

What to look for in a wedding videographer

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Your wedding day should be the happiest day of your life, and there's no better way to remember it than commissioning a professionally produced DVD. You will be so involved with the atmosphere and proceedings that it will not be possible for you to enjoy every moment as it happens, which is why most of those who choose not to have a DVD produced regret their decision very soon after the event – and even more so in the years and with the generations that follow.

This guide has been published to help you choose the right videographer to produce your wedding video. With so many companies now offering wedding videography it is not easy for the Bride and Bride Groom to distinguish between those offering a professional service and those who are just trying their hand at this very specialised craft.

In a creative industry such as videography, it can be easy not to look beyond a supplier's creative abilities or showreel and to understand what other qualities you should be looking for. We hope this brief guide helps you to identify these further qualities and enable you to make a better choice in your videographer.

Style

Each Videographer will have his or her own particular style and no two wedding videos will be the same. There are videographers specialising in all types of event coverage now – from simple fly-on-the-wall type productions, to documentary-style creations, through to highly stylised and orchestrated films. You really do have the opportunity to have the wedding video or wedding day film of your choice.

This individual style is what many couples base their decision on – so your first step in choosing a Videographer is to see a range of examples of work. Some will provide you with a showreel of various weddings that have been edited whilst others will supply complete wedding videos. However, you should always check that the video was produced by the videographer who is going to cover your event. Problems can occur when the videographer sub-contracts the work to another who has a completely different style.

Unless there are great distances between you, we would recommend that you ask your videographer to personally present the demonstration video. This gives you the opportunity to ask important questions about their service and the way in which they operate their business.

Ask the right questions

Because each wedding video is different you must be sure that the Videographer knows exactly what you want included. There are standard contracts in use in the industry which protect all parties – one of which is supplied by the IOV. Any contract should state times and locations for the wedding along with details on the terms of engagement. A clearly defined contract will lessen the chance of disappointment in the finished product.

Insurance

Anyone operating a professional wedding video service should have Public Liability Insurance, even though they are not legally bound to do so. Ask the Videographer if they are covered and, if possible, ask to see their policy. In addition, the IOV's Code of Practice demands that their members have Professional Indemnity cover for situations that might occur which are beyond their control.

Copyright & Moral Rights

Your videographer should also be fully conversant with the copyright laws which relate to wedding videography. They should also have the appropriate copyright licences to record the wedding service and music. They will also have access to copyright licences that will enable them to dub your favourite music on to your DVD. A good videographer will understand that breach of copyright is theft – and will no doubt expect their own work to be treated with the same respect.

It is worth noting here that, unless agreed otherwise, the copyright in your wedding DVD will remain with the videographer. However, your videographer should also understand their obligations of maintaining your moral rights and rights of privacy. Hopefully, your wedding DVD will be so good that your videographer will want to use it as a demonstration to other couples. However, they need to make this clear to you from the outset – and you need to air any concerns you might have about restricting its use.

Health & Safety

Though relatively low risk, your videographer still has obligations to ensure the health and safety of you and your guests, those working around them – and obviously their own health and safety. Trailing cables, tripods and lighting stands - as well as the videographer being preoccupied in creating a fantastic video for you - could all pose problems in maintaining health and safety. Employing a videographer who understands and assesses these risks will undoubtedly help avoid any accidents on your special day.

How much should you spend on a wedding video?

The cost of your wedding DVD is dependent on a number of factors. The sky really is the limit if you want a complete Hollywood blockbuster.

Some videographers offer a range of services which vary in the extent of coverage, e.g. from the Bride's house to the first dance, or the wedding service only. Some videographers use domestic or semi-professional equipment whereas others use professional or broadcast quality equipment. Others may offer fully edited and/or multiple camera productions. The cost, therefore, is directly linked to the level of service and the expertise of the Videographer. Cutting costs may mean compromising on both, so never base your decision on price alone. If the videographer charges more for their work there is usually a good reason.

It is advisable to watch several videos covering a wide price range before making your decision. As wedding videography is a seasonal business most successful videographers will become booked months if not years in

advance. The videographer should be booked at the same time as other services such as photographers and caterers.

About the IOV

The IOV (Institute of Videography) was established in 1985 as a trade association for companies and independent producers who offer video production services to both the general public and the commercial sector alike. With over 1,000 members the IOV is the leading trade association representing videography in Europe.

Among its membership the IOV has some of the earliest pioneers in wedding video production. On joining the IOV, all members agree to act in accordance with our Code of Practice. This document has been continually developed since the IOV was founded in 1985 – and includes all the key areas of conduct which we believe a professional videographer should work to.

One of the main benefits to you is that our members have made a commitment to a trade association with a common cause, and that's to promote professionalism within video production. Their membership provides them with certain benefits that should enable them to work more efficiently, fairly and in line with common practices throughout the industry. Members keep abreast of video technology, techniques and practices through our online forums and website facilities and features in our monthly magazine. By networking at IOV events and local meetings, they can ensure they are adopting the best possible practices and delivering a service common to other likeminded professionals.

As a further reassurance to you, all IOV members must accept the right of their clients to refer any contractual disputes to the IOV Arbitration Office - and to agree to any findings they decide upon in such cases. This in itself differentiates our members from those who choose to work outside of any such framework.

All members undertaking commercial activity will carry adequate Public Liability and Professional Indemnity insurance. They will understand their requirements with regard to copyright, moral rights and any legislative or local restrictions that might be imposed on them in their work - and the impact these may have on the services they provide. They will understand their obligations of client confidentiality and the confidentiality of any information entrusted to them. And, of growing importance these days, they will at all times observe current Health & Safety regulations and have due consideration for the safety and welfare of staff, clients and the general public.

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More details on the IOV can be found on their website – www.iov.com

More details on copyright licences can be found on www.iov.com/copyrightguide