

National Association for Catering & Events Dallas 2023

Tom Chelednik

The Foundry
Redfield Photography

WEDDINGpro

The power of *the knot* + WEDDINGWIRE

Getting To More Conversations That Get More Bookings

NACE Dallas Convention 2023

The Foundry
Redfield Photography

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The power of *the knot* + WEDDINGWIRE



Ceremony Officiants
Jackalope Photography

Reminder

The wedding industry is worth \$100 billion a year



Connect With Local Couples

271,641 searches for pros like you every month in Dallas, TX Area



WHO THEY ARE

Age: **31**

They call themselves: **Fun**

Average HHI: **\$123,500**



THEIR PLANNING JOURNEY

December
is when most couples get engaged

13 months
is the average engagement length

October
is the most popular wedding month



THEIR EVENT

55% go over budget

111 guests in attendance

14 pros hired

Raise Your Hand If.....

Goals for this session

- Walk away with solid ideas to improve your lead follow up content
- An action plan to increase your follow up on leads
- Ideas on how to automate your follow up process

BOOK MORE WEDDINGS




Tom Chelednik

**Associate Director of WeddingPro Support,
The Knot Worldwide**

Professionally

- 25 years in sales and marketing
- 12 years at The Knot
- Visited thousands of wedding professionals
- 2 years COO at The Treasure Venue Collection
- 14 years in the wedding business





Building Blocks To Lead Replies

Building Blocks to Successful Lead Replies

- Professionalism
- Timing
- Content
- Follow up



Professionalism & Timing are Key

- Remember, You can be professional and show personality at the same time
- Avoid emojis and slang
- Check your grammar
 - Grammarly.com is a great resource
- Read and re-read all your replies
- Check formatting on all devices

Pro-tip: An auto reply that tells someone you are going to respond within 24 hours is not the best use of your first contact. Customize the message to welcome your lead, congratulate them, and let them know you are personally reviewing their email before getting back in touch.

Follow up

Baseball Analogy

2001 - 2020 831,932 hits in the MLB

2001 - 2020 100,690 home runs

= 12.10 % “Hit it out of the park”

How Many Times are You Swinging The Bat?



Follow up Cadence

- How many times are you following up?
- Out of 10 leads, how many replies back do you get? How many turn into bookings?

Follow up for 30 days

Why?

		Month			Year		
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
				1	2	3	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
25	26	27	28	29	30		

Why Follow up?

- You paid for that lead
- You need the bookings
- You are helping couples



Your email is getting buried!

Email Response Goals

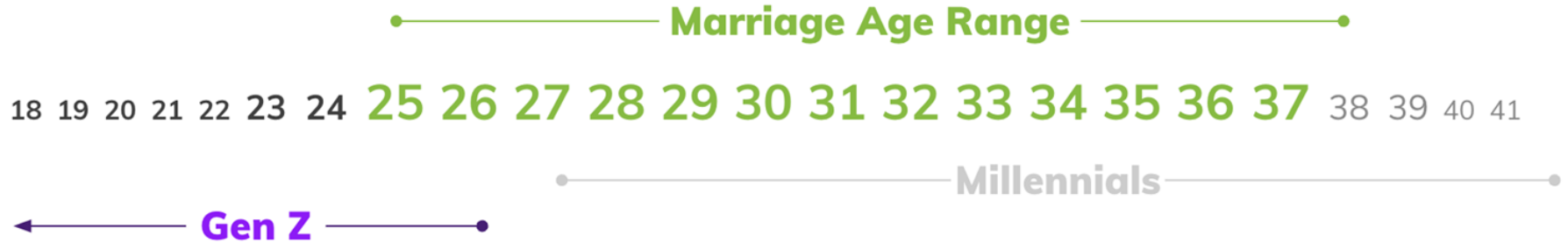
- Gain Two-way Conversation
- Build Trust
- Build Rapport
- Shows Responsiveness

Book more Weddings



Let's Talk Gen Z

Gen Z turned 25 in 2022 and entered core marrying age



The oldest GenZ were about 10 years old when the first iPhone was released

Marketing to GEN Z: 10 Tips to Market to GEN Z

<https://go.weddingpro.com/weddingpro-gen-z-pdf>



Questions?

Email:

tchelednik@theknotww.com

Follow Up Email Content



Antique Coach Excursions
Dawn Derbyshire Photography

Email Content Building Blocks

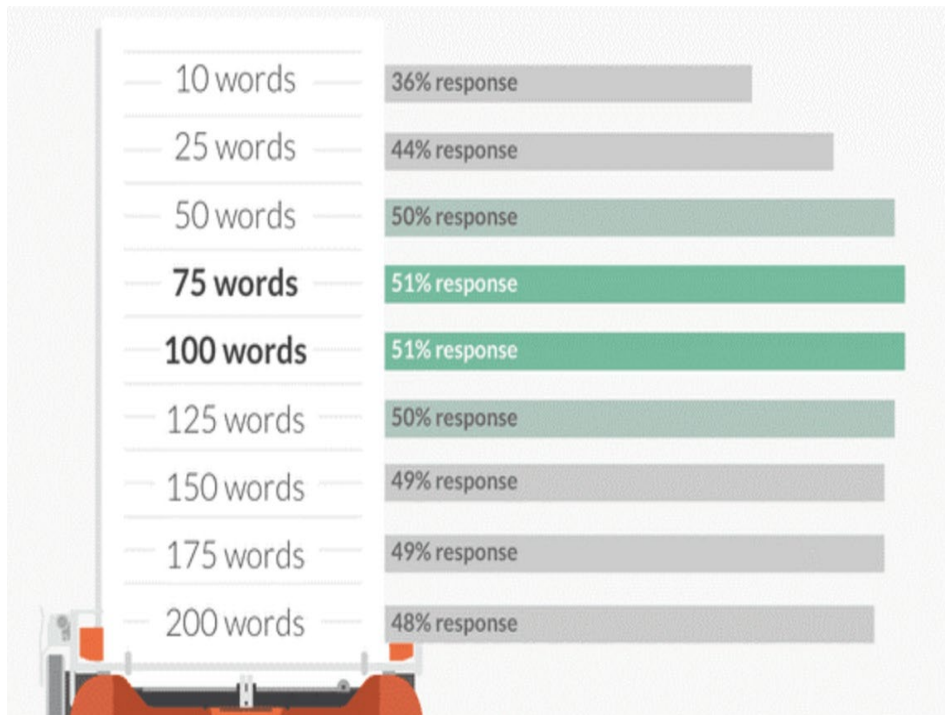
- Keep it short
- Be professional/friendly
- Bring value/be helpful
- Create a sense of urgency
- Show your personality
- End in a open ended questions



Keep it Short

Email Attention Span

- Follow the 12 second rule
- Use the 2 swipe rule
- You can use wordcounter.net to copy and paste your replies to



What *not* to do in your first reply

- Overwhelm them
- Include high intent actions
- Send large attachments

612 Words 

Also, thank you for considering the World-Renowned or your wedding!

At this time, Saturday, April 20, 2024 is available.

We also do your wedding planning with you.

Celebrating 27 years, can accommodate large groups, with capacity at 500 guests. The houses, with center courtyard, were once home to the Markey-Picard Institute, a finishing school for girls!

Most of our weddings average from 125-250 guests. We provide food and beverage packages for your guests; off street and lighted parking for cars and buses; security. We pride ourselves on our one stop service, but we do leave the flowers, cake and music up to you, AND we can help you with our vendor list to help with those decisions.

is the only home and studio of the French Impressionist Master anywhere in the world. open to the public! s proud that we have recently been declared a French Landmark by the French Ministry of Culture. The French Ambassador to the United States, Philippe Etienne presented this marker of distinction on July 15, 2019. This prestigious award, the Maisons des Illustres (meaning 'House of the Illustrious') puts the in the company of the houses of Napoleon, Joan of Arc, the Chateau of Monte Cristo, Eric Satie, Ravel, Jules Verne, and a host of other luminaries throughout history.. There are 236 homes in this collection, with four being outside the French territories including two in the United States, of which the Degas House is one.

has been awarded "Best of Weddings" by The Knot for the last 10 consecutive years. We are also in The Knot "Hall of Fame". We are proud of these distinctions because they are based on customer service and our 5 Star Reviews by Brides! Our popularity over the years, is attributed to great service and a staff that is well trained and who truly care about you and your family and guests.

I have attached information about the property including a floor plan, our signature "Dressing of the Bride" package, reception menu options and bar packages. While you are looking them over please keep in mind that we would be more than happy to customize the menus and packages to meet any dietary needs and to fit your taste and your budget!

Our venue rental fee on a Friday or Saturday is \$5,000 and on Sunday through Thursday it is \$4,000. However, we WAIVE that fee if you reach the \$10,000 minimum food and beverage spend.

Our decoratively lighted courtyard is extremely spacious and is flanked by both houses, allowing for easy access to both elegant interior spaces, and the informality of the outdoor Courtyard!
Pricing includes off street parking for 90 cars on our lighted, secured parking one block from the Degas House, corner Rocheblave, at 2401 Esplanade Avenue.

Our pricing also includes all food and beverage, (please see our attachments); security officer; parking; our in-house coordinator; service staff, bartender(s), among other items, including our vendor list.

We would love to have you come for a site visit to take a tour of the venue and meet some of our staff. We are here for site visits, by appointment, 7 days per week.

You can check out photos from some of our previous weddings on our website or on our Facebook page by clicking the link

We are constantly updating photos around the many events that we host, including our Weekend Brunch.

Would you be kind enough to share your phone number so that we can discuss details of your upcoming wedding?

Thank you again for reaching out to the World-Renowned Degas House! Please feel free to reach out to me at any time with any questions you may have!

PLUS 6 Attachments

What to do in your first reply

- Reply the same method they sent inquiry
- Answer their questions
- Personalize - USE VIDEO!
- Keep it short
- End in a open ended question

99 Words



Subject Line: Your Wedding Planner

"Congratulations on your engagement and upcoming wedding! Good news, we are available for your wedding on August 15! We are honored and excited that you have the Tom Planners as a possibility to plan your dream wedding!

Our package prices start at XXXXX.

- Budget Consultations & Creation
- Wedding Design Concept Creation
- Guided Vendor Sourcing
- Timeline Planning & Review
- And so much more!

Your wedding should be unique to you, we can help create a package that fits your wedding!

I am obsessed with decor and themes. What colors or themes are you thinking for your wedding?

With much love.

Which would you rather read?

"Congratulations on your engagement and upcoming wedding! Good news, we are available for your wedding on August 15! We are honored and excited that you have the Tom Planners as a possibility to plan your dream wedding!

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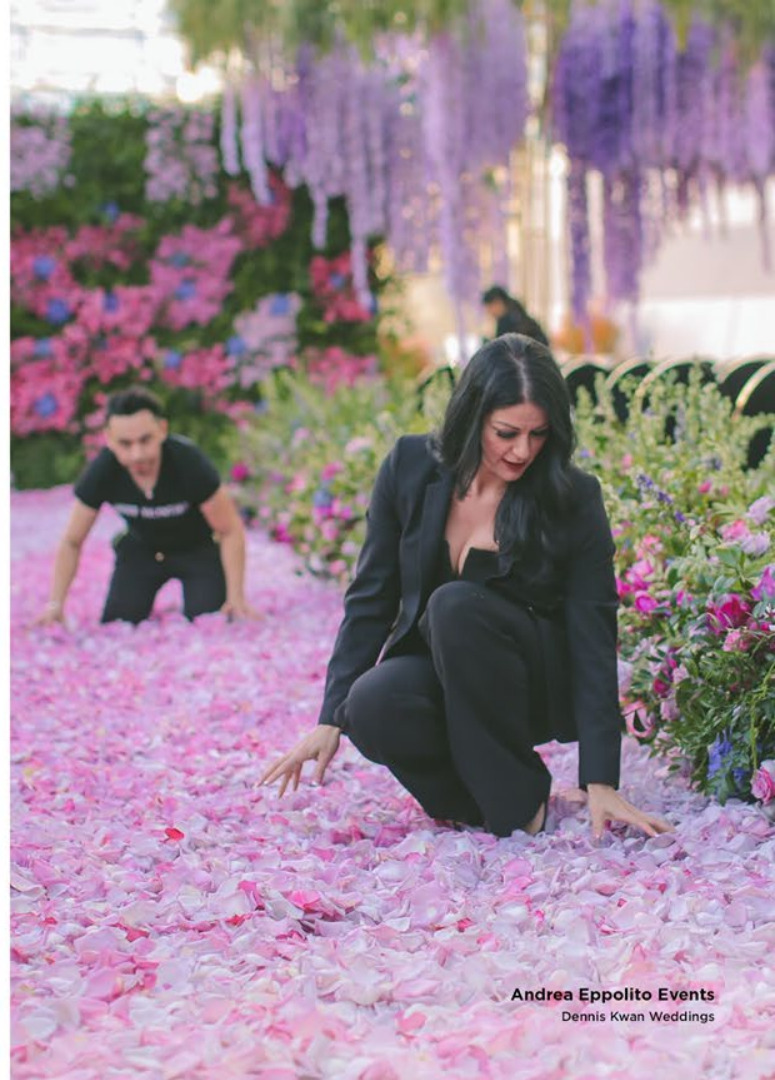
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Bring Value & Be Helpful

Bring Value and Be Helpful

- Builds trust
- Build rapport
- Be helpful
- This shows you are genuine



Be helpful and build value with each email

Hi,

Checking in to ensure the information you requested made it through your spam folders.

It's time to set up a free get to know you consultation.

We are looking forward getting to know you and your finance, your love story and your wedding vision.

Many of our couples have used our timeline template that I have included in this email. .It includes a sample of a typical wedding timeline and an area left blank for you to put your thoughts down.

What are you thinking are planning for food service?
Passed Hors d'oeuvres,, Buffet, Sit down dinner?

With much love.

(Attach the TimeLine Template)

Examples:

- Venue Comparison Charts
- Bar Menus
- What is included
- Template for must have photos
- Things to do in your area list
- Photos
- Blog Links
- Wedding TimeLine
- Design Service
- Experience

100 words





Create a Sense of Urgency

Why a Sense of Urgency is Important

- Forces the brain to make a decision quickly
- Prioritizes a persons to do list
- Creates FOMO



BOOK MORE WEDDINGS!

An Example of Sense of Urgency in Email

Hi,

August 15th will be here before you know it; At this time we still are available on your preferred date.

We are offering a PROMO for the month of July. When you sign before July 31st your guests will receive a **FREE Welcome Champaign Drink** as they enter your cocktail hour!

Let's talk about your signature drink! We can help you with that too! What type of signature drink are you thinking about?

With much love.

Examples:

- Free upgrade to next package level
- Free extra XX hours of coverage
- Free app
- Free champagne welcome drink
- Free extra shooter
- Free engagement session

75 words





Show Personality

Showing Personality in Your Emails

- Have fun!
- Don't be afraid

106 words



SUBJECT LINE: Are you ok?

Hi

Has wedding planning done you in? Or are you just overwhelmed? Either way, let me know if you're ok?

Usually, at this point, when we haven't heard from the couple that requested information from us, one of three things has happened:

1. You found another wedding venue. That's sad for us. Where are you hosting your guests?
2. You are no longer getting married; oh, that's sad. Sorry!
3. You are just overwhelmed, and you are binging Netflix. What type of popcorn should we send? Microwave or Stovetop?

Please let me know how we can help, or should I just stop following up?

With much love.

Ask Open Ended Questions



Andrea Eppolito Events and Lovella Bridal
Brian Leahy Photography

Open Ended vs. Close Ended Questions

- Open ended questions gives couples the opportunity to share information
- Close ended questions can be answered with one word (Yes/No) Very Little Sharing

Why is it important?

- Gives couples the opportunity to communicate
- Shows you are interested in the couple
- Makes you stand out from the competition



Examples of Open Ended Question

Open ended questions start with:

Why

How

What

Describe

Tell me about

What do you think about

Examples:

1. Tell me about your most important things about your wedding?
1. What are the colors and theme you are thinking about?
1. Describe the kind of experience you want to give your guests.
1. Why are you interested in getting married here?
1. Describe how you want to feel when you walk in to your reception.



Automating Your Emails

Lead Management

Weaven CRM

Venues only
Two Sided CRM
Includes Couple Portal
sales@weven.com

17 Hats CRM

Most basic,
\$50/month

DJ Event Planner CRM

Specific for DJ's,
\$50/month

Honeybook CRM

More features than 17 hats,
\$33/month



Dubsado CRM

Strongest when it comes to
automation,
\$35/Month

Software

Flodesk: Used for
automated emails

Calendar/Spreadsheets

Calendar Appointments
Excel/GSheets





**Where are your couples
planning?**

Couples are using multiple resources to plan

- Overall, **90%** of planning is done online.
 - Wedding planning sites as well as friends/family are most used resources.
 - Pinterest continues to be heavily relied on, especially for inspiration.



In 2022, Pinterest launched a new collage-making app Shuffles that saw a big surge among GenZ soon after launch

Top resources used for planning

Wedding sites/apps	73%
Friends/family	73%
Pinterest	68%
Google docs/sheets	53%
Search	47%

Source: 2022 The Knot Real Weddings Study



How can I help?

Feel Free to Reach out.

tchelednik@theknotww.com





Thank You for Attending!

WEDDINGpro

The power of *the knot* +  WEDDINGWIRE

Left to right, from top: Private Stock Band/Emily Harris Photography; Jove Meyer Events and Bloombar/Jenny Fu Studio; Dejanae Events/Severin Photography; DJ Brian B; Manolo Doreste Photographer; Cali Scott Artistry/Bluesky by Cass Bradley; Intricakes/Lumière Imagery; Flowers for Dreams/Studio Finch; The Foundry/Redfield Photography; Beautini/André Maier Photography; Manolo Doreste Photographer; Pacific Coast Strings/Callaway Gable Studios; Manolo Doreste Photographer, Rod Tuffcurls and the Bench Press/Tib Tab Studios; SMS Photography