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Salvatore Cincotta

NEXT

MASTERING BUSINESS FUNDAMENTALS

Sal and Taylor are back and they are here to talk to you about what's NEXT for you and your business.

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REINVENTING THE WHEEL
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GET 'ER DONE

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PRODUCT GUIDE

SOFTWARE & ONLINE RESOURCES

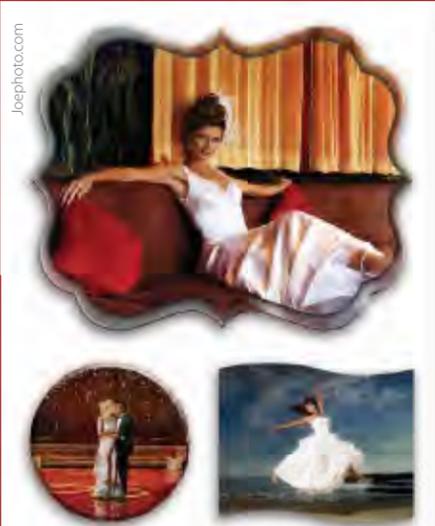
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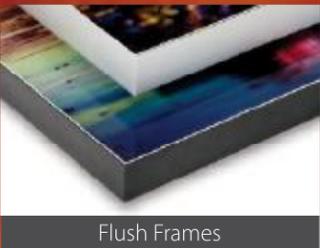
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DIVING DEEPER into SEO

(SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION)

WITH JUSTEN HONG



HOME ABOUT US GALLERY BLOG CONTACT



St. John's Newfoundland wedding photographer specializing in weddings, baby, maternity and family portraits

Hi! Thanks for visiting my site.

Looking for a photographer to cover those special moments and milestones in your life is important. I believe in capturing those moments that are real, not posed, but those secret looks, subtle smiles, and all the other little things you do to tell the world about your love. I can capture anything you need, from newborn to children photography, maternity to family photo shoots, fashion and commercial and of course the engagement shoot along with wedding photography.

Working in the St. John's area gives me the chance to shoot in the city, travel outside to new locations or studio photography.

Being a photographer for over 12 years has given me the confidence and experience to make sure that your moments are captured in the way that is perfect for you. Have a look through the website and visit my blog to see some of my most recent photos.

I look forward to hearing from you and booking that special shoot.

Crystal McEllen



"We have used Crystal three times for our family photos. She captured fabulous images every time. Thank you Crystal for freezing our precious moments in time."

- Amy and Tom

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Latest from Our Blog



Wedding photography for the Smiths in St. John's, Newfoundland



St. John's, Newfoundland wedding photographer, Crystal McEllen photographs the Watsons



St. John's Wedding photography for the Andersons



St. John's wedding photographer for the Underhill wedding

HOME ABOUT US GALLERY BLOG CONTACT

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BY JUSTEN HONG



In March I wrote about websites and search engine optimization, and for this issue was asked to delve a little deeper into SEO. This article will be most useful if you've already read my previous article, and you use a search-engine-friendly platform like WordPress.

As you should know by now, your organic search engine ranking depends on two main factors: content (text/copy) and inbound links. These tips should help you improve your ranking.

CONTENT & SEO

Content can be broken down into a few main categories: titles, metadata, URLs, headers (H1s), subheaders (H2s), and body copy. They rank in order of importance, like so:

1. Title tags
2. Meta description
3. URL
4. H1 tags
5. H2 tags
6. Body copy



1 | TITLE TAGS

Title tags are the most important factor in ranking. Most search engines use a maximum of 60 characters for the title, so keep it around that. It can go over a little, but don't get carried away. The most common mistake people make is to not take the time to write an SEO-friendly title for each and every page and blog post; they have duplicate titles for different pages/posts, and people who know a little bit about SEO sometimes tend to keyword-stuff them. Keyword stuffing is when you overuse your keywords. You can actually get penalized for using your keywords too much. A good tip to avoid this is: If it sounds funny when you read it, don't use it. Take a look at Google's own description of keyword stuffing for a good background on this practice.

Use a healthy variety of titles. Don't start every page and blog post with the same targeted phrase, such as "St. Louis wedding photographers." Mix it up. Look at our examples below. They all contain our sample targeted keywords—*St. Louis, wedding photographers, photography*—but each is different, just safe enough not to be considered stuffing.

Example targeted phrases: •*St. Louis Wedding Photographers* •*Jim & Jane Doe Photograph the Smiths Johnson's* •*St. Louis Wedding Photography by Jim & Jane Photography* •*Jim & Jane Photograph a Country-Themed Wedding in St. Louis, MO*

2 | META DESCRIPTIONS

Your meta description is a brief description of the information on that page. When placed in a page, it is usually the sentence under the title in an organic search result. Most search engines use a maximum of 160 characters for the description. Once again, you can go over that a little, but don't overdo it. Common mistakes are similar to those mentioned above—people don't take the time to write them; duplicates; and keyword stuffing. Use your targeted terms in the description, but, again, avoid stuffing.

3 | URL

Your URL is what shows up in the address bar of your browser. On your homepage, it looks like this: <http://www.yourname.com>. If you click into the pages or a blog post, it should look something like: <http://www.yourname.com/st-louis-wedding-photographers>. If it looks something like <http://www.yourname.com/?p=123xyz>, then it will really hurt your ranking! You can fix this by changing your permalink structure in your WordPress settings tab. Just know that this will change all your page URLs, so if you have incoming links to pages, these will be lost/broken unless you do 301 permanent redirects. A 301 tells search engines that a page has permanently moved. Check out the simple WordPress plugin Simple 301 Redirects. It has two fields: one for the old URL and one for the new one. Changing your redirects for an entire site or blog can be very time consuming, and too many 301s can actually temporarily hurt your rankings—but in the long run, changing your permalinks is something that must be done for a solid, long-term SEO strategy.

4 | H1 TAGS

H1 tags are your main headers in the actual content of a web page. If you use View Source in your browser, they look like this: `<h1>Header</h1>`. Your keywords need to be used in them. One major issue I see is that many developers and designers (especially with WordPress) pull the H1s from the page name, which means if you name a page "Portfolio," your page's H1 tag would automatically be named "Portfolio," which does absolutely nothing for SEO. It should be something like "Wedding Photography Portfolio." If your site does this, you need to change it, because H1 tags are critical to ranking well.

5 | H2 TAGS

Same rules as above, but for the subheaders.

6 | BODY COPY

The more body copy, the better. Search engines eat it up, especially if it is keyword rich and high in quality. Just make sure it's 100 percent original. When you add your keywords, make sure it still reads logically. Recently I reviewed a website where the person copied Salvatore Cincotta's homepage content and simply replaced the location names. This may actually do them more harm than good. Google most likely will consider it duplicate content (because of the sentence structure), and there is a good chance that site will be penalized for it.

If you have a WordPress blog that uses all the standard widgets—a calendar, archives, etc.—they may be creating too many “links per page.” Having too many links on a page can weaken its ranking and weaken the other more important links on that page. Most people don’t use those calendar or archive widgets anyway. As long as you have a search field, I recommend removing them.

Don’t overuse blog tags. Overtagging can also cause too many links per page. Make sure your tags are targeted and relevant to each post.

Page load speed is also taken into account with ranking. Make sure your site loads quickly and that all your images are the smallest size possible. PhotoShop’s Save for Web & Devices tab (under the File Menu) works well for compression. For larger images, just mess around with the JPG settings to find a quality you are happy with. Also, don’t forget to add keyword-rich Alt Tags/Attributes for all your images.

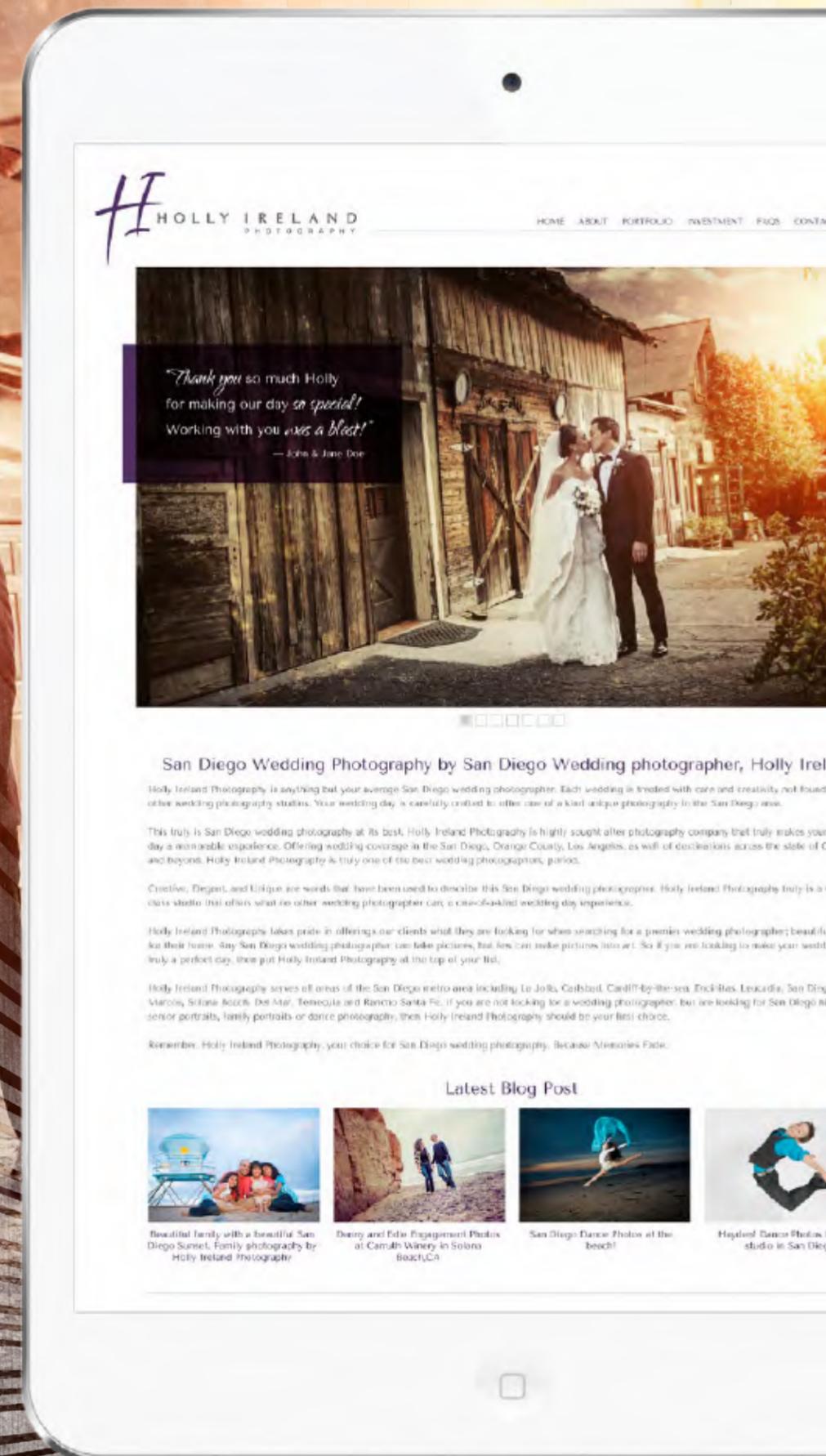
LINKS & SEO

Inbound links, also called incoming links or backlinks, are links from other websites to yours. Search engines use them like votes. The more votes a website has, the better it will organically rank. Acquiring inbound links, especially high-quality content-related ones, is critical for a well-ranked site. It can be argued that links are more important than content. I’ve seen horrible websites with tons of links rank better than sites with quality content. I’ve also seen sites with quality content rank better than sites with more links. I think quality content is more important, because it’s what attracts quality links in the first place.

So if you are a wedding photographer in St. Louis, quality links would be from places like local wedding venues, local chambers of commerce, wedding blogs, other wedding vendors, etc. You’d want to link to any website that’s related to St. Louis or weddings.

Any links help. Here are more tips to acquiring them.

- Create a LinkedIn profile. You can add a link from your profile page, and you can also add links to your website, blog, and other sections of your website using LinkedIn’s share feature.
- Create a Google+ page for yourself and your business. There are multiple places in Google+ where you can add links to your site.
- Create a Pinterest account. In the profile section, there is a place to add (and verify) your website address. Next, create a board of your top portfolio pics; when someone else pins them, that creates another link to your site. Just keep in mind that if you pin something from your blog, don’t pin from the main blog page, but instead from the actual post page. That way the pin doesn’t link to your blog, but to the actual post. This way, if someone clicks that pin, it takes them to that particular post, not to your main blog page, where the post will eventually get pushed down and then off the main page.
- For Facebook, I use a plugin called Wordbooker. It automatically creates a Facebook status every time you add a blog post. It creates a link back to your blog, along with a small featured image, the title of the post, and a lead-in sentence. Another good social media plugin is called Share This. People can like it, share it, retweet it, etc., all of which create links back to your site. Google is now placing more importance on social media, so the more retweets, likes, and shares, the more it will help your ranking.
- There are also tons of free directories, such as ChamberofCommerce.com, where you can add info and links about your business. Take the time to find them.



ADDITIONAL LINKING TIPS

Use your keywords in your incoming links, especially your targeted terms. For instance, a link like JimandJane.com will help since it is an incoming link, but an incoming link that reads “St. Louis wedding photographers Jim & Jane” is much, much better.

Sprinkle some internal links throughout your site. These are links between different pages on your site. Once again, use your targeted phrases in the actual links. For example, in your homepage body copy, you have your targeted phrase “St. Louis wedding photography”; make that text a link to your wedding services or wedding portfolio page. But, like everything else, don’t get carried away with it.

You also need to add some external links to your website that link to other sites. Just make sure that you link to topic-related and high-quality sites. These links should open in a new window so the user doesn’t leave your site.

CHANGE IS COMING!

Although inbound links are still one of the most important factors when it comes to your ranking, Google’s latest algorithm update starts to shift its power from inbound links to social media. Facebook likes, shares, tweets, and Google +1s now carry more weight, and we believe they eventually will be more influential than inbound links. Once this shift occurs, quality content will be king, as that is the only real way to get likes, shares, tweets, etc. So start focusing on your social media strategy now to get ahead of the curve.

RAISE YOUR ORGANIC LISTING BY A COUPLE OF RANKINGS.

Using a relatively new technique, you can raise organic listings by a minimum of two rankings. In some cases, we have seen rankings increase by eight places. Want to learn how? Go to Visual Lure’s Facebook page, like us, and message us your email address. We will send you an email with instructions. ■

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CREATING FRIENDORS

with Kristy Dickerson



by Kristy Dickerson

Friendors.

Yes, I totally made up that word.

I use it to refer to friends who are vendors.

These are valuable people in your life because you can refer work to one another. And when the day is done, they can double as drinking buddies.

Here are a few pointers to developing a referral base of friendors.

ONE

Network! Look for local networking opportunities. Local magazines often host monthly or quarterly events, which are tremendous networking opportunities. Attend them. Introduce yourself. Mingle. Exchange business cards. Have fun but not too much fun. Keep it business.

TWO

Probably the biggest ball gets dropped here. Right after the event, shoot an email to those you met, just to say hi. Make a point to mention something that you talked about. Ask for nothing in this email. I know so many wedding planners who constantly get emails asking to be put on their “list.” This is not an effective method, and will actually hurt your brand more than it will help. If someone just emails you out of the blue about your list, would you put them on yours? No. Because you don’t know them or trust them—same thing.

THREE

At subsequent events, if you see someone you met before, start another conversation. This is where you can ask for something. Ask them if they’d like to get lunch or coffee sometime, and set a date.



FOUR

At the coffee or lunch meeting, leave work out of the conversation. Be yourself, and just get to know them. People will refer only those they trust and like. When you refer someone, it can reflect on your brand and you. So making sure you establish a trusted recommendation list is key. Of course, if they bring up business, don't avoid the topic—just don't make the whole conversation about it. Take care of the check. It is a business write-off for you, and a nice gesture.

FIVE

Depending on the contact and potential business relationship, offer to do a style shoot or even updated headshots for the vendor. This gives you the opportunity to indirectly show off your work and potential. It's also an exchange of value that can get the ball rolling.

SIX

Get the business. You might or might not get any business from this, but I guarantee you are establishing your brand. But don't do any of this with the idea of landing business. If you think of it as making a new friend, there'll be less pressure on both of you. In marketing and networking, the end goal is business. But brand awareness and marketing strategy should all be part of it. Don't focus too much on the end goal.

Be yourself, just get to know them.
People will refer only those they
know and like.

SEVEN

If you get a referral, find the right way to thank that person. A lot of people make monetary kickbacks. That is not my style. I prefer to thank them with cards containing images of their work, or even digital copies of their work that you shot. So many photographers get so busy and skip this step. This, my friends, is the best way to make friendors. Give them something that they can use in their business. It doesn't have to be expensive—maybe just a handwritten thank-you card.

EIGHT

Remember, their success is your success. Always put what they need before what you need. In my opinion, one of the biggest thank-yous you can give someone is a referral back. After all, that is what friendors do.

NINE

Social media is also a huge part of networking. Using Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram gives vendors an opportunity to know the person behind the camera. It gives them a peek into who you are. Connecting with them on social media also keeps your name fresh on their mind.

I truly care about my friends who are also vendors or event clients. Stop focusing on you, and do things to give back—it will come back to you tenfold. Networking is key to any successful business. Don't just invest in monetary things—invest in relationships. As Porter Gale wrote in *Your Network Is Your Net Worth*, networking is not a one-time thing, but an ongoing effort to establish and keep relationships. ■



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WEDDINGS:
REINVENTING
the wheel

with Sal Cincotta



I've been screaming for years
that you have to find that
X factor
in order to **stand out &**
keep your business moving forward.



BY Sal Cincotta

Is there anything original anymore? Just about everything seems to be a regurgitated idea.

What about photography? Are any of us producing truly original imagery? What about our techniques? Lighting? Everything's been done in some form or fashion. I know what you must be thinking: Whoa, are you saying we are all copycats? Well, yeah, kinda. Ok, hold on, so should we just hang up our straps since it's all been done already?

I am not suggesting that we give up all hope. Sure, it's increasingly difficult to impress clients. They've seen it all. This week we put a kissing couple in a field, and next week they are kissing in front of some cool doors. Oh, wait, this week we are using the sun to back-light them, and next week they are in open shade.

It's all the same stuff. The challenge is finding a way to stand out from the crowd. I've been screaming for years that you have to find that X factor in order to stand out and keep your business moving forward.

I photograph as many as 50 weddings a year. Are all 50 unique? Come on.

So how can you be original
in a copycat world?

Spot the obvious. Then do something different.

When you walk into a room, look for the most obvious spot to shoot, and then freaking run! Don't go there. No matter how hard you want to. Five thousand photographers before you have shot in that same spot. Trust me: The first, most obvious choice is not the most original one.

Have you ever walked into a church or reception hall and been told where other photographers "typically" shoot from? I want to go nuts when they do that. Can you imagine telling a Michelin-rated chef, "This is how other chefs make this dish"? It's laughable.

Here is what I do. I walk into a room—it can be a hotel room, ballroom, or a closet—and I look for the most obvious shot. Not gonna lie. I take it. Why? It's my fail-safe. Anything goes wrong, I got a shot I can safely show my clients. But let's get real: Your business isn't going to grow on safety.

Take a chance. Do something different. I look for that shot that no one else sees or that everyone else is too lazy to go after. Maybe they have to move the client or move some furniture, but the shot is there and it's not something that the average person sees. That's what creates originality for my clients, and why they love working with our studio.

Create a formula that works for you.

Creating a formula for weddings is critical. Rhythm and flow, the way you interact, how you shoot and see—all have a formula, or recipe. As much as I am looking to maximize creativity, we all need a formula for success. As much as I would love to share my formula, it would be useless to you, and would kill the point I'm trying to make.

Each of us creates art in our own way. It's a process, one that's learned over time. We have to find what works for us, our studio, and our clients. Listen to client feedback and read body language, and adjust accordingly. Eventually you'll find your formula. Use one that works for you, and don't ape the competition.

Each of us creates art in our own way.
It's a process,
one that's learned over time.
*We have to find what works for us,
our studio, and our clients.*





Rinse & repeat.

Although I strive to satisfy my clients' desire that their weddings be handled uniquely, I run 80 percent of my wedding day the same from week to week. Why? It works. I have already proved it week in and week out. This is what has led to my formula for the day. I don't reinvent the wheel every week. It's just not possible.

Because of my experience, I know what works and what doesn't. I am going to use that to my advantage. What do clients really want? They want amazing images from their day. I have never heard a client say, "Wait, I saw this same picture of the bride and groom kissing at the altar from another one of your weddings." A certain percentage of the day is the same week in and week out. We know what works. We know what works for their album. We know what works for large portrait sales. Use that to your advantage. And when it's all said and done, clients will love you for producing a consistent event. After all, they hired you because of what you showed them on your website. So to a certain extent, that's what they expect from you.

With that remaining 20 percent, I try something different here and there throughout the day. Something I might not have ordinarily tried. I even tell my clients what I am doing. I say, "Hey, I'm trying something different, and this could completely suck, but I want to experiment a little." Oh, boy, they love it! And because I have my 80 percent rock solid, if I screw up the experiment, no one cares! That is key. You can never risk the main shots. Try this. I promise it will be liberating.

REINVENTING THE WHEEL

Look to other genres for inspiration.

The worst thing you can do is watch what other wedding photographers are doing. Instead, I love to look to other genres, like commercials and Hollywood, for inspiration. I'll take a concept I saw—lighting, editing, posing—and then bring it to the wedding platform.

Rather than reinventing the wheel, you could say this is repurposing the wheel. Someone has already done it, but it hasn't been overdone, and your clients will probably love it. It's a great way to really get out there and push limits.

History is your friend. What's old is new.

History truly is our friend. I love looking at photos from old magazine ads and spreads. I love the style, the posing, just the feel of it all. Sure, not everything we see lends itself to great wedding photography, but it sure can provide great inspiration. Trends come and go, but they almost always repeat themselves.

Here's a new technique I've been using that's becoming a hit among my clients. I ask my couples for pictures of their grandparents posing as couples, and attempt to re-create them with a modern twist. Now we're pitching this to clients during consultations. Some love it and others hate it.

Doesn't matter to me either way: My job is to try something a little different. ■



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impact and wow shots that will drive big sales.
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posing . lighting . shooting

DAY TWO

We will focus on business, business, and more business.
your business plan . pricing and packaging . marketing and advertising
social media . branding . managing costs . contracts
working with and hiring second shooters . sales (in-studio and online)
how to deal with objections from clients . developing referral channels . SEO



GET YOUR

LIFE

BACK

with Laurin Thienes





by Laurin Thienes

Get your life back.

Free your time.

Speed up your turnaround time.

These messages from postproduction companies surround us at trade shows and in magazine ads, but do you really need to outsource? Are you at that point in your business where it is time to let go? Your kneejerk response could very well be Nope, not ready yet. Maybe it's time to stop standing in the way of your business and embrace ways that can help it grow. Outsourcing can easily be one of them.

What happens when you are drowning in postproduction work? A lot of us clam up, our productivity goes down the tube, and we lose precious time with family and friends, which is when we consider outside help. Successful outsourcing is all about what you do with the time you are not in front of the computer screen. You need to convert hour for hour your editing time to marketing, networking, shooting, and quality time away from work.

If you do not value your own time, then it is a tall task to justify spending money for someone else to do your work. Usually, even modestly valuing your time per hour leads to a net gain when you use your time for other business purposes. A recent poll in a wedding photographer forum showed that the average user was spending between 28 and 35 hours per wedding in postproduction. That is absolute madness if you hope to stay in business long. At a very modest \$25 per hour, that is at minimum a \$700 cost to you. The intangible savings and benefits are significant as well. Being able to increase your turn time by having outside help can increase sales and overall customer satisfaction because you haven't procrastinated to the point your clients are just not as excited about their pictures.

It seems like **a lot of photographers fear losing creative control**, but any reputable service will work closely with you to define your preferences.

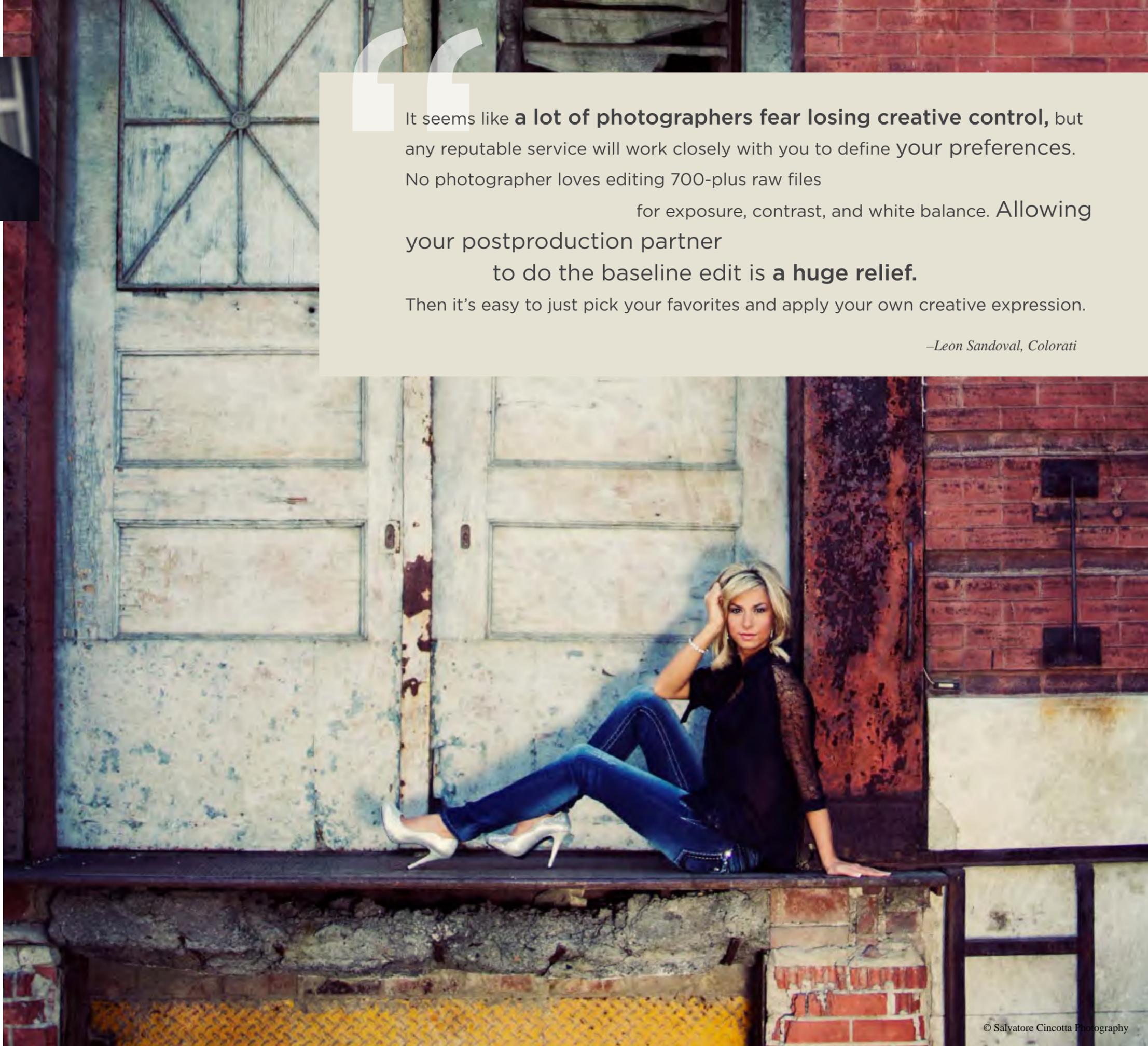
No photographer loves editing 700-plus raw files

for exposure, contrast, and white balance. Allowing your postproduction partner

to do the baseline edit is **a huge relief.**

Then it's easy to just pick your favorites and apply your own creative expression.

—Leon Sandoval, Colorati





One rut many photographers get caught in is when they strive to make every single image technically perfect. A friend once told me, “Close enough is good enough, and perfection does not make me money.” He could not be more correct. Your clients are not going to notice a slight variance in color temperature or a one-third stop difference from image to image. Leave the mundane heavy lifting to someone else. (At the same time, failing to give feedback to your editing team will, without a doubt, leave you frustrated because you won’t get the quality you want.)

Outsourcing is a scalable solution, one that doesn’t require you to retain and manage costly staff. With a postproduction company, the slow time of the year does not require you to lay off staff—you just stop sending work. When you are busy, they should be able to pick back up where things left off.

I’ve been an outsourcing professional for six years, so of course I’m a huge advocate. But the reasons why go farther than self-interest. I have watched countless photographers grow from having a part-time studio and full-time day job to having a full time studio and quitting the day job, all because they believed that outsourcing was the right move from the beginning. When everything went from film to digital, everyone immediately thought they needed to be their own lab, buying high-powered computers and large-format printers. Our studio went through hundreds of rolls of film every week, and never once did we think we had to be the ones to develop any of it. I believe passionately that for the majority of studios, outsourcing is the answer. I’ll leave you with some thoughts from industry leaders who agree.

These days it seems professional photography is all about technology and endless complexities. We think the focus should be on people, passion, and running a successful business. By outsourcing technical and time-consuming tasks like color correction and retouching,

photographers are free to focus

on their clients, their business, and their art.

—Jerry Weiner, CEO, Post Edits

GET YOUR LIFE BACK

Time is money. It's that simple.

I can't service my customers properly
if I am spending my time sitting at a computer playing
with my actions and presets.

I want to spend my time and effort
on the front lines
with my clients and my business.

If I am not shooting, I am not making money. And if I am not
working on the marketing and advertising of my business,
who is?

There is nothing artistic about color correction. We have to
stop convincing ourselves as artists that somehow we are less
of a photographer because we don't spend hours editing our
images. **Let someone else do it,**
and get on with your life and your business. ■

—Sal Cincotta, CEO, Evolve



e·volve

EVOLVE

EVOLVE

EVOLVE

/i'völ/

- VERB
1. Develop gradually, esp. from a simple to a more complex form.
 2. (with reference to an organism or biological feature)
Develop over successive generations, esp. as a result of natural selection.

www.evolveedits.com

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WE
YOUR WORKFLOW



BEFORE

EVOLVE PHOTO WEF

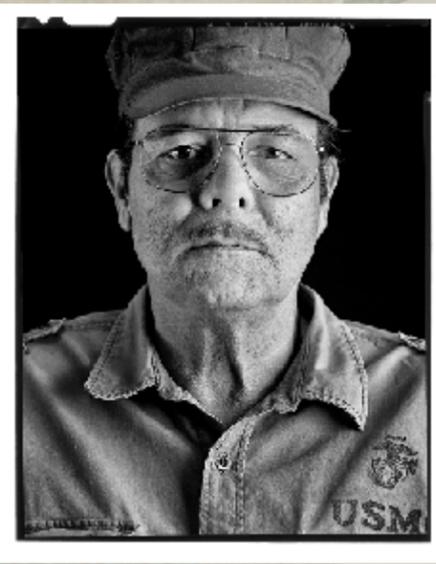
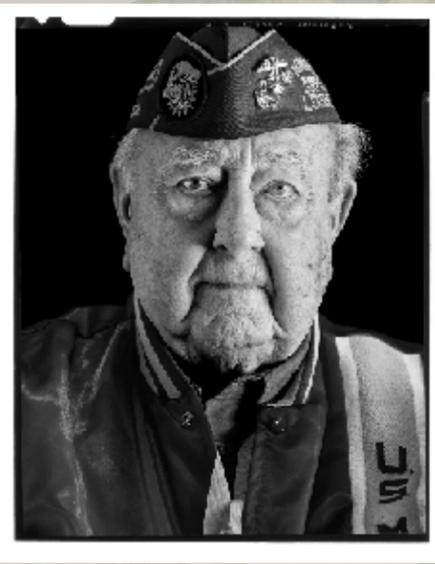
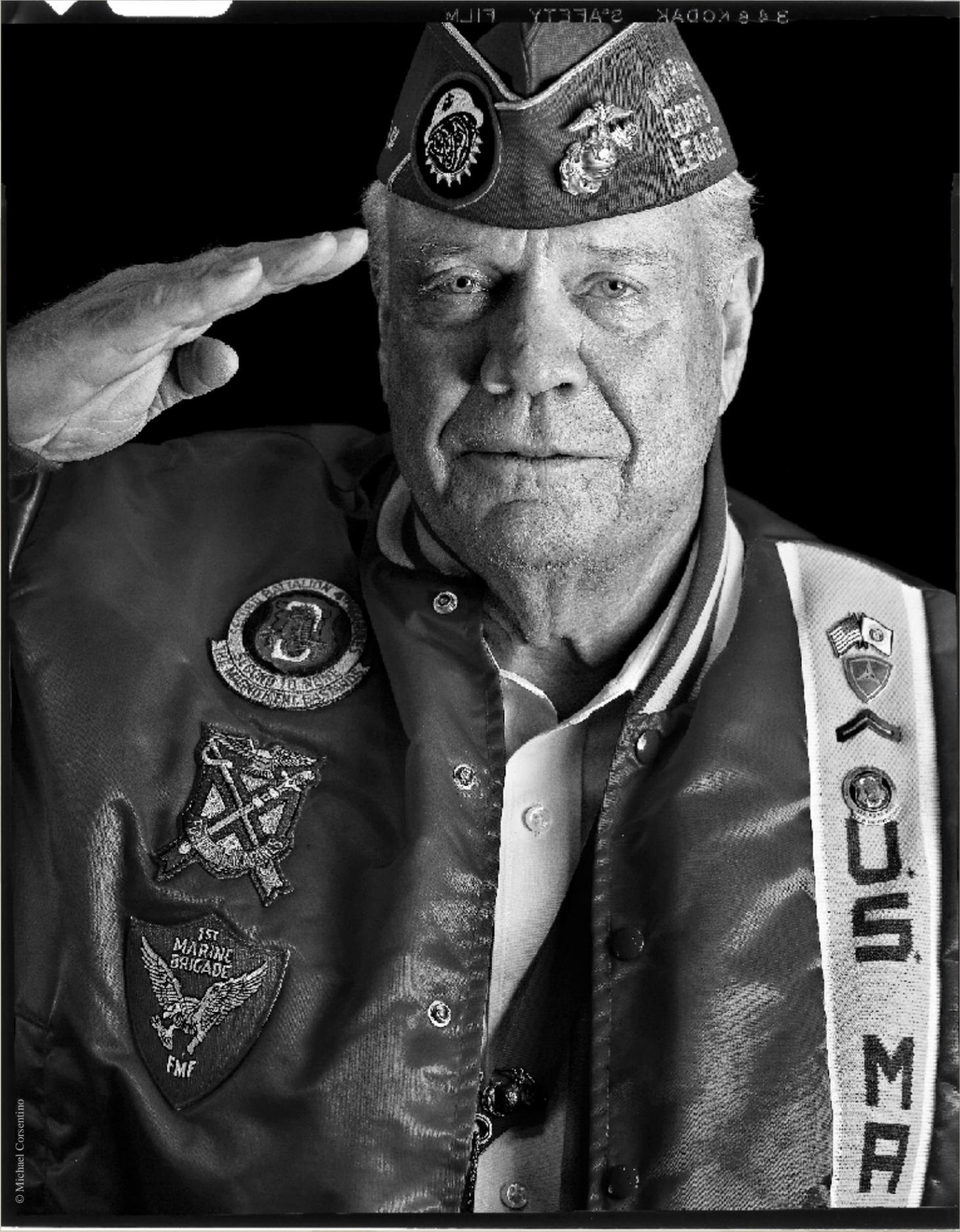
WHERE IMAGERY
BECOMES ART



BEFORE

Evolve
CREATE | EDIT | DESIGN

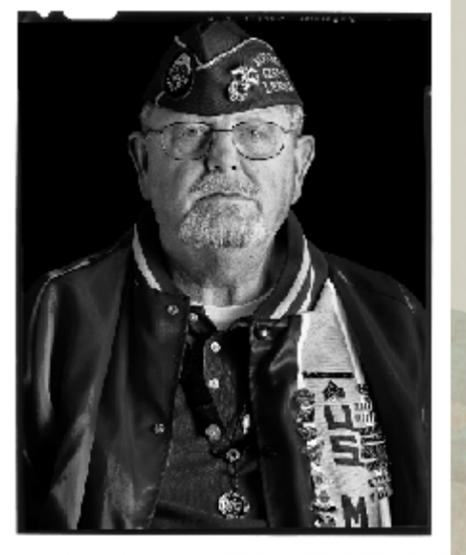
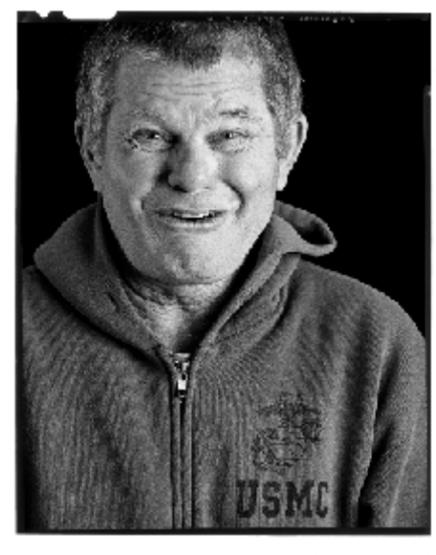
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ONELIGHTWONDERS

VETERANS DAY PORTRAITS

WITH MICHAEL CORSENTINO



In this series,
I'll explore
the creative
possibilities of
using only
**one light &
a little creativity.**



BY Michael Corsentino

With Veterans Day just behind us, I thought one of the shoots from my ongoing Veterans Day Portrait Series would be the perfect opportunity to introduce a lighting technique called the “one-light wonder.” In this series, I’ll explore the creative possibilities of using only one light and a little creativity. In addition to showing what you can do with one light, this month I’ll also share which lightweight, easy-to-transport tools I used to create the ad-hoc, on-location studio for these portraits.

The location for this shoot presented an interesting challenge. It wasn’t an office or someone’s home, the more typical scenarios. For this session, I’d need to set up and shoot in the back room of a restaurant where the vets had their monthly meeting.

The shots featured in this article are part of the One-Light Wonders series not because they’re wonderful portraits, but because they’re a good example of how much you can accomplish with just one light and a few simple tools. So let’s get right to it!

Those who don’t have a studio or can’t get people to come to their studio need to be able to work on location, produce professional results, and not break the bank or their back doing it. You can create a portable studio fairly inexpensively. Many of the things that aren’t in the budget now can be easily DIY’d—a foam core board or a white wall can be used as a reflector, a curtain or paint-splattered drop cloth can become a backdrop, etc. Much of what’s discussed here is inexpensive and can be found used.

When putting together the gear for a shoot like this, I want to be as portable as possible without sacrificing quality, flexibility, and the workflow I’m comfortable with. For that kind of portability, nothing beats collapsible tools. Here, everything I’m using is collapsible—the 6’x7’ black/white background, the reflector, and a Westcott 28” Apollo Softbox. Each is lightweight, inexpensive, and easy to transport. I’m also using three lightweight stands and a laptop for tethered shooting.



ONE-LIGHT WONDERS

I've got a sandbag on each light stand to keep gear secure and subjects safe. Before shooting on location, make sure you have the proper insurance. The likelihood of someone tripping over a cord or light stand and hurting herself or your equipment is slim, but if it happens, you'll want to be prepared.

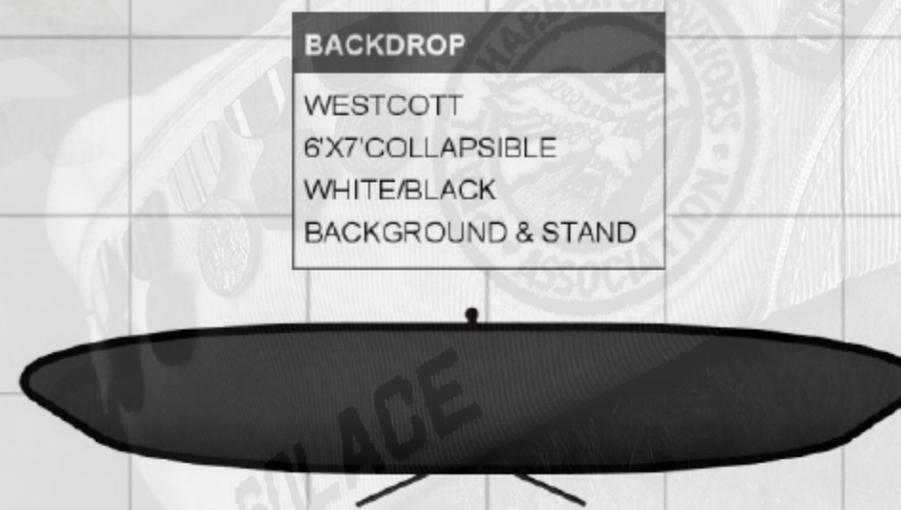
I shoot tethered whenever possible. I do this because the camera's LCD doesn't provide reliable previews. I want to see exactly what's going on and be able to accurately check focus, exposure, hair, wardrobe, any distractions in the background, etc. The large previews on a laptop or iPad make this possible. Tethered shooting also slows me down, so I tend to examine captures more. Consequently, I work more thoughtfully and deliberately, and make fewer mistakes. Everything looks great on a 3-inch screen! Tethering is well worth the extra effort, and the immediate feedback from clients and subjects is a big plus.

No matter what kind of shoot I'm doing, one piece of business I always take care of before I ever click the shutter is to have signed model releases for each subject. With weddings, the model release is part of my contract. Taking care of this at the beginning of the session is a great way to assure everyone is on the same page and there are no surprises at the end of the shoot. Typically, I leave this task to an assistant with an iPad running iRelease. Subjects sign their release on the iPad, and then iRelease sends us both a PDF for our records. Model releases fall into the "better safe than sorry" category, and I never shoot without them.

Before arriving at the restaurant, I disabled the automatic sleep feature on my Speedlite, common on most handheld flashes. Doing this saves you from the embarrassing "gotcha" of your flash not firing because it's fallen asleep and lost its connection with the camera. Not that I've ever experienced this myself!

To trigger my off-camera Speedlite from the camera, I used PocketWizard Plus II transmitters. These are manual triggers, meaning they send a simple on/off command and nothing else, no ETTL/ITTL commands, etc. For this type of static studio situation, those where the distance between my subject and my lights won't be changing, I prefer to set both the camera and the flash to manual mode. Working this way simplifies things, putting all the creative control in my hands and assuring consistent exposures every time. For manual work, I always have a light meter on hand. I used a Sekonic 758DR for this shoot. The DR indicates its capability to wirelessly trigger a PocketWizard.

The light modifier you choose and its position, angle, and height are all important decisions. Each determines the quality of light produced. For these portraits, I wanted a dramatic, stark look, one that conveyed the seriousness of the sacrifices made by those in the armed forces. I wanted drama, but not so much that the portraits ended up looking cartoonish or overly produced. Positioning the soft-box camera at right angles to my subjects gave me the dramatic split-light effect I envisioned when I planned this series.



BACKDROP
WESTCOTT
6'X7' COLLAPSIBLE
WHITE/BLACK
BACKGROUND & STAND



REFLECTOR
WESTCOTT 42" 6-IN-1
COLLAPSIBLE
REFLECTOR, SILVER
SIDE FACING
SUBJECTS



SOFTBOX
WESTCOTT 28" APOLLO



ONE-LIGHT WONDERS

Let's dig a little deeper and look at the role height played in these portraits. The brightest and harshest light from a soft box comes from its center, often referred to as its hot spot. As the light moves toward the edges of the soft box, it becomes softer and more diffuse. As I mentioned earlier, I wanted a crisp, dramatic look for these portraits, but I didn't want to blast my subjects with light, either. It is possible to create drama, which in this case I'm defining as contrast, without relying on harsh light. The position of the light is creating the contrast via a split light pattern, but I'm relying on its angle and height to create a softer quality of light. I'm using a technique called feathering for both the light's height and angle. Feathering the light simply means angling it in such a way that the center hot spot isn't providing the majority of the illumination. Rather, with feathering, you're relying on the softer light produced along the edges of the modifier to be your main source of illumination. Essentially you're aiming your light past the subject and fine-tuning the placement of the modifier edges.

I positioned the height of the soft box so that the bottom edge was aligned with the top of my subjects' shoulders, keeping it straight with no horizontal angle. This put the hot spot above their faces, and created a natural fall-off of light (vignette) below their faces. I then moved the soft box in front of my subjects, keeping it at a 90-degree angle, and again relied on the feathered light from the edges of the modifier. Next I shot a few test frames of a stand-in subject to make sure the catch lights in the eyes were being created where I wanted them.

I shot profile portraits of some of the subjects as well. For these, I wanted more of a strip-light effect. I had only one soft box with me, and it wasn't a strip light. I easily remedied this with a little black craft paper and gaff tape I had on hand. I've since graduated to carrying duvetyne and Cinefoil—but the point is that creativity can often overcome lack of gear.

From my test shots, I could see that the left side of the subjects' faces was too dark for what I had in mind. Since this series was all male subjects and I wanted a punchy look, I opted for a silver reflector. I placed it on the left side of my subjects to bounce light back onto their faces and open up the shadows. Again, with portability in mind, I chose a 6-in-1 42-inch collapsible reflector and a lightweight stand.

The pullback shots and finished portraits tell the story. With a few simple, portable tools and one light, I was able to transform the back room of a pretty ho-hum, 1970s-style restaurant into a polished-looking studio. With a little ingenuity, you can have a studio wherever you go. ■

I used Nik Silver Efex Pro to create the black-and-white conversions.



A graphic featuring the word "SHUTTER" in a bold, sans-serif font. To the left of the word is a play button icon. To the right is a camera aperture icon. Below the word is the text "LEARN MORE! CHECK OUT THIS VIDEO...". The entire graphic is set against a background of a large, high-contrast black and white portrait of a man in a military-style cap.



GETTING WITH VANESSA JOY
published PART 2

by Vanessa Joy



There are four typical ways to submit your work to blogs and magazines (not including a chance encounter with the photo editor). The most popular methods are via direct mail, email, a third-party service, and through the publisher's website submission form.

Submitting via direct mail is the method I used the first time. Because of the time and cost, I likely won't submit that way again. That's not to say that you shouldn't. Because most people submit electronically, submitting via snail mail just might set you apart. Here's how to do it.

Submit three to five weddings to your chosen publications (we'll talk about exclusivity policies and ethics later) using a large manila envelope so that your mail stands out (you can even decorate it).

In the envelope, include a contact sheet of images (nine per page works nicely), a disc of the high- and low-res images (so they can be pulled quickly for print or online), and a cover letter. The letter should be brief, explaining who you are and what you're submitting, and include your contact information.

Include a vendor page listing all of the known vendors and their contact information. The less the editor has to research, the better.

Optionally, include a page telling the story of the wedding day. For ideas on how to write this, or how to have your bride write it for you, see last month's article.

I prefer to submit electronically because it's faster and less expensive. Some publications have their own system for submissions, and you can easily find that on their website. Check out the submissions policy page of *Style Me Pretty*, one of the most popular wedding blogs in the world, here: <http://submissions.stylemepretty.com/>. Other publications, like *The Knot*, prefer that you email them your submissions: <http://wedding.theknot.com/wedding-themes/choosing-wedding-themes/articles/submit-wedding-to-the-knot.aspx>.

When I email editors, I normally send a link to my blog post about the wedding (again, more on exclusivity policies later) that includes a vendor list, favorite photos (including a lot of details), and a short story about the wedding. It's a quick and easy way to submit to publications. Normally, I'll submit up to five weddings per email, with a little note to the editor. Short is key! Editors get hundreds of submissions per month, so sending them a lengthy email can be an immediate turnoff.

Lastly, I use a third-party service called Two Bright Lights (TwoBrightLights.com). TBL makes it easy to upload weddings to its site and submit them to various publications, as well as share them with vendors. It is partnered with both larger and smaller blogs (not just wedding blogs), so there's a variety of places where you can get your work published with just a few clicks.

1 | Publication Aesthetics

Where you send your weddings is critical. Blogs and magazines have different styles. They all feature weddings, but they're creating a brand and a feeling to go with the style of weddings they feature.

Style Me Pretty has a rustic, vintage feel, so I probably wouldn't send them a wedding with a tattooed bride in pink hair and a funky dress. I'd submit a wedding like that to a blog like *Rock N Roll Bride* (RocknRollBride.com).

Building and Using | 2

When you get an acceptance letter, start building a positive relationship with your contact. Get them what they need when they need it, and do everything with a smile. Build a relationship in a similar way that you would build it with your clients and in a way that's conducive to your brand. A little thank-you gift (even if it's just a box of chocolates) packaged with your branding will go a long way. Now, the next time you have a wedding that you want to submit, you can email them directly and tell them that you thought they'd like the wedding, and wanted to give them first dibs on it. Be careful not to step on toes or overstay your welcome, though. It's just as easy to create a negative relationship with a photo editor as it is a positive one.

Some publications are more likely to consider publishing a wedding if the vendors that worked on it advertise with them. Does this mean that you have to start advertising in those publications? No. Instead, find out where the vendors that you worked with advertise. I normally contact the hall where the wedding was held, because most venues advertise in magazines. Typically, I'll email them saying it was a pleasure working with them and that so-and-so's wedding was amazing and I'd love to get it published. I'll ask them if they advertise in any magazines and if they have their representative's contact information. Often, I'll even suggest that they submit it for publication and give them the blog link to do so. Collaborating with advertising vendors is an effective way to stand out, and it's the perfect way to start building a good relationship with other wedding vendors.

3 | Blogs vs. Magazines

Blogs and magazines differ in a few key ways. Blogs, especially popular ones, have a larger audience, but the shelf life of a post can be as short as 12 hours. Magazines, on the other hand, can have a shelf life of three months or more, but might not have the same reach. Blogs can improve your SEO, but magazines sometimes hold a higher prestige and credibility level. Ultimately, you have to choose what you're aiming for, but it's beneficial to research and weigh the differences between publications while you're deciding where to send your work. Here are my top five aspects to consider when determining where to submit for publication.

- Audience reach: How many people will see this publication?
- Prestige level: How credible is the publisher?
- National, regional, or worldwide publication: Where in the world will the publication be delivered?
- Shelf life: How long will the publication be available to readers? How long will it be in a prime viewing location?
- Other benefits: Will this publication benefit me in other ways (improve SEO, give monetary compensation, provide free banner ad or print advertising, improve a photo editor relationship, etc.)?



Exclusivity — 4

Someone once explained to me the concept of publishers' exclusivity this way: It's like showing up to prom and someone else is wearing the same dress. While I would love seeing a wedding of mine in three incredible publications—like *Style Me Pretty*, *Southern Weddings*, and *Manhattan Bride*—publishers often have strict rules against concurrent publication.

Every publication has different rules on exclusivity. Most will be ok with you having posted some pictures on Facebook or on your photography blog, while some don't want more than one picture to have been seen anywhere. A lot of the bigger publications have a strict exclusivity policy, while some of the smaller ones have none at all.

Normally, I will submit to bigger publications first because of the higher benefits (prestige, audience reach, etc.). They can be harder to get accepted into, and sometimes you're competing with 400 other weddings for one of the 10 spots that week. Then if I get rejected, I'll submit to my second and third choices, and so on. Be ready to get rejected, because you will be. It's ok to be rejected— it doesn't necessarily mean your photos weren't good enough, it usually means it just wasn't a good fit for the publication, or the timing was bad (maybe they just published a wedding with similar details).

If I still don't get accepted or if I have a wedding that I don't think is strong enough detail-wise to be considered for a larger publication, I'll submit it through Two Bright Lights to 10 smaller, nonexclusive publications, and usually it'll get picked up by a few of them. I actually really like getting published in nonexclusives because it looks good on my end having been published in multiple locations, and the brides love it too.

After your wedding has been published in an exclusive publication, you can often submit it to nonexclusive blogs and magazines. Always double check with the photo editor to be on the safe side. Ignoring a publisher's exclusivity policies is an easy way to burn a bridge.

Now that you've been published, let the world know. Check out this video for three ways to show off the major accomplishment of getting your work published. ■



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INSPIRATIONS

with **JERRY GHIONIS**

My favorite photo in my portfolio is one I call *Angel*.

It represents **everything** I love in a photograph:
beauty, symmetry, strong composition,
rich tones, beautiful lighting, symbolism.

I shot it at the wedding of John and Monika in December 2011.



INSPIRATIONS



JERRY GHIONIS
Angel

This photo reminds me that the **elusive, iconic “wow” photo** for which all photographers strive is worth **fighting for.**

To me, it represents an angel sleeping on a cloud at the pearly gates. Some say it looks like a girl lying in a bubble bath. But when I first saw her dress, it reminded me of a cloud. And when I saw the amazing round gold-leaf staircases, I wondered if her dress, spread out on the floor, would fit neatly in the circle between them.

When she lay down, her head was lost in the dress. I placed a rolled-up towel under the dress, underneath her head, to allow the light to illuminate her face. Although a bird’s-eye view is nothing new, this image offered a different perspective, with the depth of the wall at the bottom of the frame leading your eyes into the bride. I hung over the balcony to get this perspective. My wife, Melissa, held my belt so I wouldn’t fall over the edge. There are strong symbols and triangles that are recognizable and consciously or subconsciously pleasing to the eye, namely the omega sign and the keyhole shape.

I originally opened the front doors to illuminate her, but there was too much light, and it was unflattering. I then closed the front doors, and used the existing ambient light from a chandelier directly above her and natural light filtering through a window directly below her.

When you have been shooting for as long as I have, you sometimes wonder if your best shots are behind you. This photo reminds me that the elusive, iconic “wow” photo for which all photographers strive is worth fighting for. My best photo is in my future, but for now this will do. ■



Camera: Nikon D3 | Lens: 14-24mm f2.8 | Focal Length: 14mm | Shutter Speed: 1/125 sec
Aperture: f3.5 | ISO: 640 | White Balance: Daylight | Light Source: Window and Ambient Light



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Q & A



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with
Salvatore Cincotta

Introducing the

SHUTTER MAGAZINE 

PRODUCT GUIDE

SOFTWARE & ONLINE RESOURCES

1 EDITING

In our industry, time is money, and when you're sitting down to edit your images, the last thing you want to do is waste your time using clumsy software. In the Editing Software category, you'll find a list of resources we think can help you save time and money, and produce better images.

EDITOR'S PICK **on** onOne Software

EDITING

Time is money! And onOne Software's Perfect Photo Suite 7.5 hits the mark. When sitting at your computer, it's never fun flipping back and forth between applications. This package has just about everything you could ever want in your postproduction workflow.

Best of all, you don't need PhotoShop! While the tool works seamlessly with PhotoShop and Lightroom as a plug-in, it operates as a stand-alone platform, allowing you unprecedented access to editing tools.

Perfect Photo Suite 7.5 includes these features:

Perfect B&W // Develop stunning black-and-white images quickly and easily. It includes powerful tools that add dramatic, elegant, and classic B&W looks to images instantly, offering you complete creative control.

Perfect Portrait 2 // Enjoy powerful portrait retouching, now improved with more accurate automated feature detection and enhancement tools to smooth skin, remove blemishes, brighten eyes and teeth, correct skin color, and reduce red eye.

Perfect Layers // Combine images and extend your image editing options in a layered file workflow without PhotoShop. Create and edit multilayered files directly from Lightroom, Aperture, or as a stand-alone application.

Perfect Effects 4 // Extend your creative power and find even more ways to create images with impact. Perfect Effects 4 delivers an extended library of photographic effects, frames and edges, and presets designed by industry experts via a flexible new browser with keyword search functionality and favorites selection.

Perfect Mask 5.2 // Create high-quality masks quickly and easily with automated functionality and powerful tools that make selecting subjects and isolating backgrounds for removal extraordinarily accurate.

Perfect Resize 7.5 // Perfect Resize is renowned across the photography and printing industries for its ability to increase image size well over 1,000 percent without the loss of sharpness or detail.

Focal Point 2 // Create realistic selective focus and depth-of-field effects after the shot. Choose from a selection of lens presets to produce a specific bokeh, or adjust controls to get the amount and kind of blur you want.

WATCH
NOW

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE!](#)

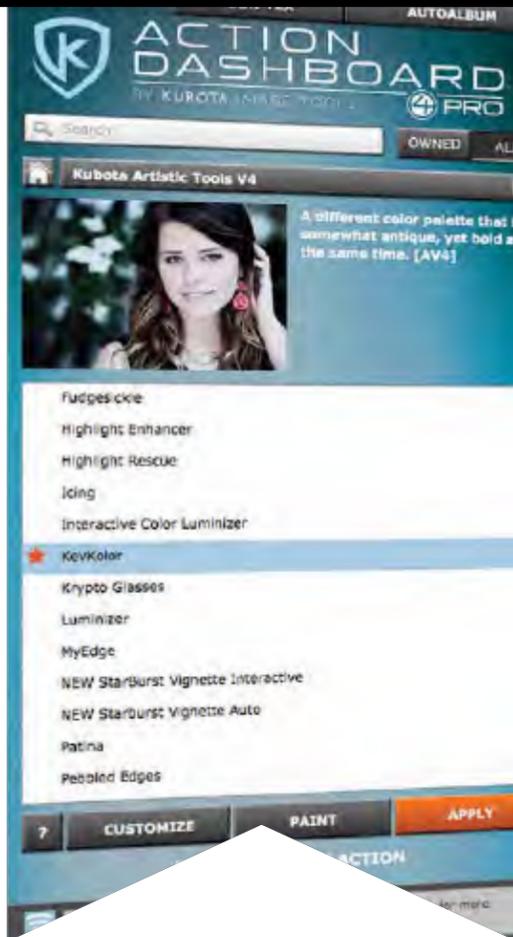
Unlike designers, photographers don't always need all the features of expensive video editing software. CyberLink PhotoDirector is the ideal tool for them.

Here are some of the key features PhotoDirector offers photographers.

- End-to-end Workflow Solution, now for Windows and Mac
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- Transform your photos into masterpieces with powerful regional and global adjustment tools
- Extensive photo presets, including the new HDR effect
- Bring out stunning photos with people beautifier and the new body shaper
- Remove unwanted objects with Content Aware Removal
- Share your photos in high-quality prints and on the Web; create animated slideshows

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KUBOTA IMAGE TOOLS



Kubota imaging tools should be part of your workflow vocabulary if they aren't already. With innovative tools for both Lightroom and PhotoShop, team Kubota makes it easy for you to create outstanding images for your clients.

The new 3-in-1 Kubota Dashboard combines action, borders and textures, and album design Dashboards, making them even easier to use.

Several new free features have been added, including the ability to batch actions through the Dashboard, allowing users to load any of the actions into their actions palette and use them through the PhotoShop Batch function.

Users can control and manage their own actions with the new Dashboard, which includes about 50 essential tools. All of this is available for free.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE!](#)

Having the right **EDITING SOFTWARE** can mean the difference between **MINUTES & HOURS** in front of your computer.

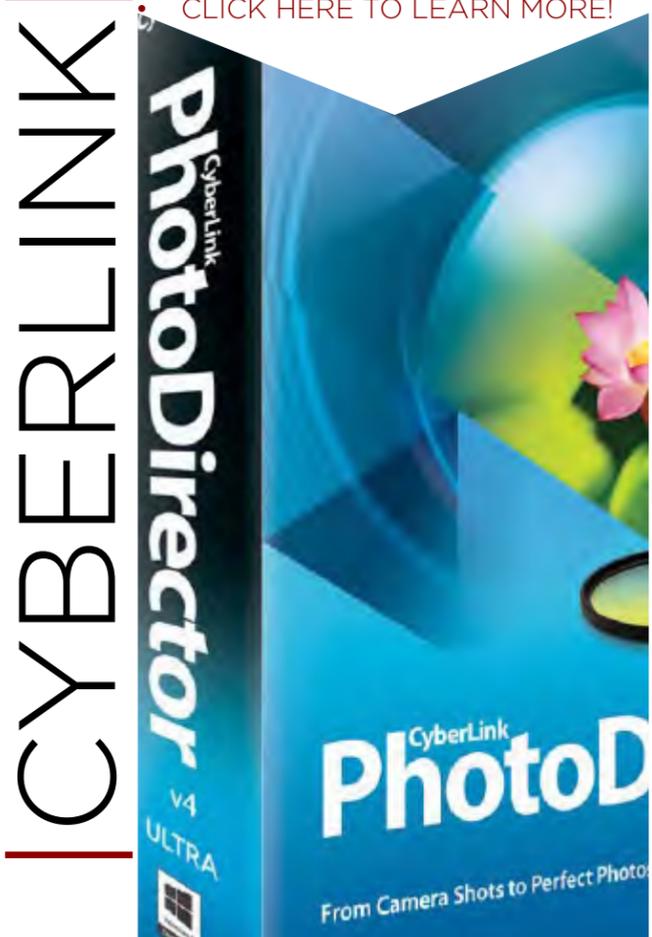
| ADOBE |
At the heart of the photography editing software world sits Adobe. Now under the Creative Cloud moniker, Adobe has incorporated Behance community features into its desktop applications, including Adobe PhotoShop and Illustrator.

| XARA |
Xara, one of the oldest software developers in the UK, produces Web-based products that include Photo and Graphic Designer 9. Its software specialty is photo editing and enhancement.

| PORTRAIT PROFESSIONAL |
Portrait Professional is a popular photo editing program from Anthropics Technology, which claims to be "trained in human beauty." Portrait Professional is a popular and award-winning product used by portrait photographers worldwide.

| COREL |
Corel Corporation created one of the first graphics programs for Windows. It specializes in photo editing software, including PaintShop Pro X5 and PhotoImpact X3.

| ARCSOFT |
Arcsoft is headed by CEO Michael Deng, a technology scientist with a lifelong passion for photography. ArcSoft is a pioneer in photo and video imaging technologies. It specializes in photo editing software products and apps that feature filters and special effects inside a user interface.



MOBILE APPS

The world is shrinking and becoming incredibly social. Mobile apps help you market your business and connect with your clients in ways never before possible. In the Mobile Apps category, we help you join the age of the Internet with our list of apps.

EDITOR'S PICK

Sticky albums.com

MOBILE APPS

This is one of the most powerful marketing tools on the market today! It's easy to use and viral in nature—your clients will go out of their way to share their images, and your logo and brand with them. Plain and simple, this is good for business!

It's been a little over a year since StickyAlbums splashed onto the scene. The concept is simple yet incredibly powerful. Creating a custom mobile app for each of our clients is the ultimate way to knock their socks off and kick-start your word-of-mouth referrals like nothing else has before.

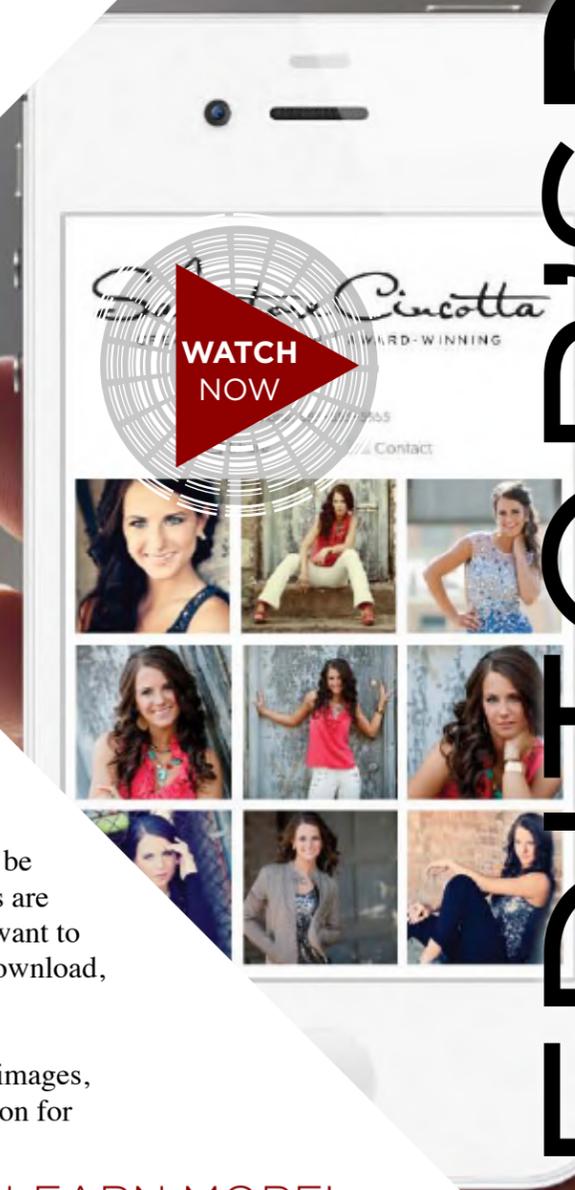
Because it is a subscription-based service, the company recommends creating a StickyAlbums for your clients just after they have placed their print order. This way you don't have to worry about competing with print sales, but more importantly, this is when they are most excited to share their images with their friends and family. Now they don't have to wait two weeks for the prints—they can have their favorite images with them wherever they go.

This is a marketing tool first and foremost. No one wants to look through a hundred images on their mobile device. Your albums will go viral when you put the very best images in your clients' StickyAlbums.

StickyAlbums' most important feature is that it allows images to be saved offline. Clients download the app one time, and the images are available on their phone with no data usage required when they want to show them off. And because the images are local after the first download, they open really fast.

Additional features include unlimited album creation, unlimited images, social media integration, YouTube integration, password protection for albums, and custom branding.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE!](#)



TRENDING PRODUCTS

MOBILE APPS

| SNAPSEED |

Snapseed, a creation of Nik Software (recently purchased by Google), is a versatile iPhone editing app that emphasizes editing on “one image only,” just like PhotoShop. It includes several creative filters.

| FILTERSTORM |

Filterstorm offers a desktop-style photo editor on your mobile phone. It supports up to five layers at a time, and allows you to make adjustments including brush, gradient, color range, vignette, and opacity.

| SQUARE |

Square is a popular mobile business solution that allows photographers (and small business owners) to accept credit card payments via iPhone, iPad, or Android. The company collects a 2.75 percent fee per swipe, with “no additional fees and next-day deposits.”

| POCKET LIGHT METER |

With this free mobile app, first developed by NuWaste, you can use your iPhone camera as a light meter. It measures reflected light, and also allows reciprocity calculations. It can be used in conjunction with manual film cameras, and also offers “better low light performance.”

“

It's hard to remember life
before cell phones.

Your clients **want to see images NOW**
& share them
with the world...

**SHOW
THEM HOW!**

The right mobile apps
will get your name out there
& let your clients
do your marketing for you!

”

STUDIO MANAGEMENT

Being organized can help your studio stand out from the crowd and provide a better level of customer service. In the Studio Management category, we have reviewed several platforms that will help you manage your studio—whether you're a one-man operation or have a stable of shooters working for you.

EDITOR'S
PICK

STUDIOCLOUD™



STUDIO MANAGEMENT

With over 50,000 businesses using StudioCloud for their management needs, I would say this company knows a thing or two about studio management.

In our studio, we needed a tool that would allow us to track customer data, including contact information, sales data, and history, as well as conduct robust scheduling. StudioCloud has become the hammer in our studio toolbox.

Two of my favorite features are automatic email reminders and the ability to integrate my calendar with my iPhone and iCal.

StudioCloud provides an easy-to-use cloud-based business solution that includes client management, calendaring, point-of-sale, bookkeeping, reporting, marketing campaigns, and project management tools. Utilizing the Adobe Flash Platform, StudioCloud is able to provide an intuitive user interface across multiple devices and screens where creative businesses can access their information with or without an Internet connection. StudioCloud is used by tens of thousands of creative professionals—including photographers, designers, and videographers—in over 100 countries.

Out of the gate, StudioCloud is a powerful tool for any business. With the addition of its Add-On services, it becomes cost-effective business management software that would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to develop and customize for your business.

StudioCloud provides impressive mobility by syncing all of your StudioCloud data between the cloud and all of your Internet-enabled devices.

CloudProofing // CloudProofing by StudioCloud offers photographers an easy and powerful integrated online proofing system they can use to sell their images online.

CloudBooking // CloudBooking by StudioCloud offers an integrated online booking solution that is fully customizable to meet most every business's booking needs.

CloudAlerts // CloudAlerts provides automatic email, text message, and postcard reminders to businesses, their employees, and their customers.

CloudStorage // CloudStorage provides online integrated storage.

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EDITOR'S PICK

FEATURED PRODUCTS

STUDIO MANAGEMENT

Light Blue Software makes one product: Light Blue, business management software for photographers.

It's designed for all types of photographers, it's easy to use, and it makes admin simple.

This company knows that photographers would much prefer to be out shooting and making money than doing their business admin! Light Blue gave its software to thousands of photographers around the world in exchange for their feedback; it's a small, responsive company that uses that feedback to make its software even better.

Light Blue is desktop software, so you don't need an Internet connection to use it. That's a massive advantage over Web-based systems—you will always have access to your data! For photographers who want to manage their business on the go, Light Blue has recently developed iPad and iPhone apps as well.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE!](#)

TRENDING PRODUCTS

| PIXIFI |

Pixifi, founded by photographer Tim Hussey, is designed to simplify and organize your photography business. The all-inclusive studio management program allows you to input clients, billing, leads, workshops, events, invoicing, payments, locations, and more.

| SHOOTQ |

ShootQ helps automate and optimize your business so you can spend less time doing paperwork and more time being creative. From lead tracking to online booking and payment collection, ShootQ is a studio management program that can assist you from initial client contact to final product delivery.

| SIMPLY STUDIO |

Simply Studio is a studio management system designed to help photographers keep track of clients, stay on top of bookkeeping, and deliver final products. It touts itself as "the best online proofing and selling system," promising to "increase sales and provide clients with a great experience."

| STUDIO PLUS SOFTWARE |

Studio Plus Software offers a full array of studio management solutions designed to help photographers manage their business by providing digital workflow and e-commerce solutions.

| PSM QUEST |

PSM Quest is a studio management program designed to make it easy to manage your photography business. Its developers promise "value, ease of use, and utility."



Keeping your
business organized

can be a job in & of itself.

SIMPLIFY & AUTOMATE

as much as you can
with studio management tools!

Spend your time & energy
being creative &

increasing your bottom line!



LIGHT BLUE

Light Blue customer comments...

"The best investment for the business side of my work I've made"

"I'm bowled over by how amazing Light Blue is and wondering how I ever managed without it."

"I'm seriously impressed with how easy to use it is and how immensely seamless the data transfer is."

"Great service from the guys at Light Blue Software – couldn't be quicker or more efficient."

WEBSITE DESIGN

In today's ever-changing social market, your website is the first vision of your work, and today's client is extremely tech-savvy. Is your website prime time? In the Website Design category, we review a list of website providers that can get you and your business on the right path—quickly, easily, and effectively.

EDITOR'S PICK zenfolio

WEBSITE DESIGN & HOSTING

We live in a digital world, and most if not all photographers require a digital storefront. When was the last time you heard a client say, "I was just walking by and decided to have my picture taken"? Reality check. It doesn't work that way!

Today, our storefront is the beginning of the process for most of our clients. Your website is your store, and clients make decisions about your business and if they want to work with you based on what they see.

Zenfolio wants to simplify the process of building and maintaining your virtual store. All while making complex development a thing of the past for you and your business.

It offers an all-in-one portfolio and online proofing solution that is ready as soon as you open your account. Choose from a selection of built-in pages or create custom pages to suit your individual needs.

All Zenfolio sites are built using HTML and HTML5, making them easily compatible with mobile devices.

Every account comes with a fully integrated photo blog that maintains your design identity and allows for an easy showcase of photos and videos in blog posts.

The shopping cart and the entire checkout experience are fully integrated with your website. The Zenfolio e-commerce platform is designed for photographers by providing them the flexibility and features to get from shooting to selling in as little time as possible.

In addition to using a custom URL, Zenfolio gives you tools for increasing the visibility of your site. Everything that needs to be done to make your site search-engine optimized is done for you automatically, behind the scenes.

You can include social media buttons from Facebook, Pinterest, Google+, and Twitter into your pages, encouraging sharing between your visitors and enabling viral promotion of your content.

Entice your customers with special deals by using the flexible coupon functionality. You can create amount- or percentage-based coupons, make them applicable to a specific event, set expiration dates or number of uses, and more.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE!](#)



EDITOR'S PICK

FEATURED PRODUCTS- WEBSITE DESIGN & HOSTING

LightRocket is all about delivering value. Its creators have firsthand understanding of the challenges facing photographers, as well as the opportunities.

Core services include secure cloud storage, customizable personal websites, and archive management tools.

LightRocket takes no commission or service fees. It acts as a service hub for each member's personal archives, providing professional but easy-to-use tools for managing, marketing, and distributing digital archives. The service has a distinctly professional feel, and we expect that it will appeal to anybody with passion for photography.

The team at LightRocket believes in providing a great service and continually evolving, expanding, and improving functionality.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE!](#)

LIGHTROCKET



When I started my business, I launched my first website through PhotoBiz. It was easy to use and gave me the professional look I needed.

PhotoBiz specializes in designing and hosting HTML5 portfolio and content sites, stores, blogs, and client proofing, all of which can be seen on mobile and tablet devices.

All of its website solutions are built on a simple online control panel powered by the Passionate Support team.

Whether you want to show off your work, sell online, or tell your story, you're covered with these website solutions.

Why PhotoBiz?

- 1 Access to a collection of interchangeable designs so you can update the look and feel of your website anytime
- 2 Unlimited access to the Passionate Support team
- 3 The company is continuously building innovative new designs, adopting new technology, and integrating new features to enhance its products

PhotoBiz's newest product is Point of Sale. It's powered by its Store, and allows you to make sales on the go through your Apple or Android smartphone.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE!](#)

PHOTOBIZ

TRENDING PRODUCTS

| LIVEBOOKS |

Founded in 2005, Livebooks is a content management platform that offers photo sharing, e-commerce, and print-on-demand solutions for websites, mobile applications, and digital storefronts. The company's primary focus is on "elegance in design, quality in product, and simplicity in the user experience."

| APHOTOFOLIO |

APhotoFolio was founded in 2008 by Erik Dungan and Rob Haggart (former director of photography for *Outside* and *Men's Journal*), whose focus is on website design for photographers. They say to look no further if you seek "beautiful designs, ease of use, and powerful customizations."

| CREATIVEMOTIONDESIGN |

CreativeMotionDesign specializes in portfolio website designs for photographers. It offers HTML5, Flash, unlimited pages, easy content management, a splash page, HD video pages, and a built-in photo cart.

| FOLIOLINK |

Foliolink offers "websites for the creative" that are designed to help photographers stand out from the crowd. It offers Flash and HTML5 designs, as well as management tools that allow the user to switch designs and control image sizes. It also offers iPad and iPhone shadow sites, customization tools, e-commerce, SEO enhancements, and more.

| PHOTOSHELTER |

PhotoShelter offers website and business tools that help photographers grow their business. Its websites include built-in e-commerce, secure cloud storage, client proofing tools, and more. Its site solutions include built-in SEO and social media tools.

“

The average visitor is on your website less than 3 min.

You have

3 mins or less

to tell the viewer who you are

& **WHY THEY SHOULD HIRE YOU.**

”

ALBUMS PRESENTATION & PROOFING

Providing your clients with a well-designed album is crucial for sales in your studio. But who wants to spend six to ten hours in front of a computer that could be spend out in the field shooting? In the Album Design, Presentation, and Proofing category, we review a handful of programs that will reduce the time you spend on album design, increase your sales, and give you more time to dedicate to other parts of your business.

EDITOR'S
PICK



LumaFix:FotoFusion

ALBUMS, PRESENTATION & PROOFING

Album design. Whoa. Did you just get chills of horror thinking about it? Next to editing images, this is the biggest time sink for any photographer. When I first started designing wedding albums, I would spend six to ten hours per album. It was brutal.

I had to look for tools to streamline the process. FotoFusion is one such tool!

Both Mac- and PC- compatible. And with two versions, Enhanced and Extreme, you can create a beautiful, professional book in a fraction of the time it would take using other tools.

Bottom line:

**The tool is easy to learn and easy to use.
It's loaded with features.**

Print your albums anywhere. Easily adjusted form factors allow you to get your 10x10 bridal book printed in one place, and then in just a few clicks you can resize the book and send it off to a different printer as an 8x10.

Blending Modes // The most powerful image tool to be added to the FotoFusion family in a long time allows you to enhance your images in unique and beautiful ways.

Image blending modes can be applied to a single photo or "mixed in" with the canvas using background modes to create stunning overlaid results. Effect presets transform images in one click, while advanced settings allow you to adjust blending options and create your own recipes.

Web albums // Make a project . . . click one button . . . and bam!—your project shows up as a digital album on an iPad, iPhone, or Android device, or in a PC or Mac Web browser.

Flip from page to page like a book, jump to any page, or share it by email, Facebook, or Twitter. Albums are available for 30 days from publication. V5 users can publish as many online albums as they like, at no charge. Enjoy!

Project Versioning // Go back in time and load earlier versions of projects, listed by date and time.

Lose power or shut down unexpectedly? FotoFusion now includes auto save and crash restore. Never worry about losing a single edit.

FotoFusion®
THE ULTIMATE PHOTOGRAPHY SOFTWARE

WATCH
NOW

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SHUTTER MAGAZINE | www.BehindTheShutter.com

EDITOR'S PICK

You gotta show it to sell it! It's that simple. The folks at TimeExposure have made it easier than ever to show it to your clients and generate big sales in the process.

TimeExposure was founded in 2004 by Australian portrait/wedding photographer Fran Howlett and her husband, Peter, to create innovative software for professional photographers.

ProSelect, the company's flagship software, provides photographers with a presentation, sales, and workflow solution for running a professional in-person sales presentation with which you can easily design, show, order, and produce what you are selling. Wall-mounted products can be framed and shown at exact size.

ProSelect's Room View feature allows you to show an image or layout on the client's own walls, but you can also create and show complete wall gallery designs with any mix of framed prints, composites, and canvases at the same time.

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Client Galleries
Digital Downloads
Print Fulfillment
Your Prices



No commissions, no set-up fees! Music to my ears. Who wants to pay commissions to hosting companies when it's your work that created the sale?

ShootProof is an online photo proofing service that allows photographers to upload, share, and sell photography online. You control your products, pricing, and print labs. The service presents your photos in a professional gallery, handles the ordering process, and allows you to spend more time taking pictures!

It's all about choice. The service allows photographers to "Shoot and Share" or "Shoot and Sell" on a client-by-client and event-by-event basis. The photographer controls print and digital options. The print/product sales markup and digital images can be for free or for sale at any price per gallery. ShootProof galleries work across all devices.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE!](#)

| FUNDY SOFTWARE |

Fundy Software, founded by Andrew "Fundy" Funderburg, is devoted to "helping photographers design faster and better than they ever have." Its specialty is album design and workflow software solutions.

| COLLAGES |

Collages is a lab for professional photographers that also offers free album design software. Its software, for both Macs and PCs, offers hundreds of page styles, makes, and backgrounds.

| ALBUM DS |

Album DS (Design Made Simple) is an album design tool that primarily functions as a toolbar for Adobe PhotoShop CS and higher. Its features include preferred template folders, automatic album creation, website creation, slideshows, and template saving.

| YOUSELECTIT |

YouSelectIt allows photographers to design an album in "30 seconds or less" on both Macs and PCs. Features include 10,000-plus templates, custom templates, and image organization.

| VIAPHOTO |

ViaPhoto is an album design software solution that helps streamline photography workflow with "just one click." With it, photographers can collaborate online, create album designs, and proof photos.

| PHOTOGENE |

The Photogene mobile app is about "improving your digital photos and having fun" with its comprehensive set of professional editing tools.

NEXT MONTH

CAMERAS & ACCESSORIES

Are you always wondering what you should get next?

Come back next month for our comprehensive look at cameras and accessories!

*how to keep your
head above
water*

4 TIPS

for

BUILDING YOUR CINEMA BUSINESS

with Rob Adams



>> Don't take on too much work.

This mistake is all too common. We land a client who wants us to film and edit her wedding or event. She's ready to hand us a sizable cash deposit. It's difficult to turn it away, and we feel that we can handle the workload. The fact is, if you don't have a lot of help, you can't.

I fell into this trap early in my career. I was charging only a few thousand dollars for a wedding video, and felt that I needed to do high volume in order to make money. While this may be true in theory, the reality is if you can't complete the postproduction, you're only hurting your business. The money may be coming in, but when are you going to have the time to do anything with it? I was trapped in a sea of 57 edits in one season, and it was just me. To make matters worse, I was unwilling to let go of creative control to get it done faster.

Someone once told me that success is not measured by how much you work, but by how much free time you have while still earning a living. The point is, don't book more jobs than you can handle. I've found that by myself, I'm able to edit about 10 weddings a year at the level of quality I'm aiming for. The shooting is the easy part. I go out some weekends and break my back to shoot a wedding. I'll work a 13-hour day, no problem, but spending 40 hours in editing is when life begins to suck. So, with that formula in mind, if I desire to shoot 30 weddings a year, I'll need at least two more editors to make it worth my time.

Find a way to charge what you are worth by taking a good, honest look at the quality of your work, and comparing it to that of others in the industry. Find out what your competitors are charging, and consider your market. Are you charging too little and taking on too many jobs, or can you afford to raise your prices (provided your work is up to par) and shoot less? Ask others to critique your work, or hire an established pro for one-on-one mentoring to get a realistic outlook on your skills and what they are worth. If nothing else, hire help and take the financial hit. Taking eight months to deliver a wedding video is only going to hurt your reputation.

BY Rob Adams



I've seen it happen over and over again: startup filmmakers and established videographers getting in over their heads trying to run their cinema/video businesses. I've seen it with photographers trying to start a video/cinema division too.

The key to it all is understanding the limits of our skill sets, and then managing client expectations to coincide with our skills. It's a fine balance, and the single most important factor to consider. If you apply the principles correctly, you'll have happy clients and a short, manageable queue of postproduction work.

Your business, no matter what field you are in, shouldn't rule your life. Owning a business is hard work, but if it's causing you to neglect other more important things in life—your spouse, children, friendships, sanity—it's not worth it. No amount of money can replace what truly fulfills me in life. If my business detracts from these things, something is wrong that needs to be fixed. I've been able to balance my successful video-production studio with my life, and I continue to find and adapt new ways of making it even better.

>> Don't be a gearhead.

I understand that gear can be an addiction. With all the new cinema stuff rolling out, it's hard to not excitedly purchase new equipment. But cinema is all about good storytelling, and you don't need the latest \$15,000 Steadicam or helicopter to do it. I use a slider, flyer, and sometimes a jib crane in my wedding films, but I use them very subtly to enhance a story, not to support it. In fact, some of my best films are the ones where all I had at my disposal were monopods, tripods, and good lenses.

If you are just starting out, don't spend tens of thousands on gear. Start with cameras that fit your market. Today's less-expensive DSLRs shoot amazing video when used correctly, so it's more about how you use the gear as opposed to how high-end it is. If you're going to invest in anything, invest in lenses. Good optics are the key to capturing good images if you know how to use light correctly. You don't need the latest viewfinder, follow-focus rig, or matte box to produce a good story. Learn to master your craft with good visual storytelling, and keep your shots steady! I can't stress this enough.

A simple heartfelt story with locked-down and steady shots is much more effective than all the Steadicam and jib shots you can throw in there. You'll be surprised how much brides will pay for wedding films that tell a story cleanly. Remember, they aren't looking at the production value specifically, they are looking for emotion. Yes, you want your edit to be clean so your work stands out as more professional, but clients want to feel good about what they are watching. They don't care whether you're using a DSLR or a Canon C300 or a 1DC.

We professionals may notice those kinds of amazing differences in production, but as you're building your business, you can't afford to go into debt. Start with decent cameras (try not to mix camera models, to ensure consistent quality), four to five good lenses, monopods and tripods, maybe a slider. Invest in some good microphones and digital audio recorders. This leads us to our next tip.



>> Start simple.

We are talking about production here. I see too many new videographers/cinematographers with no experience in producing videos, editing, or screen direction trying to use too many cameras and too many devices with too few experienced crew members. The result is a poorly told story, not to mention poor production value.

Let's define poor production value: shaky shots, poor color balance, crew members in shots, rigging in shots, bad focus, poor audio, missing audio elements, and missing footage. If you are experiencing any of these problems, I'm willing to bet it's partly because you are trying to do too much on an event. Don't try to emulate what the top guys in the business are doing right away. It took them years to get to the point where they can manage all of those camera angles and audio sources and then produce high-quality run-and-gun shooting, using instincts that are honed over time.

You have to start small, maybe with just two cameras. Concentrate on cleanly capturing your wedding ceremony and reception events (first dance, toasts, etc.), then focus on more advanced storytelling techniques and more complicated productions. Build up your skill set. It's better to create a simple, clean two-camera production than a three- or four-camera shoot where none of the shots are steady, focused, or correctly composed. Master your current equipment before slowly expanding.

You're not going to be able to grow your business on poor production value. If you are booking clients who seem to be ok paying for poor production value, chances are they aren't the ones paying bigger fees. It's the difference between working more and earning less, or working less and earning more. It's up to you. I know I don't want to shoot 57 weddings a year ever again.

>> Don't be afraid to outsource.

You can't do it all. Good videos, specifically wedding videos, require many hours of postproduction. If you are editing your life away, chances are you are not living life to the fullest. If you aren't editing much but shooting lots, chances are your clients are waiting a long time for their films. Neither of these scenarios is good. I had to let go of my creative control early on and allow others to take on some of my editing.

I spent days if not weeks training them to edit in my style. I maintain quality control by reviewing each film and giving input, but it's better than my spending 60 hours a week staring at a computer monitor in addition to having to run my business. I'd rather be focused on growing my business, marketing, blogging, and thinking of new ways to get the clients I want. You don't have to let go completely. I still edit the weddings I choose to, usually my favorites of the year. It keeps the editing process enjoyable.

Always be looking out for new freelance editors, and take the time to train them. You don't want to be left with a huge backlog of work if your one and only editor decides to up and quit in the middle of the editing season. There are certain things I continue to manage on my own, and same-day edits are one of those things. I don't necessarily enjoy doing them, but I have to ensure the quality my client expects on the wedding day is produced on time, and I don't feel comfortable trusting someone else with that task. Plus, the stress that comes with same-day edits is enough to drive away editors. You have to decide what parts of your business you want to control, but if you are shooting more than 15 weddings a year, it may be hard to keep pace if your wedding films are short-form and require high production quality.

I hope these tips help you to step back and look at the bigger picture. Producing good videos is hard work requiring long hours. If you're doing it quickly, chances are the quality is suffering. If you are able to produce amazing videos in under a few hours, contact me. I could use you. Just be realistic, and manage your clients' expectations by always underpromising and overdelivering.

Check out the video for an example of clean production value. Notice how steady and deliberate everything is. Steadiness is the key to good storytelling. ■



BETTERQUALITY . PREMIUMLEATHERS . VIRTUALALBUM-BUILDER



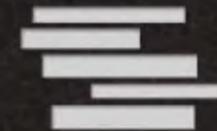
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THE SIGNATURE
COLLECTION

by Salvatore Cincotta

same-sex
WEDDINGS
AN EMERGING MARKET



WITH KRISTIN KORPOS



BY KRISTIN KORPOS

The flourishing acceptance and legality of same-sex marriage is increasing opportunities for wedding photographers. And with the U.S. Supreme Court's recent rulings, gay weddings will soon be mainstream. Now is the best time to tap this emerging market.

ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

The financial impact same-sex weddings have had on the wedding industry is enormous and will continue to build. In 2010, the Census Bureau reported 131,729 same-sex married households and 514,735 same-sex unmarried households in the United States. These numbers show the imbalance that exists, with so many same-sex couples living together but not yet married. This means there are a lot of potential wedding clients out there.

Same-sex couples also have more disposable income to pay for photography services. The Census reported that unmarried same-sex couples had an average household income of \$103,980, while unmarried heterosexual couples had an average household income of \$62,857.

The U.S. wedding industry saw \$48 billion in business in 2011, and will grow to \$54.3 billion by 2016, according to IBIS World Research. If same-sex marriages were legalized nationally, same-sex weddings would add \$9.5 billion in revenue to the wedding industry, estimates Forbes.com.



But don't gay people hire only gay photographers?

This is a myth, says my friend Bernadette Coveney-Smith, who touts herself as the nation's first gay-wedding planner: "The quality of the work [and the value] that the vendor provides are more important factors than the sexuality of the business owner, as long as the business owner is supportive of same-sex marriage."

Bernadette knows her stuff. She has planned hundreds of same-sex weddings. If you are a photographer who is pro-marriage equality and you do quality work, same-sex couples will not be biased against you for being straight. Just like any other couple, gay couples are looking for a photographer whose images they adore, and with whom they feel comfortable. Being photographed is personal for everybody.

This means that as a photographer, you have to be comfortable "showing what you shoot" on your website and blog. If you want to shoot same-sex weddings, you should be displaying same-sex work to prospective clients. If you don't, they might get the vibe that you are not gay friendly and pass you by for the next photographer.

If you don't yet have any same-sex shots in your portfolio, set up a shoot with models from Model Mayhem, Craigslist, or through word of mouth.

PREPPING FOR SAME-SEX CLIENTS

You will need to have gender-neutral language on your website, blog, all marketing collateral, client forms, and contracts. When you market to same-sex couples, it is not just "bride" and "groom" anymore. Everything your clients see needs to be inclusive and gay-friendly. Two women are both brides, and two men are both grooms. Obviously you wouldn't expect a woman to sign under the line that says "groom," and viceversa.

In order to be inclusive of same-sex couples, you may either tweak your client forms and contracts to say "bride/groom" under each area where a signature is required by your clients, or you may wish to have three separate wedding contracts—one for a bride and a groom, one for two brides, and one for two grooms.

I have found that due to the specific nature of prewedding questionnaires (which I use to help establish timelines and day-of information), it is best to have a questionnaire for each type of couple. So I have a questionnaire for a bride and groom, for two brides, and for two grooms. I am not going to ask the grooms whether there is going to be a bouquet toss, because that just doesn't happen. But I will ask two brides if they are planning one.

Is photographing same-sex couples so different?

Capturing images of two women or two men who are in love takes the same photographic skill as capturing a woman and a man in love. Photographing a wedding is about capturing the celebration of love between the two individuals, regardless of their genders.

There are a few things that may feel different to the photographer, such as the overall flow of the wedding day. Same-sex couples often take a nontraditional or more creative approach to their weddings. For example, instead of one aisle, there may be two aisles, or they may choose to get ready in the same room and therefore see each other prior to the wedding ceremony.

Additionally, photographing two women in bridal gowns or dresses, one or two women in pants, or two men in suits may be a new visual experience for the photographer. But you should have the artistic and visual skill necessary to create a well-balanced image. Have fun with it!

If you have attended a same-sex wedding, you may have noticed that emotions run very high since the legal recognition of same-sex marriages is so new. There also may be sensitive situations involving a family member who has not yet fully come to terms with his or her child's sexuality.

If you can shoot heterosexual weddings, you can shoot same-sex weddings. No special expertise is required, and if somebody tells you it is, don't believe it. Sure, you may feel a bit intimidated because visually it is new territory, but at the end of the day, love is love.

In next month's issue, I'll go more in depth into what to expect at a same-sex wedding, and will provide some tips for posing couples. I will also discuss ways you can market your photography services to this market. ■



“Thank you Adorama, for leading the industry with practical resources and unending support for photographers. Adorama is my go to for the tools I need and the foundation I want.”

Jennifer Rozenbaum
Generations Photography



Photo Credit:
Ananda Lima Photography

A wedding couple stands next to a classic white car in a park-like setting. The bride is wearing a white gown and holding a bouquet, while the groom is in a white tuxedo. The background features trees with autumn foliage and a fountain. A black text box is overlaid on the right side of the image.

WEDDING PACKETS

WITH A PURPOSE

WITH TAYLOR CINCOTTA



BY TAYLOR CINCOTTA

How do you present the wedding contract to your client?
On copy paper? By email?

Someone who has put the most important day of their lives in your hands and who is paying you thousands of dollars deserves a lot more than that. Plus, what does email or copy paper say about your brand? Do you think it gives them warm fuzzies about the amount of money they have just committed?

When our brides book with us, they get a black, branded, textured presentation folder filled with:

- Copy of their contract printed on linen résumé paper
- Black linen envelope stamped and addressed to us for them to return the signature portion of their contract
- Custom cover sheet that includes their name and date
- Copy of the pricing they have locked into
- Cover letter explaining what's included in the folder
- Timeline worksheets
- Tips for being photographed and videotaped
- Fliers from our recommended vendors
- Fliers about our Allure studio sessions
- Fliers about the Client for Life program they have included in their wedding package



Everything's printed on linen résumé paper, which has a rich texture.

Their packet is also functional. The timeline worksheets I include (you can read my article from last month for details on those) help them plan out their day in advance to ensure we have time to capture all the images they want. It breaks it down and makes it easy to understand how much time we need for each part of their day.

The photo and video tips provide them invaluable information with which they're probably not familiar, such as the advantages of getting ready in a hotel with large windows versus in a church basement. If your clients can help you get better photos that will ultimately make them love their pictures even more, why not arm them with that information?

The fliers from our recommended vendors not only help our brides, they help us too. Our vendors give a special discount to our brides, so it's a win-win for everyone: Our brides are getting a deal, and we know they will be working with quality vendors. We've been working with our makeup artists (MakeupArtistry2.com) for five years. One reason is that they do amazing work, but more importantly, they are on time! All the other makeup artists we've dealt with have made our brides late for pictures because they make them go last in the makeup chair so they have the "freshest" face. Our girls know that if Sal and I are going to be there at 12:30 p.m. to shoot the bride, then she needs to be done with makeup by noon. They have never been late or let us down. They also know what makeup colors and styles photograph well. And because we work with them so much, they can use our photos to tailor their artistry to ours.



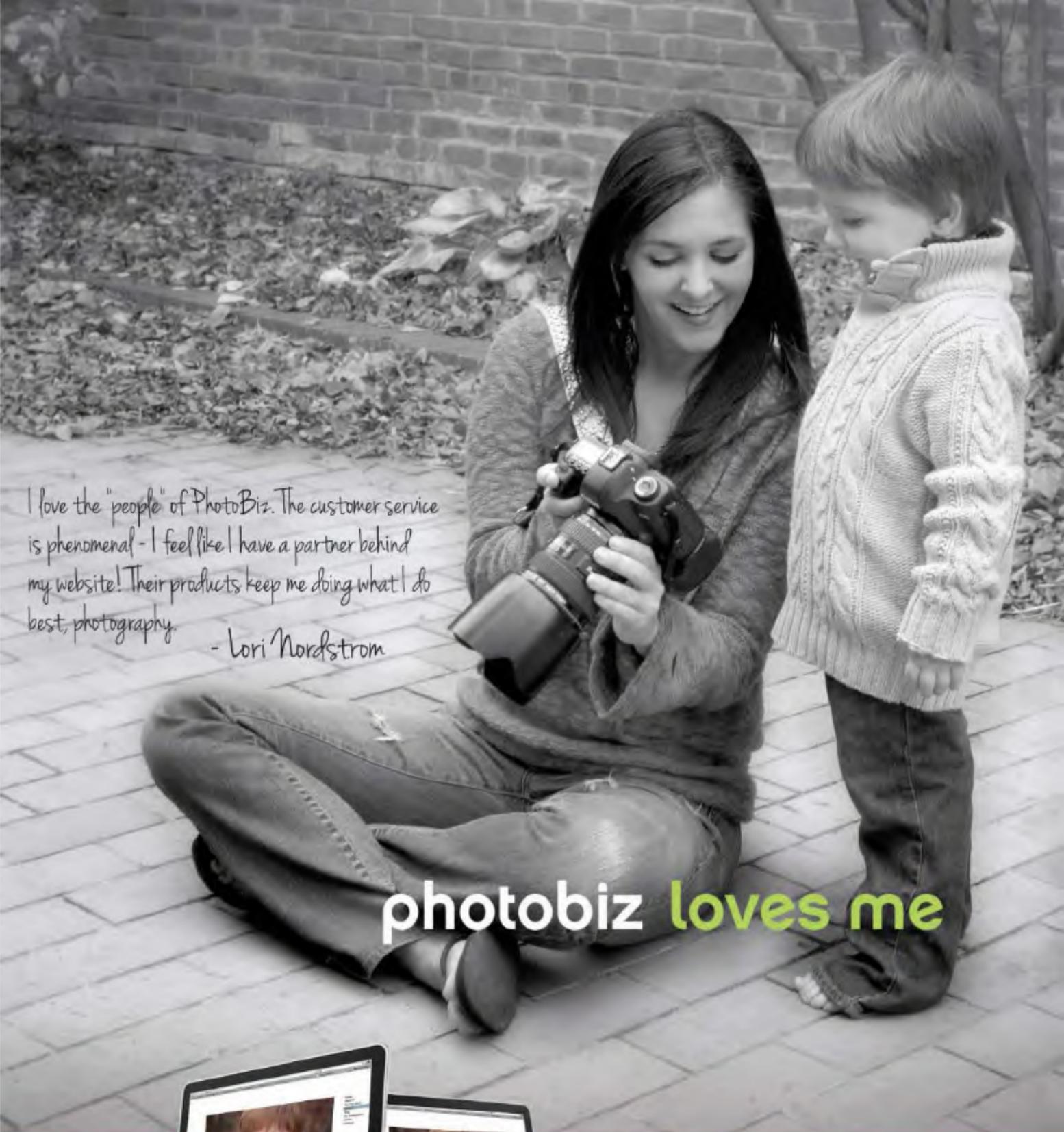
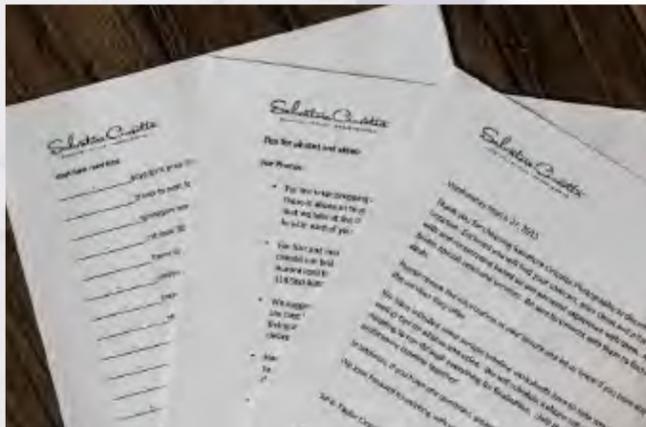
Be sure everything that touches your clients' hands **matches your brand & provides the experience** that you want them to have.

I include fliers in the folder that show off to our clients the other services we offer. We don't include our Allure glamour sessions in our wedding packages, so this is a perfect opportunity for me to plant the seed in my bride's head of buying an Allure session as a gift for the groom, or incorporating it into the bachelorette party.

The concept for this folder came from a Louis Vuitton experience Sal and I had. When we had checked out at the store, they didn't just hand us a receipt. The receipt was printed on résumé paper, folded neatly, and put into a branded, textured envelope that matched the branded and textured shopping bag my purse was in, tied with a brown leather strap. That was just the receipt! You think I threw that beautiful packaging away? No way, I have kept everything from every purchase from that store because it is so beautiful and has such high quality. I reuse their boxes and bags to hold jewelry when I travel or to store items in my closet. And this is exactly what I am hoping my clients do with their packaging.

Be sure everything that touches your clients' hands matches your brand and provides the experience that you want them to have. When someone commits thousands of dollars to you, what do you want them to feel? Make sure the way you hand them their contract evokes that emotion.

It doesn't have to cost a fortune (our folders are less than \$2 apiece), but it does have to be high-quality and thoughtful. Doing this will get your clients excited and talking about their experience, which will ultimately lead to more business and more happy customers. ■



I love the "people" of PhotoBiz. The customer service is phenomenal - I feel like I have a partner behind my website! Their products keep me doing what I do best, photography.
- Lori Nordstrom

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GRAB THEIR ATTENTION WITH

VIDEO

WITH BLAIR PHILLIPS

SENIOR VIDEOS



BY BLAIR PHILLIPS

Grabbing the attention of the youth market is no simple task these days. The Internet has put everything immediately at our fingertips. When teens want to know how to do something or to learn about a new product, they don't head to the library. They search for a video online. And video marketers face several unique challenges.

Video marketing allows me to do several key things with high school seniors. I can describe myself and what I do. I could provide that information in text—a big soulless block of text with zero emotion. In video, your personality and expertise are visceral. It allows you to tell them what they need and must have. Video makes your message personal, as if it were filmed especially for each viewer. Potential clients can put a face with a name. Video takes all the guesswork out of a message.

Our whole senior photography program is centered and built upon a video. This is how we launch, maintain, and remain in contact with seniors throughout the season. We send a link to the video to all the seniors we shot the previous year, and ask them to send it to any underclassmen they knew. This way, it's coming from someone they know.



“Video takes all the guesswork **out** of a message.”

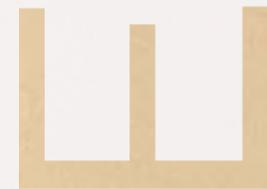
Several components must be brought together to ensure a video's success.

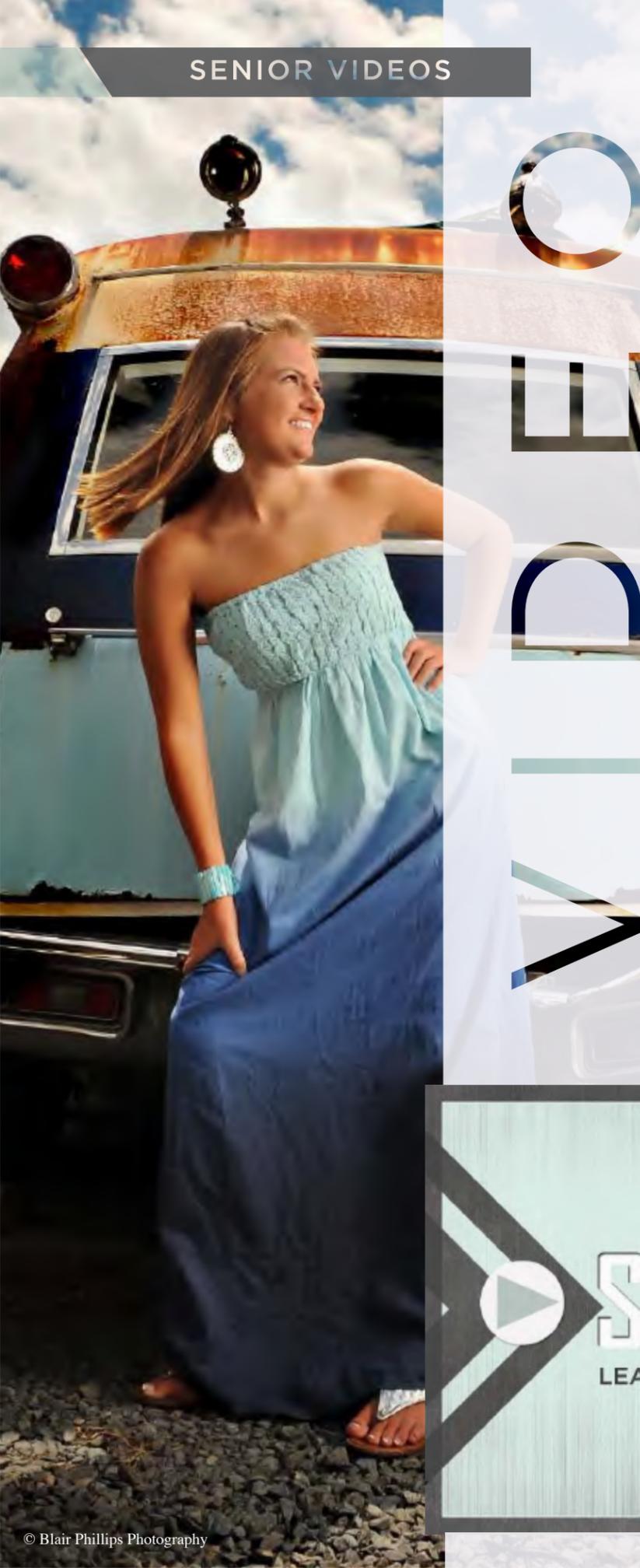
- > Keep it less than three minutes long. People have a short attention span.
- > The video style should match your brand and personality. Before filming, write down the key points you want to get out so you don't get lost for words. Have someone hold them up on a large piece of paper, or write and memorize a script. This way you will not ramble on and create a reason for people to tune out.
- > Create a sense of urgency.
- > Get straight to the point and make your message very clear. Eliminate any guesswork.
- > Any background or setting should add value, make sense, and be visually appealing. My senior marketing video this year was filmed on a music-themed background with an amplifier and a guitar for props. (We refer to our senior reps as "little rock stars.")
- > Use music in every video, but be careful not to violate copyright. That sends a bad message, since, as a professional, you'd expect no one to use your photos without your permission. (I use Triple Scoop for all my royalty-free music.)

All of my videos are filmed with a Nikon D4 to ensure a very high-end look. Most any DSLR with video capability is a safe choice. Its ability to film with wide-open apertures is what makes the DSLR a must for me.

Lighting is just as important in video as it is in photography. I generally use Westcott TD6 Spiderlites in a three-light setup. I have a main light, a kicker light, and a hair light. These are continuous daylight balanced fluorescents, so what you see is what you get. A wireless microphone is another must-have for a seamless and effective video, and you shouldn't skimp on this piece.

Not everyone's comfortable being on camera. If you're not, get someone to step in for you. Offer an exchange of services or cross-promotion to a video pro. If none of the equipment choices above are in your reach, you can still get the job done with a Flip Mino or Kodak pocket video camera. These won't give you a really high-end look, but can still provide what you need.





We use video marketing in other ways too.

It's hard to get people to respond to you these days. When I receive an email inquiry, one of the first things I do is film a quick iPhone video thanking the potential client for his or her interest. This always gets a great response. We also do all of our promotions and announcements in the form of videos.

You may also ask some past seniors to make cameo appearances in your marketing video, which can help your audience relate to your message. The video can become a sort of FAQ.

Properly used, all these factors can up add up to great marketing success. If this all seems like way too much work for you, just remember how many new photographers enter this industry every month.

We have to start thinking of more clever ways to **maintain our presence** in this increasingly competitive market.

And be sure to watch the video, which includes my studio's senior marketing video for this summer. ■

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CLIENT ATTRACTION

with Lori Nordstrom





Client attraction is marketing...

these days it has much more to do with
networking—
being in the right places
and in front of the right people.



BY Lori Nordstrom

Client attraction is a current buzz-term for attracting new clients in your target market. Trendy phrase or not, it is important to any small business owner. We all go through phases of busy and slow, or too busy with the wrong type of client. Client attraction is marketing, but it's marketing focused on your target client base, and these days it has much more to do with networking—being in the right places and in front of the right people—than it does with creating the right mailing or ad campaign.

Don't let the thought of getting out from behind your computer to start networking hurt your brain. Let's start there, behind your computer.

Traditional social media advertising isn't working like it did just a year ago. Your marketplace is onto you: They aren't reading your posts about sales or specials, and they aren't opening your digital invites. So use your social media outlets to start networking in the right circles. Check up on your current clients and stay involved in their lives. (Yes, I'm in favor of stalking your clients on Facebook and staying on their minds!) If something special has happened in a client's life, send them a note of congratulations, or a gift certificate for a cup of coffee. Look for people you don't know who are being awarded or recognized for something they've accomplished. Reach out to these potential clients, too. Send them a note saying you'd like to be one of the first to congratulate them!

CLIENT ATTRACTION

Become the expert in your specialty by posting information that has value to your target client. For example, if you photograph weddings, post about all the great resources in your area for brides. Highlight your favorite vendors, or neat ideas from other weddings. You can even start to connect your brides through social media. Are you working with two women who you know would hit it off? Make the connection, telling them you think they would enjoy chatting about their wedding or honeymoon plans. They will love you for it!

When it's time to get out of the pj's and get out and about, take a no-excuses approach. You need new clients, and you need the right clients. Stop whining about not being able to find them, and get out there. Be where they are and get to know them. When we get involved in the circles where our target clients play, we find out about their priorities and their expectations, and what makes them tick. Learn how to communicate with the people you want to do business with by being in their midst. Want to photograph families and their pets? Get involved in the charities that are important to pet owners, partner up with a high-end groomer or pampered pet boarder. Create a detailed questionnaire for your clients about the pet products and services they use. Let them know that you like to connect your clients with the very best for their animals. When you have these leads, go meet and greet. Let these business owners know about your passion for animals, and find out how you might network together. Can you provide images for their blogs, publications, and newsletters? Could you partner up on an event? What can do you for the doggie daycare that will get them excited about working with you and referring you to all of their clients?



CLIENT ATTRACTION

If you're a high school senior photographer, attend high school events. How can you get involved and get in front of the junior class? Can you be a part of its career day? Call the school with the idea of a program you'd love to present, or ask what events they would like photographed. Go to the football games and photograph the cheerleaders in action. They will love these photos and share them with all of their friends.

Think about the current groups or activities that you are currently a part of, or would like to be. Get involved in these groups, and find out what you have in common with the other members. If you're passionate about wine, find a few local wineries that have regular events, and get involved. Love gardening, art, cars, or running? When you can carve your niche around those things you're most excited about, you'll find others who are just as excited to work with you because of the interests you share.



Make client attraction a priority in your business. Carve out time each week for networking in your target client circles. It may be time to redefine who your target client is. Think about the things that you're most passionate about. How do they connect you to your target client? (Watch the accompanying video and download the target client worksheet at the end.)

As business owners, we wear lots and lots of hats. If you are a one-man or one-woman show, those hats get pretty heavy. It's easy to get trapped in business that doesn't move you forward, and usually the busier you get, the more marketing gets pushed back. If you make a consistent marketing plan, you're more likely to keep a steady flow of clients.

I'm the first to admit that planning is no fun. But planning and scheduling will make all of the difference in your business, and therefore in your family and personal life. Make daily prioritized lists of what's important for that day. Schedule time for marketing and networking. Determine how many phone calls you will make each week, and schedule time for follow-up. Plan to write a certain number of notes, and include gift certificates. What business owners will you meet this week?

When you start to make a real marketing plan, you will begin to enjoy it more and more as you reap the rewards of getting out there and attracting the right people. Put the steps in place to make the best use of your time, and stay committed to the kind of marketing that works for you. ■

A graphic for Shutter Magazine. It features a play button icon inside a purple triangle on the left. To the right, the word "SHUTTER" is written in large, bold, white letters, with "MAGAZINE" in smaller letters below it. Below the logo, the text "LEARN MORE! CHECK OUT THIS VIDEO..." is written in a smaller font. The background of the graphic is a light, textured beige.



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**GREAT
MANAGERS**

ARE

**NEVER
ALONE**



BY SKIP COHEN

To build a
successful
business,
you've got to
pay attention
to every detail.

It takes a lot to be a great manager. You have to be on top of your business, communicate well with your staff, communicate with clients, build a reputation and your brand. It's a nonstop job. To build a successful business, you've got to pay attention to every detail.

Many of you are pretty much working alone, a one-person operation with no support. How can you manage a business without a staff to manage? Well, you do have support and you do have a staff: the crew at your lab, album company, and frame shop, not to mention your family and friends.

I decided to do something a little different this month, and interviewed friends in the industry. Each one has something in common with most of you: They're pretty much a one-person operation. Here's what some of the best "managers" in the business have to say about not having a staff to manage.



My buddy Terry Clark is in the Pittsburgh area. There's nothing he can't shoot, but his primary focus is commercial people work. The eight people on his "staff," he says, include his accountant, insurance agent, banker, and financial planner. Here's what he had to say.

As you know, it takes a village to keep a business going. I don't believe one person can ever really do it completely alone, no matter how OCD or obsessed they are. I have no spouse to talk things over with, so I rely heavily on my board of directors.

My CPA has been with me for 22 years—since a month after I got into business. Joe has watched me go from a bootstrapping startup to where I am today. He keeps me honest and he keeps watch to make sure I don't do anything foolish. Well, not too foolish anyway. He also helped me find my bookkeeper.

Second on my team is Doug, my insurance agent. We met at a business networking event, and just clicked. Now he's an invaluable member of my advisory board. Doug handles all my insurance needs and, because he's also self-employed, is a great sounding board when I need to kick around an idea.

Number three is Johanna, my banker. I turn to her for loans, lines of credit, as well as checking and savings accounts for my business. As interest rates and other financial things change, it's good to be on a first-name basis with your banker. She's caught a lot of things I might not have seen until it was too late.

Number four is my financial planner. This part is critical no matter how little or how much you have to put away for retirement. It may be fun to say, "I love what I do! I'll work till I die!," but it's not much fun to say, "I didn't plan, now I have to work till I die."

Another part of my equation is a small but trusted circle of creative friends. These are people I can turn to to brainstorm anything from picture ideas to marketing. One of these creatives is an art director I've worked with for many years, two are photographers, and the fourth is a retired graphic designer and fine artist.

Being alone is tough. But with eight people on my side, I know there's nothing I can't accomplish.

TERRY CLARK

BOBCOATES

Bob Coates is based in Sedona, Arizona. He can photograph just about anything, but his passion is commercial work and fine art. He says his wife, Holly, is his right hand and only staff member, and also points out the importance of staying focused and avoiding burnout.

My biggest help is my wife, Holly. She makes it possible for me to do what I do by taking care of me and the house and the yard and the books. Probably one of the most important is the books. Knowing numbers is important to helping you decide if you should be working with a specific client or not. It's too easy to be working really hard but not generating any bottom-line dollars.

The other important thing is to make the most of your own time. There's a brain study that was done to see who's more efficient: people who multitask versus people who concentrate on one thing and then move on to the next. Surprisingly, it's not the multitasker. The brain scans showed that every time you do a different task, your brain has to gear up for it, taking up valuable time. So turn off your phone or have someone else answer it. Don't look at your emails all the time. Read and answer them in the morning, maybe at noon, and then at night. Concentrate on whatever it is you are working on exclusively.

Make time for yourself and your life partner. For the longest time, I was always working. When I made myself cut the number of hours in the day I worked, took a day and half off each week, and took vacations, I actually made more money while working fewer hours. Even though I enjoyed working, I was burning out without knowing it. When I took time for pleasure, I came back to work refreshed and more efficient. Work will fill up the time allotted to it. Set time limits, and you will become more efficient.



© Justin & Mary Marantz

Justin and Mary Marantz work hard to manage their business and, in a way, each other. They're wedding photographers based in Connecticut.

Justin and I divide up all the tasks, and we each have our own umbrellas that things fall under. That way we know who is doing what, and if something is getting backed up, we also know where the buck stops. He does editing, uploading, and album ordering. I do blogging (including editing images for the blog), email, social media, writing articles, and organizing workshops.

We have an awesome album design company called Align that took all of the design work off of our plates.

This year we really focused on getting lean and mean and streamlining everything in our business. We took a look at everything we were doing and asked if it was really helping our business or just something we were "supposed" to do. In those cases, we trimmed the fat and got rid of it.

We use PASS [Product Application and Support Software] to both turn around our images to our clients faster and also get images to our vendors. It's saved us a *ton* of time shipping DVDs and running to the post office. We outsource our cleaning. And once a week a crew comes in and cleans for us—we call it "Clean Sheet Tuesday."

We try to automate where we can, with things like email signatures and batch processing in PhotoShop. We try to focus on doing the things where our skill set is a 9 or 10, and get help in the areas where we're only a 6 or a 7.

We try to do only the things that have the most return on their investment, the most bang for their buck in regards to time and money. I could spend hours of my life answering the same questions from other photographers over and over in email, or I could write one public post about it and help a ton of people at once. Just stuff like that.

JUSTIN&MARYMARANTZ



Michael Corsentino is based in the Orlando area. His specialty is primarily weddings. He's a one-man band, but he utilizes his vendors in a way that sets a standard for support.

For me, one of the most important components of running a successful small business is partnering with other businesses. I look for companies that position themselves as partners rather than solely as vendors. Finding companies that share a vested interest in my success is key and a win-win for both of us. My continued success builds their success, and vice versa. I'm blessed to work with companies that back up this philosophy of mutual success with quality products, responsiveness, accessible customer service, and attention to detail. Each of these factors is important when looking for the right partnerships.

Relationships with Evolve and Album Epoca allow me the flexibility to outsource my post and album design when necessary, and free me from the financial burden of full-time staff. Outsourcing provides a scalable solution for support staff—they're there when I need them and gone when I don't.

Offering high-quality products is another essential part of my business that I leave in the expert hands of White House Custom Color. Each of these relationships provides simple turnkey solutions that allow me to spend time building my business, networking, and enjoying life!

MICHAEL CORSENTINO



© Michele Celentano



Here's one more example, but this time it's someone who's more technology driven. Again, the common denominator is that Michele Celentano is a solo act with one assistant to help manage her business. She's an outstanding family photographer just outside Phoenix.

As much as I hate to admit this, technology is a partner in my life. Opus Domini is a cloud-based calendar/life planner that is always up to date on my desktop, laptop, phone, and iPad Mini. It can update from iCal, so all my appointments and to-dos are easily accessible no matter where I am.

WHCC [White House Custom Colour] has a fantastic app for my devices that allows me to track all of my orders no matter where I am. This is a huge help in managing client orders and tracking shipments. I no longer need to be sitting at my desk to manage the phone, emails, client orders, or anything that my business needs to run. My studio is as mobile as I am now thanks to technology.

The downside of this is that we often never "leave" work because we bring it with us all of the time. Like everything else you schedule time for, I schedule free time away from tech. Technology has made life so much easier, while robbing us of human interaction. Managing my relationship with technology in life and business is what helps keep me balanced.

The common denominator between Terry, Michael, Michele, Bob, and Justin and Mary is that they all strive to efficiently exploit their resources, and recognize where they each need help. And let's not forget prioritizing the challenges.

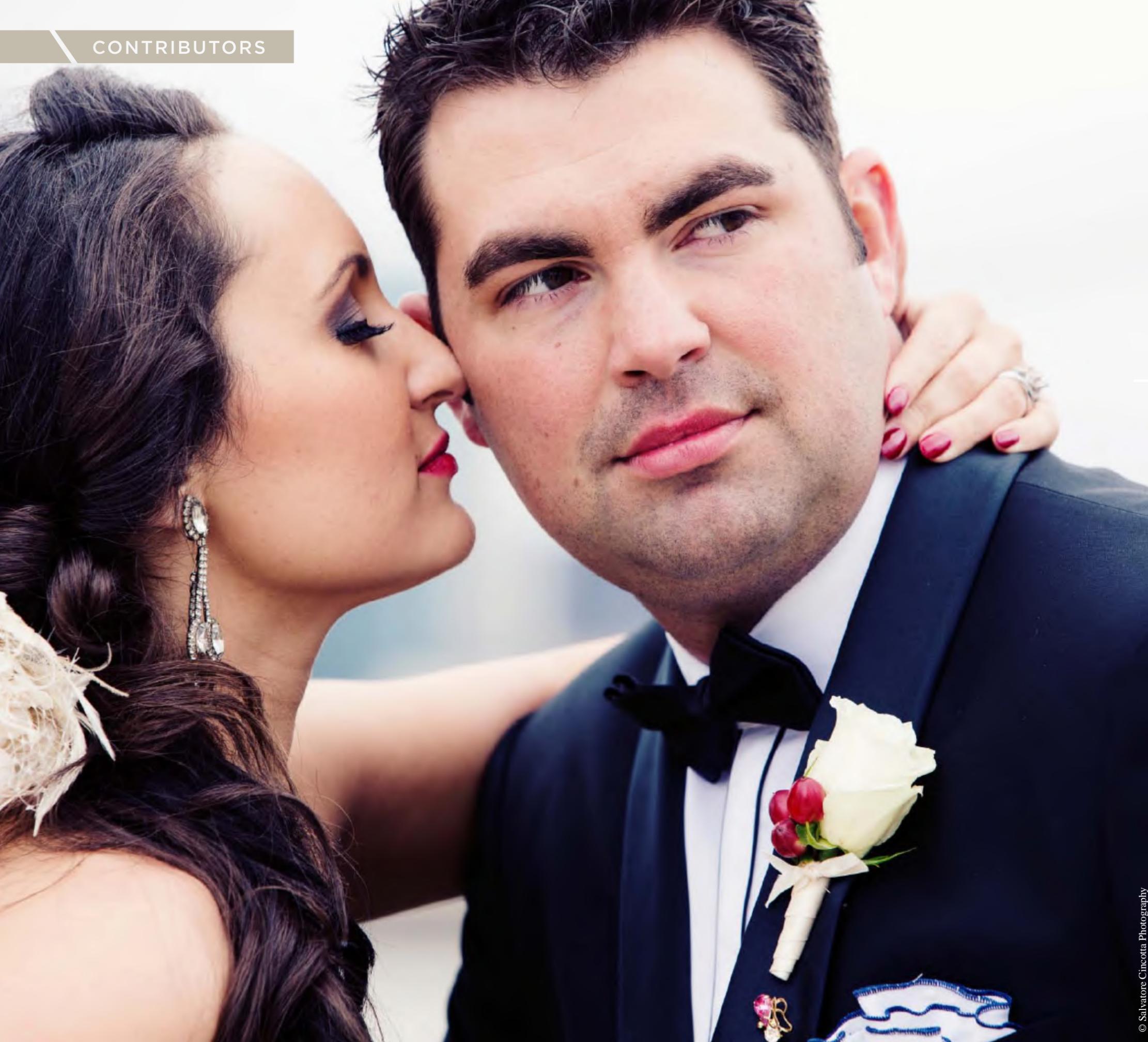
This is all about teamwork, but you've first got to recognize that even if you're working completely alone, you've still got a team of people out there to help you build your business and your brand. It all starts with understanding where you need help and then trusting those people and vendors who can help you.

As management expert Patrick Lencioni wrote,

**“Remember,
teamwork begins by building trust.
And the only way to do that
is to overcome our need for invulnerability.”**



MICHELE CELENTANO



EDITOR



SALCINCOTTA

www.SalCincotta.com

LOCATION: O'Fallon, IL

PASSION: Weddings & Seniors

Sal was exposed to photography at a very early age and has been in love with our craft ever since. He can still recall the smell of the chemicals in his aunt's makeshift dark room in the basement. However, a career in photography would elude him for over 20 years.

Graduating from one of the top 25 business schools in the country, Sal pursued a corporate career with his photography becoming more of a hobby. In 2007, he left corporate to pursue his dream of a career in photography and has never looked back.

Today, Sal Cincotta and his wife Taylor own and operate a very successful studio in the St. Louis metro area. Salvatore Cincotta Photography, Salvatore Cincotta Films, and BehindtheShutter.com.

Focused on wedding and senior portraiture, Sal has had the opportunity to shoot for corporate clients like Nordstrom's and the St. Louis Cardinals to elite sports celebrities and the White House, photographing President Obama.

FEATURED ARTICLES

Weddings: Reinventing the Wheel
Q&A with Sal Cincotta



ROBADAMS

www.RobAdamsFilms.com

LOCATION: Freehold, New Jersey

PASSION: Weddings

“Wedding films are my life. It’s all about the the story-telling. The art of seeing action, drama and beauty unfold and then harnessing the emotion of it all and the making it come to life on screen...that’s why I do this.”

Rob Adams began his video career in television over 15 years ago. Four years after that he merged into the wedding industry and eventually started his own business in 2006. Recently, Rob filmed and directed his first full-length feature film that was premiered at Robert DeNiro’s personal screening room in New York City.

Because Rob is on the cutting edge of the DSLR video revolution, his business has grown rapidly over the past few years and his passion for finding new creative ventures in the field has as well. His main goal, along with making sure that every product that leaves his studio is amazing, is to teach other wedding film-makers how to bring their work to the next level. Speaking around the world at venues such as creativeLIVE, WPPI, Imaging USA and more, he wants to see each and every film-maker learn about the little things that make filming and editing go from “good” to “the best in your market.”

FEATURED ARTICLES

4 Tips for Building Your Cinema Business



TAYLORCINCOTTA

www.SalCincotta.com

LOCATION: O'Fallon, IL

PASSION: Weddings & Seniors

Taylor is a business school graduate, only picking up a camera in the last 5 years. Catching the bug from Sal, Taylor has fallen in love with the romantic side of wedding photography and photographs 20+ weddings per year, along with, running the sales side to their studio.

She brings her own sense of style to a wedding day and her clients love the calm she brings to an event. Her passion is in creating moments for her clients.

More recently, Taylor has gotten increasingly involved in the training aspects of our industry and now enjoys speaking and writing educational pieces for new photographers.

FEATURED ARTICLES

Wedding Packets With a Purpose



© Taylor Cincotta

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LOCATION: Sarasota, Florida

Skip Cohen is President/Founder of Marketing Essentials International, a marketing consulting firm specializing in projects dedicated to photography, primarily photographic education. (www.mei500.com)

He is also the founder of Skip's Summer School (www.mei500.com), the founder of the Akron Photo Series (www.AkronPhotoSeries.com), and the co-founder of GhostRighters (www.GhostRighters.com), a content resource for professional photographers needing help with editorial content, web re-design and marketing. His blogs, SkipsPhotoNetwork.com and PhotoResourceHub.com, is read by thousands of professional and aspiring photographers. On May 21, MEI launched PhotoResourceHub.com a new content site for professional photographers with video, podcasts, blog posts and an ongoing calendar of industry events.

He has been a recipient of ADL's Torch of Liberty Award and Foto Imagen Magazine's Man of the Year Award and in 2001 he received PPA's Legacy Award for his work in support of PPA Charities. His images have been published in a long list of photographic trade magazines, including: Rangefinder, Shutterbug, Foto Imagen, Studio Photography and Design, Petersen's Photographic and The Hasselblad Forum. He's also competed in print completion in both WPPI and PPA's national conventions.

In addition, he has written six books on photography: The Art of Wedding Photography, The Art of the Digital Wedding and The Art of People Photography with Bambi Cantrell: Don Blair's Guide to Posing and Lighting Body Parts: and Wedding Photography from the Heart, co-authored with celebrity wedding photographer Joe Buissink. Book number six, GoingPro, co-authored with Scott Bourne, was released by Random House in October 2011 and remains on the photography book best seller list at Amazon..

FEATURED ARTICLES

Great Managers Are Never Alone



MICHAEL CORSENTINO

www.CorsentinoPhotography.com

LOCATION: Petaluma, California

PASSION: Lifestyle Photography

Michael Corsentino is an award-winning, contemporary wedding and portrait photographer. He is an American Photo 2013 Top 10 Wedding Photographers nominee, Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Lightroom expert, Capture One Pro Certified Professional, author, contributing writer for Photoshop User Magazine, Shutter Magazine and Resource Magazine, speaker and international workshop leader.

Based in Northern California, Michael has been shooting digitally since 1999. His love affair with the magic and science of photography is more passionate today than ever. Stylish, dramatic, edgy and modern images set Michael's photography apart. His award-winning photojournalism, fashion and editorial styles have made him an in-demand portrait and destination-wedding photographer. Passionate about education, Michael loves to share his lighting and posing secrets, post-processing techniques, time-saving workflow strategies and shooting philosophy at workshops and speaking engagements.

FEATURED ARTICLES

One-Light Wonders





KRISTY DICKERSON

www.KristyDickerson.com

LOCATION: Atlanta, Georgia

PASSION: Weddings & Engagements

Kristy Dickerson is the founder and CEO of Fisheye Connect (www.fisheyeconnect.com), professional laundry sorter, CFO of multitasking, wedding photographer, mom of two, and a wife who is never wrong... never. Upon earning her degree in finance and business management, she started her photography business after the birth her first son. As if she didn't already have enough on her plate, in June 2010, Kristy launched Fisheye Connect for other photographers, like herself, looking for quality education. Fisheye Connect allows aspiring photographers to connect with photography industry experts by location, instructor or interest. It is a searchable database for photography workshops/ events, along with services that help instructors manage the marketing and financial aspects of their businesses. Merging Kristy's business sense with her passion, Fisheye Connect has become a thriving community of photographers learning and growing together.

FEATURED ARTICLES

Creating "Friendors"





JERRY GHIONIS

www.JerryGhionis.com

LOCATION: Victoria, Australia

Widely regarded as one of the top five wedding photographers in the world, Jerry Ghionis is based in Melbourne, Australia, and Beverly Hills, California, and travels frequently on international photography assignments and speaking engagements.

With the flair of a fashion designer and the ingenuity of an architect, Jerry's style can be described as the place where vintage glamour meets contemporary fashion. Renowned for his creativity, he not only has the ability to capture the natural magic on a wedding day but he creates magic of his own. His natural love and empathy for people creates powerful visual storytelling.

FEATURED ARTICLES

Inspirations



CONTRIBUTORS



JUSTEN HONG

www.VisualLure.com

LOCATION: Caseyville, IL

PASSION: Logo Design

Justen Hong is a St. Louis area-based, award-winning, internationally published graphic designer with works in multiple LogoLounge books, The Big Book of Packaging, plus logos that will soon be featured in a new book published by Artpower International publishing out of Hong Kong. Justen is the owner and head designer at Visual Lure®, which specializes in logo design, graphic design, web design, search engine optimization (SEO) and packaging design, with his true passion being logo design. Justen has a studio art background with a degree in graphic design and a printmaking minor. He also loves art, photography and architecture.

FEATURED ARTICLES

Diving Deeper into SEO

CONTRIBUTORS



HOME ABOUT US GALLERY BLOG CONTACT



St. John's Newfoundland wedding photographer specializing in weddings, baby, maternity and family portraits

Hi! Thanks for visiting my site.

Looking for a photographer to cover those special moments and milestones in your life is important. I believe in capturing those moments that are real, not posed, but those secret looks, subtle smiles, and all the other little things you do to tell the world about your love. I can capture anything you need, from newborn to children photography, maternity to family photo shoots, fashion and commercial and of course the engagement shoot along with wedding photography.

Working in the St. John's area gives me the chance to shoot in the city, travel outside to new locations or studio photography.

Being a photographer for over 12 years has given me the confidence and experience to make sure that your moments are captured in the way that is perfect for you. Have a look through the website and visit my blog to see some of my most recent photos.

I look forward to hearing from you and booking that special shoot.

Crystal McLellan



"We have used Crystal three times for our family photos. She captured fabulous images every time. Thank you Crystal for freezing our precious moments in time."

— Amy and Tom

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Wedding photography for the Smiths in St. John's, Newfoundland



St. John's, Newfoundland wedding photographer, Crystal McLellan photographs the Watsons



St. John's Wedding photography for the Andersons



St. John's wedding photographer for the Underhill wedding

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VANESSA JOY
www.VanessaJoy.com

LOCATION: Freehold, New Jersey

PASSION: Weddings

14 Years of photography, eight years of shooting weddings, three years of business ownership (not to mention five college degrees)

Vanessa is a trilingual (English, Spanish and a bit of French), award-winning photographer, living with her husband, Rob Adams, in the great state of New Jersey. She has studied photography since 1998 and has spent most of her life running a successful wedding photography studio that shoots 35 weddings a year (at a premium price). In her first three years of business, Vanessa achieved honors such as: 20+ publications in print magazines (including three cover photos and interviews in *PDN* and *Rangefinder*), a Grand Imaging Award from PPA and a second-place wedding Image Award from WPPI.

Vanessa enjoys speaking across the country at venues such as CreativeLIVE, Clickin Moms, WPPI, Imaging USA, PPA-related conventions and personal workshops. She is recognized for her talent and even more for her business sense. Vanessa's clients love working with her, and industry peers enjoy learning from her generous, informative and open-book style of teaching.

FEATURED ARTICLES
Getting Published Pt 2



KRISTEN KORPOS

www.NiftyKnowledgeRocks.com

LOCATION : Boston, MA

PASSION : Business

Kristin Korpos is the founder of Nifty Knowledge Rocks, which provides business, legal and tax information to photographers. She is an attorney licensed to practice in New Jersey, and holds a Masters in Business Administration as well as a Masters in Accounting.

In 2009, while trying to find a creative balance to her corporate career, Kristin started a photography business in the Boston area (www.kristinkorpos.com). She quickly became a much sought-after wedding photographer whose work has most recently been featured in *RangeFinder*.

With the success of her own photography business, Kristin has become passionate about empowering other photopreneurs with the knowledge necessary to run healthy, legitimate, successful businesses. Through the NKR podcast, videos, and blog, photographers can gain knowledge on a variety of topics. Other resources, including contracts, legal forms and sales tax guides are available in the Nifty Knowledge Rocks Shop (www.niftyknowledgerocksshop.com).

FEATURED ARTICLE

Same-Sex Weddings: An Emerging Market





LORINORDSTROM

www.NordstromPhoto.com

LOCATION: Winterset, Iowa

PASSION:

Babies, Families, Weddings & Seniors

Lori Nordstrom {M.Photog.Cr., CPP, ABI} owns a boutique studio specializing in children and family portraits located in the picturesque town of Winterset, Iowa. Lori is a PPA approved business instructor and marketing consultant for Studio Management Services. Sharing with other photographers and small business owners is one of the things she most enjoys. In 2009 Lori started Photo Talk Forum, an online community of photographers working together to grow their businesses.

Lori has always had a heart for children and believes in giving back. She has run a successful fundraising campaign for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society (LLS) for 10 years. In 2011 Lori began her own non-profit organization, Dando Amor which focuses on helping orphaned children in Ecuador. Lori and Travis Gugleman hit their goal of raising \$100,000 the first year of Dando Amor existence. You can find out more about going to Ecuador or making a donation at www.dandoamor.org

FEATURED ARTICLE

Client Attraction





BLAIR PHILLIPS

[wwwBlairPhillipsPhotography.com](http://www.BlairPhillipsPhotography.com)

LOCATION: Landis, North Carolina

PASSION:
Seniors, Babies, Families & Weddings

Blair's team includes four employees plus Blair, who photographs 20 to 30 weddings and 500 studio sessions per year. Blair has a passion to teach photographers how to express themselves in ways they can't find with traditional training. He speaks to and teaches thousands of photographers and digital artists each year at national conventions and expos including WPPI, Imaging USA, SYNC Seniors, and various PPA conventions.

Blair and Suzanne's "eclectic elegance" style and positive energy educate and inspire photographers, while allowing them to stay true to themselves. This young team pushes the envelope daily with creativity and positive inspiration. As a side note, after 10 years of marriage, Blair and Suzanne welcomed Ava Blair Phillips into the world on August 3, 2011.

FEATURED ARTICLE

Lights, Camera, Action: VIDEO!





LAURIN THIENES

www.EvolveEdits.com

LOCATION: Portland, Oregon

PASSION:
Weddings & Engagements

Laurin Thienes was 17 when he photographed his first wedding – 20 rolls of Porta400VC. Never looking back he went on to study photography with some of the most well-known photography studios in Oregon as well as leaving the state to study still photography at Brooks Institute in Santa Barbara, CA. Upon returning to Portland, Laurin was the studio manager of Holland Studios, a high-end, high volume wedding photography studio photographing over 250 weddings per year. After his departure from Holland Studios, he has continued to work as a contract and freelance photographer, having work published in *Grace Ormond*, *Men's Style*, and *Rangefinder*. Most recently, Laurin is the co-founder of Evolve, a premier wedding and portrait post-production service in Portland, OR. Outside of photography, Laurin also likes to cook, travel, and spend time with his wife and young daughter.

FEATURED ARTICLE

Get Your Life Back!





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