

Wedding service providers seek silver lining amid Covid-19

By Sharina Ahmad | 3 hours ago | [Enterprise](#), [Featured](#), [Mainstream](#)



By Sharina Ahmad

WEDDING service providers across the spectrum have had their livelihoods disrupted by the Covid-19 crisis.

With the movement control order set to be totally lifted on June 9, only small solemnisation ceremonies are allowed, as questions abound as to how weddings will look like in the “new normal.”

The situation is fluid, an industry source said, as mass gatherings had been prohibited at the moment.

“We have to cope with the new norm and nobody seems to know what is going to happen in the future. We don’t want the virus to continue to spread when an event like a wedding takes place.

“As we are aware, mass gatherings such as Friday prayers, religious gatherings and conferences are not allowed. However, we allow a small solemnisation ceremony with less than 20 people or it can be done via online and streamed live on social media for loved ones to witness,” he told **FocusM**.

Association of Wedding Professionals (AWP) president Leticia Hsu said the wedding industry had been directly impacted by the Covid-19, much like the hospitality industry, with mass gatherings on a sudden halt and an uncertain future, hence wedding organisers and function suppliers are at a loss.

“Some categories are able to adapt to virtual weddings and e-commerce, but sadly some will have to evolve into an entirely different food chain,” she said.

A bridal house founder who only wanted to be known as Maria said there has been a drastic drop in bookings during the pandemic. “Many of my customers had made advance payments and decided to postpone the weddings. Hence, I suffered losses of nearly RM500,000. This has been a massive loss for me since I started my business in 2010,” she said.

Photographer M Morgan had committed to a wedding in Penang that was slated for late March when many Malaysians were already affected by the pandemic and worsened by the movement control order (MCO). “I had to fly from Kuala Lumpur to Penang with five others,” he said. “Because of the booking, I had to be ready, willing and able to perform my duties - otherwise I have to return all payments.” After his flight touched down, Morgan got a call from the client telling him the wedding had been cancelled.

Moving forward, AWP’s Hsu said the post-pandemic period would see a shift in wedding trends. “We predict couples will opt for a more intimate guest list with venues probably imposing a minimum space requirement. Couples who have a bigger guest list and friends from overseas may also opt for virtual wedding sites and online platforms to share their celebrations,” she said.

She added that at a time when everyone is tested and pushed to the limit, the global wedding industry should band together to exchange ideas, collaborate and cooperate.

“We see unlikely alliances come together and collaboration across different industries; this is perhaps the only silver lining in this time of uncertainty.

“With a more proactive approach to the situation, everyone should think outside the box and try to quickly evolve to avoid the entire industry collapsing,” Hsu said.
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