



Your Secret Weapon to a No B.S. (Bridal Stress) Planning Experience

By Angela Proffitt

Use technology to save time, avoid stress, and collaborate with your wedding planner.

As a bride-to-be, your life doesn't get put on hold just because you're getting ready to say "I do." In fact, there are probably a myriad of milestones accelerating the most important time of your life. You could be preparing for the MCAT, accepting a promotion or buying a house while trying to figure out if alternating damask linens with solid colors will coordinate with your centerpieces.

And while you're spending sleepless nights "what if-ing" the details of your guest list, and whether or not you'll be able to accommodate your Cousin Tiffany's gluten intolerance, you could be utilizing technology at your fingertips to relieve all the B.S. (Bridal Stress, that is.)

From my experiences with hundreds of brides, I know the planning process takes plenty of people — parents, friends, future in-laws, and the fiancé. However, with technology, people can easily participate without duplicating work for the bride. Simply share a link to a Dropbox folder, Google document, or Wunderlist task to get everyone involved.

Take control of your sleep (and your sanity) and minimize B.S. by spending a few minutes downloading these tools:

Google Drive. Let's say your fiancé is on a long business trip, and you need him to send you and your photographer a list of relatives who need to be included in photos. With Google Drive, you can edit and make changes to text and spreadsheet documents from your phone or computer in real time without having to save new versions of the original document. A few years ago, one couple I worked with kept passing different versions of a guest list back and forth, and it included a list of food allergies certain guests had. The caterer received an incomplete copy of an old guest list, and it was almost missed before final arrangements were prepared.

Pinterest. This is a given. You can share boards and pins with your planners and

vendors to create the look you want without keeping up with dozens of magazine cut-outs or screen shots on your phone. Many brides I know love using Pinterest to pick out hairstyles, makeup and even plan bachelorette parties! But remember, Pinterest is great for ideas, but nothing beats your own creativity when it comes to your special day.

HelloSign. If you're having a destination wedding and can't fly to Bora Bora to sign contracts, you can electronically sign and keep copies with this app. One bride I know decided to elope at the last minute, and HelloSign made it incredibly efficient to secure reservations. Also, if you're not one who likes to keep up with paperwork, you'll appreciate this, too.

Venmo or PayPal. You probably don't carry a checkbook as often as you used to, but these tools are easy and safe alternatives without having to drive (or fly) to pay vendors. A bride I worked with last year traveled across the country to meet with vendors and left her primary credit card in another purse she didn't bring. Talk about B.S.! Thankfully, that card's information was saved in PayPal, and she was able to secure the vendor she wanted.

Dropbox. With engagement photos, bridal photos, boudoir photos and wedding day photos, you could easily have thousands of files to keep up with. While you could put your most precious memories on a flash drive, it's susceptible to getting lost, damaged or (God forbid) stolen. I once had a bride who kept a flash drive on her keychain, and when her purse got stolen the night of her bachelorette party, she lost most of the photos she wanted to use in her slideshow. With Dropbox, you can access the app from your phone or any computer, and share the folders of your choice with friends, relatives and vendors.

Wunderlist. Since there isn't an app to clone you to be in three different places at once, Wunderlist can at least help you coordinate tasks and assignments with vendors, assistants and anyone else who needs to stay in touch with you. Wunderlist allows you to



keep tasks organized, prevent communication breakdowns and ensure time for yourself. (I promise there is such a thing. Just create a task to schedule a manicure and pedicure this week.) One bride I know was planning a wedding in Mexico, but had to prepare for the bar exam in Boston. Wunderlist coordinated her to-do list to sync on her phone and laptop so nothing fell through the cracks.

I've had brides shed tears on my shoulder, parents complain about compromise and vendors create unnecessary urgency. Instead of agonizing over the font of your invitations, or doubting whether or not the hors d'oeuvres are truly vegan-friendly, you can be enjoying the most exciting transition of your life with your family, your bridal party and your in-laws (if you can stand them).

They say that worry is like sitting in a rocking chair. It gives you something to do, but it gets you nowhere. Let technology keep you out of the rocking chair of worry and instead rock out on your reception dance floor free from B.S.

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