

HERE
COMES
THE
WEB

Quinte Mall put its social media strategy to the test by hosting a wedding



THE BOTTOM LINE

ONLINE: \$478

- > Web hosting
- > Domain registration
- > Survey Monkey (free)



ON-SITE: \$5,347

- > Contest entry poster
- > Door painting
- > Vignette props, styling and voting posters



PRINT: \$2,001

- > *Intelligencer* (local daily): 4C/quarter page, 15,000 households
- > *Community Free*: 4C/quarter page, 71,700 households
- > *EMC*: 4C/quarter page, 68,688 households



Reports of couples getting hitched at the mall are becoming more frequent in this age of shop-pertainment. So for Nicki Farrow and Tyler Birney to say their I-do's at Canada's Quinte Mall wasn't exactly a PR breakthrough. However, for marketing manager Martha Farrell and her team, the center's approach to promoting and managing the event was a foray into new territory.

"The idea wasn't just to have a wedding, but to have a large-scale mall event that would increase traffic and mall sales, while engaging the social media platforms of a micro-site, blog and Facebook fan page," explained Julia Harper of The Idea Workshop, Quinte Mall's PR firm.

"[The center employed] a micro-site with monthly wedding-related voting items for visitors, like the tux and gown or the bridal bouquet, [and] the site [received] over 572,000 hits."

This pilot social media campaign began with contestants from Ontario's Belleville and Quinte regions submitting entries, explaining why they wanted to get married at the mall. A panel of judges sifted through the entries to find the most compelling story, which just happened to be Nicki and Tyler's—how they both grew up in the area and shared fond memories of their trips to the mall with their three children, and how the passing of the bride's mother and grandmother had made a traditional wedding seem out of reach. The good news phone call that the lucky couple received secured its \$15,000 all-expenses-paid wedding and honeymoon, and jumpstarted the mall's campaign.

Quinte Mall reached out to anyone who wished to help plan the details of the couple's wedding, and directed them to GetMarriedAtQuinteMall.com to cast their votes. The micro-site was also the place to read a blog on Nicki and Tyler's wedding planning journey.

Given the potential of generating significant exposure for the center and its retailers, the wedding contest became a magnet for sponsors.

"With a goal to create awareness for the Quinte Mall retail mix, Martha was hoping for a minimum of 10 sponsors. The buzz that the wedding campaign created in the community, however, helped to surpass this goal and a total of 23 mall retailers and 17 community businesses jumped on board to sponsor the event," Harper noted.

Harper added that the campaign generated more than 400 minutes of sponsored air time on local radio station Mix 97, engaged more than 150 fans on Facebook and attracted close to 100 followers on Twitter.

MALL RETAILERS

- > Bikini Nay: a \$50 gift card
- > Black's: a digital camera
- > Boston Pizza: a rehearsal dinner for 30 guests (à la carte)
- > Bulk Barn: one case of jellybeans
- > Chapters: discount on candy for the dessert table
- > Denny's: food for the bridal party in hotel rooms before the wedding
- > GoodLife Fitness: two, six-month memberships for the bride and groom
- > Kernels: a tub of popcorn for the candy table
- > Lafferty's: a custom tux for the groom and a suit for the emcee
- > Laura Secord: 200 truffles in boxes for favors (two per box)
- > Le Chateau: the bride and bridesmaids' shoes
- > Marshman Jewellers: custom, engraved wedding bands
- > Personally Yours: engraved cake knife and server
- > Rayna: the mother of the groom's dress
- > Ricki's: the emcee's dress
- > Salon You: hair styling/manicure for the bride and bridesmaids, bride's pedicure
- > Sears: bridesmaids' dresses and makeup for the mother of the groom
- > Sears Portrait Studio: photographed the voting elements in studio (the dress, tux, bridesmaid's dress and bouquet)
- > Sears Travel: the honeymoon (donated one and discounted the other) – value of \$1,400
- > Shoppers Drug Mart: a fragrance package and the bride's "survival bag" (mints, Tide pen, stockings, blotting papers, etc.)
- > The Body Shop: provided the girls' makeup and products for the honeymoon
- > Tim Hortons Hanley Corp.: coffee and tea for the reception
- > Vivah: Necklace and earrings for the bride and bridesmaids
- > Winners: a \$100 gift card

COMMUNITY RETAILERS

- > A1 Limo: round-trip service from the hotel to the mall
- > Belle Events: balloon décor for the rehearsal party and hotel
- > Bob House: wedding photography (event photos, proofs, album and CD)
- > Confetti Occasions: custom cake and design
- > Fairfield Marriott: wedding suite (free), discount for other guests, free room for the groom and groomsmen to change
- > Ireland Academy of Dance: dance lessons
- > Kwik Kopy: printing of wedding invitations, response cards and envelopes
- > Lisa and Grace's Bridal Boutique: the bride's dress and alterations on bridesmaids' dresses
- > Live, Love Laugh: bridal party flowers
- > Runway Bridal: groomsmen's tuxedo rentals, two children's tuxedos to keep
- > Sans Souci: food, including dessert table items for 130 guests at the reception
- > Thompson Tents: staging products (e.g. chairs and linens), the guest book, pens and decorative butterflies

MEDIA

- Mix 97 radio station: more than 400 minutes of air time

Value of wedding package: approximately \$15,000

RADIO: \$1,152

- > MIX 97 (CIGC FM): 32 spots
- Radio station donated product services 324 minutes for 30-second promos and 70 minutes of 15-second live liners Does not include interview and on-air mentions



TOTAL MEDIA/ADVERTISING COSTS: \$8,978

CAMPAIGN CREDITS

- > Susan K. Bailey Advertising
- > The Idea Workshop
- Note: Campaign execution costs were included in the agencies' retainer fees.



Source: The Idea Workshop for Quinte Mall.