Engaged? Plan the perfect wedding registry

(StatePoint) For recently engaged couples this is the time to get everything you ever wanted. Whether you're starting from scratch, upgrading, expanding or replacing, the goal is to turn a whole bunch of mismatched mine and yours into a lifetime of ours.

"There are so many details involved in making sure you get exactly what you need and want, but it doesn't have to be stressful," says Audrey Stavish, wedding and gift registry expert at Bed Bath & Beyond. "Consulting a professional can make the registry process stress-free and even fun."

Stavish is offering some helpful hints to plan the perfect wedding registry:

• Plan Ahead: Start a wedding registry as soon as you say yes, to give guests plenty of time. Where you register is important. Ask friends, family and co-workers about their experiences. Opt for convenience and great customer service. Choose a store that has locations nationwide and a website, making it easy for you and your guests.

• Seek Help: It's easy to get overwhelmed with planning a wedding. That's why couples rely on the advice of professionals -- from stylists to florists to caterers. Don't forget the registry expert! Also, take advantage of complimentary wedding planning tools available on your registry website to consolidate all your wedding information in one place. A site like www.bedbathandbeyond.com for example, has features that help you budget your wedding, manage your guest list, and arrange your seating chart.

• Visit a Store: It`s in your best interest to visit a store and talk with an expert consultant who can help you with your gift selections and share great tips, like what cookware you will need to prepare your favorite dish. It's important to touch the towels, hold the flatware, and see everything in person. Most couples go into the stores many times and also update their registries online more than once.

• Dream big: A good formula is to register for two-to-three items for each guest invited to the wedding. Friends and family will rely on the registry for your engagement party, shower and holidays. And guests will appreciate having lots of choices in a wide range of prices and categories.

• Let Your Friends Know: A complete wedding stationery ensemble helps you inform your guests about every detail of your wedding -- from asking guests to save your wedding date to thanking them for wedding gifts. Visit www.bedbathandbeyond.com and click on "personalized invitations" to visit their online-only stationery store.

Planning a perfect wedding is every couple's dream. But your wedding is just the first day of your marriage. Your registry, however, will impact your daily life for years to come. So be sure you plan it perfectly.

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