

BRIDAL STYLISTS UNVEILED **BENCHMARKING AND UNDERSTANDING THE BRIDAL STYLIST COMMUNITY**

**PIVOT
POINT** RESEARCH

BEYOND THE
PONYTAIL

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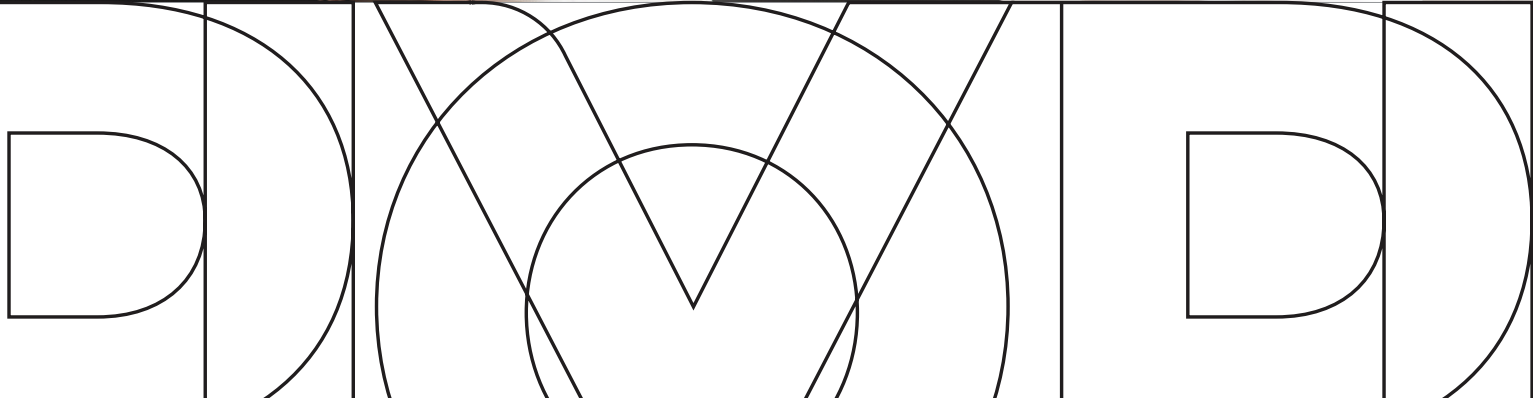




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Pivot Point's Partnership With Beyond the Ponytail

Pivot Point partnered with Beyond the Ponytail, the leading bridal stylist community, to conduct this research. Our collective goal was to better understand bridal stylists by benchmarking their community, creating a profile of their businesses, highlighting their key challenges and sharing their insights and advice.

Why This Research Matters

Bridal hair stylists represent a specialized and often underrepresented segment of the beauty industry. Understanding their career paths, business models, satisfaction, education preferences and tool usage enables industry professionals, educators and product developers to better support their growth and to help current stylists explore this community. This research intends to enhance their success and foster innovation in bridal styling.

Key Findings: The Post-Pandemic Wedding Surge

- **Friday and Sunday** weddings are now common.
- Clients understand that they must **book in-demand wedding stylists early**.

Key Findings: About Bridal Stylists

- Nearly all bridal hair stylists are **licensed cosmetologists**.
- Almost half have been working in bridal styling for **more than a decade**.
- The majority operate **independently** rather than as part of a team.

Key Findings: Their Businesses

- More than half say **bridal hair accounts for over 75%** of their business.
- The average bridal stylist works **44 weddings per year**.
- 78% reported being **very or somewhat satisfied** with their income as a bridal stylist.

Key Findings: Challenges and Goals

- The biggest challenge they face is **achieving work-life balance**.
- Their top career priority for the next year is **increasing their number of bookings**.

Key Findings: Education and Tools

- A substantial majority are **interested in specialized education**, with a preference for **live events**.
- Nearly all bridal stylists use **mannequins** for testing new styles, educational purposes and creating promotional images.
- **Quality** is by far the most important consideration when selecting a mannequin.

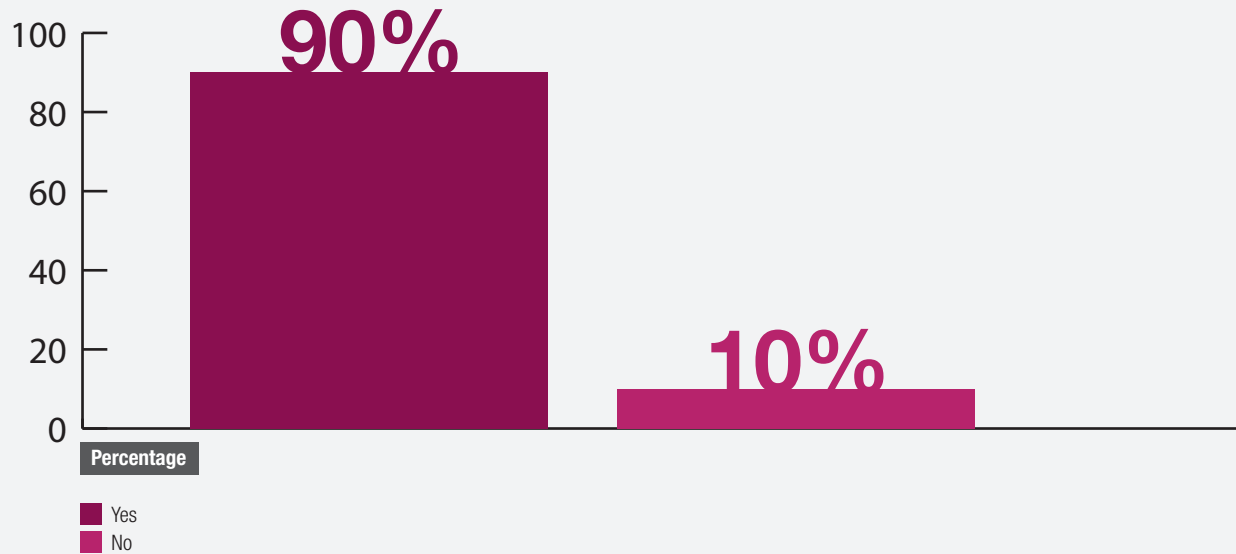
This research also includes a categorized Verbatim section, capturing authentic advice and insights from the bridal stylist community.

To provide a snapshot of the bridal stylist community and gain a deeper understanding of their businesses, challenges and needs, Pivot Point collaborated with the Beyond the Ponytail community to conduct a comprehensive survey, including responses from a national audience representing 236 active bridal stylists.

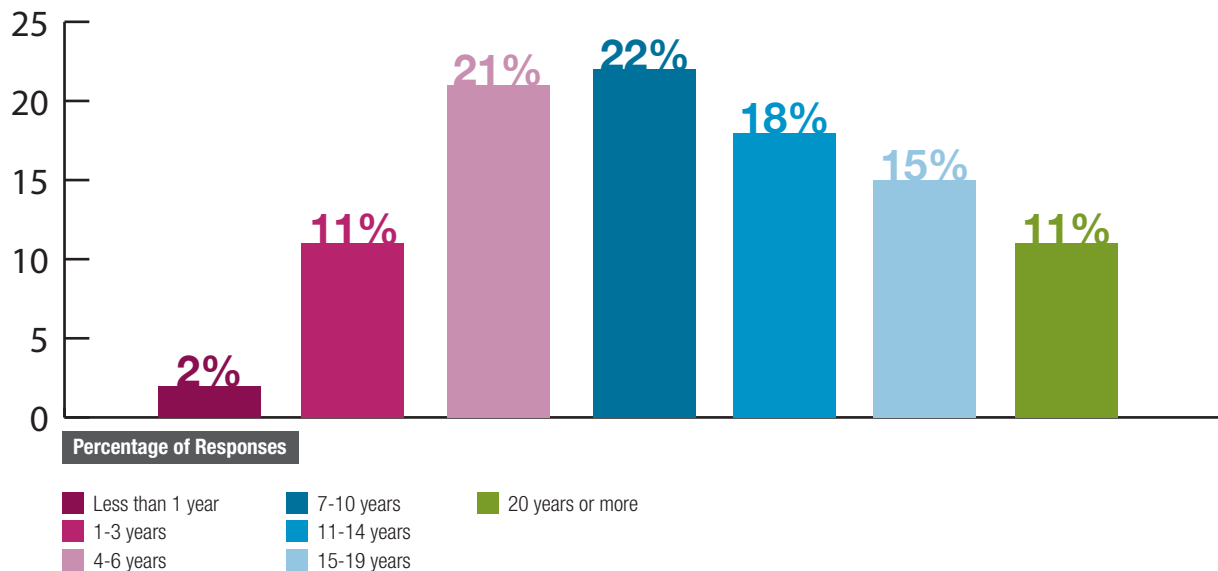
This study employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative data collection and analysis with qualitative insights gathered through open-ended responses. By combining structured survey responses with personal feedback from bridal stylists, we aimed to capture a holistic view of this community.



Question: Are you a licensed cosmetologist?

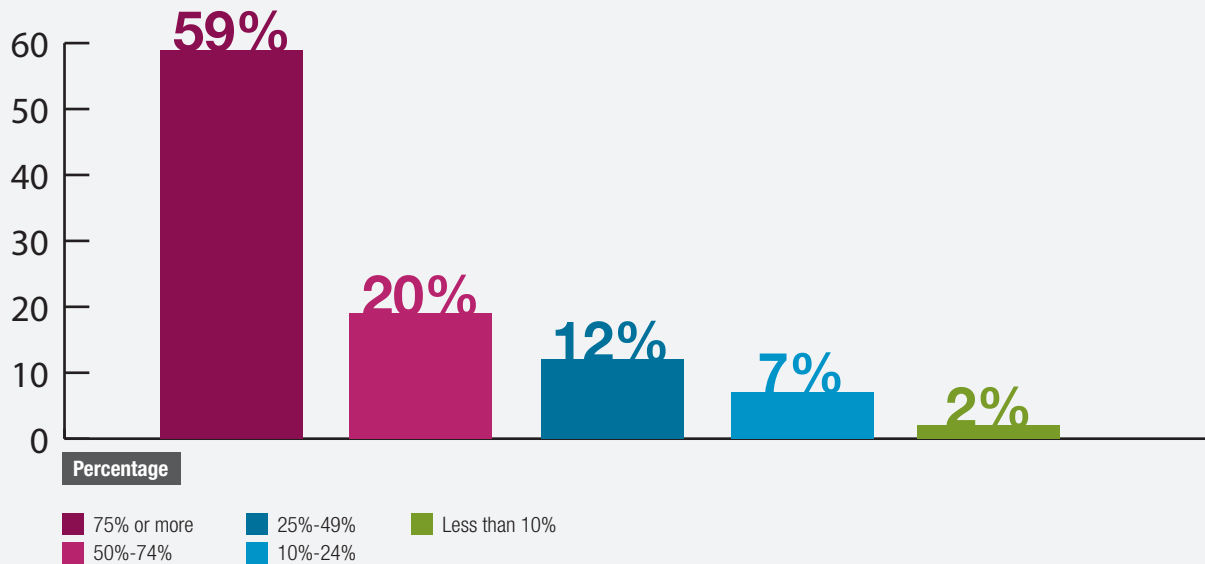


Question: How long have you been a professional bridal stylist?



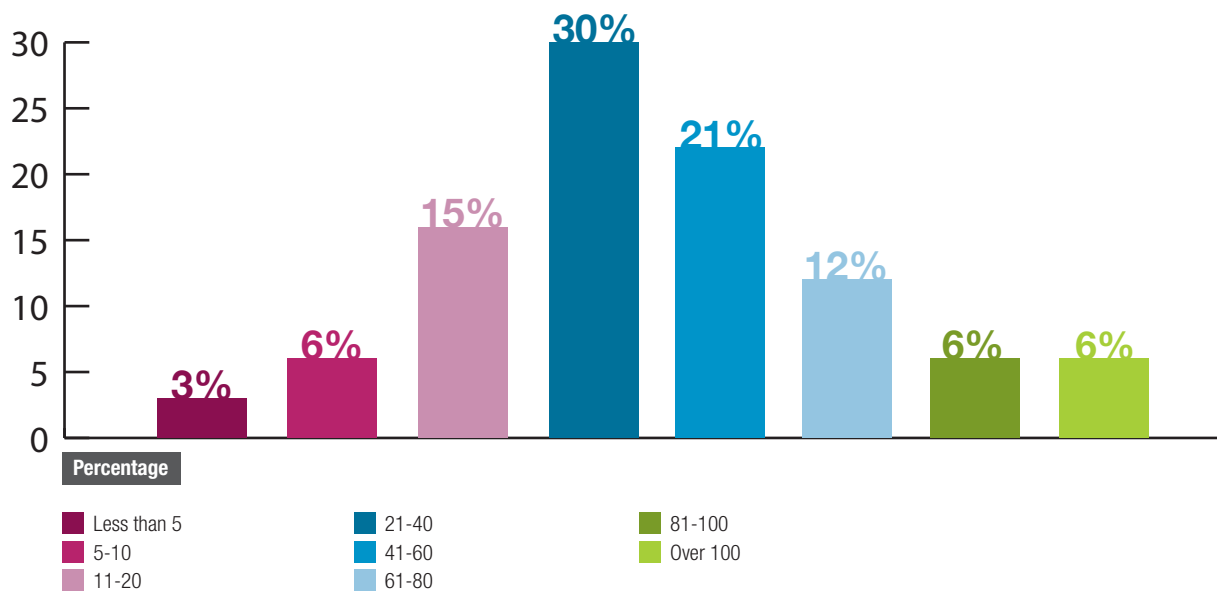
Bridal styling is often a career evolution rather than an entry point for stylists. Many bridal stylists start in traditional salon roles or as assistants before transitioning into bridal work later in their careers.

Question: What percentage of your business is focused on bridal hair?



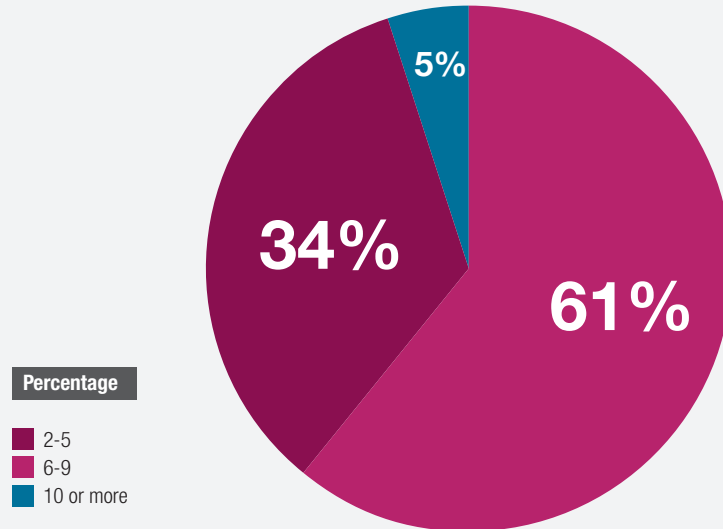
Over the past decade, largely influenced by social media—particularly Instagram—bridal styling has become a full-time profession rather than just a side hustle. Many stylists find their passion there, and an increasing number make it their full-time focus.

Question: On average, how many weddings do you work per year?



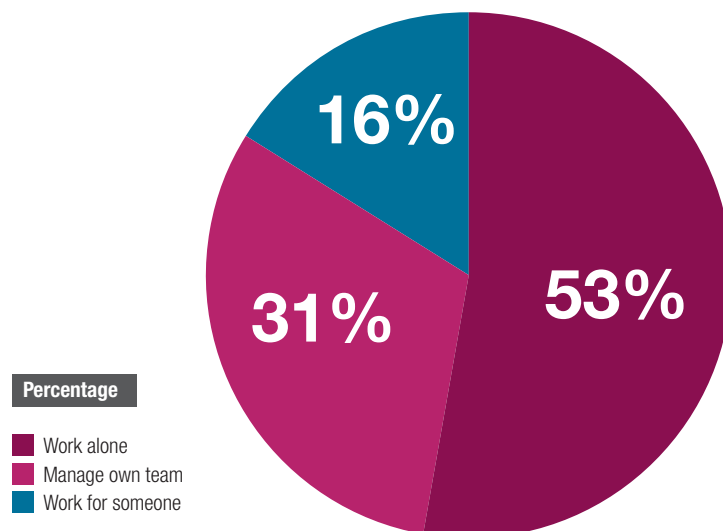
The average stylist handles 44 weddings per year. Many weddings were postponed during the pandemic, and the post-pandemic surge led to weddings being scheduled on non-traditional days, such as Fridays and Sundays. While the initial spike has stabilized, the trend of weekend-long bookings has remained strong, and bridal stylists often handle multiple weddings on a single weekend.

Question: How many bridal clients (bride and bridesmaids) do you typically serve per wedding?



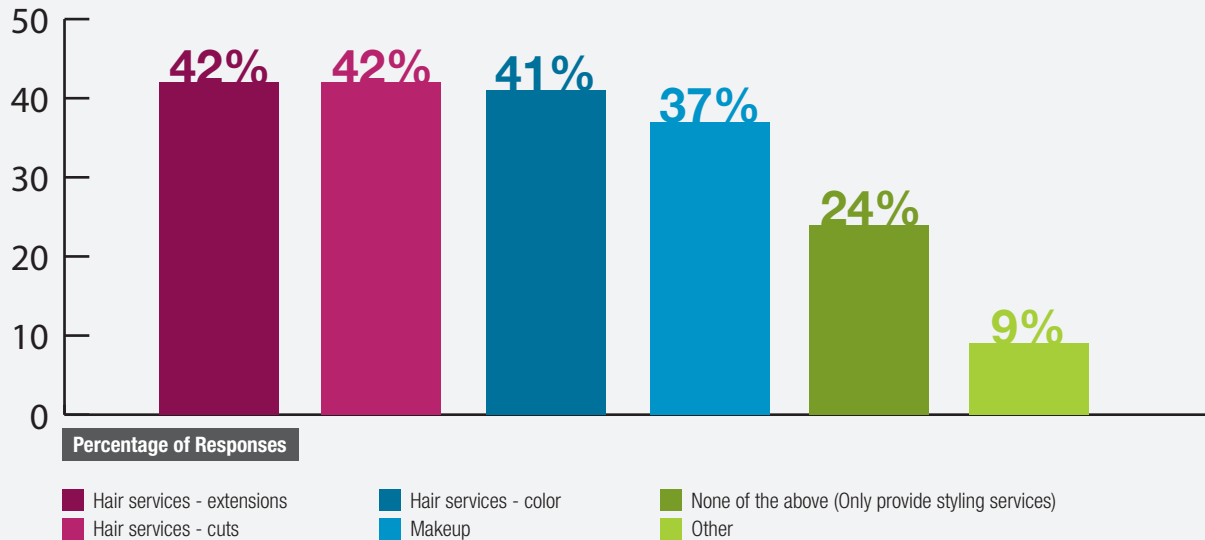
The sweet spot is between 6 and 9 bridal clients per wedding. The number of clients per wedding varies, with a post-pandemic surge in destination and micro weddings (2-5 per wedding). Anecdotally, stylists handling 10+ clients are more commonly found in the South.

Question: What best describes the structure of your bridal business?



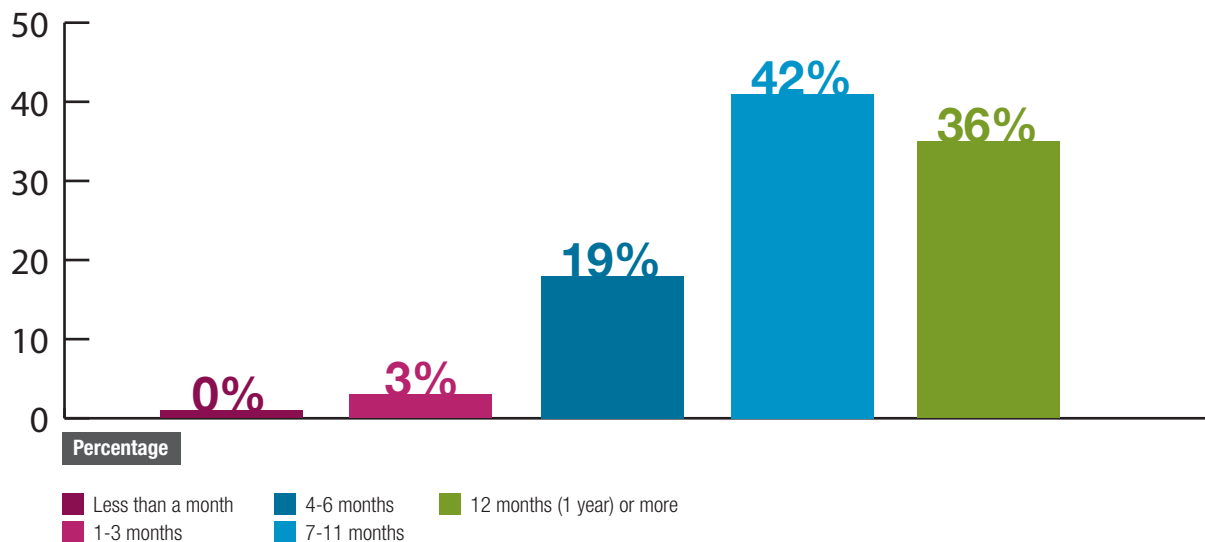
Half of all bridal stylists work alone. Bridal stylists often start solo but may create teams as their business grows. Many stylists gain experience by working in a team before launching independent businesses.

Question: Besides styling, do you offer any additional services to bridal clients? Select all that apply:



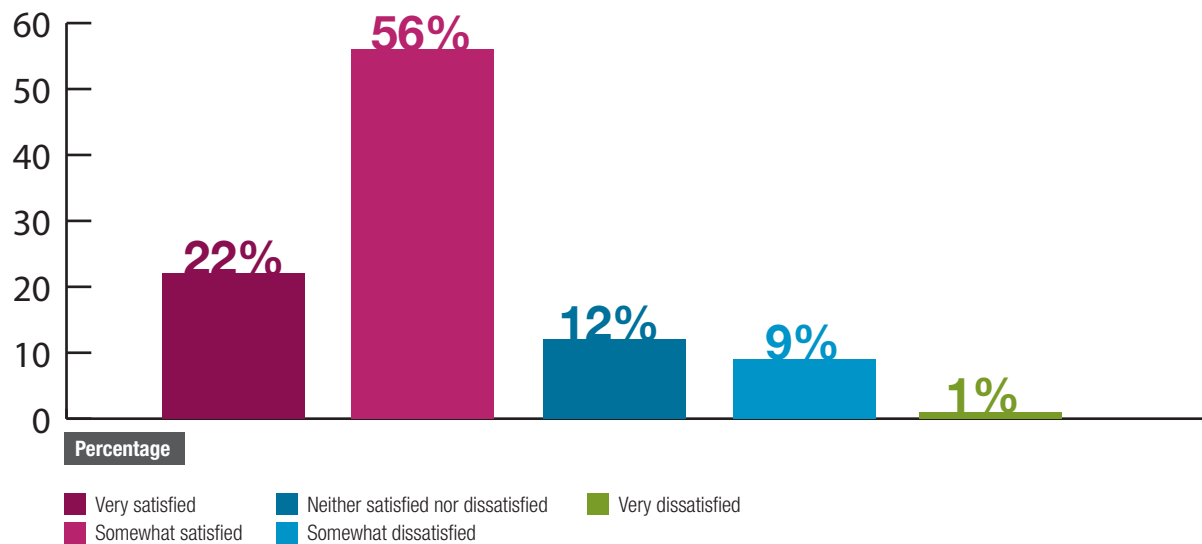
75% of all bridal stylists provide additional services to their clients. Hair extensions have become increasingly popular due to social media trends and evolving bridal styles like Hollywood/glam waves. Many bridal stylists still maintain a salon clientele for cut and color services, either because they haven't yet transitioned fully to bridal work or because they are loyal to their regular clients. Many offer both hair and makeup, which gives them a competitive advantage.

Question: How far in advance do bridal clients usually book your services?



77% of all clients book at least 7 months before the wedding. Due to the pandemic-induced surge, clients learned that top bridal stylists are in high demand and must be booked well in advance. While last-minute brides can still find services, they are typically accommodated by less in-demand professionals.

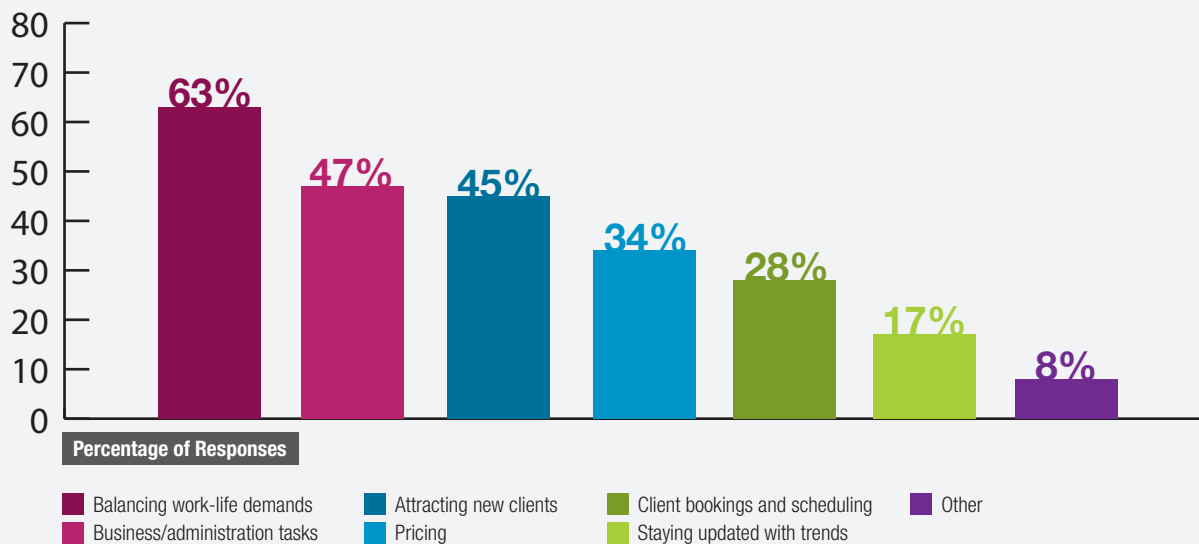
Question: To what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your income as a bridal stylist?



Over ¾ of bridal stylists are satisfied with their income. Bridal styling can be highly lucrative, with top professionals earning over \$1,500 daily. Additionally, compared to other beauty professionals (such as colorists), bridal stylists generally have minimal overhead costs, making it a financially rewarding career path.

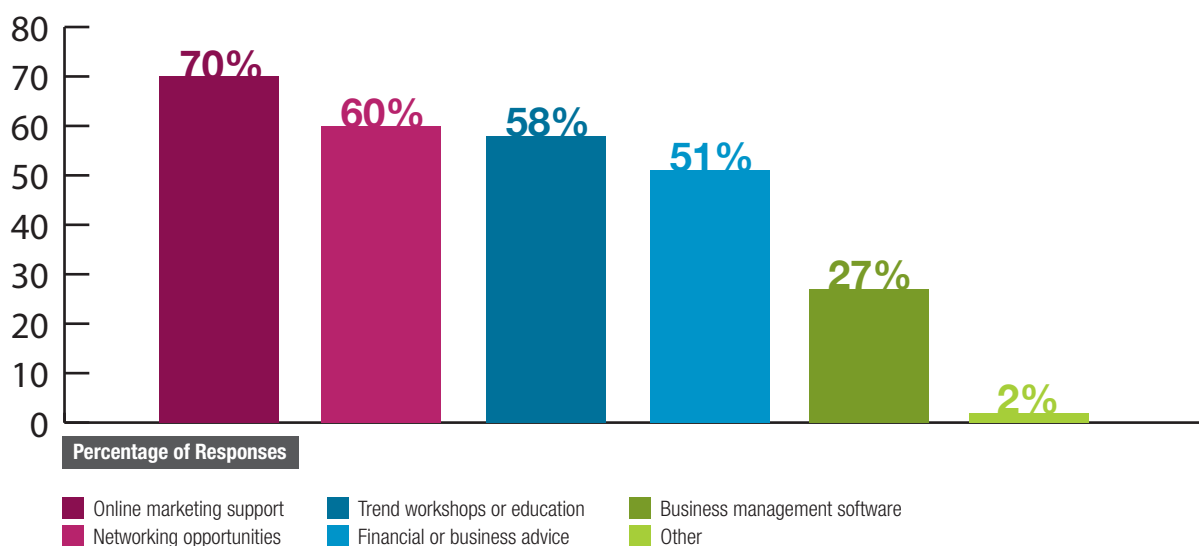


Question: What are the top three challenges you face within your bridal business? Select up to three:



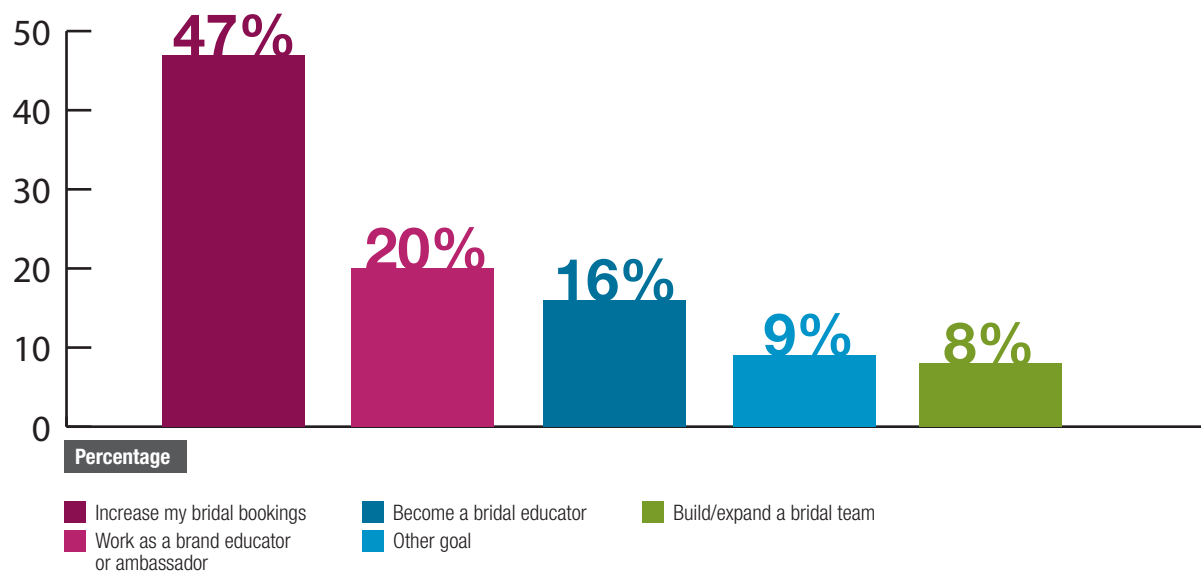
Balancing personal life and work is their most common challenge, especially as many stylists are parents. With more than half of bridal stylists working alone, they are challenged with managing their business and focusing on business-related social media presence to attract new clients.

Question: What tools or resources would help you grow your business? Select all that apply:



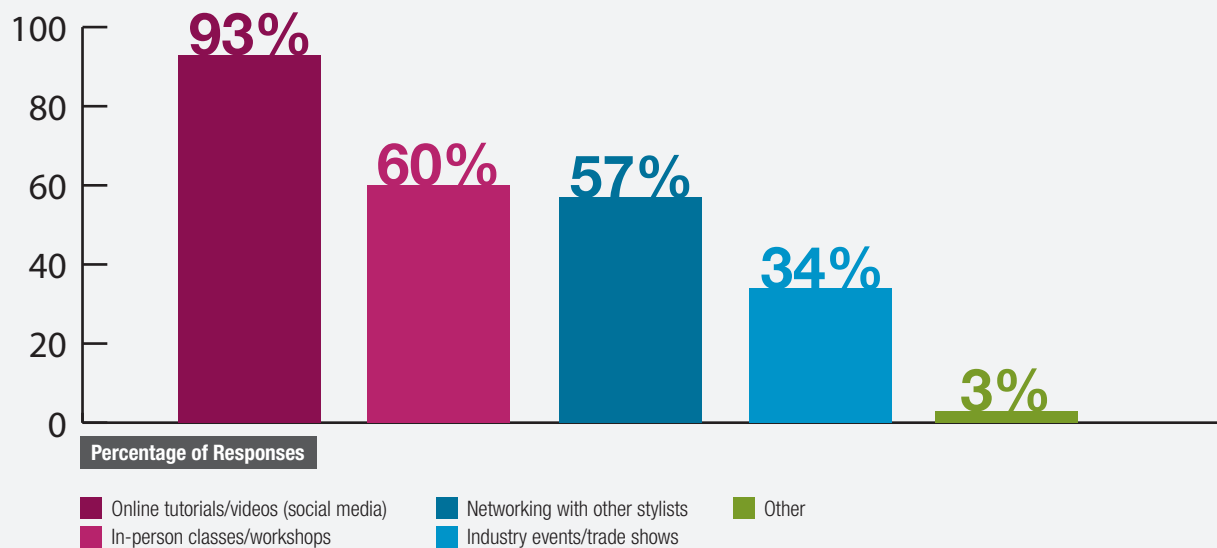
Online marketing support is their most needed resource, as a strong online presence is critical for securing bookings. In addition to social media, a professional website is very important, especially as parents—who can be less comfortable with social media—may be involved in the bridal stylist decision. Building trust with their client is also critical, and automated communication flows—relating to contracts, deposits and follow-ups—help develop confidence and streamline operations.

Question: What is your primary career goal for the next 1 year? Please select only one:



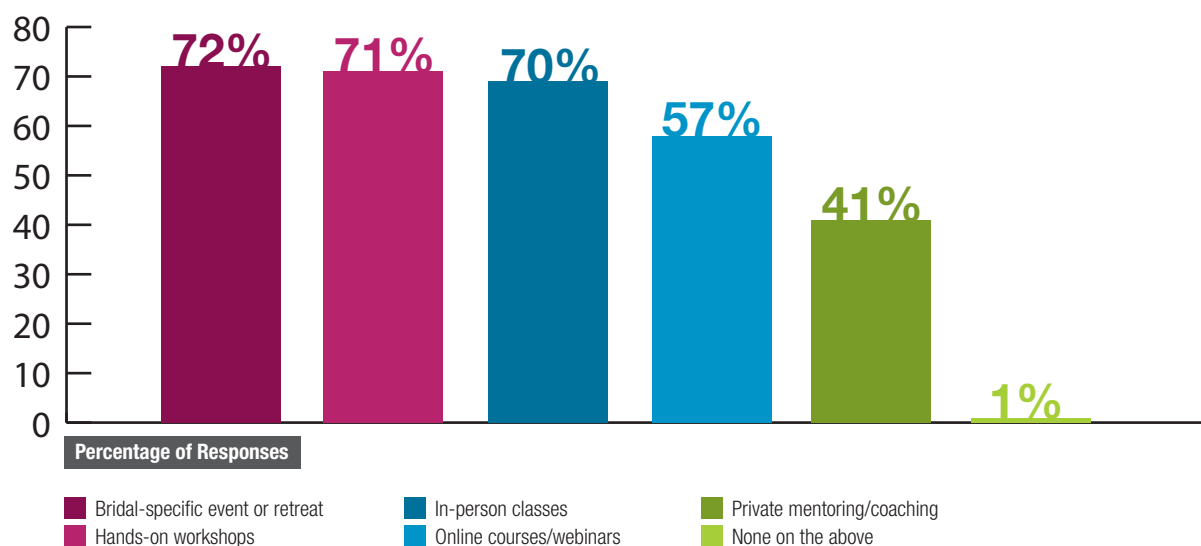
As with most beauty industry professionals, increasing bookings remains the top priority for bridal stylists. This is even more important for bridal stylists as they have “one-time” customers. As part of a very sharing and supportive community, some bridal stylists are also interested in becoming bridal or brand educators and ambassadors.

Question: How do you stay up to date on current bridal hair trends? Select all that apply:



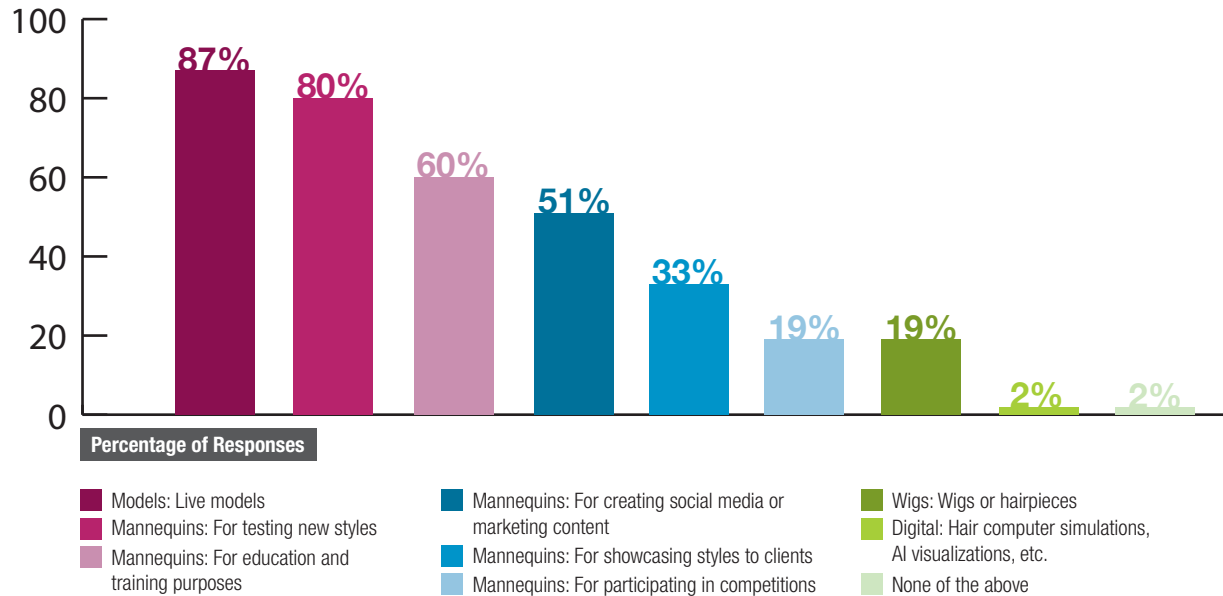
Bridal stylists are highly invested in education. Online education offers a convenient and affordable option. There is a strong interest in in-person events, with a preference for focused classes over general trade shows.

Question: If available, what additional bridal hair training or education would you be interested in purchasing, if any? Select all that apply:



Bridal stylists are focused on—and willing to pay for—education and opportunities to network with their community. It is important that they actively follow and understand styling trends, as showcasing their work online helps maintain relevance and attract clients.

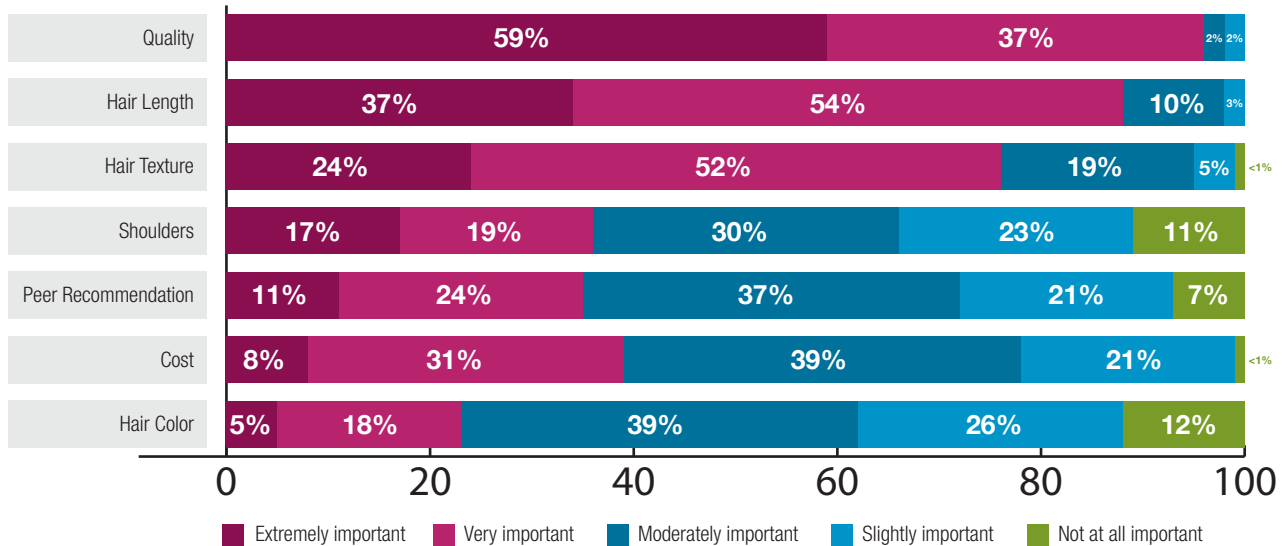
Question: What hair tools do you use in your bridal business? Select all that apply:



Mannequins are critical tools used by virtually all (84%) bridal stylists. On average, each bridal stylist uses mannequins for three different purposes—these may include testing new styles and refining techniques to support education and hands-on training. Additionally, mannequins play a key role in content creation, helping stylists produce social media and marketing materials that showcase their work and attract clients.

Live models (both clients and professionals) are commonly used for bridal trials and to develop promotional content. Wigs and hairpieces are much less prevalent and are primarily reserved for editorial work and competitions.

Question: Which of the following are important to you when purchasing a mannequin for your bridal business?



Bridal stylists overwhelmingly prioritize quality when selecting a mannequin, viewing it as a long-term investment rather than a cost-driven purchase. With durability and longevity in mind, they expect their mannequins to last for years and support their ongoing education, skill development and creative work.

Pivot Point Premium Series Mannequins, Kennedy, Kennedy, Riley, Kennedy and Adeline.



Client Challenges

- “Client retention: Keeping clients satisfied and loyal in a competitive industry.”
- “Managing customer expectations and providing personalized services.”

Education and Continuous Learning

- “Always invest in education—it’s the key to growth and longevity in this industry.”
- “Learning never stops! Stay curious, stay humble and always seek out new techniques.”
- “Take as many classes as possible; every opportunity to learn is an opportunity to improve.”
- “Find an educator who speaks your language and helps refine your skills.”
- “Staying updated on trends is essential—bridal styles evolve, and so should you.”
- “Keep pushing yourself to learn, even from those more experienced in the field.”
- “Your education is an investment in yourself and your future—prioritize it.”

Practice and Skill Development

- “Practice, practice and then practice some more! Repetition is what builds confidence and skill.”
- “Work on mannequins, models and different hair types—real experience is irreplaceable.”
- “Shadow experienced stylists whenever you can; you’ll learn more than you expect.”
- “Challenge yourself to try new styles, even those outside your comfort zone.”
- “Perfecting your technique takes time—be patient and consistent in your practice.”
- “Every head of hair is different; practice adapting your skills for any texture or length.”
- “Build muscle memory with consistent hands-on work—it will make styling effortless over time.”

Confidence and Mindset

- “Trust your artistry and set boundaries early—the right clients will appreciate your expertise.”
- “Stop comparing yourself to others—everyone’s journey is unique.”
- “Imposter syndrome is real, but don’t let it hold you back—just start!”
- “Mistakes are part of the process. Learn from them, grow and keep moving forward.”
- “Confidence comes from experience; put in the work and trust in your abilities.”
- “This industry is about patience, persistence and the ability to push through tough times.”

Business and Marketing

- “Attract your ideal clients by ensuring your branding aligns with your style and values.”
- “Social media is a powerful tool—post your work consistently and engage with your audience.”
- “A strong portfolio and website are essential—showcase your best work.”
- “Research pricing in your area and charge accordingly—don’t undervalue yourself.”
- “Build relationships with photographers, makeup artists and other vendors for cross-promotion.”
- “Networking is everything! Attend events, connect with others and put yourself out there.”
- “Invest in a good booking system early on to stay organized and professional.”

Client Relationships and Communication

- “Not every client is your ideal client, and that’s okay—know who you want to work with.”
- “Set clear boundaries and expectations from the start—this creates a smoother experience.”
- “Communication is key! Stay responsive and professional with your clients.”
- “Provide an experience, not just a hairstyle—make your brides feel valued.”
- “Be approachable, kind and professional—brides want to feel comfortable with you.”
- “Reliability and responsibility will set you apart—clients notice and appreciate it.”

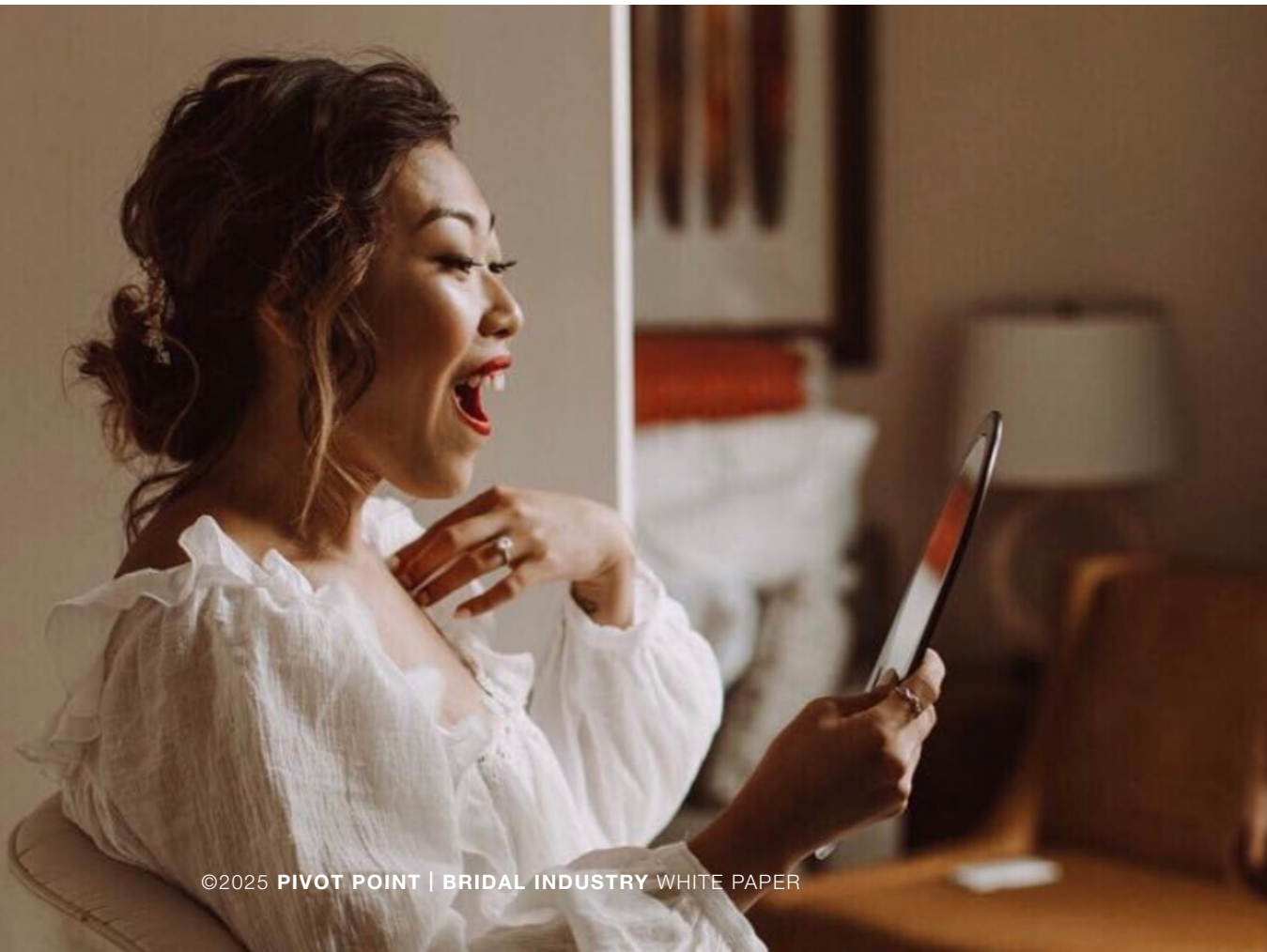
Industry Trends and Adaptability

- “Always stay updated on hair trends and new techniques.”
- “Experiment with new styles and learn to adapt to different hair textures.”
- “Understanding proper hair prep is crucial—it’s the foundation of a lasting style.”
- “Being versatile makes you stand out—learn how to cater to diverse client needs.”
- “The industry is constantly evolving—be willing to change and grow with it.”

Professionalism and Work Ethic

- “Be disciplined, consistent, and dedicated—success doesn’t happen overnight.”
- “Stay professional at all times—your reputation is your most valuable asset.”
- “Keep an open mind and learn from others; every stylist has something unique to offer.”
- “Take every opportunity to network, assist, and gain experience—it will pay off.”
- “Stay organized, plan ahead, and always be punctual—professionalism matters.”
- “Hard work, persistence, and a strong work ethic will take you far in this industry.”

Photo @kateannphotography Stylist @caitlynmeyermua



BEYOND ^{THE} PONYTAIL

Beyond the Ponytail is a global digital hair community giving hairstylists and consumers access to the best inspiration and education on the latest trends in all things styling.

Angela Cattaneo (Founder) is a visionary hairstylist, educator and entrepreneur with over 23 years in the hair industry. As the founder of Beyond the Ponytail, BTP Bridal and the Beyond the Ponytail Styling Awards, she has become a leader in the bridal beauty industry.

Beyond the salon, Angela educates and inspires, hosting nationwide networking events and curating platforms that highlight talented stylists worldwide. She supports wedding hairstylists and makeup artists through mentorship, in-person events and initiatives like the Bridal Artist Connection and Educator Masterclass.

Her impact grows with BTP Bridal's global bridal artist directory, connecting professionals with clients. The Beyond the Ponytail Styling Awards further cement her dedication to recognizing and uplifting bridal artists.

Angela's platforms provide resources, inspiration and opportunities:

- Social: [@beyondtheponytail](#) | [@btpbridal](#) | [@btpstylingawards](#) | [@angelabeyondtheponytail](#)
- Web: [beyondtheponytail.com](#) | [society.beyondtheponytail.com](#) | [stylingawards.beyondtheponytail.com](#)
- Contact: angela@beyondtheponytail.com

Angela continues redefining bridal hairstyling through her work, fostering a supportive community and inspiring the next generation of stylists.





[Pivot Point International](#) is a third-generation family business dedicated exclusively to the professional beauty industry. Our team includes over 30 professionals with industry-specific licenses, and we have extensive experience with beauty schools, salons, spas, barbershops, chains, brands and distributors.

Pivot Point offers original and third-party cosmetology, barbering, nails and esthetics education and content through a learning platform designed specifically for beauty professionals.

Pivot Point manufactures the industry's most diverse range of high-quality mannequins, all produced in our company-owned [SA 8000-certified](#) factory to meet stringent ethical and production standards. This includes a full range of [texture mannequins](#) and our versatile and eco-friendly [CAP SERIES](#) mannequins—designed for increased portability, reduced storage space and minimized landfill waste—and offering customizable hair and skin tone options.

Pivot Point is committed to supporting the industry and its professionals through charitable, cause-driven and educational activities and recognition programs, and has a strong focus on [ethical manufacturing](#), [diversity and inclusion](#) and [sustainability](#).

We are a proud founding member of [Beauty Changes Lives](#), and collaborate on the Honor Your Teacher recognition program, the Intercoiffure Student Contest and the Leo Passage Educator of the Year award.

We understand industry relationships and trends, ensuring your research objectives are met with actionable, real-world insights.

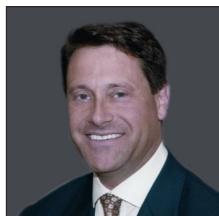
Whether your research is for internal intelligence or to support sales and marketing, we can help you explore all your research options. Knowing that quick turnaround is often a consideration, our industry relationships and experience help us provide you with the most time-effective solution.

We look forward to working with you!

INQUIRY FORM

pivot-point.com/research/

THE PIVOT POINT RESEARCH LEADERSHIP TEAM



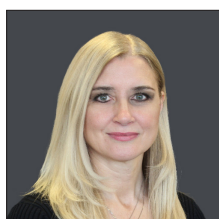
Steve Reiss
Strategic Marketing & Business Insights

15+ years providing custom research solutions to leading beauty industry groups, with a focus on leveraging research insights to create effective strategies supporting business goals.



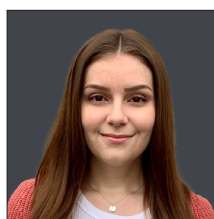
Sabrina Cason
Primary Research

Specializes in consumer-focused market research, leading and designing research methodology, execution and analysis that provides insight to drive business growth.



Vasiliki A. Stavrakis
Secondary Research

Specializes in analyzing and aggregating third-party and government data and regulatory, licensing and accrediting agency requirements to inform business decisions.



Christina Mooshil
Data Visualization

Specializes in combining analysis, design and storytelling to create visual data representations that help people understand and evaluate information more easily.