal, skincare, retail, haircare, massage and facials. Their bridal party promotions run under the campaign slogan, 'Wedding Choices: You've done so much for everyone else, what about the bride?'

They successfully handle their Bridal Package Services just like the caterers, hotels, florists, photographers and any other professional bridal service with consultations and contracts.

Their Nailcare Team tells us that during the initial consultation, brides will usually request natural nail services or a natural looking nail extension, for very pretty and natural looks. Most want a French Tip design, whether it is offered in natural nails or with acrylics. They offer 'Forever French' which includes white tips. The client always wants their new nailcare look to last at least one to two weeks, through the honeymoon. The Forever French Tips are usually guaranteed not to yellow in the sun.

The owner points out that "Our salon & Day Spa Bridal Consultant tells brides that their final manicure and pedicure must be done before the actual wedding day, one or two days before. They ask these clients to wear open-toed shoes to the appointment and to come in early, to alleviate any potential wedding day beautycare stress. From nail tech to nail tech – a wedding is one of the most important times in a woman's life. It can be the first time the brides or bridesmaids are in your salon, and if handled professionally, artistically and properly – they will become valuable lifelong clients. We see a lot of brides that come in for nailcare services with their parents and the bridesmaids. When we win over the entire bridal party and their families, we consider that we have hit a home run for them and for us. You should consider bridal party services and promotions one of the most important avenues to your future success!"

Bridal Celebrations Start at Eclips Salons & Day Spas: The Eclips Salon & Day Spa in McLean, VA notes, "We work with the organizers of the local Bridal Shows, to go well beyond just sitting at a trade show booth with a table, chair and some fliers. We come with professional prepared photography notebooks, banners, brochures, posters, samples and door prizes. We make a brief 15 minute stage presentation before the big bridal fashion show. We tell the brides, bridesmaids and their mothers in the audience all about their special 'Wedding Day Of Beauty' while covering a complete list of bridal beautycare do's and don'ts. We tell them how to prepare well in advance for their big day, by working with a professional salon. We present numerous ideas on manicures, pedicures, skincare treatments, facials, massage, hair removal, and other services. Further, we tell the bridesmaids in the audience that it is not their day – it's the bride's day. We do this, as many bridesmaids come in with an 'attitude' on the wedding weekend and we try to teach them that they need to be beautiful – yet purely supporting of the bride."

Eclips continues, "We have our booth set up with tall makeup chairs for free bridal beautycare consultations. Each convention visitor is given a list of 'Beautycare Do's & Don'ts' as well as the opportunity to fill out a 'Bridal Registration Form'. We promote that one of the Bridal Registration Forms will be selected for a 'FREE Day Of Beauty' at our day spa salon. We do tell our brides to come in one or two days before the wedding for a manicure and pedicure, while still scheduling a morning touchup on her wedding day. Further, we really promote 'Bridal Spa Parties' rather than bachelorette parties. We have had a lot of success encouraging the brides, grooms, bridesmaids and groomsmen to have a fun night at our salon where they can all be pampered – rather than going out to get drunk'.

Diane Fisher, owner of Eclips -- notes, "We have created special Bridal Beauty Guide Brochures for our three salons and spas to use. We have these offered right at the front desk of each salon as well as to offer them at any other local business that we cross market with. They are also a terrific sales tool at Bridal Fairs, making us look like we have a well-planned bridal service program. These brochures have a 'Bridal Services Schedule' on them, noting our preliminary plans from 3 months before the event, to one month, one week, one day and the actual wedding day. We prefer to do their nails one or two days before a wedding, so they look great for the entire weekend event – while coming in on the morning of the wedding for a touchup.

We do have a designated 'Personal Wedding Coordinator' on staff, who will guarantee personalized bridal packages. We offer various customized packages including 'The Bride's Retreat'. We always schedule a practice session at least 10 days prior to the wedding day, where we practice the nails, makeup and hairstyle – or whatever they have planned for their special day."

Bridal Party Marketing Plans

Bridal & Nailcare Marketing Calendars: Create a special calendar to promote certain bridal packages, community events, programs and special in-salon nailcare services each month or on a bi-monthly basis. Even though you can promote bridal nailcare throughout the year, you'll need to mix it up. Keep track of every holiday, season and peak sales period. Focus on January through June and again in September through October. Even though many weddings occur in the summer or fall, many engagements happen around the Christmas and Valentine's holidays, so you need to be ready for that.

Cross-Market With Other Bridal Businesses: Partner together with other businesses that have a focus on brides. Create some cross-marketing opportunities to hand out brochures for each other. Perhaps hire a graphic designer to create a special folder that will hold all of your materials in one portfolio. Or, design and create one comprehensive brochure offering all of your services in one large booklet. This can be updated once every year, while you all help to promote each other. By sharing the costs with a cross-marketing plan in place, you will all win. Most importantly, the bride and her wedding party will have a terrific new set of local resources that are comfortable working together. You can all promote your services and products at full price. You can also offer a special discount gift certificate from each participating merchant.

Consider contacting the following types of businesses:

- ◆ **Bridal Consultants**
- ◆ **Wedding Party Planners:**
- ◆ **Photographers**
- ◆ **Florists**

- ◆ **Limousine Services**
- ◆ **Wedding Dress Shoppes**
- ◆ **Tuxedo Shops**
- ◆ **Jewelers**
- ◆ **Plastic Surgeons & Medical Clinics**
- ◆ **Wedding Invitation Printers**
- ◆ **Disc Jockeys & Musicians**
- ◆ **Dry Cleaners**
- ◆ **Card Shops**
- ◆ **The Chamber Of Commerce**
- ◆ **Hotels**

If a 'nailcare only' salon, partner with:

- ◆ **Full-Service Hairstyling Salons**
- ◆ **Tanning Salons**
- ◆ **Day Spas**
- ◆ **Spa Resorts**

Bridal Shows: Be there, but do something different! It's a great mystery why most nailcare salons and day spas do not actively attend and have booths at Bridal Fairs. Eclips Salons & Day Spas of Virginia rent booth space for at least two local bridal fairs per year and the payoffs are enormous. This is a great opportunity for any nailcare salon or day spa. Get contact names and information by having the brides and show attendees fill out registration forms for a door prize like a free spa manicure and pedicure. Your registration note pads should ask for their complete name, address, phone, work phone, cellular phone, email address and the date of their wedding.

Bridal Advertising: You need to advertise and promote your special bridal services. Plan to invest in a series of well-timed advertising programs. Look for special 'Wedding Sections' in local newspapers and regional magazines. Look for cooperative direct mail opportunities.

You should create at least one or two independent direct mail pieces for your salon. Every time you see an engagement announcement in the local newspapers, you should look up their names in the telephone book – so that you can send them an invitation for a Free Nailcare Bridal Consultation with one of your Bridal Services brochures.

Whether you look into infomercials or regular cable TV advertisements, it's smart to have a few commercials and TV opportunities aimed at Bridal Services throughout the year. The next time you create a new TV commercial, shoot some extra footage so you can have one extra for Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Christmas and Wedding Parties. Always promote gift certificates and free consultations at the end of each TV spot.

Bridal & Traditional Nailcare Photography: We suggest that you hold a large professional photography session where you can take photographs of your various nail designs. Get some photos with the bride in her wedding dress, showing off her French Tips, airbrush artistry and nailcare fashions. Try creating a series of photos showing a bride's day of nailcare beauty from start to finish. You can present this in a special photo portfolio during bridal consultations.

Specialty Bridal Brochures: Work with a local graphic designer and printer to create professional 'Bridal Nailcare Brochures' and/or special 'Bridal Beautycare Brochures'. Include all of your information about the consultations, special nailcare packages, Bridal Part Parties, and a 'Bridal Services Schedule'.

Bridal Baskets: As part of your brochure offerings, suggest 'Bridal Beautycare Baskets' for gifts to the Bride's mother, mother-in-law and bridesmaids. Create several different packages that include a combination of nailcare and related spacare services with retail products like nail polishes and other nailcare treats.

Bridal Showers & Pre-Wedding Parties: Your brochure should also invite the bride and her family to host a bridal shower in your salon where everyone can be pampered with manicures, pedicures, paraffin dips and nailcare products as prizes before they open their presents. Offer a space where they can relax in bathrobes have fun and party together with any food or refreshments they care to bring in. Bachelorette Spa Parties are a terrific alternative to the traditional last night outings.

Bridal Nailcare PR Plans: Don't be afraid to create some special press releases about your bridal nailcare artistry that can go out to the local media with photographs of your work. Create personalized pitch letters to the newspaper and magazine editors offering customized feature stories. Send similar packages to the local TV talk show producers and news directors. Offer to work with them on a special segment or to create a weeklong TV series.

Create wedding services as a new salon specialty for your nailcare business. Weddings can become a fabulous new avenue to gain new clients, get additional client referrals and to be the talk of the town in the media. No one will know about your bridal nailcare services, packages and specialties unless you tell them. **It's time to celebrate!**

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