

The Event Experience Company: Making Dreams Come True

By Julie Workman

Published in the January 2017 edition of Pastelle magazine.

Some people dream of it all their lives. Some people dream of making it perfect for their children. Sooner or later, it happens for just about everyone.

It's your wedding, and, to quote the cliché, "It's the happiest day of your life."

Or at least it should be. The dream of a perfect wedding is different for everyone. No matter what you're dreaming of, chances are that Anthony Petersen and his team at The Event Experience Company can make it happen.

For more than ten years, Anthony (known to his clients as "Tony") and his team have been working with brides, couples, families and business partners to make the dream of a perfect wedding day come true. "We always start with a consultation," Petersen says. "We talk about the bride's vision for the day, about her wishlist, her guest list, the menu, and the overall atmosphere that she wants to create for her wedding."

"We talk about the budget right away, so that we can make sure our plans for the big day are realistic. Our clients are inviting us to be a part of one of the most important events in their lives, and I take that trust very seriously. I want the dream to come true for every family that it's our privilege to work with."

According to Kellie Duzan and her daughter Jessica Duzan Schuler, Tony and his team really can create a perfect day. "My parents have a beautiful property out in the country," Kellie said. "No one lives there; it's just a beautiful piece of land and an old barn that my dad fixed up so that our family always has a place to gather. When Jessica and John got engaged, she knew right away that she wanted to have her wedding there."

Jessica's vision for the day was to have an intimate ceremony in the morning, with just 50 or so family members, then to open the event to about 100 more guests for an "elegant, but not fussy" brunch at noon, followed by an afternoon of lawn games.

"We started talking with different vendors, and the first planner we talked to was less than enthusiastic about our non-traditional plan to have a "simply elegant" wedding in an old barn with minimal electricity. Then we talked with Tony and his team at The Event Experience."

"Their first reaction was excitement and unbridled enthusiasm at a chance to do something so completely different. They had lots of great ideas and were so helpful and responsive. The entire experience was fantastic."

The Event Experience showroom is on Morrissey Drive in Bloomington. "The showroom gives our clients a chance to see how their event will actually look," says Petersen. "They can sit in the chairs, touch the linens and lift the glasses, so there are no surprises on the big day. It takes away so much of the stress that can come along with planning a wedding. For example, when Jessica came into the showroom, she saw a table that happened to be set with exactly the blush-colored linen she'd been thinking of. She chose that one right away!"

Kellie Duzan says she couldn't have imagined a more perfect day for Jessica's wedding. "We did have a unique wedding plan in mind, and the excitement that Tony and his team had for helping us plan exactly what we wanted was the very best part of our Event Experience. For example, since we were having brunch followed by lawn games, we rented three of their putting greens for the afternoon. We rented a sound system from them, and Tony even worked with our caterer to make sure we had enough electricity and equipment to serve brunch for 150 guests. In a barn. They were just amazing."

"Everyone at The Event Experience was pleasant and easy to work with – they took a meeting every time we needed them, returned our calls right away, connected us with other vendors who were just as good, and most importantly, delivered on every promise to create a perfect wedding for Jessica and John."

Even Tony's business partners love to work with The Event Experience. Bobby Dicken is the owner of Xtreme Light and Sound and an ordained minister. He's known Tony since they were kids on a bowling league together, and like the two of them, their businesses have grown up together.

"Setting up The Event Experience showroom was a great business move for Tony," Bobby said. "I've been a DJ for 15 years now, so I work about 30 weddings every year, plus some corporate events, class reunions and even some high school dances and theatre productions."

"One of my lighting and sound rigs is set up in Tony's showroom, so we're able to cross-sell each other's products and services. I wouldn't do that for just anybody, but I know that The Event Experience team will always deliver for my clients. It's a great relationship: if my clients need pipe-and-drape services or a specific table setting, I arrange it with Tony. If his clients need sound and light services or a photo booth, he sets it up with me. It's a perfect arrangement for both our clients, too, because they can get just about everything they want while working with one point of contact."

Petersen's business partnerships were especially beneficial for Mary Schmidt and her daughter, Megan Schmidt Hucek. Megan got married in August and had her reception at The Marriott Hotel and Conference Center in uptown Normal.

The Event Experience worked with the Marriott's wedding planner to coordinate a perfect reception for 300 people *after* the ballroom was used for another event earlier in the day. "The Marriott has such a great relationship with Tony that they let him bring in all the furniture, tableware and even the extraordinary chandelier he found for us the day before the wedding because they knew they'd have to turn the room so quickly on Saturday," Mary said.

"It could have been a very stressful day. I can be very particular, and I wanted the reception to be perfect for Megan. After working with Tony and his team, I had complete confidence that he would follow through on every detail, and I was able to relax completely and enjoy the day. Tony gave me his personal cell phone number so I could text him any time with new ideas or questions or concerns, and he always got back to me right away."

"While we were still planning and making our final decisions, Tony arranged to bring one of the tables we were considering, plus the linens, chargers, china and everything to the Marriott so that we could see how it would look set up in the ballroom. I knew right then that we'd have nothing to worry about and the day would turn out just the way we planned it."

Creating the perfect reception was Mary's dream for her daughter, so she took the lead on making sure the ballroom was perfect, working with Tony, the Marriott staff and Forget-Me-Not Flowers to coordinate and deliver a dream setting for the reception. Megan worked on other the elements of the reception that were especially important to her, like hiring the perfect photographer and videographer.

When asked about the best part of the day, Mary Schmidt naturally says that it was seeing her beautiful daughter walk down the aisle. "But aside from that," she continues, "with the months of planning and working on one thing with one vendor and the next thing with another, I didn't even stop to consider what the whole room would look like when everything came together."

"The first time my husband and I walked into the ballroom and saw everything set up, we were both just stunned. Speechless. It was everything Megan wanted, and everything I'd dreamed of. From the extra sparkle that our special-request chandelier provided to the elegant draping, perfect chairs, linens, and chargers right down to the simple yet sophisticated, unique floral arrangements on each table, no detail had been overlooked, and the room was absolutely stunning."

By all accounts, working with The Event Experience is an experience like no other. Tony's clients offer rave reviews about everything from the team who came to set up the huge tent at the wedding on the farm to the stunning design and set up of the most elegant ballroom in town. There's no question that The Event Experience delivers as promised and will do everything in their power to make sure that your event is exactly what you want it to be.

"We make every effort to make our clients' dream of the perfect day come true. High season for weddings here in central Illinois is from around May to October, and obviously, the more time we have to plan, the better. I start working with most clients 6-12 months before the big day, but depending on their needs and our availability, it doesn't always take that long," Petersen said. "When you choose The Event Experience, you're getting so much more than a guy who makes sure the tent gets set up and the chairs all match. We do our best to make every event an extraordinary experience, and to make dreams come true for our clients."

If you or someone you know is planning a wedding, a reunion, or a corporate event, you owe it to your guests to talk with Anthony Petersen and his team at The Event Experience. Call today to book your 2017 event.

The Event Experience Company is open from 9-5 Monday through Friday at 1815 Morrissey Drive in Bloomington. Visit us anytime at www.eventexperiencecompany.com, find us on Facebook, or call 309.661.6500.

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