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The traditional wedding scene has changed little over the years. Besides the bride and groom, it usually includes the church or hall, guests, clergyman and justice of the peace and the infamous photographer clicking away during the ceremony.

Today, however, many weddings include a relative newcomer - a videographer. That's a person who videotapes the proceedings. And with portable home video gear it's easy enough for almost anyone to do.

"Today's portable video decks and cameras are lightweight, easy to use, quiet and require no special lighting," says Richard B. Williams, marketing manager for General Electric's Video Products Division. "As a result, it's a perfect way to capture the 'live' feel of a wedding without being obtrusive."

Previously, the only means of capturing the "live" feel of a wedding was with a home movie camera. But home movies were never really practical for events like weddings, Williams comments.

"Filming a home movie during a wedding ceremony tends to be disruptive because it requires additional lighting, and the camera itself can be noisy," he says.

Aside from weddings, portable video equipment is perfect for recording everything from vacation highlights to the kids' little league games.

But what about cost? True, a video camera and VCR are more expensive than a movie camera and projector. But in the

long run, savings from video can be substantial compared to movie film.

A study by the GE Video Products Division estimates that six hours of home movie film, including processing, can run between \$1,200 and \$1,400. And the user must find room to store about 120 cans of 50-foot film. One six-hour videotape cassette, on the other hand, costs an average of only \$15 to \$18. And it can be reused indefinitely, if desired.

Today's video equipment also has features never found on conventional home movie equipment. Such features as auto-focus, one-button record, push-button zoom and a character generator (to put titles right on the tape) help make home videotapes look professional, even with an amateur operating the camera.

A new GE video camera offers super-sensitivity that produces bright, sharp color images whether shooting in sunlight outside the church or in low lighting in the reception hall. And, its small size and light weight make the camera an easy tag-along for the honeymoon trip.

"What's nice about videotaping your wedding or any special event is that the whole day can be brought to life months or years later, simply by replaying the tape on your home TV screen," Williams says.

And, as videotape continues to increase in popularity, the videographer will become more common at weddings and other special occasions, capturing precious memories that will be relived for a lifetime.

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