

How to Chose Your Wedding Videographer

Videography has come a long way in the last few years. The 'Wedding Film' has become an art form in itself. With so many companies to choose from, how do you find the one that is right for you? Here are a few pointers;

When approaching videographers, ask to see examples of their work in the form of a showreel which you can take away and watch in your own time. It is also a good idea to check whether there are additional examples on the company's website. Make sure that the quality of the showreel you see matches up to your expectations for your own wedding film. You will be surprised at how poor some showreels can actually be.

Find out what your videographer really does for a 'living'. We believe that the best videographers are always full time filmmakers. Some people just do 'a spot of wedding filming' to earn extra cash at the weekend, whilst having a different job during the week. Wedding films are a specialist product and you need someone who understands the genre inside and out.

You should never hire a videographer on price alone. Making good wedding films is a costly business - this is because a good film requires several days of skilled labour with expensive equipment. You should regard cheap quotes with suspicion. Prices vary from place to place but professional videography should be at least as expensive as professional photography – it's just as important in terms of capturing your memories, and the time and skill involved is comparable.

So, always weigh up different companies and choose the best one you can afford. Ask exactly what is included in the price of the film. Expect editing, music and titles to be included. Are there things included that you don't want? How bespoke is the service? Find out how many copies of the final film are included in the price and how long the finished DVD will be.

Ask how many cameras will be used to film the ceremony and reception. One camera is not enough to capture everything in a wedding ceremony in every eventuality. Two cameras allow for much better shots and produce a more varied and creative film. Ask what format the film will be shot and supplied in; widescreen is a must. You might also like to ask about other formats such as clips for your iPod.

Don't be blinded by the science of exact camera models etc. You should regard the use of 'broadcast quality' cameras as a given, as is the use of professional sound equipment and radio microphones. These are not 'unique selling points'. Also bear in mind that biggest cameras are not always best, as they can be more obtrusive and less flexible in a potentially fast moving, 'one take', creative situation.

Ask about the type of music that will accompany your film. Can you have contemporary music of your choice or will the videographer use naff copyright-free music? Establish if the videographer has the appropriate copyright licences to record any copyright material that will be captured on the film during your service and reception, and to use contemporary music as a background soundtrack.

Always choose a videographer who is an accredited member of a professional organisation, for example the Institute of Videography (IOV). This will give you a further level of confidence in the people you chose to make your film. You should also check that they are fully insured.

Find out whether your videographer has filmed at your venues before. If not, only go with a videographer who is happy to visit your venue prior to your big day, as part of their preparations. They should make no charge for doing this. The videographer should be able to get on with people and communicate well. Videographers need to work with both guests and other professionals, but of course, on the day, they should always be as unobtrusive as possible.

We know from our own experience that the decision to have a wedding video is seldom regretted. We hope this has given you some ideas of what to look for in a reputable company.

Most importantly of all – have a fantastic day!

Zoë and Chris
The Curious Weddings Film Company