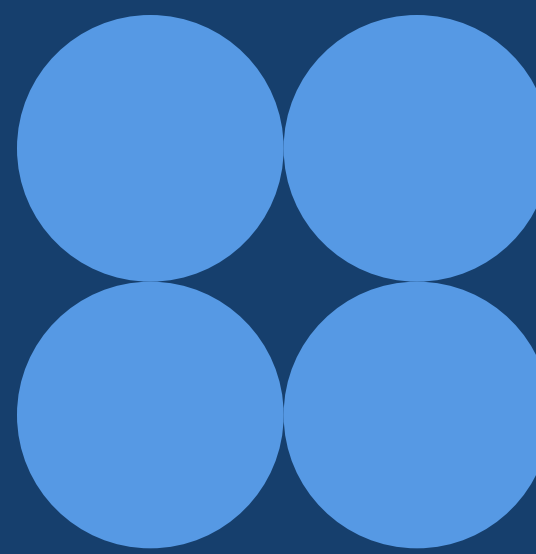


# The Cost of "I Do"

Insights that Meet the Moment



Wedding season is now a year-round buying period where couples are actively making big purchase decisions and often changing brand preferences.

For advertisers, the engagement period is a key moment to reach people as they enter a new life stage and start spending across multiple categories.

The most effective brands do more than sell—they help guide couples through planning and decision-making. Using AI tools and personalized social content, brands can reach couples at the right moments, helping them balance budget pressures with the goal of creating a meaningful celebration.

# 27%

More than a quarter of U.S. adults say they are planning, have already had, or have upcoming wedding plans – marking a notable increase from last year, when 17% said they were either having one in 2025 or later

## 48%

plan to host a reception immediately

## 37%

are opting out of a reception entirely

## 15%

are postponing it to a later time

### WEDDINGS SIZE

**46%** medium-to-large wedding

**39%** smaller weddings

**16%** destination weddings

### WEDDING-RELATED EVENTS

Bridal showers 12%

Bachelor/ette parties 11%

Rehearsal dinners 10%

## THE FINANCIAL IMPACT: BEYOND THE BOUQUET

Wedding season is a significant financial commitment, with costs extending well beyond the wedding day into months of preparation and related events such as showers and bachelor or bachelorette parties.

### For Couples

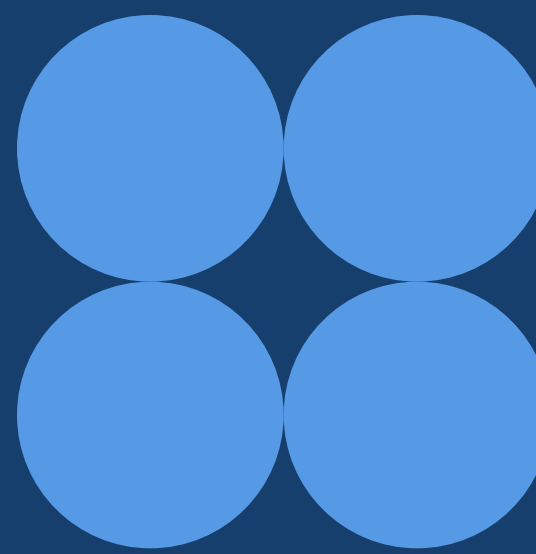
The average wedding now rivals a home down payment, as "Pinterest-perfect" expectations and inflation drive more wedding-specific financing and tighter budgeting.

### For Guests

Between bachelor/bachelorette parties, travel, attire, and gifts, the "price of friendship" can hit thousands per season - driving a "spend now, regret later" mindset or a shift toward more affordable gifting.

# The Cost of "I Do"

Insights that Meet the Moment



## HOW FINANCIAL PRESSURES ARE SHAPING WEDDING SPENDING

64%

plan on spending under \$20k

50%

say they are on budget

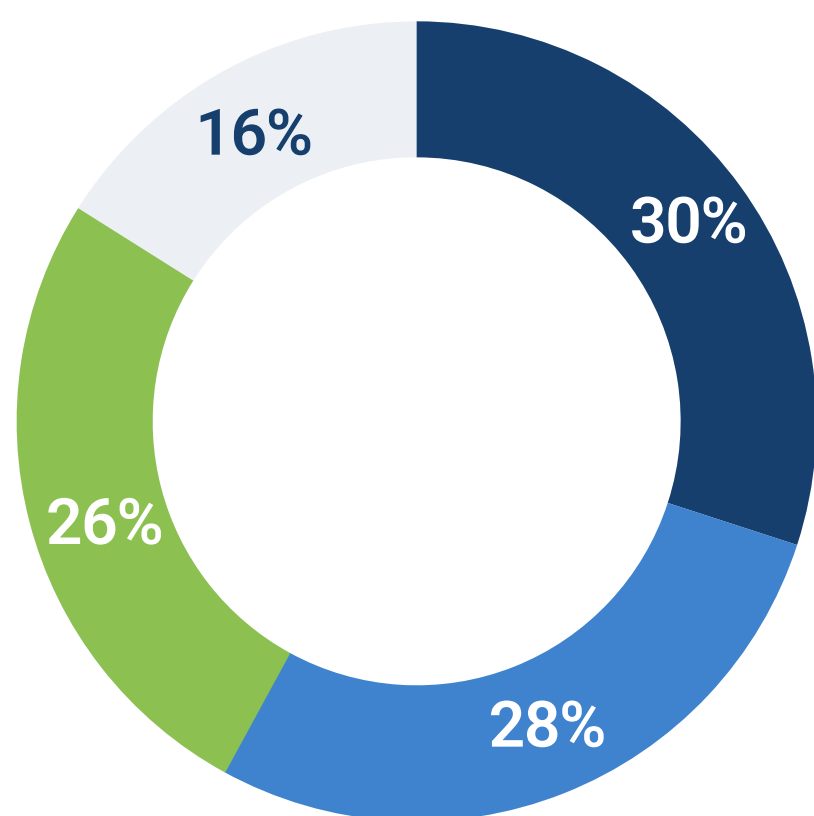
35%

are currently over budget

15%

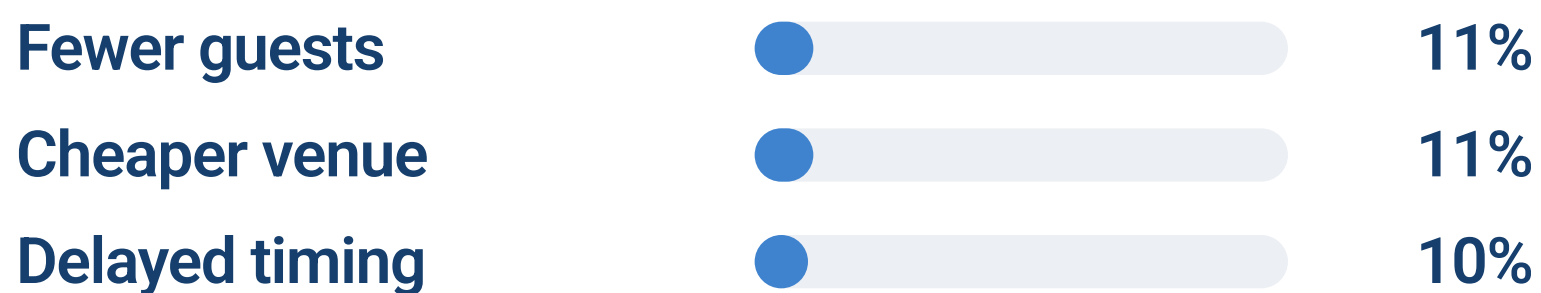
are under budget

### FUNDING

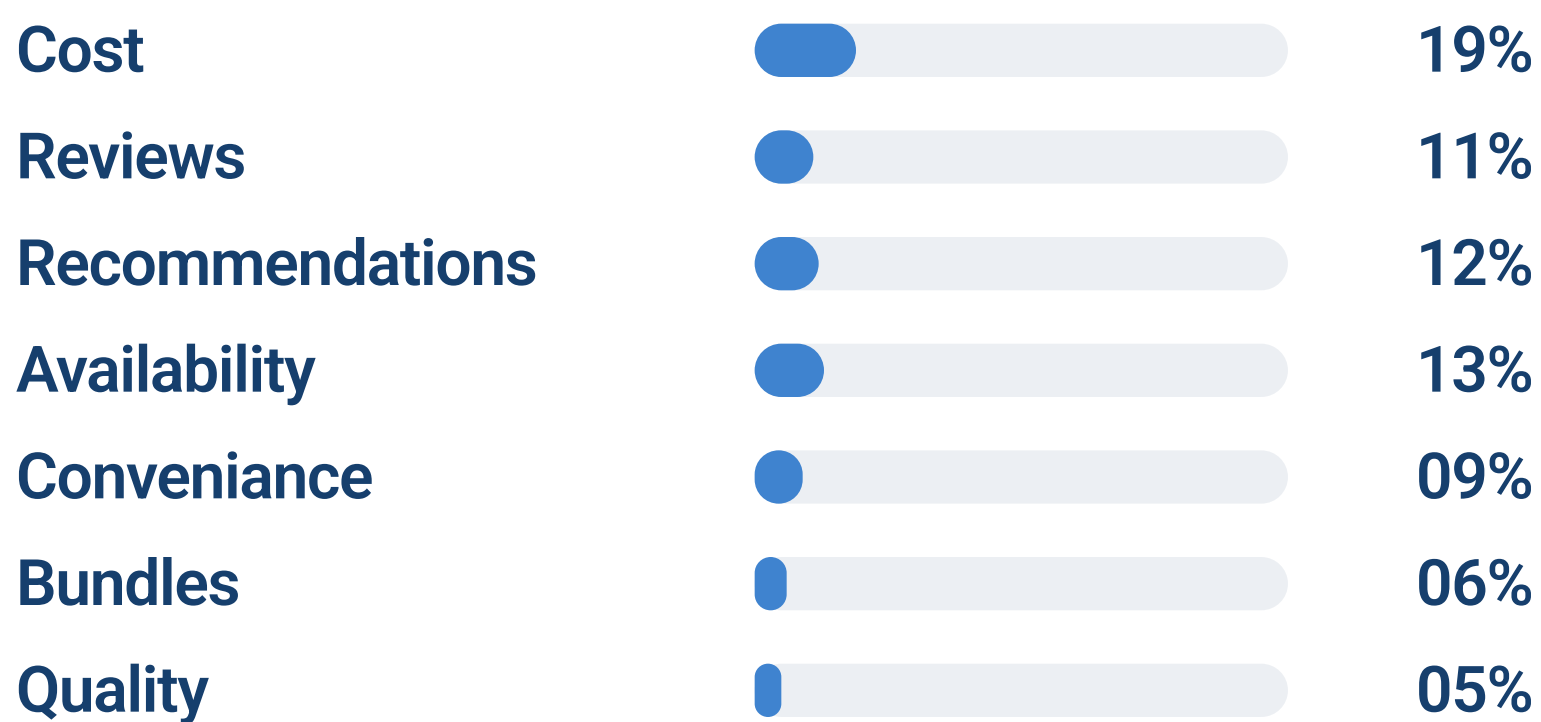


- Personal savings
- Family support
- Credit cards
- Other

### COST-CUTTING BEHAVIOR

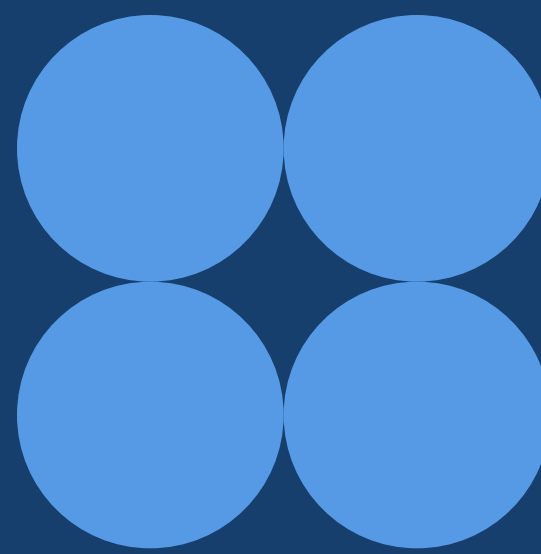


### VENDOR SELECTION FACTORS



# The Cost of "I Do"

Insights that Meet the Moment



## THE SHIFT IN WEDDING PLANNING BEHAVIOR

76%

start planning 9+ months out

36%

begin more than a year out

64%

one partner takes the lead

16%

share decisions equally

68%

hired or plan to hire a planner

32%

going without a coordinator

08%

mention that family members help with planning

## AI IS TRANSFORMING HOW COUPLES PLAN AND SPEND ON WEDDINGS

57%

Use AI for shopping

51%

Experienced using AI for shopping

55%

Prefer a dedicated AI per retailer

VS.

VS.

VS.

21%

Non-wedding audience

31%

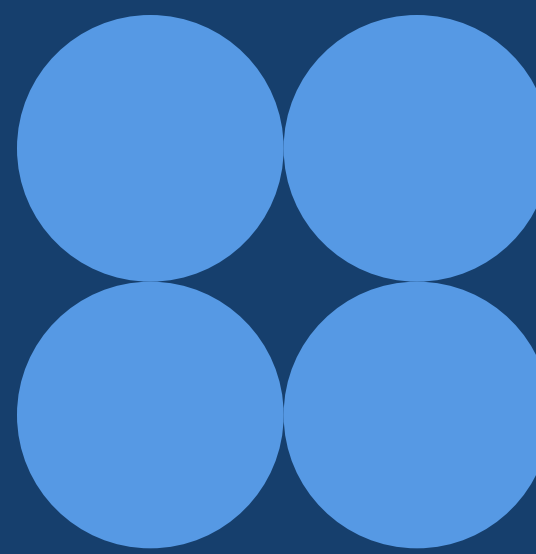
Non-wedding audience

24%

Non-wedding audience

# The Cost of "I Do"

Insights that Meet the Moment



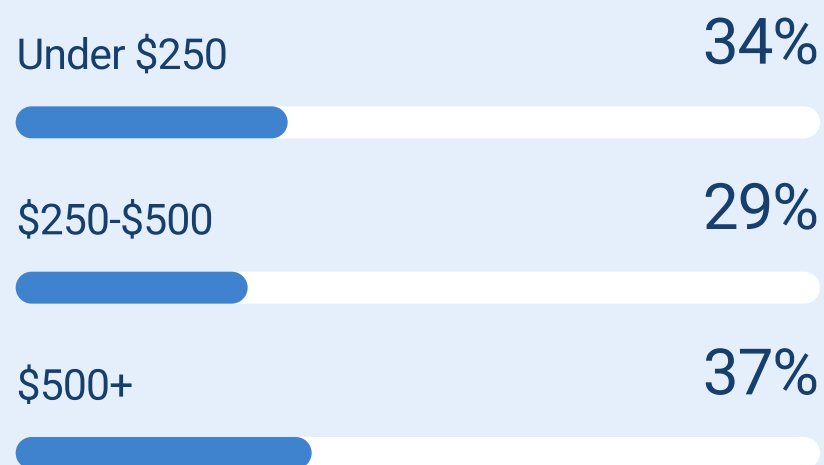
## WEDDING SEASON IS A GROWING FINANCIAL BURDEN FOR GUESTS

Nearly half of U.S. adults are attending a wedding this year and the costs go well beyond a gift. From engagement parties to bachelor and bachelorette trips, guests are absorbing thousands in seasonal expenses, with over half making financial tradeoffs just to show up and celebrate.

### EVENT ATTENDANCE



### GUEST SPEND



### BACHELOR OR BACHELORETTE TRADE-OFFS

**53%**

of those invited report making tradeoffs on participation or gifting due to cost

## Why CivicScience

CivicScience is an advertising and analytics platform built on the world's largest database of real-time consumer sentiment and declared intent. Powered by AI-enabled survey technology engaging millions of U.S. respondents every week, we help leading brands and agencies activate and measure high-performing advertising – reaching custom audiences of over 165 million consumer profiles across premium digital, online video, and connected TV environments.

Real Voices. Superior Advertising. Thriving Media. Responsible AI.

