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**Light, Bright, and White** shows up the most from the greatest distance. Check what can be seen from the road driving by, or the parking lot. Smaller details and good signs are for pedestrians and shoppers.

**CF** VISUAL DISPLAY

# Bridal Display Basics

By Linda McKendry



## Showcasing Different Styles Offers Brides More Options

**B**rides will walk down the aisles of a florist shop long before they make the anticipated march down a church aisle to say, "I do!" You want as many brides as possible to be saying "I do" to your store's offerings before their weddings.

Begin the bridal displays in your shop with images that are traditional: that is the colour white or off-white and the patterns of lace, satin and tulle, but remember to bring a lot of variety to the styles you show. Every bride wants her day to be unique, special, one-of-a-kind, so you have to send the message in your displays that you can give her what she wants.

My suggestion is that you set up a variety of venues in which to showcase different styles. Separate pure white from off-white because next to crisp, clean whites, off-whites can look drab, dusty, dull and dirty. The only exception here is if you choose and plan to create a distinct display that purposefully mixes different shades of whites and it is being consistently shown in the same venue with all the elements – the flowers, the ribbons, the accessories, accents, containers, candles, etc.

In merchandising, if you want to get a message across more quickly, the trick is to exaggerate elements. In other words, if you want to attract the bride who is very formal, frilly and feminine, then look for the ruffled parasols, long gloves and lacy fans with fringes and tassels as the props around the flowers. Add a man's tall, black, satin top hat and a cane and gloves to incorporate the masculine touch and create a nice contrast that will enhance the formal theme.

Do all of this under a beautiful crystal chandelier or, better yet, displayed on a lace tablecloth under a tall lamp that has prisms dangling down around it with a soft shade that filters focused light directly onto the products. Remember, the three things that catch the eye are contrast, movement and light – prisms will catch the reflection of the light and catch a shopper's eye at the same time. They are also traditionally romantic.

On the other side of the spectrum is the bride who is more informal or contemporary and favours understated, plain but elegant elements. In a floral arrangement this is usually represented by calla lilies instead of roses. Pick out pedestals, columns and furnishings for risers and platforms in styles that are more sleek and sculptured to showcase the contemporary floral offerings that fit into the modern scheme.

Look around your shop for items that haven't sold and see if by refinishing, spray painting, faux-painting or adding some beads or other trim you can bring them into a bridal theme and display them for sale this season.

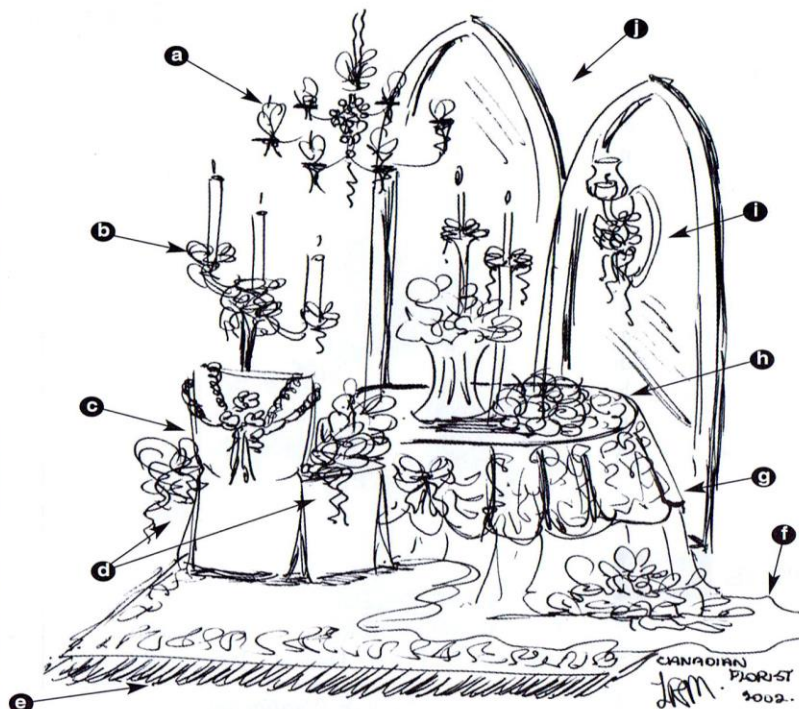
Remember that brides are looking for

**Look around your shop for items that haven't sold and see if by refinishing, spray painting, faux-painting or adding some beads or other trim you can bring them into a bridal theme.**

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## Formal Bridal Display Idea



a.) Chandelier or hanging candelabra decorated with floral and ribbons. Note: Bring in lamps or spot lights to light up the display, which will enhance colours, finishes and textures. b.) Portable candelabras with floral arrangements attached. c.) Fabric slip-covered typical banquet chair with back facing to showcase ropes or tassels holding flowers. d.) Chair used as a riser for other arrangements or bouquets with ribbons trailing over the edge. e.) Area rug or floor cloth (or platform) to anchor and define the display. It should be a traditional design, floral, and have a deep red or burgundy background without too many patterns or colours. Don't use anything that 'competes' with the main display. f.) Trailing or 'puddling' fabric to mimic a bridal train on which to place a bouquet or arrangement. g.) Layers of different 'wedding' fabrics as a table cover. h.) Tables bring more products to prime selling space at better eye level. Showcase centrepieces, candle sticks, bouquets, etc. i.) Candle wall sconces, attached to screen, trimmed with artificial or fresh floral arrangements. j.) Folding screen cut out of sheets of foam board or plywood to mimic chapel windows. Use dark natural wood or off-white antiqued finish.

something very unique and you have an opportunity to take something common and turn it into a coveted item for weddings. Bring out all your ribbons, tassels, trims and creamy off-white coloured merchandise that might fit into any wedding situation and focus all of this into a section of your store that will announce, 'Wedding Things For Sale Here!' All your signs, bridal magazines, a consultation area and coffee will encourage the brides to stop in your shop or call you.

Remember too, with today's trends in decorating wedding halls, any way to embellish typical balloon clusters, tables, chairs, candelabras, folding screens and archways with flowers will be of interest to the bride. Thinking beyond the wedding and creating floral arrangements that 'break' down into smaller bouquets or mini-arrangements that can be divided among the guests for take-away favours is just one way to justify the cost and allow a product to have more than one function or purpose. **EE**

Linda McKendry of VMPC offers on-site consulting and instruction for retailers, wholesalers, distributors and manufacturers. Linda has presented display seminars at the CGTA Gift Show and the Alberta Gift Show. To order her book, VMP & Display, call (905) 813-8725, fax (905) 819-8505 or e-mail lrmcke@attglobal.net.



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**Stock Furnishings Provide Good Service:**  
Save time and impress your bridal party with everything you need at handy reach.

Eye level and glass shelves are for feature displays. Below eye level is for samples of items you can show without going back to your main stock.

The counter is a stock item that has had a piece of granite added to increase the size, provide overhang to sit at, and a place to display bridal books for viewing.

This saves time and **MAKES** money!

## SET UP A SPECIAL PLACE FOR BRIDAL CONSULTATIONS



**Save! Save! Save!**  
Gets a custom look for the mirror and the light by purchasing generic items at big box stores and then embellishing them with beads, pearls, and prisms!

The "I DO" words on the mirror are from a craft store! The mirror is for the bridal party to test the size and shape of some of your artificial sample bouquets.