

Thirteen Questions You Should Ask Your Photo Booth Professional

Photo booths continue to be a popular addition to any special event whether it's a Wedding, Sweet 16, Senior Ball, Junior Prom, Fund Raising Event or High School Reunion. One side effect of this surge in popularity is a wider selection of services and price ranges for you the consumer but with it, it brings an increase in less reputable companies looking for a quick buck.

So how do you know which photo booth professional you should work with? Which one will deliver the quality you expect at a price that makes sense? Keep in mind price should **NOT** be the only selection criteria you use. Quite often a price is cheap for a reason. Instead consider the **VALUE** you get for your dollar.

Do a little homework. You'll get much more out of a meeting or conversation with a prospective photo booth supplier if you do a little research first. Spend some quality time with Google or talking to friends. Wedding websites, local directories (including Google I local) and related party planning sites can be a great starting place. This way when you meet with a photo booth professional you'll be able to ask better questions and have an idea of what to look for.

After your research is complete narrow the list to 3-5 companies and then contact each one by phone or email. As you go through this part of the process take note of a couple of things.

- If you leave a message how long does it take them to return your call? (Side note, what does their voice mail greeting sound like? Friendly, stodgy?)
- If you contact a company via email how long does it take them to respond?
- How complete is any quote they may provide you? Is it just a price for a set period of time (3 or 4 hours) or does it tell you what's included?

These things, while simple, may give you an early indication of the level and quality of customer service you can expect.

When you contact a company here are some questions you should ask.

1. **Is my date available?** Sounds silly but this is the first thing you should ask. If they are not available there is no point in continuing. Right?
2. **How long have you been in business?** Look for a company that has been around at least one year. If less than one year ask if you can contact some of their past customers as a reference.
3. **Do you use a contract?** A contract is designed to protect both you and the wedding professional. Don't settle for a verbal agreement, insist on something in writing.
4. **Are you insured? How much insurance do you carry?** This protects you in case an unfortunate accident should occur on your wedding day. It's also a sign that this is a reputable business; since most "fly by night" operations don't invest in insurance.

5. **What style of photo booth do you have?** Is it an “open air booth” pipe and drape or homemade booth? Is it fully enclosed offering your guests privacy so they can let loose?
6. **How many people can you fit in your photo booth?** Many booths can only accommodate 2-4 people. This can result in longer lines of people waiting to use the photo booth instead of actually using it.
7. **How many reprints do you offer on site?** A great photo booth company should provide a copy of the photos to every person in the booth.
8. **Do you offer custom photo layouts?** Does the vendor only offer photo strips or are other layouts available? Will they try to match the colors in your wedding?
9. **What kind of equipment do you use?** Professional photo booth companies should use professional grade cameras and dye sublimation photo printers. If a potential vendor uses a webcam or ink jet/laser printer **run away and run fast.**
10. **What are your prices/packages?**
Price is often relative, especially when you factor in experience, reputation and expert skill. Generally, the most talented professionals have a higher price tag because they are worth it.
11. **What specifically is included in each price/package?**
Because packages often vary, it's likely that you won't be able to compare one vendor exactly to the next without doing a little figuring. The lowest cost isn't necessarily the best deal; some higher quotes include services that you have to pay extra for in other packages. Make sure you take this into account. Look for all-inclusive pricing.
12. **How much is the deposit? When is the balance due?** Most vendors will require a deposit to secure you date, this can vary anywhere from \$100 up. Likewise some may require the balance is paid 7 days or more in advance of the event date.
13. **What do you need from me/us to get the process started?** If you provide your selected vendor with the information they need to create a contract, design the photo layout etc the process should be very easy and straightforward.

Download our free Excel tracking sheet **Photo Booth Vendor Check List** to help you keep track of all this information on one easy to remember form.