

## HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY STREAM YOUR WEDDING

First, I assume that if you're here, it's because you're planning a **wedding – congratulations!** Second, I also assume that you may have had some plans change, which is why you're now considering streaming – hang in there! Keep reading for all the strategies you need to stream your wedding to anyone who can't be there in person with a minimum of tech confusion and stress!

### *Tech requirements*

This doesn't have to be complicated; you can keep it as simple as using your phone, tablet, or laptop. If you want improved video or audio quality, I recommend bringing in some extra equipment (though that comes with an extra cost, and an additional chance that something will go wrong).

#### 1. Camera/Quality

- your **webcam** will suffice (choose the device that has the best quality camera: laptop, tablet, phone). Mount the device on a tripod or place on a stable surface. Consider supplementing your lighting if the ceremony is inside, or in a shaded area.
- for better quality (optical zoom, better mic), and to ensure you have a recording, should your stream go down, connect a **video camera** to your laptop using a **camlink** (\$200) and an HDMI cable.
- set up your device well in advance of the ceremony, and zoom in for the best quality shot (use models placed where your ceremony will be held to ensure that you don't cut someone out of the frame!)

#### 2. Microphone

- you may wish to connect an external microphone (USB, XLR or Bluetooth) to your device to ensure better sound quality. If you're using an XLR mic, you'll need a digital interface. Place an external mic closer to the ceremony (but out of the shot, ideally!).

#### 3. Internet connection/Adequate upload speed

- a wired connection is preferable to wifi for consistency of connection
- test your upload speed (google 'test my internet speed', or [www.speedtest.net](http://www.speedtest.net)). Upload speeds of at least 5.7mbps are recommended for streaming 720p.

#### 4. Streaming platform

- choose a streaming platform that you're comfortable with (see below).

#### 5. Church

- many churches now have the technology to stream services, so if you're being married in a church, ask if they can help with the streaming.

#### TIPS AND TRICKS:

- Test. ALWAYS test! (Video, sound, lighting, stream)
- If outdoors, SHADE your equipment! If it's a hot day, your device may go into thermal shutdown. You may want to direct a fan on your setup to prevent this (be mindful of the additional white noise, if you're using your device's internal mic). And don't forget a rain plan! You don't want your laptop getting caught in a storm!

# Streaming platforms

You'll need to choose a platform to host the live stream of your event. There are many options out there, from social media applications you may be more familiar with, to setting up your own server and streaming to a private webpage (this is above my pay grade – feel free to try if you're techy!). With most platforms, you can download a recording after the fact, or select 'record' when you set up your stream.

Many streaming platforms recommend uploading video at 720p, 30 frames per second. If you're recording in 1080p, make sure you have the upload speed to support it. (If you're recording from a video camera, you'll have a 1080p recording even if the streaming platform 'throttles back' the resolution while uploading).

## 1. Facebook LIVE, Instagram, YouTube

- If you have a pre-existing Facebook Group of your guests, a FB livestream is an easy way to ensure access for your guests, and there's essentially no time limit on your stream.
- Instagram live streams are limited to one hour.
- Youtube takes 24 hours to activate, so ensure that it's set up in advance.

## 2. Zoom

- free version only allows 40 minutes
- up to 100 people
- \$20/month to remove time limit
- guests have to download Zoom app

## 3. Skype

- group calls limited to 50 people, no time limit
- guests download app or send weblink

## 4. Google Meet

- free for 1 hour, up to 100 participants
- pay to increase time or participants
- send guests weblink

## 5. Dacast, Livestream.com (Third-Party services)

- pay by the event, by number of GB used
- designed for commercial/conference needs

## 6. Eventlive.pro

- Third-party service specifically designed for wedding streaming
- \$50 USD for one event, unlimited viewers and time
- Guests don't need to download anything
- Easiest from an Apple or Android device, but possible to stream from a laptop or camera

### TIPS AND TRICKS:

- Run a test stream with a couple of people prior to the big day to ensure you're familiar with the interface, and so you know what to tell guests.
- Check to see if you can change the quality of the stream – on Facebook, for instance, you have to select 'Upload HD' in Video Settings (it's not the default) if you want your video to upload in high-quality.
- Designate someone specific to monitor the tech and set up the stream. If the stream goes down, you'll have no way of knowing once you've started the ceremony.
- Start your stream 15 minutes early to allow everyone to sign in. On a lot of platforms, you can screen-share a welcome screen.
- Turn off all other applications and any programs that might be using bandwidth

# Advanced options

If you're looking for a more professional-quality stream, or if you want to include multiple camera angles, graphics, text overlay or transitions, you may want to look into advanced streaming and broadcast software.

## 1. OBS

- Open Broadcaster Studio is a free, open-source piece of software that allows you to switch between pre-set 'scenes', so you can combine multiple camera angles with text and graphic overlay, or screenshares.
- there's a steep learning curve, so make sure you spend time with the program prior to using it for your wedding.
- you definitely need someone to run this during the event, who has knowledge of the program, and the transitions between sources that you require.
- OBS needs to be connected to a server in order to stream: Zoom, YouTube, Facebook, or your own private server, if you have one, are all possibilities.

### TIPS AND TRICKS:

- Don't attempt this unless you're pretty tech-savvy. The more complex the application, the more chances there are for things to go wrong, and you don't want to be troubleshooting streaming issues moments before you say your vows!

# Hiring a pro

To completely take the guesswork and stress out of the equation, hire a production or videography company. Most videographers can both capture the day for you and offer a streaming option, and a lot of production companies have pivoted, and are now offering wedding streaming as a service.

### TIPS AND TRICKS:

- As with any vendor you'll have face time with on your wedding day, it's important to interview a potential videographer (many are currently offering video meetings). Ensure that you feel comfortable with him or her, and ask how much experience they have with live streaming.

# Guest etiquette

Because streaming has been less common historically, many guests may not know what to expect. It's your job to prepare them:

## 1. Mute Audio/Video

- if you're using a platform that allows guests to connect with audio and video, either pre-set your stream so that guests are automatically muted on entry, or ask them to join with audio and video off. Having everyone sharing video and audio may bog down the stream, or cause an unintentional 'hijack' of the main attraction - you! (If you're having guests do a reading or prayer, instruct them to unmute only during the time they are directly involved).

## 2. Attire

- if guests are keeping their video streams on, give some indication of attire suggestions. You don't necessarily want everyone seeing Joe and Susan sitting in their pool!

## 3. Comments

- depending on your platform, guests may be able to comment in a separate 'chat box' as the event unfolds. Let them know if this is an option, and if it is, whether their comments are public, or if there's an option (as on Zoom) to comment privately to another guest.

## 4. Sharing

- well in advance, have a conversation with your partner about whether your guests can share the stream link. Depending on your comfort level, you may want to request that guests keep the link private.

# Best wishes

FOR AN AMAZING WEDDING, A SUCCESSFUL STREAMING EXPERIENCE,  
AND AN EVEN BETTER MARRIAGE!!!

# Learn More

[www.unmistakablyyou.com](http://www.unmistakablyyou.com)

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