



QUALTRAIN AUSTRALIA

Ongoing Professional Development

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Registered Training Organisation Provider Number 51465

Resources for registered marriage celebrants:

- Guidelines on the Marriage Act 1961 Version 4 July 2018
 - The Guidelines provide essential information on the solemnisation of marriage in Australia – the most accurate information and guidance available.
- Marriage Act 1961
- Marriage Regulations 2017
- Information and resources for celebrants available on the Attorney-General's website:
<https://www.ag.gov.au/families-and-marriage/marriage/resources-marriage-celebrants>

QualTrain encourages registered marriage celebrants to regularly review the Guidelines and the resources on the Attorney-General's website.

QualTrain recommends membership to a celebrant association/network. A list of associations can be found on the Attorney-General's website: <https://www.ag.gov.au/families-and-marriage/marriage/resources-marriage-celebrants/networks-associations-celebrants>

Information in this OPD workbook has been reviewed and approved by MLCS. The information is updated regularly and is correct at the time of printing. Where case studies appear in workbooks, they are examples only and any comparison made with other persons either living or deceased is purely coincidental.

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*Thank you for choosing QualTrain
We hope you enjoy your OPD activities*

21QT040 Legal Refresher – Finding the right answers (2 hours)

This activity relates to a unit of competency within CHC41015 CIV in Celebrancy:

- CHCCEL402A Establish and maintain knowledge of legal responsibilities of a marriage celebrant
 - This unit describes the knowledge required to be developed and maintained by marriage celebrants to fulfil their legal responsibilities under the *Marriage Act 1961* and *Marriage Regulations 2017*, including the Code of Practice for Marriage Celebrants
- CHCLEG001 Work legally and ethically
 1. Identify and respond to legal requirements
 - 1.1 Identify, access and interpret sources of information about the legal requirements that apply to the work role
 - 1.2 Identify the scope and nature of own legal rights and responsibilities
 - 1.3 Adhere to legal requirements in work practice according to workplace policies and procedures and scope of role
 - 1.4 Recognise potential or actual breaches and report according to organisation procedures

The **aim of this activity** is to develop and refresh each celebrant's essential knowledge thereby developing confidence and assurance they are fulfilling their legal responsibilities when solemnising marriages.

Introduction

In this activity we are going to look at the **most current information** available to Commonwealth Registered Marriage Celebrants, drawing on the following resources:

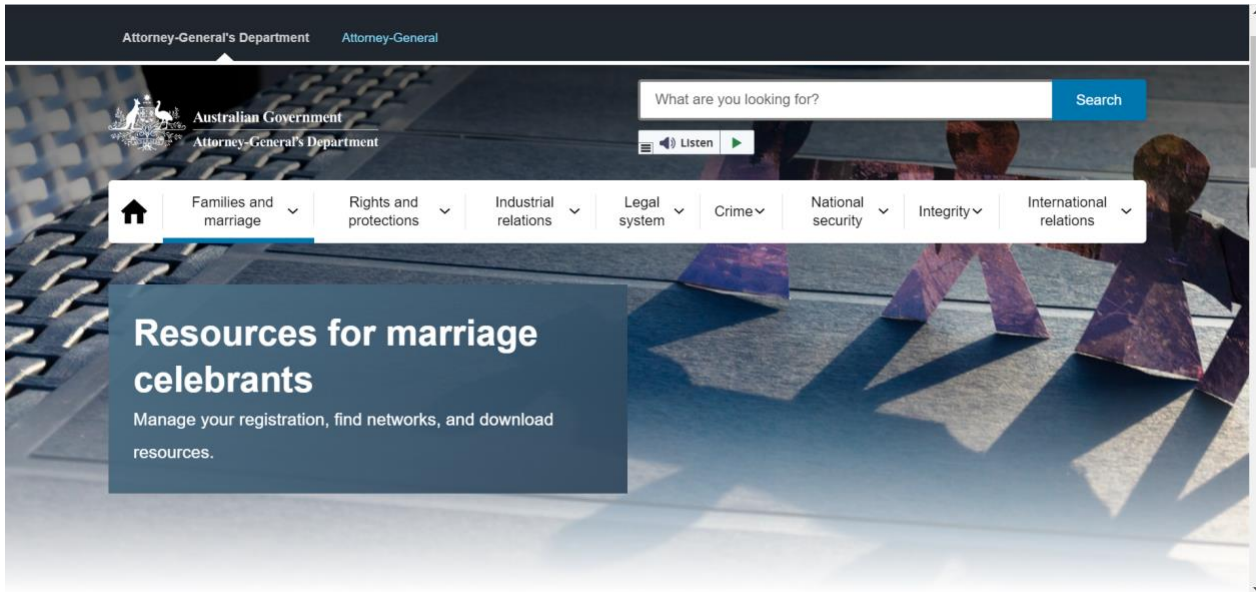
- Attorney-General's website, particularly in relation to [resources for marriage celebrants, your responsibilities as a Commonwealth Registered Marriage Celebrant and self-service portal](#)
- Marriage Act 1961, Marriage Regulations 2017, Guidelines on the Marriage Act 1961.
- Guidelines on the Marriage Act 1961 (current version)

PART ONE - REVIEW

To begin the activity review the links to current information, most relevant to this activity.

Please click on all the links or copy and paste into your web browser.

Snapshot of the Attorney-General's website 'Resources for marriage celebrants'



LINK: <https://www.ag.gov.au/families-and-marriage/marriage/resources-marriage-celebrants>

Scroll down the page to find the following:

- **Your responsibilities as a Commonwealth-registered marriage celebrant**
Understand your responsibilities as a Commonwealth registered marriage celebrant.
- **Download resources** Download forms and resources for your work as an authorised marriage celebrant. Access fact sheets, forms and celebrant newsletters.

When you visit the page: [Your responsibilities as a Commonwealth-registered marriage celebrant](#) you will find this important information (extracted):

Rules for Commonwealth-registered marriage celebrants

Commonwealth-registered marriage celebrants play an important role in our communities.

As a celebrant, you have legal responsibilities you must follow. If you don't, you could face serious consequences.

You must follow all the rules in the:

- [Marriage Act 1961- external site](#)
- [Marriage Regulations 2017- external site](#) (including the code of practice for marriage celebrants)

Download the code of practice: [Code of practice for marriage celebrants](#)

Guides to help you understand the rules

We manage the Marriage Celebrant Program in Australia. Through the program, we aim to help you understand your responsibilities and how to meet them.

Our guides contain essential information on how to meet your responsibilities as a Commonwealth-registered marriage celebrant. We cannot provide legal advice.

Download a guide to the Marriage Act 1961 (latest version to be updated):

- [Guidelines on the Marriage Act 1961 for authorised celebrants – Sep 2021](#)

Checklist for solemnising a marriage:

- [Celebrants obligations when solemnising marriages – Updated July 2018](#)

Rules about accepting electronic copies of documents:

- [Marriage Celebrants in an Online Environment June 2019](#)
- [Quick Reference Guide – Celebrants in an Online Environment – June 2019](#)

Notice of Intended Marriage fact sheet:

- [Notice of intended marriage – giving the minimum one month notice – Revised August 2018](#)

For further guidance on completing the Notice of Intended Marriage form, please see the factsheets below, including examples of completed Notice of Intended Marriage forms using existing scenarios.

- [Tips for completing Notices of Intended Marriage – from September 1](#)

Correcting marriage documentation fact sheet:

For guidance on how to amend information or correct errors made on marriage documentation please read the fact sheet on correcting marriage documentation.

- [Correcting marriage documentation – September 2020](#)

We also provide guidance on how to advertise your services as a marriage celebrant. This includes rules you must follow and tips for offering your services.

Download the advertising guidelines:

- [Guidelines on advertising for Commonwealth-registered marriage celebrants – Updated May 2019](#)

Please review this important information and make note of where you can find the latest versions of these publications and resources in the future.

When you visit the page: **Resources for marriage celebrants**

<https://www.ag.gov.au/families-and-marriage/marriage/resources-marriage-celebrants> you will find the following important information (extracted) under the tab **Download resources**:

Marriage forms

The forms on this page are for official use under the Marriage Act 1961 and Marriage Regulations 2017.

Do not change these forms or they may become invalid.

Buy official forms from CanPrint

You can download all forms **except the Form 15 Certificate of Marriage**.

You must buy this form from CanPrint Communications- external site which is the approved supplier. They can only supply the form to registered marriage celebrants.

CanPrint also supplies other marriage stationery, including:

- marriage registers
- official forms
- certificates

You must give them your celebrant registration number anytime you buy marriage stationery.

You can buy forms that are not the Form 15 from other suppliers. But they must meet the requirements under the Marriage Act. If they don't, they may be rejected by the registry of births, deaths and marriages.

Visit CanPrint Communications- external site or email them for more information.

A copy of our approval letter for CanPrint:

- Authorisation of CanPrint to supply the Form 15 Certificate of Marriage

ACTIVITY Solemnisation of marriage forms are available to download on this page. Please review the available forms and make note of where you can find the latest versions of these resources in the future.

Link: <https://www.ag.gov.au/families-and-marriage/marriage/resources-marriage-celebrants/download-resources>

Did you know that 'Happily Ever Before and After...' can be found in 30 different languages?

Scroll further down the page to find this and the following helpful information:

LINK: [Marriage Celebrant Matters Newsletters](#)

Publication date 16 September 2020

Download

[Newsletter – Spring 2020 edition \[PDF 432.6 KB\]](#)

[Newsletter – Spring 2020 edition \[DOCX 204.71 KB\]](#)

[Newsletter – Spring/Summer 2019/20 edition \[PDF 188.93 KB\]](#)

[Newsletter – Spring/Summer 2019/20 edition \[DOCX 202.75 KB\]](#)

[Newsletter – Autumn 2019 edition \[PDF 436.35 KB\]](#)

[Newsletter – Winter 2018 edition \[PDF 225.09 KB\]](#)

[Newsletter – Winter 2018 edition \[DOCX 52.55 KB\]](#)

[Newsletter – Spring/Summer 2017/18 edition \[PDF 1.26 MB\]](#)

[Newsletter – Spring/Summer 2017/18 edition \[DOCX 52.88 KB\]](#)

[Newsletter – Autumn/Winter 2017 edition \[PDF 418.45 KB\]](#)

[Newsletter – Autumn/Winter 2017 edition \[DOCX 42.33 KB\]](#)

Further links:

Downloads

- [Template for Certificate of Marriage for Civil Ceremonies](#)
- [Template for Certificate of Marriage for Religious Ceremonies](#)
- [Sample Certificate of Marriage for Civil Ceremonies](#)
- [Sample Certificate of Marriage for Religious Ceremonies](#)

Contact details

Marriage Law and Celebrants Section

1800 550 343

Outside Australia: +61 2 6141 3111

marriagecelebrantssection@ag.gov.au

3-5 National Circuit, Barton ACT

Related links

[Statutory declarations](#)

[Marriage Celebrants Self Service Portal](#)

What's new in 2021?

This year marriage celebrants will undertake a **compulsory activity** which will comprise a series of questions based on your knowledge of marriage law. The questions will be accessed via the **celebrant self-service portal**. Have you used the portal regularly? If not, here is some information that will help you, sourced from the Attorney-General's website.

New Forms - The three new marriage forms: the Notice of Intended Marriage (NOIM), the Official Certificate of Marriage (OCM), and Declaration of No Legal Impediment to Marriage (DNLI) forms, will be available for download from the department's [website](#) on 31 August 2021.

MLCS has provided the following guidance material on the changes to marriage forms commencing on 1 September 2021:

1. [Fact sheet on Changes to marriage forms and certificates 2021](#)
2. [Mocked-up new Notice of Intended Marriage](#)

From 1 September 2021, all authorised celebrants MUST use the new NOIM, OCM and DNLI forms.

NOIM forms signed and submitted to an authorised celebrant before 1 September 2021 will remain valid for a period of 18 months from their date of receipt by the authorised celebrant. All NOIM forms submitted to an authorised celebrant after 1 September 2021, must be in the new form.

There are no changes to the Form 15 Certificates of Marriage (that is given by the celebrant to the couple immediately following the wedding). Authorised celebrants can continue to use their existing stock of Form 15 certificates. The Form 15 certificates continue to be available for purchase from CanPrint Communications.

[Guidelines on the Marriage Act 1961 for authorised celebrants](#) will be updated on 31 August 2021, to reflect the new forms commencing on 1 September 2021.

ACTIVITY: Follow these links:

Return to the page [Manage your registration](#) See the following information extracted from this page:

Use the self-service portal#

Our [self-service portal- external site](#) makes it easy to manage your registration online.

In the portal, you can:

- update your contact details
- view your invoices and receipts
- [apply to not pay the registration charge for 1 year](#)
- [apply to not complete OPD for 1 year](#)
- update your OPD activities
- [resign as a marriage celebrant](#)

If you have problems accessing or using the portal, [email us](#).

Download tips to help you use the self-service portal

- [Accessing the marriage celebrants self-service portal](#)
- [Updating your details – Fact sheet – Minimum and maximum details displayed on the register](#)

Ongoing professional development self-reporting

- [Ongoing professional development Self-reporting – September 2019](#)

ACTIVITY Please review this important information and make note of where you can find the latest versions of these resources in the future.

ACTIVITY: (Extracts from the Guidelines on the Marriage Act 1961 most current version available). Follow this link to the [Guidelines on the Marriage Act 1961 for authorised celebrants \[PDF 1.96 MB\]](#)

Using the Index in the Guidelines, 'ctrl click' on each of the parts outlined below to read the relevant information. **Please review** this important information and make note of where you can find the latest versions of this resource in the future.

PART 4 SOLEMNISING MARRIAGES AND COMPLETING OFFICIAL MARRIAGE FORMS

- Witnessing the NOIM (Part 4.9 of the Guidelines)
- NOIMs signed overseas (Part 4.9.2 of the Guidelines)
- Transfer of NOIM (Part 5.2.2 of the Guidelines)
- Signing the Declaration of No Legal Impediment (Part 4.14 of the Guidelines)
- Vows (Part 5.7 of the Guidelines)

Trainer led, webinar discussion

PART 8 ESTABLISHING THAT THE PROPOSED MARRIAGE WILL BE VALID

- Grounds on which a marriage may be invalid (part 8.2 of the guidelines)
- Real consent (parts 8.5 and 8.6 of the guidelines)
- Surprise marriages (part 11.1 of the guidelines)
- Capacity to understand and the nature and effect of marriage (Part 8.6.5 of the guidelines)

Trainer led, webinar discussion

Review CHECKLIST FOR SOLEMNISATION OF A MARRIAGE (APPENDIX B TO THE GUIDELINES)

This document forms an excellent checklist for marriage celebrants. Please review the document and we suggest you review it regularly as it will ensure that each essential step in the solemnisation of a marriage is followed without error or omission. This checklist is available as a fact sheet on the Attorney-General's website:

<https://www.ag.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-03/celebrants-obligations.pdf>

Trainer led, webinar discussion

PART 12 OFFENCES

12.1 WHY IT IS IMPORTANT FOR CELEBRANTS TO KNOW ABOUT OFFENCES UNDER THE MARRIAGE ACT

12.2 OFFENCES RELEVANT TO CELEBRANTS

The following are the most commonly encountered by marriage celebrants:

- Section 99 Solemnising marriage where notice or declaration not given or made etc.
- Section 100 Solemnising marriage where reason to believe there is a legal impediment
- Section 101 Solemnisation of marriage by unauthorised person
- Section 104 Giving defective notice etc

Trainer led, webinar discussion

By now you will feel confident in knowing that marriage celebrants have all these excellent resources freely available.

Highly recommended: develop a practice of regularly visiting the Attorney-General's website to check on the currency of the publication or resource you wish to view. Only the latest versions appear on the AGD website. You don't need to print the majority of these versions as you can regularly download them to your computer.

REMINDER Celebrants are encouraged to review the resources available to them as shown in the text above. Celebrants are not encouraged to rely on information or answers to questions received from celebrant colleagues, by following unauthorised website blogs and so on. The risk is that this information, although given in the spirit of goodwill, may not be accurate or current.

If a celebrant cannot find the answer needed in the resources available to them, then they may contact MLCS at marriagecelebrantssection@ag.gov.au / 1800 550 343 (office hours Canberra time). If the information required relates to registration of a marriage or lodgement of marriage documents then they should contact the Registry BDM in the state or territory where the marriage took place.

PART TWO – FINDING THE RIGHT ANSWERS

Now that you have reviewed the current resources available to all marriage celebrants, it is time to practice 'finding the right answers'. As a guide, we will use some of the essential knowledge requirements outlined in the units of competency: CHCCEL402A & CHCLEG001

EXERCISE: Review the checklist below.

CHECKLIST

TOPIC	ISSUE	RESOURCE(S)	WHERE TO FIND THE RESOURCE(S)
Witnessing of signatures on the Notice of Intended Marriage (NOIM).	The marrying couple reside overseas and will not arrive in Australia until two weeks prior to the date of the marriage. They want to know who can witness their signatures on the NOIM.	Marriage Act 1961 + Guidelines on the Marriage Act 1961 current version July 2018 + the NOIM + AGD website Rules to get married in Australia	Act – S42.2(d) + Guidelines 4.9.2 + page 4 of the NOIM + Rules to get married in Australia + Quick Reference Guide – Celebrants in an Online Environment – June 2019
Evidence of the date and place of birth of parties to a proposed marriage (evidence required when parties born in Australia and born overseas).	One party to this marriage was born in New South Wales (John) the second party was born in Switzerland (Liesle). Explain the evidence they require to present prior to marriage.	Marriage Act 1961 + Guidelines on the Marriage Act 1961 current version July 2018 + AGD website Rules to get married in Australia	Act – S42.1(b) + Guidelines 4.10 + Rules to get married in Australia + Quick Reference Guide – Celebrants in an Online Environment – June 2019
Evidence of the end of a previous marriage of a party to a proposed marriage (evidence required for previous marriages conducted in Australia and overseas).	John was divorced from his previous spouse. Liesle is a widow. Explain the documents they must show for evidence of the end of their previous marriages.	Marriage Act 1961 + Guidelines on the Marriage Act 1961 current version July 2018 + AGD website Rules to get married in Australia	Act – S42.10 + Guidelines 4.11.1 + 4.11.2 + Rules to get married in Australia + Quick Reference Guide – Celebrants in an Online Environment – June 2019
Amending information or correction of errors made on marriage documentation.	After the marriage of John and Liesle, you discover an error on the official certificate of marriage.	Marriage Act 1961 + AGD website – Rules for Commonwealth Reg. Celebrants - factsheet	Act – S51 + Correcting marriage documentation – September 2020
Circumstances for shortening of the notice time for an intended marriage.	You receive a call from a marrying couple who tell you they have to get married in three weeks' time as the visiting partner's visa is about to expire.	Marriage Act 1961 + Marriage Regs 2017 + Guidelines on the Marriage Act 1961 current version July 2018	Act – S42.5 + Regs – Schedule 3 + Guidelines 4.3

Optional learning: Now that you have reviewed the completed section of the checklist, using the following template CHECKLIST, review the TOPIC + ISSUE then enter the name of the resource or resources and the location(s) where you can find them.

CHECKLIST CONT.

TOPIC	ISSUE	RESOURCE(S)	WHERE TO FIND THE RESOURCE(S)
In-house celebrant for a venue.	'Top-Spot Weddings and Parties' have invited you to be their in-house celebrant. They want to discuss remuneration with you – the first wedding is scheduled for five weeks' time.		
Marriage between a person and their adopted child.	Frank wants to marry Lee. Frank tells you that 15 years ago he was married to Jane and they adopted Lee. The adoption was subsequently annulled, they divorced, Jane's new husband adopted Lee. Can you marry Frank and Lee?		
Second marriage ceremonies.	Christine and Sarah recently returned from Las Vegas. They tell you they went to the Elvis Chapel and were 'married' by an Elvis impersonator. They don't think it was a legal marriage and they don't have a certificate. They would like to be married by you.		
Names on marriage documents.	George is the name a party to marriage has written on the NOIM. When you sight his birth certificate, his name is spelt 'Jerzy'. He doesn't want to go through the process of name change and insists that he wants to use 'George' in the ceremony and on his certificates.		

<p>Advertising your celebrant services.</p>	<p>You have decided on a new name for your marriage celebrant business: 'Bespoke Registry Weddings' Can you use that business name?</p>		
<p>Real consent to marriage.</p>	<p>When you arrive at the wedding, you find one party to the marriage is obviously under the influence of alcohol. The second party to the marriage is arriving shortly. What can you do?</p>		
<p>Marriage of a minor.</p>	<p>Eighteen-year-old Paul tells you his sixteen-year-old girlfriend, Jenny, is pregnant and they want to be married before the baby is born. Jenny does not communicate with her parents. Paul wants to support Jenny and the baby. How will you advise them?</p>		
<p>Interpreters in the marriage ceremony.</p>	<p>Rupert tells you that his fiancé, Constance, is Balinese and doesn't speak much English. However he speaks Indonesian (as well as English) and because they don't have enough money to engage a interpreter, he would like to invite Constance's Balinese Uncle to conduct the ceremony. The uncle does not speak English.</p>		

21QT015 Use technology to effectively coordinate business resources (2 hours)

By the end of this activity participants will have learned skills and knowledge required to use the tools of modern technology to run your celebrant business effectively and successfully, whilst discovering technological resources and applications that will improve the function of their business operation and help alleviate pitfalls.

This information relates to a unit of competency from CHC41015 Certificate IV in Celebrancy.

The topics that will be covered in this activity relate to elements from BSBADM409 Coordinate business resources and include:

- 1 Determine resource requirements
- The Web – Website, email and domain
- Search engine optimisation
- Google My Business and Adwords
- Invoicing and billing – software / hardware

What are business resources?

Here are a couple of examples:

Business.gov <https://www.business.gov.au/>, created by the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science – AusIndustry, is a whole-of-government online resource providing essential information on planning, starting and growing a business. In addition, this website offers information specifically for businesses, in relation to:

- grants and assistance offered by government to help businesses
- advisory services in your state or territory, some of which are free or have minimal costs involved
- events offered throughout Australia, including seminars, training courses and workshops.

ASIC website <https://asic.gov.au/> The best place to start is the Small Business Hub on ASIC's website, which has a range of small business resources to give you more comprehensive information. You will also have the option to sign up to ASIC's free monthly InFocus e-newsletter, designed to keep you up to date with ASIC-related news and information on companies and business names.

In this activity we will focus on ...

Business technology resources

Technology resources are a category of **business resources**. They include digital or 'online' resources that can be utilised to make operating a business more efficient and effective.

Here are some common technology resources that can be used to either start your new business, or to improve your existing business:

- Websites
- Emails
- Online calendars
- Google
- Social Media
- Point of Sale (POS) Systems
- Invoices
- Applications

Websites

Websites are one of the most important channels to promote your business.

A website itself can be used to accomplish many different marketing strategies to help your business grow. A strategically developed website and online presence solution provides tremendous benefits and costing outlines.

Your website and social media accounts are accessible 24/7/365. Since your website is operational around the clock, from the convenience of the local coffee shop, their couch, your customers and clients can easily access your website and services.

By building a website you are giving your business the opportunity to tell consumers why they should trust you and the testimonials and facts to back up those opportunities. Using your website, you can continuously serve consumers online and increase your credibility as a business owner.

Consider the following:

- **WYSIWYG - *What you see is what you get***. WYSIWYG editor is a system in which content can be edited in a form closely resembling its appearance when printed or displayed as a finished product, such as a printed document, web page, or slide presentation.
- **Wordpress** has the ability to have certain sections to be shown as is. So no coding is required, just click on the area you want to edit and change it. Wordpress is the most used CMS (Content Management System in the world). By using Wordpress for your website you are ensuring you have the freedom of getting support from almost any web developer.

Others - Other common CMS include

- **Wix** and **Square Space**. Both are available on software as a service model offering monthly fees in combination to hosting and domain name purchasing.

Review: [WIX](#) [SQUARE SPACE](#) [WORDPRESS](#)

What is a domain name?

A domain name is your 'website address'. It's the 'entity' people need to type into a web browser to locate your website. For example, typing 'qualtrain.com.au' into a web browser will take you to QualTrain Australia's website.

- Domain names are cheap. They can start at about \$10-\$15 per year
- Domain names generally do not include hosting

Domain name tips

Here are just some simple rules to follow when purchasing your domain

- **Keep it simple:** when you are deciding on the name, think about how people will remember it; you don't want them to make errors when typing the address because the words were too long or difficult to spell / unusual spelling / etc.
- Where possible, use keywords
- Purchasing a **.au** domain helps with SEO for Australian business

What do you think of these domain names?

- 'expertsexchange.com.au' (exchange experts!)
- 'speedofart.com.au' (online art equipment suppliers)
- 'teacherstalking.org' (teachers talking)
- 'gloria_fishersfabulousweddingz.com.au'
- 'rosesareredvioletsarebluesoletmemarryyou.com.au'

... not too well considered? ... a little confusing? ... too long?

Domain name research

Here are some well-known websites where you can find out more about domain names:

- <https://au.godaddy.com/>
- <https://www.crazydomains.com.au/>
- <https://www.name.com/domain/search>
- <https://www.netregistry.com.au/domain-names/>

Website hosting

The next step is to get yourself a **hosting provider**. This will allow you to setup your website and potentially emails using the domain address. Example: website <https://qualtrain.com.au/> and emails associated with the domain admin@qualtrain.com.au nathanael@qualtrain.com.au

Consider the following when choosing the host for your website:

- How much storage space do you need from your web hosting company?
- How important are privacy and security to you? Will you be storing sensitive data on your website?
- Will you need full or partial control with the ability to change settings as needed?
- What is your level of technical knowledge and experience?
- What degree of support and assistance would you expect from the host provider?

Create your own brand

“Your personal brand is a promise to your clients... a promise of quality, consistency, competency, and reliability”

Jason Hartman, Author of "Become the Brand of Choice"

Suggestions to establish your brand:

- Use the same logo across all of your online outlets.
- The colours you choose are important ... keep the same across all visual elements (logo, text, images, business cards, stationery).
- The types of content you publish ... keep it relative, interesting, fresh.
- Other identifying features to develop, such as quality, personality, reputation, customer response.

SEO

SEO stands for Search Engine Optimisation. It is the term given to the process of trying to increase your ranking results for google searches. SEO is broken into two areas:

- Onpage - Ensuring that your webpage is optimised in such a way to identify as much as possible to your area of business.
- Offpage - SEO consists of creating backlinks, making posts and registering on directory sites.

Think of SEO as networking for your website, everywhere you place your contact details is like leaving a little business card

POS

Ensuring payment is as easy and fast as possible creates a better experience. Securing payments for deposits in person has never been so easy. Both Square and Paypal offer affordable and portable solutions.

- Square lets you accept tap-and-go cards, mobile wallets and chip cards, whether you're on the move or at your counter.
- Paypal – customers purchase your service (or product) – Paypal processes the payment with financial details protected – your business receives the money.

Email hosting

Email makes your email address look more professional, incorporating your own domain could also improve your brand image. Example:

<https://yourcelebrantwa.com.au/> and the email kate@yourcelebrantwa.com.au

Updating your website

If you haven't touched it since the day you launched it, you probably don't have a great SEO ranking. To drive more traffic to your website and increase its popularity, you need to give visitors a reason to keep coming back. Remember your content needs to be high quality, recent, and relevant.

Calendars & Invitations

Using either **Gsuite** or **Microsoft Office 365** emails will allow you easy integration into their calendar app.

- Calendar Invitations - Appear just like an email but allows the recipient to reply yes/no/maybe and have all appointment details shown
- Less booking confusion - Setting alerts is also built in and will notify you on your phone and any device you are on.
- Auto appointment add - When creating an appointment in the calendar you can create an invite immediately.

Check these sites:

- **Google Gsuite** - Great for those used to the google ecosystem such as gmail. Using Apps on Phones such as Google calendar and Gmail to make it all work. Check it out here https://gsuite.google.com.au/intl/en_au/
- **Microsoft Office 365** - Perfect for those used to using outlook on their computers. Integrates perfectly with the Microsoft Office suite (2013 or newer) Check it out here: <https://products.office.com/en-au/business/office>
- **POP/Imap Hosting** - Generally provided with website hosting. Doesn't provide calendar syncing to different devices. As mailboxes get bigger issues become more prolific. Read this interesting blog: <https://www.aussiebroadband.com.au/blog/whats-difference-imap-pop-email/>

Google My Business

This is a must to ensure that all your details are perfectly setup and duplicated on all channels. Google My Business allows setting up service locations and service coverage areas as well.

- When registering - fill in as many details as possible – this will help when people search for you specifically and also aid with SEO.
- Make sure that as much contact information is placed in your Google My Business Profile in the EXACT way as everywhere else (that includes spaces in phone numbers, capital letters etc)

Check it out here: https://www.google.com/intl/en_au/business/

ACTIVITY: Google your business name. What appears? Do you have a Google My Business? Is the information correct? Is there information missing? What can you improve?

List

YOUTUBE VIDEO <https://youtu.be/xGhgjEZuVAM> How Social Media helps attract traffic to a website

Social Media

Popular platforms

- Facebook - 60% of Australia uses Facebook
 - Most users are aged between 18-55
- Instagram - 37% of Australia uses Instagram
 - 90% of users are under 35

Check out this

information: <https://www.facebook.com/business> https://business.instagram.com/getting-started?locale=en_GB

How to get it right

- Don't use social media for the 'hard sell'
- Show what you do in a creative way
- Take them behind-the-scenes
- Expand your reach by tagging people
- Create a human voice for your business
- Post regularly
- Encourage comments and reply quickly

Social Media Tips - Use 3 Ps of Posting

To make sure you get engagement and reach on your social media page. Use the 3 Ps of posting to add value and interest for your followers.

- **Be Present**
 - You must be present; don't post and then not attend to responses, let your followers know you are there to receive responses and have interest in them.
- **Post in Real Time**
 - Life, ideas, events all happen in the 'now'. Don't wait to share with your listening audience.
- **Plan Content in Advance**
 - What's happening? What's coming up? Milestones ... events ... latest news ... Keep your posts lively and interesting.

Choose Your Profile Pic Wisely

People want to see faces not product shots and logos. Don't use your logo, use your real face instead. Your face is your personal brand. It helps you get recognised on other social media platforms as well.

Tell Stories

The reason why stories work is because it's personal and your fans will probably have a similar story or situation that they're going through. This allows you to connect on a personal level.

YOUTUBE VIDEO <https://youtu.be/ZOt04dgskZQ> Use stories to enhance social media posts

Ideas continued:

- Post Selfies
 - Selfies are some of the most popular posts on Facebook. It not only humanises your brand but gives your brand a personality of its own.
- Share Random Thoughts
 - What's on your mind today? You'll never know if some of your fans might be thinking the same.
- Post Videos
 - Videos are the hottest commodity on Facebook. There are over 8 billion videos watched on Facebook daily.
- **Include:** Quotes Memes and more!
Example: <https://www.brainyquote.com/topics/free-quotes>
 - Share Inspiring Quotes because they can connect with literally anyone.
- **Act Human**
 - We're all human - Act that way! Show your real side and just be you. Act like how you are in real life. Your fans will appreciate that and you'll get more likes and comments.
- **Post at the Right Time** (based on Facebook Insights)

- The best time to post is: 12 PM + 3 PM + 7 PM
- Every study will show a different result because the best time to post varies based on industry and demographic. Use Facebook Insights to determine when your fans are online.
- **Experiment with How Often You Should Post ...** The response from your fans might surprise you.
- Be Consistent regardless of how often you post - make sure you're consistent.

YOUTUBE VIDEO <https://youtu.be/lxw9nNnDytY> Social media for small business

Selling to Millennials

80% of marrying couples are millennials!

Millennials spend an average of four hours on mobiles per day. Is your website mobile friendly?

The main aspects they look for in a website is great pictures and minimal text.

It's not just the bride looking for a connection, the modern-day groom is often a lot more involved in the process of finding a celebrant and becoming married.

Online reviews are important in this modern age – millennials will take the opinion of former clients whom had spent time reviewing your service.

There are a growing number of Millennials who consider the wedding ceremony the most important aspect of their wedding.

Are you ready for Gen Z?

At the moment Gen Z people range in age from 2 – 19 but prepared because they are on their way!

Gen Z are innovative, phone-obsessed, and they crave authentic experiences. They're conscious about the environment, choose visuals over text and prefer incognito social media platforms that their parents and grandparents aren't on.

In order to attract Gen Z, you will need to –

- Be as authentic as possible
- Use spontaneous photos and videos
- Focus on social influence by offering a quality service

- Invite them to provide videos, images and stories

YOUTUBE VIDEOS <https://youtu.be/frCTrbrcyH4> <https://youtu.be/fP5z-rKfYag>

TIPS

QR codes published on your social media channels will lead customers to your website.

Include visuals, hashtags, short text and emoticons in your posts when relevant for more interaction. You can post links, images; you can re-share, post quotes.

Posts with visual elements such as images have a significantly higher engagement than the ones that don't.

Make sure it's easy to share your website content on social media and that all links from your social media posts work perfectly.

How frequently should you post?

According to the Australian Bureau of statistics More than a third of people now access social media more than five times per day (35%), which is up from 26% last year. Among 18-29 year olds 89% check-in at least once per day.

The most popular times are:

- In the evening (up from 49% to 57%) and first thing in the morning (up from 49% to 57%) have become even more popular and are the most popular times for using social media.
- Almost half are now accessing social media on their break (up from 33% to 47%) or at lunchtime (up from 36% to 47%).

Ref: <https://www.sensis.com.au/about/our-reports/sensis-social-media-report>

ACTIVITY: Consider your next post. Write your post intro using some of the ideas mentioned above.



Here are some helpful links:

Square: <https://squareup.com/au/en>

Paypal: <https://www.paypal.com>

Waveapps: <https://www.waveapps.com/>

Wordpress: <https://wordpress.com/>

Wix: <https://www.wix.com/>

SquareSpace: <https://www.squarespace.com/>

Applications

Try new technologies, use free programs, or give new start-ups a chance

Don't be afraid to try new things. Most new technologies offer trial periods, so take advantage of these. Free programs or 'apps' are useful for small businesses; just because a program is free, doesn't mean it isn't good!

Here are some examples free solutions that you can use as alternatives to paid programs. Taking advantage of these will help you save money.

File Creation

- **Google Docs:** With Google Docs, you can write, edit, and collaborate wherever you are. For Free. <https://www.google.com/docs/about/>

Client Relationship Manager (CRM)

A CRM can help you keep track of your process with each couple and you can store contact details, financial records, client progress and notes. A CRM can take a little while to set-up but once organised, it can save you a lot of time and energy in the future. The wedding industry has a number of CRMs including:

- Studio Ninja - <https://www.studioninja.co/>
- Celebrant Easy - <https://www.celebranteasy.com/>
- Tave - <https://www.shootproof.com/tave>
- 17 Hats - <https://www.17hats.com/>

File Storage

In today's modern world, it's convenient if you can access your files from any location rather than just your home office. There are a number of cost-effective cloud storage options.

- **Dropbox:** Sign up for 2 GB of storage, and start accessing and sharing photos, documents and other files from any device. <https://www.dropbox.com/basic>
- **Google Drive.** Free with a Google account that allows for cloud file storage. Google Drive can be accessed from any device or platform with an internet connection.

Video Calling

Many celebrants today are interacting with their couples via phone or 'video' call for their initial meet and greet. There are a number of technologies to use to enable this:

- **FaceTime:** available on Apple products
- **Skype:** Skype makes it easy to stay in touch - Talk. Chat. Collaborate: <https://www.skype.com/en/>
- **Zoom meetings** stay connected with colleagues and customers even when meeting in person is not possible.
- **What's App.** A messenger device that also allows video calling. There is useful for non-Apple users.
- **Facebook Messenger.** A subsidiary app to the Facebook app that allows messages and video calling.

Ceremony Reading

As many celebrants move to reading their ceremony on digital devices, there are a number of applications you can use to read your ceremony from including:

- **Adobe Acrobat Reader.** Once a ceremony has been completed, you can convert your document into a PDF and then open the PDF in Adobe Acrobat Reader which is an app for viewing and editing PDFs
- **iBooks.** This primarily for reading books but also handy for opening PDFs and reading from them.
- **Pages for iPad.** Designed for viewing documents on iPads

Audio Recording

- **Otter.** Automated meeting notes with audio recording, transcribed text and highlight summary.

Location

- **Waze.** Waze is a GPS navigation software app and a subsidiary of Google. It works on smartphones and tablet computers that have GPS support. It provides turn-by-turn navigation information and user-submitted travel times and route details, while downloading location-dependent information over a mobile telephone network.

Weather

- **Rainparrot.** Get notified 30 minutes before it's going rain! A very useful weather app.

Financials

There are a number of apps available to use for your business finances which allow you to invoice, track expenses and be used for taxation purposes. Note if you have another business, these apps can be used in conjunction with that business so all your financials are recorded in the one place.

The most common ones in Australia are:

- **Zero**
- **QuickBooks**
- **MYOB**

Music

Many celebrants offer to organise and play the ceremony music for their couples. For a small monthly fee, there are a number of music apps that allow you to access a huge library of songs. And remember the monthly fee is a tax deduction!

- **Spotify**
- **Apple Music**

Password Storage

- **1Password** is a password manager. It provides a place for users to store various passwords, software licenses, and other sensitive information in a virtual vault that is locked with a master password.

Image and Video Editing

There are a huge number of apps out there that allow for image editing to use images on your website, social media, marketing collateral etc. Remember you should never edit a professional photographer's photo without permission. Download some and have a play! Some of these apps include:

- **Unfold.** A toolkit for storytellers. Create beautiful and engaging stories from minimal and elegant templates.
- **Canva.** A graphic design platform, used to create social media graphics, presentations, posters, documents and other visual content. The app includes templates for users to use.
- **Adobe Lightroom.** Adobe Lightroom is a creative image organization and image manipulation software.
- **Animoto Slideshow Creator.** Create and share videos for free with Animoto's video maker.
- **iMovie.** A video editing software application.
- **Layout from Instagram.** A better way to make collages. Layout lets you create one-of-a-kind layouts by remixing your own photos and sharing them
- **Split Video: Long Story Maker.** Split Video is a free app that lets you split long videos into smaller clips and post them to your Instagram stories or other social networks.

Social Media Management

These applications allow you to manage all your Facebook and Instagram pages in the one place:

- **Facebook Business Suite.** A Facebook tool that helps you organize and manage your business.
- **Facebook Creator Studio.** Creator Studio lets creators and publishers manage posts, insights and messages from all of your Facebook Pages in one place.
-

Social Media Scheduling

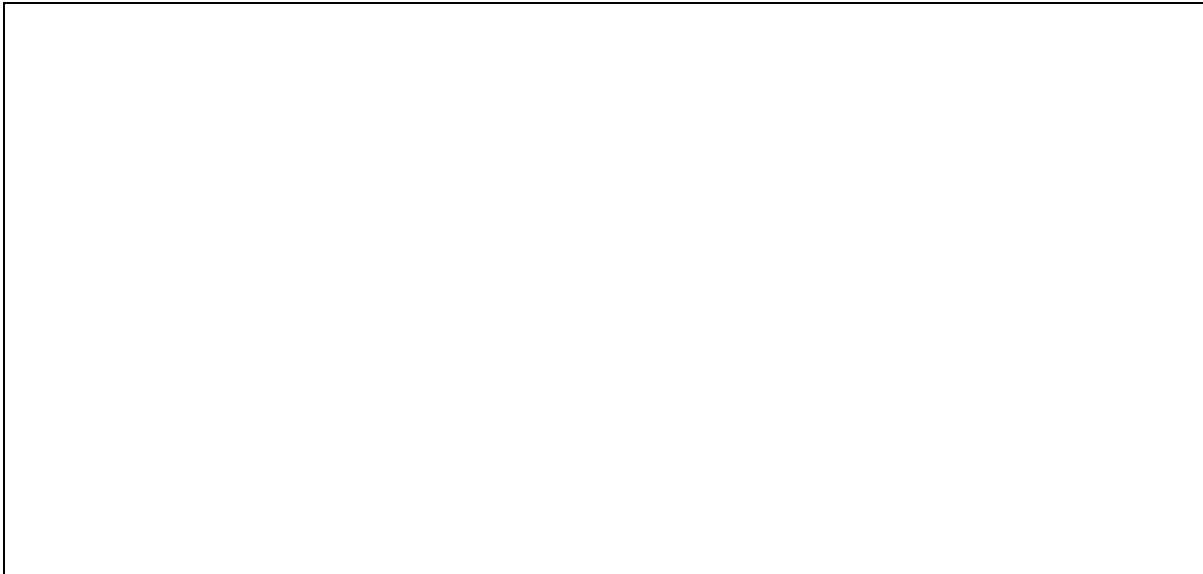
In today's busy world, posting on social media can get neglected or seem too hard at times. Using a scheduling and management app allows you to write and schedule posts in advance. Many successful businesses plan their social media content a month in advance so they don't need to do it on a daily or weekly basis.

- **Planoly.** A visual planner for Instagram and Facebook.
- **Later.** Visually plan your social posts, publish automatically, and get tailored insights to help you reach more people.
- **Hootsuite.** Hootsuite is a social media management platform. The system's user interface takes the form of a dashboard, and supports social network integrations for Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube.

Some of the biggest names in technology began from humble backgrounds, and the businesses that gave them a chance at the start are now reaping the rewards.

YOUTUBE VIDEO <https://youtu.be/qFuBKTz6LP4> Beyond digital transformation

CHALLENGE: What changes will you make in your use of business technology resources? What apps do you think might benefit your business? Create a plan to continuously improve business performance and success!



ACTIVITY: Choose an app from the list above. Download it, have a play and see how it could improve your celebrant business!

NOTES