

How to save time and money on a photo shoot for your business

You've finally scheduled that photo shoot for your business, product line or personal brand. You know that professional photography is an important part of marketing your business but you are more than a little anxious about what to expect and whether or not this will prove to be a worthwhile investment.

Like anything you do in marketing, much of the value you receive from your photo shoot will come down to the actions you take. Things like clearing your work environment of clutter, checking your products carefully and understanding how to dress or apply make-up for a shoot can save you paying for extra time in shooting or touching up photos! In photography, little things like a layer of dust or a scratch on a product's packaging can make an enormous difference to the photographer's workload.

Here are 3 important tips to ensure you not only save time and money at your photo shoot, but make money from your investment as well.

Tip #1 Get organized

- **Follow the procedure** outlined by your photographer or marketing consultant. Are there permission forms to sign and return? Do you need to secure your booking in any way?
- **For profile photos, check that all team members will be present** on the day, if possible. It can be more cost effective to get everyone in on the same day than to schedule the photographer on different days (and it cuts down turnaround time, too)
- **Find out if there is a schedule** for the shoot, common for shoots longer than 2 hours. Some photographers will provide this but you may need to tweak it to suit your staff's timetable on the day. Always check changes with the photographer as he or she will know how much time is needed for set-up changes etc.
- **Always read the brief** provided very carefully and ensure that staff members do too. The brief contains details of what to bring and how to prepare for the shoot.

Tip #2 Ensure you, your staff, your products and your work space look their best... BEFORE the photographer arrives!

- Be aware that investment-wise, it is often better to **hire professional models/talent** for set-up shots of customers, board meetings etc. (your photographer or marketing agency can organise models) rather than to use your friends. Trained talent can look like regular people but have the skills to portray the exact feel that you want for your photos, and work more efficiently to get the shots than non-professionals who are often nervous, need 'warm-up' time and more direction through-out.
- If you have organised your own models, ensure they are given **a brief with**

very precise details of what to wear (your photographer or stylist can help you). This includes things like nail colour, hair style, clothing changes, make-up requirements and whether tattoos need to be covered up! Note that both male and female models should use a cover-up for blemishes (this saves you paying the photographer for extra photo editing time!)

- Ask the photographer for **tips on what to wear for your own photos**. Be aware that one style does NOT suit all, and features are emphasised under the camera lens. **If you have a uniform** with variations on styles, it is best to give staff members a choice as they will naturally choose the pieces they look best in and are most comfortable wearing. Ask them to bring a variety of options.
- **If not wearing a uniform**, you should bring a couple of changes such as a jacket/no jacket look. Hair, make-up and jewellery should be worn as feels most comfortable, with special attention to covering up shadows and blemishes with make-up where you wish to do so.
- **This may sound obvious but you would be surprised how often it creates a problem...** ALWAYS ensure your clothes are ironed and stain-free! Also check for missing buttons or problem areas such as too-sheer fabrics, too-short ties or gaping holes in blouses!
- **Products and their packaging** to be photographed should always be brand new. Creases, dust, stains and dog-ears are very time-consuming and sometimes impossible to remove in post-production and will add to your photography bill considerably! Remove price tags or any labels or elements you don't want pictured – and do this beforehand, laying out your products ready for the photographer, preferably in the combinations you want them shown in (the photographer can suggest placement and styling to help you).
- **If your workspace is to be photographed**, scan your eye across the room and ask yourself what you do and don't want seen in the photos. Are there stickers, personal notes, bits of paper or yesterday's lunch cluttering the scene? What impression are you trying to make? Maybe it's friendly and approachable but at the same time it's almost always professional and organised. Generally photographs with little going on in the background are more effective in drawing attention to the subject and saying what you want them to say. DON'T end up paying the photographer extra time to do the clean-up themselves (or to stand around while you do it) – get it done BEFORE the shoot!

Tip #3 Communicate

- Ensure you understand **what is/is not included in the photography fee**, prior to shoot day. Don't assume because the photographer is there with a camera, that they can 'quickly take a photo of...' if it was not included in the brief! Different photos require different setups and different equipment to be done properly. Ensure you are given a summary that itemises all the aspects to be photographed BEFORE the shoot day.
- This also extends to understanding **what is included in the editing process** of your photography package. For example, some basic

touch-ups and resizing of images are normally included, but not converting images to black and white or creating special effects... like making you look 20 years younger (why are you asking for that anyway? Your clients like you as you are!)

If you have questions about your shoot or want more information, **always ask**. Your photographer should care about making you feel comfortable and delivering the best value to you!



New Work Photography is a boutique photographic agency specialising in fashion and commercial work, corporate events and art.

Director Julissa Shrewsbury (B.Ed, B.Arts) is passionate about working with other creative business people and promoting local artists and designers. Her background in the performing arts informs her work.

New Work Photography's Mission is to create beautiful photography working closely with your brand.

www.newworkphotography.com