



Market Report

A Snapshot of your Market Sector

Wedding Services

Cost of Doing Business Support

For information on **reducing the cost of running your business**, the [Find Business Support](#) website has links to advice, funding and regional support.

This pack has been designed to provide information on setting up a business in the **Wedding** industry in Scotland, as well as helping to inform the market research section of your business plan. You can find more information on how to write a business plan from the Business Gateway website (www.bgateway.com/businessplan), including an interactive template and tips to get you started.

This market report was updated by Business Gateway in **October 2023**. If you find the information contained in this document useful, tell us about it! Send us feedback [here](#); we will use your comments to help improve our service.

What do I need to know about the Wedding market?

The following summary statistics have been taken from market research reports and reliable resources that the Information Service uses to compile industry information. They should give you an indication of how your industry is faring at present and whether there is demand for your type of business:

- ◆ There were **28,921 marriages** in Scotland in 2022, representing a return to pre-pandemic numbers. Of these, a total of **1,112** were same-sex marriages, again showing a return to pre-pandemic levels. (National Records of Scotland, [Marriages and Civil Partnership Time Series Data](#), July 2023)
- ◆ The Wedding Venue industry has had a tumultuous time up until 2023-24. In 2020-21, COVID-19 forced couples to postpone their weddings, causing a momentary plummet in venue income in 2020-21. However, most of these postponed weddings were rescheduled for 2021-22, when restrictions eased, causing a boom in income in 2021-22. Overall, wedding venue revenue is projected to grow at a compound annual rate of 1.7% over the five years through 2023-24, to reach £3.3 billion. (IBISWorld, [Wedding Venues in the UK](#), September 2023).
- ◆ Being or getting married is important to **63%** of Gen Z. One in five Gen Zers plan to get married in the next five years, suggesting that, for many, it will be further ahead in the future... Nearly four in 10 Gen Zers, though, do not see marriage as important in their lives, demonstrating a significant shift in priorities in modern society. If Gen Z are to follow the same path as Millennials, who are not getting married at the same rate as previous generations, the number of couples tying the knot will continue to decline (Mintel, [Lifestyles of Generation Z UK](#), 2023).
- ◆ The average wedding cost in Scotland for 2022 was **£19,337** not including engagement ring and honeymoon spending; including those the average was **£23,686**. This represents a significant increase in the 2021 averages of **£15,102** and **£18,038** respectively. (Bridebook, [The UK Wedding Report 2023](#) and [The UK Wedding Report 2022](#))
- ◆ The national organisation for this industry is the [National Association of Wedding Professionals](#). Other industry bodies include the [Association of British Wedding Businesses](#), the [Retail Bridalwear Association](#), and the [Scottish Wedding Industry Alliance](#).



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Where can I find more information on my market?

The Information Service has access to a number of databases which can offer more detail on this industry. Some of these reports are listed below - if you would like to be sent extracts from any of these reports, please contact us on **0300 013 4753** or email info@bgateway.com.

- ◆ **IBISWorld – Photographic Activities in the UK (June 2023)**. The ONS estimates that between March 2020 and June 2020, 73,600 weddings and civil partnership ceremonies were postponed during the spring lockdown, causing a slump in photographic activities...Wedding photography generates the largest share of revenue. The UK marriage rate is in long-term decline; as social acceptance of cohabitation rises, more individuals tend to delay their weddings. Changes in cultural attitudes towards marriage and increases in the median age of marriage are the primary reasons for the falling marriage rate. The introduction of same-sex marriage legislation in England and Wales in March 2014 has slowed the decline in the marriage rate. The industry has increased its focus on culturally different wedding ceremonies and celebrations, with the Association of Photographers offering workshops for Asian weddings.
- ◆ **IBISWorld – Bridal Stores in the UK (July 2023)**. Bridal boutique revenue is expected to creep downwards at a compound annual rate of **3.1%**. Unsurprisingly, bridal store revenue is heavily influenced by the marriage rate. Unfortunately, changing social structures make marriage less of a priority – with Britons prioritising expenditure on education, travel and other experiences over-elaborate weddings.

There are also a number of online resources you may find helpful:

- ◆ Commenting on the number of marriages in 2023, the National Records of Scotland compared the increase to post-war booms of 1919 and 1945 (<https://shorturl.at/arAH5>).
- ◆ The Complete Business Reference Adviser (COBRA) resource, available through the National Library of Scotland's eResources page, has a Business Opportunity Profile for the Wedding Planner profession that contains useful information on the necessary qualifications and skills; key market issues; and trading, commercial and legal issues. There are also Opportunity Profiles for Bridal Boutiques and other wedding-adjacent industries.
- ◆ [Tie The Knot Scotland](#) has a supplier directory which covers all types of service and product providers in the wedding sector, as well as information on venues, wedding trends, and news articles relevant to the Scottish and UK wedding industry.
- ◆ [The Scottish Wedding Guide](#) has a directory of wedding suppliers and venues covering the whole of Scotland, as well as articles on trends in UK and Scottish weddings.

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How can I find out about my competitors?

Business Gateway's online guide to [Competitor Analysis](#) explains how to find your competitors, how to research what they're doing and how to act on what you learn about them.

Immediate competition will be from other businesses in your local area. There are several online directories which can be used to find company information and generate lists easily and at no expense. Many Local Authorities also publish local business directories on the web. Below are some key web resources:

- ◆ General business directories such as [Yell](#) ,[Thomson Local](#) or [Google Maps](#)
- ◆ Trade specialists like [EuroPages](#) (European directory), [The Wholesaler](#) or [Free Index](#)
- ◆ Business to business (B2B) specialists such as [Kompass](#)

Likewise, your local Chamber of Commerce may publish a members' directory; find your local Chamber on the [Scottish Chambers](#) website.

Once you've identified who your competitors are, the next step is to gather information on the way they do business. Which services do they provide? How do they market themselves? How much do they charge?

To learn about your competitors:

- ◆ Look for articles or adverts in local newspapers, trade press and directories.
- ◆ Try to read their marketing material; if the company has an online presence, visit the company's website as a first port of call. Not only does it give you a better understanding of the company's activities, it can also offer a wealth of information such as a company history or staff biographies, as well as the company's partners or suppliers
- ◆ Search for information on limited UK companies via the [Companies House](#) website
- ◆ Gain an insight into your competitor's performance using credit checks and the accounts that limited companies are required to submit to Companies House each year.

We can provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using this resource, or looking for us to help you find relevant publications, please contact us by emailing info@bgateway.com or by calling **0300 013 4753**



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What about suppliers?

[Choosing and Managing Suppliers](#) can help you decide what you need from a supplier, how to identify one and how to choose one to deal with.

Trade associations or industry specific organisations may also be able to recommend suppliers or contacts. You can also use the aforementioned resources for finding competitors to find suppliers.

Once you have decided on a supplier, we can run a credit check on the company to help assess their financial stability. We provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using the resource please info@bgateway.com or by calling **0300 013 4753**.

Who are my customers?

Your business plan should include information about the customers you would expect. Business Gateway's guides on [Market and customer research](#) will help you to identify new trends, opportunities, customers and competitors.

It can be useful to group your customers by geographical location, age or lifestyle. The websites listed below are freely available and can provide most of this information. If you can't find what you're looking for from these website, please contact us and one of the team will be happy to help:

- ◆ Access the latest population estimates from the [National Records of Scotland \(NRS\)](#). NRS also offers demographic factsheets for each council area in Scotland, which can provide summary statistics for the area you will be based in.
- ◆ Information from the most recent census in 2011 is released via the official website. See in particular the [Census Area Profiles](#). Clicking on your area of interest will give the latest population figures, including estimates by age.
- ◆ [Understanding Scottish Places](#) has interactive profiles of towns and cities across Scotland. It can be useful for understanding the interrelationships and flows between towns, and also gives comparisons between two or more places.
- ◆ [Scottish Government Statistics](#) provide accurate and up-to-date statistics on Scotland, covering population, health, education and housing.
- ◆ [The Scottish Household Survey](#) provides information on the structure, characteristics, attitudes and behaviour of Scottish households, both at a national and local level.
- ◆ [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#) is the recognised national statistical body for the UK. ONS covers a wide range of demographic, economic and social issues at a UK level.

How can you help me with other aspects of starting my business?

The Business Gateway website has guides, videos, online tutorials and tips on all aspects of starting up a business in Scotland. Follow the links below to explore each resource:

Accountancy

Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland's (ICAS) "[Find a Chartered Accountant](#)" tool

Funding

[Practical information](#) on finance and funding for starting and growing your business

Insurance

[Business insurance guide](#)

Legal Help

Gov.uk "[Licence Finder](#)" tool

Law Society of Scotland's "[Find a Solicitor](#)" tool

Pricing

Business Companion [Pricing & payment guide](#).

Please note: the most effective way to research pricing is to conduct your own research – visit wholesalers or suppliers to obtain price lists, find quotes from similar companies and work out what other businesses in your area are charging

Promotion

[BG guides to Marketing](#)

Training

[Skills Development Scotland's My World of Work](#)

[Funding for training](#)

[Small Business Bonus Scheme \(Scotland\)](#)

Your local Business Gateway can offer events, workshops and 1:2:1 support on all aspects of starting and developing your business. Call the helpline on **0300 013 4753** to find out what is available in your area.

We hope you find this Market Report useful and we'd love to hear your feedback [here](#).

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You must not rely on the information in the report as an alternative to advice from an appropriately qualified professional. If you have any specific questions speak to your Business Gateway Advisor or consult an appropriately qualified professional.

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