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The wedding planner



Friday, March 11, 2011

Planning and organising a wedding is a mammoth task. Candice Pereira who started Marry Me - The Wedding Planners, talks about her wedding planning company

By Valerie Fernandes

Starting out

Growing up in a household where her parents, as event organisers, also planned weddings, Candice Pereira had a clear vision of her future quite early. "Seeing multiple weddings while growing up, I understood client expectations. The main attributes a successful wedding planner requires are attention to detail, organisational skills and creativity," says Candice.

After planning weddings for her friends and family members, she eventually stumbled upon the idea of starting Marry Me - The Wedding Planners. "My exposure in the wedding industry and an education background in hotel management helped me begin my venture. I started off by working on weddings overseas (Dubai, Bali, Sri Lanka) and interacting with other wedding planners. Besides, I did all the usual things like deciding a name, registering the company, setting out goals and budgets, hiring staff and so on."



Balancing worklife

Being in the wedding industry, there is no fixed work schedule or work location. "Most of the work is done on the wedding sight and running around for the smallest wedding errand. It is tiring and energy consuming, but at the same time, I know that my job requires me to be on my toes," says the young wedding planner.

To her advantage

On asking her about facing gender bias and how she dealt with it she says, "This is one field where being a woman works the most to my advantage. A wedding planner is expected to be empathetic and a confidante to one and all involved closely with the wedding. It's not like only a woman can be a good wedding planner, but people tend to trust the fairer sex more in terms of emotional understanding," adds Candice.

Infrastructure and funding

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With clients in India, before talking about her business, Candice first needs to sell the idea of wedding planners. "So, fund availability was extremely difficult as people didn't understand the value this business could bring." She started out with acquiring funding from family, friends and loans until she reached a point where the business became self-sustaining.

Challenges

"Many of our clients are still not clear about the role of a planner, and thus our vision can get challenging at times," she adds. Also, weddings are about two families coming together and they usually have inputs and opinions from every member of the family and the extended family. And then there's the ever-rising stress level, a given when planning a wedding, because of the erratic schedules which sometimes can leave you with little or no time for yourself," Candice confesses.

Team motivation

Marry Me is a 12-member team and the members hail from different backgrounds like hospitality and event management, among others. They also have experts for every facet of the business like make-up artists, chefs, stylists, hotels, designers, choreographers, photographers and videographers who work closely with them.

USP

"We make it a point to understand the requirements and personalities of our clients. We plan theme weddings and like to concentrate on the pre-event functions, being as innovative as we can with the mehendi and sangeet ceremonies, the cocktail parties, etc. Also, we try to create and design interesting games like treasure hunts and so on before the wedding only for the bride and groom. This works well especially with arranged marriages. This helps the couple to spend time together in a relaxed and fun atmosphere," Candice concludes.

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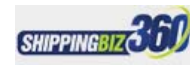
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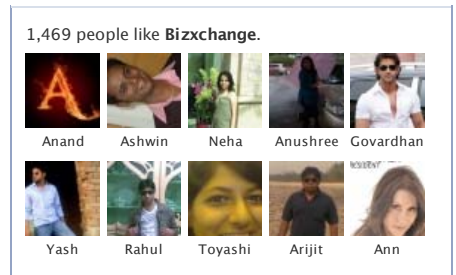


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