



# The Influence of Social Media and Influencers on Preferences and Trends in the Wedding Dress Industry

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## Abstract

*This study presents the methodology that analyzes how social media and the phenomenon of influencers transform consumer preferences and set the direction of fashion trends within the wedding fashion segment. The aim of the research is to identify and theoretically deconstruct the mechanisms of this influence, to analyze the evolution of wedding gown selection models among brides, and to determine the role of visual content and user experience in the online environment as factors that accelerate trend cycles and entrench new aesthetic standards. In addition, attention is given to the evaluation of adaptive marketing strategies employed by brands in the bridal attire industry, which focus on integrating innovative digital tools and collaborating with key opinion leaders to achieve a competitive advantage and maintain relevance amid a dynamically changing sociocultural landscape. The results demonstrate that social media constitute a dominant factor in constructing contemporary aesthetic norms, contribute to the intensification of trend-update cycles, and heighten demands for authenticity and personalization in wedding gown selection. In conclusion, the strategic necessity for market participants to develop collaborations with influencers and to implement advanced digital marketing solutions is emphasized, as this not only enables adaptation to the challenges of the digital era but also fosters the formation of sustainable long-term competitiveness.*

**Keywords:** Social Media, Influencers, Wedding Fashion, Wedding Gowns, Consumer Preferences, Trends, Digital Marketing, Fashion Industry.

## INTRODUCTION

Quantitative studies demonstrate that social platforms have firmly entered the practice of preparing for wedding celebrations: statistical data indicate that approximately three-quarters of newlyweds consult digital resources to substantiate at least one key decision related to the ceremony. This points to a profound transformation of traditional planning mechanisms: visual content, expert recommendations, and reviews available on social networks become significant guides for couples when selecting stylistic concepts, service providers, and event formatting, as confirmed by the results of the relevant study [1]. Moreover, nearly half of soon-to-be spouses (49.5 %) actively use TikTok as a source of inspiration for wedding planning, indicating the growing role of short-form videos and viral content in this segment [1]. In addition, forecasts suggest that the global wedding services market may reach a volume of USD 565 billion by 2033, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 12.32 % from 2023 [2]. The market for wedding attire itself, according to one analytical forecast, will exceed USD 80 billion by 2029 [3], while another projection

estimates it will reach USD 35.78 billion by 2030 at a CAGR of 9.05 % [4], underscoring the industry's economic potential and the scale of the digital factor's influence.

**The aim** of the article is to analyze the impact of social networks and influencers on the formation of consumer preferences and current trends in the bridal gown industry.

**The scientific novelty** of the study consists in a comprehensive evaluation of the extent and nature of the influence of various social platforms and categories of influencers on the process of selecting a bridal gown and on the dynamics of fashion cycles, based on recent empirical data from the indicated years, as well as in the conceptualization of these processes within the framework of contemporary theories of consumer behavior and fashion mediatization.

**The author's hypothesis** posits that social networks and influencers not only serve as the dominant factor in shaping the preferences of modern brides regarding bridal gowns but also accelerate the cycles of trend changes.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

For the purpose of achieving the stated objective and testing

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the proposed hypothesis, an analysis of a wide range of sources was conducted. The core of the source base comprised scientific publications, analytical reports by leading research firms, publications in industry journals, and up-to-date data presented on authoritative internet resources and news platforms specializing in the fashion, marketing, and wedding services industries. Sources concerning the influence of social media and influencers on the wedding dress sector may be divided into three groups: market reports and forecasts; studies of social platform trends and consumer behavior; and academic works addressing influencer marketing and ethical considerations.

Market reports include Sara Does SEO [1], Spherical Insights [2], The Business Research Company [3], ResearchAndMarkets.com [4], Business Wire [11], SYVO [13], and Yung Q. [15]. These sources assess the scale of the wedding services and wedding dress market, forecast growth through 2033, and examine the impact of digital channels on consumer behavior.

Reports focused on social platform trends are represented by Quijada S. [7], Hitched [8], Pinterest Newsroom [9], Parade Home and Garden [10], and French Wedding Suppliers [12] (the latter partially overlapping with the first group). These sources consider the particularities arising in brides' behavior on social media.

Academic research includes RMIT University [5], Jones L.C., Anitsal I., and Anitsal M.M. [6], and Alfazeena A. et al. [14]. RMIT University [5] analyzes the legal and ethical risks of influencer marketing, proposing a responsibility assessment model for the brand–influencer–platform contract. Jones L.C., Anitsal I., and Anitsal M.M. [6] investigate brides' decisions between online and offline boutiques by combining survey results with content analysis of customer reviews. Alfazeena A. et al. [14] applied rhizomatic analysis to identify nonlinear influence networks in social media, using NVivo to code posts and interviews.

Thus, despite the broad coverage of publications, the literature contains contradictions in different methods and approaches between quantitative market reports (traffic growth, conversion rates, advertising ROI) and qualitative studies (identity, rhizomatic networks). Market forecasts suggest an increased role for social media in segmentation, whereas Quijada S. [7] emphasizes qualitative changes in brides' behavior. A discrepancy is also noted in the level of detail regarding platforms: some works generalize “digital channels” [11], while others focus on specific platforms without comparing them. This creates a gap between “what is happening” and “why” in the development of trends.

### RESULTS

Analysis of empirical data incontrovertibly demonstrates the pervasive and multifaceted influence of social media and influencers on consumer preferences and trends within the wedding dress industry. Modern platforms oriented toward

visual content—primarily Instagram and Pinterest—have assumed leading positions as sources of inspiration for prospective couples. According to analytical studies, approximately 75% of engaged couples prioritize decisions inspired by social media posts [1]. Pinterest functions as a global digital mood board platform, where the volume and structure of user queries are closely intertwined with prevailing stylistic trends: from “old money” luxury [1, 11] to the revival of vintage silhouettes that echo the aesthetics of previous eras [9, 10]. Instagram, in turn, delivers an intense visual stream (posts, Stories, Reels) through which influencers shape and direct preferences, revealing not only completed looks but also the “behind-the-scenes” practices of brands and designers—an aspect especially valued by a contemporary audience seeking authenticity [7].

The exponential rise of social media influence, particularly TikTok (utilized by nearly half of newlyweds for inspiration searches [1]), and the platform's recommendation algorithm have significantly accelerated formerly lengthy cycles of transformation within bridal fashion. This phenomenon has given rise to “micro-trends”—short-lived yet powerful surges of interest in specific details, such as how gowns with dramatic voluminous sleeves or pearl-embellished veils rapidly gain popularity [12]. The immediacy of the online environment compels fashion houses and retail networks to demonstrate unprecedented flexibility, responding instantly to shifting consumer demands. By 2025, viewed through the lens of social media, lace motifs, lavishly embellished elements, miniature '90s-inspired silhouettes, Basque lines, as well as corsets and mini-dresses, have strengthened their positions. Within the veil segment, there has been an explosive increase in interest in mantillas—search queries for which have risen by 640% [9, 8].

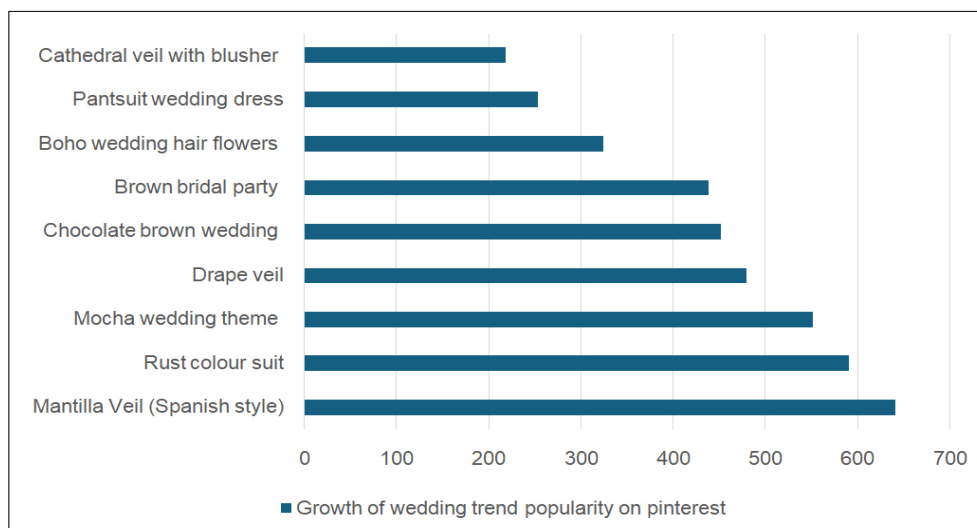
Influencers have become an indispensable component of marketing strategies in the wedding sector, combining the roles of both major bloggers and niche micro-creators whose content exhibits a high degree of credibility and authenticity. The word-of-mouth effect in the digital environment often surpasses traditional advertising techniques by generating a sense of personal recommendation. At the same time, researchers emphasize that trust in opinion leaders is associated with ethical dilemmas, which intensifies questions regarding the transparency of relationships among the brand, the influencer, and the audience [5]. For contemporary brides, influencers often serve as “virtual friends” whose aesthetic choices and value orientations are perceived as current and relevant.

Digital platforms not only transmit global fashion trends but also reinforce the desire for individualization. The high degree of visual saturation and the accessibility of diverse styles contribute to brides seeking ways to personalize their appearance, as evidenced by an increased interest in bespoke tailoring and customization of garments [6, 13]. Parallel to this, there is a growing trend toward sustainability: the

number of searches related to “green” wedding dresses has steadily increased, and related hashtags have accumulated millions of views, reflecting the demand for conscious consumption [13]. Influencers promoting principles of sustainable development and “slow fashion” act as catalysts for this direction, creating competitive advantages for

brands that focus on ethical production and the rational use of resources [6].

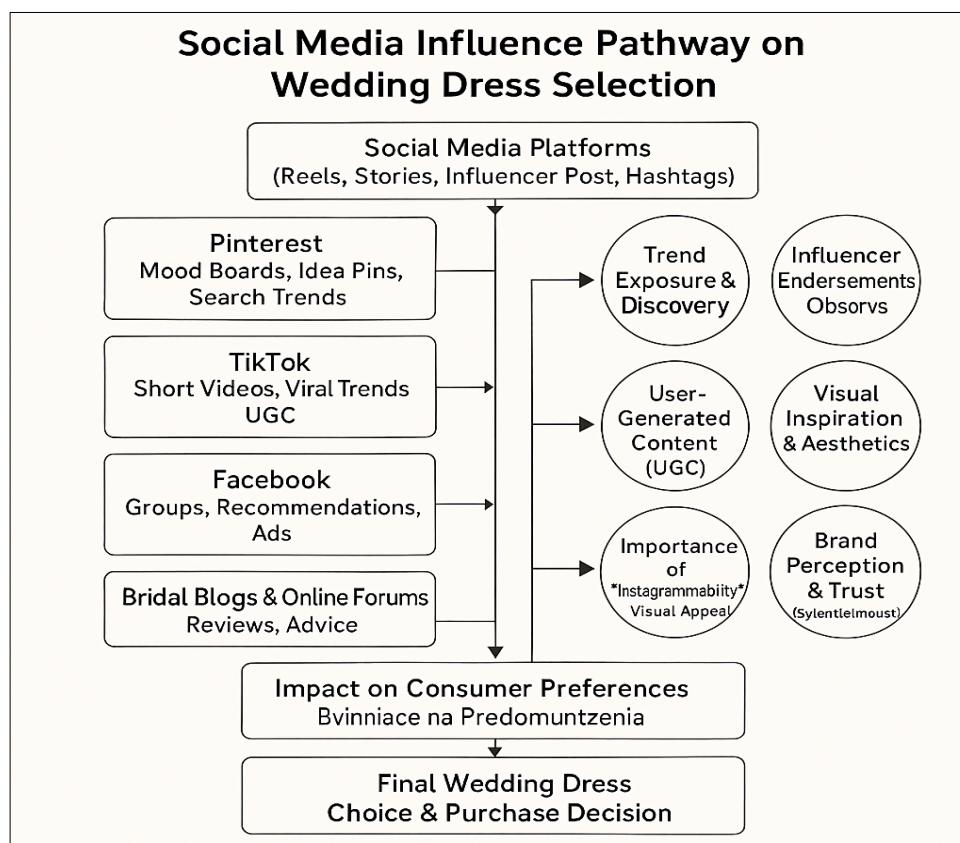
To comprehensively illustrate the scale of social media’s impact and the evolution of trends, Figure 1 below presents the trend in popularity of wedding-related search queries on Pinterest.



**Fig.1.** Dynamics of popularity of search queries for wedding trends on Pinterest (compiled by the author based on the analysis of [9]).

The data clearly show a surge of interest in specific veil styles, color palettes (particularly brown and rust tones), and non-traditional outfits such as trouser suits [9].

Next, Figure 2 will present a schematic representation of the influence of social media on the choice of a wedding dress.



**Fig.2.** The scheme of the influence of social networks on the choice of a wedding dress (compiled by the author based on the analysis [6, 14]).

As shown, the diagram in Figure 2 illustrates the pathway by which social media influences the process of selecting a wedding dress. The first level identifies the key platforms. The second level outlines the mechanisms through which these platforms exert their influence (exposure to trends, influencer recommendations, user-generated content, visual inspiration, social proof). The third level demonstrates the shifts in consumer preferences under this influence (the

drive for personalization, environmental consciousness, accelerated trend cycles, the importance of visual appeal for social media, brand perception). The diagram culminates in the final decision—choosing and purchasing a wedding dress.

Table 1 then presents the wedding trends along with the influence that social media has exerted on their formation.

**Table 1.** Key wedding trends of 2025 and their relation to social networks (compiled by the author based on the analysis [6, 8, 9, 13, 15]).

Trend	Description	Social Media Manifestation (Examples)
Return of Lace	Active use of lace details, 3D appliqués, contemporary interpretations	Instagram posts by designers (Wona Concept, Eva Lendel); Pinterest boards featuring lace dresses
1990s-Style Dresses	Minimalist silhouettes, slip dresses, vintage Vera Wang models	TikTok videos with #90sweddingdress; Pinterest searches for “90s slip wedding dress”
Personalized Details	Embroidery, custom elements, detachable features (sleeves, trains)	Instagram Stories from boutiques showcasing customization; posts by brides highlighting unique dress details
Sustainable Fashion	Eco-friendly fabrics, vintage pieces, dress rental, ethical production	Hashtags #sustainablebride, #ecowedding on TikTok and Instagram; posts by influencers about ethical brands
“Quiet Luxury” / “Old Money”	Elegant restraint, high-quality fabrics, classic silhouettes	Pinterest boards titled “Quiet Luxury Wedding”; Instagram influencers demonstrating understated looks
Brown and Earthy Tones	Chocolate, mocha, terracotta colors in attire and décor	Increase in Pinterest searches for “chocolate brown wedding” (+451%), “mocha wedding theme” (+551%)
Unusual and Statement Veils	Mantilla veils, draped veils, veils with embroidery or embellishments	Increase in Pinterest searches for “mantilla veil” (+640%), “drape veil” (+479%)
Mini Wedding Dresses	Short wedding dresses for ceremonies or outfit changes	TikTok trends with #shortweddingdress; Instagram photos of brides wearing mini dresses for receptions

The table summarizes some of the most notable wedding dress trends for 2025, indicates their manifestations on social media, and refers to sources confirming these trends.

### DISCUSSION

The obtained data confirm the hypothesis that social media and opinion leaders predominantly influence the tastes of prospective brides and accelerate the transformation of trend benchmarks within the wedding fashion industry. Digital platforms have transcended their role as mere communication channels, becoming powerful mechanisms for shaping demand and dictating aesthetic standards. A qualitative paradigm shift is evident: whereas major trends previously originated “from above” (from elite ateliers through glossy publications to a broad audience), contemporary fashion innovations often emerge “from below” (user-generated content, viral posts) or spread “horizontally” (via social media authorities and specialized online communities), rapidly achieving global dissemination.

Particular significance is attributed to the “Instagrammability” of an outfit—its visual appeal in terms of presentation on Instagram—which invariably influences the selection of a wedding gown. Modern brides increasingly prioritize how the dress will appear in photographs and on-screen, taking into account not only traditional criteria (“perfect fit,”

“flattering cut”) but also the potential to generate striking visual content. This affects choices of silhouette, detailing nuances, and even color palettes: designers are compelled to ensure that garments look harmonious not only in the wedding venue’s real-life setting but also when captured for social media.

Contemporary movements oriented toward personalization and environmental responsibility are inextricably connected to the creation of new meanings in the digital sphere. Online platforms make it possible not only to explore a diversity of unconventional design solutions but also to engage deeply in discussions of the ethical dimensions of fashion production: from labor conditions to the ecological footprint of materials. This “digital” engagement prompts a radically different approach to selecting a wedding ensemble, insofar as it is perceived not merely as a component of a festive appearance but as an expression of the individual self, reflecting personal values and aesthetic preferences. Discourses on social media are gradually transforming bridal fashion from a strictly utilitarian function into a phenomenon requiring philosophical reflection: the dress ceases to be a “ceremonial accessory” and acquires the status of a symbol embodying the bride’s personal journey, ideals, and social position.

However, the online medium also influences the mind

through its darker side: a portion of the surplus information and idealized images gives rise to serious psychological challenges. The intensified dynamic of comparing one's own "ideal" self-image with the endless stream of pictures and advice can generate inflated expectations, chronic stress and frustration when reality fails to meet virtual standards. Consequently, as tension mounts in the online context, a paradox emerges in which the expansion of choice and the accessibility of information serve not only as sources of inspiration but also as factors of cognitive and emotional discomfort.

In the field of wedding attire promotion, influencers' activities give rise to a number of acute ethical dilemmas related to the transparency of sponsored content, the authenticity of published reviews, and the degree of accountability for endorsing specific goods and services. Openness regarding collaborations with brands, the credibility of bloggers' personal experiences, and their readiness to assume responsibility for the outcomes of their recommendations constitute fundamental prerequisites for establishing trust among prospective brides and for ensuring the long-term effectiveness of advertising campaigns.

From the perspective of brands and retailers, the task of social positioning in the wedding segment has evolved into an ongoing process of refining the marketing model, which involves maintaining consistent activity across all key social media platforms, producing content that genuinely resonates with the target audience, and establishing mutually beneficial relationships with relevant opinion leaders. The ability to respond swiftly to rapidly changing trends—adjusting both product assortment and communication formats accordingly—has become an integral element of the strategy. Investments in professional visual assets, comprehensive website optimization (SEO), and interactive tools—such as virtual "fitting rooms," augmented reality filters, and other immersive experience technologies—can no longer be viewed solely as a means of gaining a competitive edge.

### CONCLUSION

The conducted study emphasizes the pivotal and continuously evolving role of digital media platforms and opinion leaders in shaping aesthetic preferences and introducing new currents in wedding fashion. Social networks have not only altered information-seeking algorithms and sources of inspiration but have also deeply transformed the cognitive and emotional components underlying decision-making by prospective brides. Visually oriented platforms, such as Instagram and Pinterest, now serve as primary authorities in establishing exemplars of the ideal visual narrative, thereby guiding stylistic choices. At the same time, TikTok functions as an accelerator: its algorithms facilitate the instantaneous spread of viral trends, which leads to a shortened lifespan for micro-trends and increases the dynamism of the range of wedding looks.

Taking into account the identified factors, industry participants gain the opportunity not only to adapt to the challenges of the digital era but also to independently shape principles for a more conscious, diverse, and responsible approach to wedding fashion. This opens the way to developing concepts focused on long-term value and ethical sustainability: from selecting environmentally friendly materials and ensuring fair production conditions to implementing practices that reduce cultural homogeneity and encourage the individuality of each wedding ensemble. Such an approach makes it possible not only to maintain high levels of competition but also to establish new standards under which fashion ceases to be merely a fast consumer phenomenon and becomes a thoughtful, socially and environmentally responsible practice.

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