

Most estheticians assist client-brides with skin care and make-up advice before their weddings, but did you know that a small minority of wise beauty experts offer even more-a full-scale beauty consulting program for their client-brides to be. Providing esthetic counseling on the necessary touches that are needed to assist the client-bride in achieving just the right image she wants on her wedding day, can be quite lucrative. In the following article you will learn just how these clever estheticians do it and what you can do too.

Preparing your bridal beauty program

So your client has just **informed** you she is getting married. She probably has a single spaced list of wedding details, and is most likely wracked with anxiety. **Being** in the bridal spotlight is not easy. People are going to gossip about her, criticize her **choices** and bombard her with all their unsolicited recommendations. Practically **everyone** she knows wants to give her advice about her wedding, but what she **really** needs is the guidance and direction of a neutral party **especially** when it comes to her appearance, makeup and skin. Be ready, willing, and able to inspire your client with your expert beauty advice and special services.

Qualifying potential customers

In an effort to define your client's taste and to coordinate all the details **involving** your bridal-beauty program you will need to obtain the most accurate **information** possible beforehand. I suggest you conduct **an** initial interviewing session using the following questionnaire as a guide:

1. **What** is your wedding date?
2. **Where** will you be married?
3. **Will** you **be** having an ethnic ceremony?
4. **Does** your taste **run traditional**, contemporary romantic, or eclectic?
5. What does your wedding gown look like? Low-cut back, low-cut front, split in back, split in front, sleeveless, halter top, strapless?
6. What kind of headpiece are you going to wear?



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Consider all the possibilities

A bridal **beauty** package should include the **following**: special health and fitness programs to get the bride in shape before her big day; facial treatments; eyebrow shaping; eyelash tinting; body waxing treatments; referrals to other wedding specialists; sunless tanning lotion treatments; suggestions for **haircoloring** and hairstyles that will accommodate the bridal **head-piece**; seasonal **color-coding** makeup sessions; spa or skin care gift **packages** for bridal **party** members; **special** photographic makeup sessions for the bride and the entire bridal party on the day of the wedding; and **pre-ceremony** aromatherapy and **massage** treatments to help ease jitters.

Networking with other professionals

Don't expect to be an expert on every aspect of the bride's appearance. Instead, consider networking **with** a team of specialists with experience and technical expertise in areas you are less informed about. For example, one successful **esthetician** who offers appearance consulting to her clients before their weddings insists that good health and energy are basic to beauty. That's where her **program** begins. She **has** designed a **special** form that she asks her client to **fill** out which reveals what the bride-to-be eats, why she chooses the foods she does, and how much she exercises. From this **information** the **esthetician** compiles a **report** that she sends off to a **registered** dietitian, who places her client on a weight reduction or maintenance program prior to the wedding.

To ensure that the bride not only looks beautiful, but feels **great** on her big day the professional can **recommend** the expertise of an exercise **trainer**. The **fitness** expert can institute an exercise regimen for the bride-to-be in order to get her **in** shape or counteract the stress of wedding planning.

Today, without **neglecting** the importance of **tradition**, brides are free to express their individuality through a range of original wedding gown designs that can either be purchased at specialty wedding dress shops or custom made. In addition to having a custom made gown, a **good** dressmaker can also duplicate a wedding dress for substantially less **than your** client would pay for an off-the-rack compromise. Have a referral list at your disposal in **case** your client asks.

Seek out assistance from other **professionals** in other bridal-related fields. Supply them with your business card as well as brochures on your bridal packages so they can refer your services to their clients. Remember to reciprocate by becoming a resource for them as well. In other words, network, network, network.

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One industrious esthetician I know tells me that she gains new clients by offering to host makeup parties for bridesmaids a month in advance of the ceremony. Using the seasonal color coding system, she makes suggestions on the appropriate makeup shades for the bridesmaids and custom blends each one of their foundations. In addition to the fee she gets for giving the event, she also generates extra revenue from the prepackaged seasonal makeup kits she assembles for each member of the bridal party, which can be given away as gifts from the bride.

Working with the photographer

If you **are considering** becoming a bridal beauty consultant you will need to be well-skilled in the **art** of photographic makeup. A clear understanding of the differences in doing makeup for black and white or color photography is necessary. Careful attention must be paid to the time of day the ceremony will take place, its location and the light source the bride and the members of the wedding party will be photographed in. It is up to the bridal beauty **consultant** to make the bride look romantic and cherished on her wedding day.

Guidelines for hairstylist referrals

When the client looks for the right hairstylist, she will want a professional that she can trust and feel comfortable with. It is also a good idea to keep a referral list of hairstylists that will be available for group styling or styling outside of the salon. The bride may even want to work with more **than** one stylist. Recommend that the hair consultation take place at least one month before the wedding. If you or the stylist recommends hair coloring for your bride-to-be client, the appointment for the **coloring** procedure should take place at least seven to 10 days prior to the wedding. This avoids any last minute surprises.

Travel-sized products and sun care

Ask the bride if she would like to purchase **travel** size skin **care** products for her trip. **Sunny, tropical** destinations will definitely require some sun care products such as sunscreen or sunblock. Lip balm is sometimes a necessity as lips often get **dry** and chapped from sun and traveling.

If **the** bride will be going to cold destinations, sun care may still be a necessity because snow **can** reflect dangerous UV rays. Dehydrated skin may also pose a problem.

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Include massage in your bridal package

A wedding is a complex event that produces a lot of stress. No one looks their best when they are **subjected** to stressful situations. **The** benefits of massage are **well-known** to help reduce stress.

Bridal beauty consultants can arrange for a massage therapist to visit the home of their bridal clients on the day of the wedding or the bride may visit the spa. In addition to relieving the nervous jitters brought about by the ceremony, massage is a great beauty aid because it relaxes tension in the muscles, including those of the face, which can cause tight facial expressions.

Marketing your bridal services

One of the easiest and most cost-effective ways to market your bridal beauty consulting services, is by advertising in local newspapers distributed to select neighborhoods.

Listing your services on the **internet** will also bring a lot of inquiries. Bridal fairs are another great way to attract potential clients.

One final note

As a newlywed I can attest to the fact that, when it comes to weddings, you cannot possibly be over-prepared. My wedding day, although romantic, exciting and memorable was complicated by the expectations of many people. In order to have the perfect afternoon garden wedding, I had to juggle countless details. It **was** difficult even for me as a professional consultant in the field.

I had to carefully plan my priorities, and at the same time, respect the concerns and desires of the groom-to-be, our families and our close friends. I was fortunate to have the background and experience as a

bridal beauty consultant to handle many of the esthetic challenges that arose.

Thanks to many bridal fashion magazines, **books** and **bridal** fairs, you too **can** easily get a multitude of ideas on how to put **together** your own special bridal counseling program. By reading skin care articles and books, you can become informed on the **many** different aspects of wedding planning and how you, as an **esthetician** can help. No matter what your previous background, this type of **research** and leg-work **will** provide you with the basic fundamental knowledge required to offer your esthetic assistance to your bridal-clients.

Remember, be prepared. **Don't** make any appointments until you have all services and referral lists in place. Study well **before** you try to place **yourself** in the formal role of a bridal beauty consultant. Knowledge builds confidence and inspires creativity. ■



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