

INSIDER INSIGHTS

WHAT WEDDING FLOWERS COST AND WHY

Sebrell Smith, owner of Sebrell Smith Designer Events, brings a savvy sense of style and spirited Southern grace to weddings and celebrations in the south ranging from the intimate garden affair to grand black-tie galas.



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QUICK FACTS

Lives in
Savannah, Georgia

Known for
Spirited Southern Events

Been in the Business
20 years

Website
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Flowers are not the only cost that affect the final look of your wedding day flowers. Elements like conceiving designs, preparing orders, placing orders, securing containers and accessories, receiving inventory, prepping inventory, arranging, delivering, and breaking down after the event all effect the operating costs of wedding florists thus the rate brides pay for wedding flowers. While creativity is what fuels modern day florists, it's the nuts and bolts of business that ultimately determine what the cost of your wedding flowers will be. To help the everybride understand how it all comes together I've outlined four insights that give you a behind the scenes look on how wedding florists work.

HARD COSTS

There are many things that have to be considered when pricing a floral order. My first approach is to add the wholesale cost for each stem in each arrangement and apply a percentage markup appropriate for perishables. Then I add the wholesale costs of supplies used and apply an appropriate percentage markup for hard goods. I also consider the time and expertise required in consultations with the bride and flower brokers, time needed for proper handling of the flowers, actual creative design time, along with the time requirements for delivery and installation. The retail price is a sum of all of these factors.

INVENTORY EFFECTS

My second consideration is the volume and types of flowers needed. Most flowers are bundled in bunches of 10, and some are in bundles of 25 stems. Should a bride choose mixed floral bouquets, then I have to think about the cost of the flowers I will

purchase to accomplish the designs, but are not sold in the designs. Stem lengths and shelf life must be considered, as well as out of season colors or varieties which do not fare well as typical shop inventory. In this case, it is necessary to increase the retail value of each finished item.

NOT YOUR TYPICAL RETAIL BUSINESS

The florist industry is not a typical retail business. It is a manufacturing business that is serviced by individuals who are typically self-employed, inventorying fresh flowers and supplies, in a shop, with helpers. There are the five controlling factors to the end (retail) price of any wedding order: cost of flowers, cost of hard goods (containers, vases, ribbons, etc.), overhead expenses, payroll (which includes the time spent on meetings, the creative process, execution, and other considerations outlined above), and profit.

FINDING THE RIGHT TEAM

Brides will find the best value by employing a planning and design company that offers professional floral services in house. This is where a bride will find a "wedding team" delivering the most benefits for dollars spent. She will have one contact for all of the various components of her wedding, and every selection will show her personality and signature style. With a company that offers planning, a budget is established to balance dollars for the best overall wedding experience which includes beautiful flowers. Finally, it is important to point out, when reviewing event planners and/or florists, look for images of real events, rather than staged shoots. A bride will want to know what they can do in a situation with several moving parts, as well as in a static environment.