

NETWEBMEDIA AI SERIES · 14 INDUSTRIES

AI and Events & Weddings

Planners, venues, photographers, DJs and caterers: how AI helps you get found, quote faster, run the day and keep the referrals coming.

PLANNERS

VENUES

PHOTOGRAPHERS

DJS

CATERERS

First edition · September 2026

Book 9 of 14 · netwebmedia.com

About this series

Fourteen books, one question: what does AI actually change for a business like yours? Each book is written for one industry — its customers, its tools, its rules — so you can act on it this month, not someday. Buy one, or get all fourteen in the bundle.

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| 3. AI and Hospitality & Tourism | 10. AI and Wine & Agriculture |
| 4. AI and Restaurants & Cafés | 11. AI and Beauty & Wellness |
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Every statistic in this book carries a numbered reference to a named, dated source in the Sources section. Benchmarks are medians or averages from other businesses as published by those sources — not predictions of your results.

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Start here

This book is for the people who actually run events businesses: the wedding planner who books twenty weddings a year and answers inquiries from her phone at midnight, the venue with two ballrooms and one sales coordinator, the photographer who spends more nights culling frames than shooting them, the DJ, the caterer, the florist, and the small agency producing corporate meetings and ticketed events. If your revenue arrives one event at a time, this is written for you.

It is not a book about the future of AI. It is a book about the next thirty days. Every chapter ends in something you can do this week, and every number in it comes from a named, dated source you can check in the Sources section.

Here is what you get. Chapter 1 shows where the market and your peers are, with the 2025 and 2026 data from The Knot, Zola, Bizzabo, Cvent and the wedding-pro surveys. Chapter 2 explains, in plain English, the five jobs AI can do in an events business and the ones it cannot. Chapter 3 is about your customers: how couples and corporate planners now use ChatGPT and Google's AI answers before they send an inquiry, and why most vendors are invisible there. Chapter 4 ranks the ten use cases that pay back fastest. Chapter 5 gives you a tool stack with real September 2026 prices, in three budgets. Chapter 6 covers the rules: reviews, consent, copyright, the new US state AI laws and Chile's Ley 21.719. Chapter 7 is the 30-day plan. Chapter 8 is for readers in Chile and the rest of Latin America.

You can read it front to back in about forty minutes. If you are short on time, read Chapter 4 and Chapter 7 and come back for the rest.

Events, weddings and AI in 2026 — four numbers to know

36%

of engaged couples
used AI to plan in
2025, up from 20%

84%

of individual wedding
vendors have zero
citation share in AI
answers

52%

of couples say
responsiveness is key
to trusting a vendor

\$410K

median revenue gap
between service
businesses using AI
and those not

Sources: The Knot Worldwide, 2026; 5W Public Relations, 2026; HoneyBook / Harris Poll, 2026 (vendor survey)

The pattern those four numbers describe is the whole story of this book. Couples doubled their use of AI in a year.¹ The assistants they ask are not naming you.² What wins the booking is still the speed and warmth of your reply.¹ And the businesses that point AI at that job are pulling away from the ones that do not.³ The vendor who uses it carefully, to answer faster and free up hours for the human work of the event, has an advantage that is getting bigger, not smaller.

1. Why AI matters for events and weddings now

A big market made of small businesses

Weddings in the United States are a \$100 billion-plus industry, and almost all of it flows through small vendors. About 2 million US couples married in 2025; the average wedding cost \$34,000, or \$292 per guest, with 117 guests. Couples hired an average of 13 vendors: 89% booked a venue, 88% a photographer and 85% a caterer.¹⁴ Zola puts the 2026 average at \$36,000 with 145 guests; 78% of couples worry the economy or tariffs will push the bill higher, and 44% have already adjusted their plans.⁵

The vendor side is where the pressure sits. In a survey of 553 wedding professionals, more than half of them solo operators and most under \$100,000 in annual revenue, the average booking level for 2025 was 66%, but only 42% for 2026 as of late 2025. 60% of their clients spend \$5,000 or less per service. Leads come from Google Search (64%), vendor referrals (55%) and Instagram (46%); TikTok sends 4%.⁶

Corporate and ticketed events are cautious rather than shrinking. Bizzabo's 2026 benchmark found 40% of organizers expect budgets to grow (53% a year earlier), 40% expect flat budgets and 20% expect cuts; 40% plan to run more events, down from 66%. The average attendance rate is 52% of registrants.⁷

Key number: 52% of couples say responsiveness is key to building trust with a vendor,¹ and 36% of customers avoid small businesses that are hard to reach.³ In a market where a third of your calendar for next year is still empty, the fastest reply is the biggest lever you own, and it is the one lever AI moves with almost no effort.

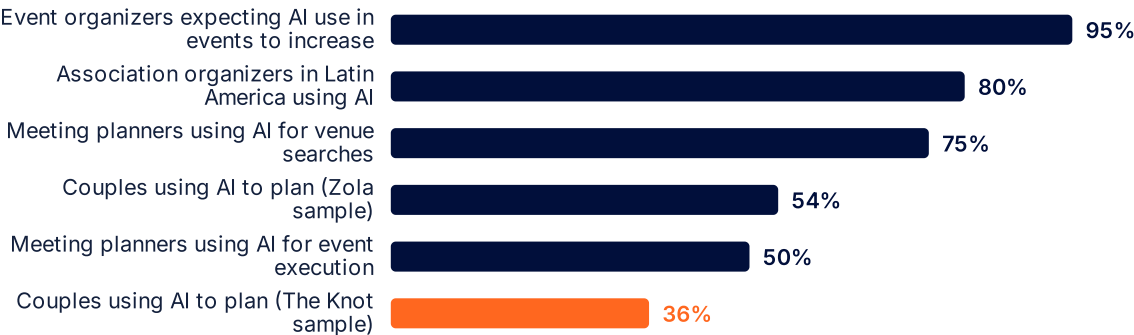
Where your peers are

Adoption is no longer the question; where it is pointed is. On the customer side, 36% of engaged couples used AI in wedding planning in 2025, up from 20% the year before.¹ Zola, whose sample skews younger, sees 54% of couples using AI in some way, a 150% increase in a year.⁵

Among professionals, the picture is similar. 50% of meeting and event planners surveyed by Amex GBT use AI for event execution, and 85% are optimistic about the year ahead, up 11 points.⁸ Cvent's survey of 1,650 planners found 75% use AI for venue searches and 61% plan to increase their use; yet nearly one-third say their sourcing technology hinders their workflow or adds no measurable value, and 58% still spend up to five hours sourcing each event.⁹ In Bizzabo's benchmark, 95% of

organizers expect their organization's use of AI in events to increase, 35% "significantly."⁷ In Latin America, association and congress organizers using AI went from one in four in 2024 to 80% by mid-2026.¹⁰

Who is using AI in events and weddings, 2025–2026



Sources: Bizzabo, 2026 (vendor survey); ICCA via Ladevi Chile, 2026; Cvent, 2026 (vendor survey); Zola, 2026 (vendor survey); Amex GBT, 2025; The Knot Worldwide, 2026

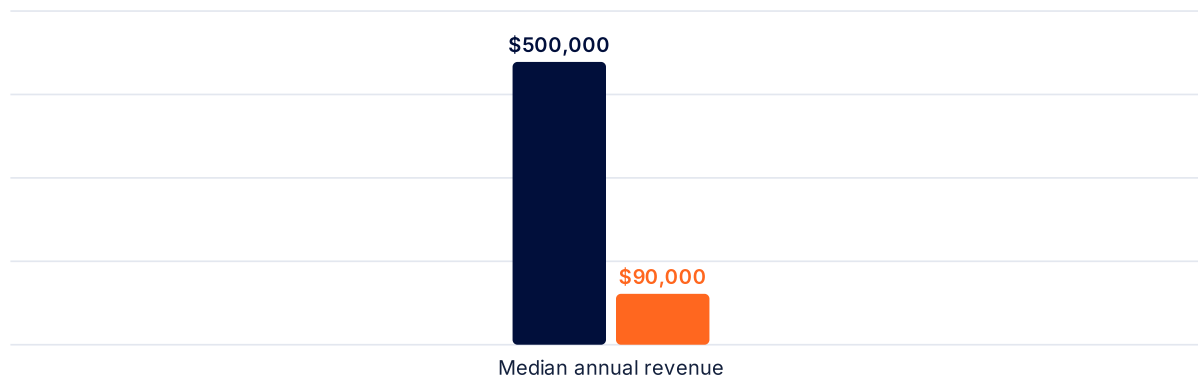
Notice the last two bars. The customers are arriving at AI faster than most vendors are. A couple who used ChatGPT to build their timeline and draft their vendor emails expects the vendor on the other end to be at least as quick.

The gap between using AI and earning from it

Using AI and getting results from it are different things. HoneyBook's 2026 study of 503 US service-based small businesses, a base heavy with photographers, planners and other event professionals, found a median annual revenue of \$500,000 for owners who use AI versus \$90,000 for those who do not, a \$410,000 gap; 97% of the top-earning "Leaders" use AI, against 88% of everyone else.³ Almost everyone has the subscription. The gap is explained by what the tool is pointed at.

Service small businesses: median annual revenue, AI users vs. non-adopters (2026)

■ Use AI ■ Do not use AI



Source: HoneyBook / Harris Poll, 2026 (vendor survey; 503 US service-business owners under 20 employees)

Bizzabo shows the same gap from the corporate side: 95% expect AI use to grow, while 40% of organizers still cannot prove event ROI at all.⁷ Adoption is a solved problem. Process, measurement and trust are not, and those are what the rest of this book is about.

What this costs

You do not need a new budget line. The general assistants start at \$0 with paid tiers around \$20 a month,¹¹¹²¹³ and the event-industry CRMs that now bundle AI email drafting and lead alerts start at \$29.¹⁴ The \$50–\$300 a month stack in Chapter 5 costs less than one lost booking.