

Dress duplication banished by online 'outfit register'

The anguish and embarrassment of arriving at an exclusive party only to find another woman wearing the same outfit could be banished forever thanks to a new website that allows partygoers to "register" their dresses before the event.

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DressRegistry.com's inventor Andrew Jones Photo: AP

DressRegistry.com lets users describe their choices to other revellers, so that no two women arrive in the same ensemble. It includes a place to detail the colour, length, designer, neckline description and other distinguishing characteristics. You can even upload a photo.

Andrew Jones got the idea after his wife travelled from their home in West Palm Beach, Florida, to New York City to buy a gown for a charity ball in their hometown - solely to avoid seeing the same dress at the event.

"I kind of put two and two together and I said, 'I think there's a way technology can help us here,'" said Mr Jones, 42.

The dress duplication problem has long caused anxiety among women.

Hollywood's A-list stars know their garb may end up on a magazine page - with a side-by-side comparison to someone who wore it better. Jones cited first lady Laura Bush's "Oh, no!" moment at the 2006 Kennedy Center Honors, when she was one of four women wearing the same red Oscar de la Renta gown. Mrs Bush quickly changed into something different.

"If it could happen to the first lady, it could happen to anyone," Mr Jones said. "With the inauguration, it just all came together in my mind. I thought it would be a great time to roll it out."

So far, inaugural partygoers have registered about 100 gowns for more than two dozen official and unofficial events, including the Constitution Ball, the American Indian Inaugural Ball and the Green Inaugural Ball hosted by Al Gore. As the inaugural festivities near, the registries keep growing.

"I've had people self-registering their events every day," said Mr Jones, adding that he's recorded some 300,000 hits and more than 10,000 unique visitors since the Web site launched Dec. 1.

"As the site gets more populated, we may be able to infer by what's being worn for each particular event, what people are leaning to," he said.
