

The
CREATIVE BRIEF
BRAND IMAGE MASTERCLASS

Module 4 - Creating your website and photoshoot
Part 2



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BRAND PHOTO SHOOT

Planning your personal branding photo shoot can be such an exciting journey in the process of building your brand. We've heard this before, "*a picture is worth 1000 a thousand words*". This is why some of the top luxury brands in the world use powerful images to get us to lust over the latest products or services.

I certainly enjoyed my own branded photoshoot including my experience as the editor in chief and publisher of my own luxury lifestyle magazine.

Image is everything and having photos that put into visual representation, your brand personality and story, is something that is worthy of both *time* and *deliberate effort*.

I want to help make your photo shoot experience as smooth as possible, so that all you need to figure out is venue, what to wear and who to do the job. Here are the essential factors you need to consider before even stepping in front of the camera.

CLARIFY YOUR PHOTO STORY

How do you want your ideal client to feel when they visit your website?

What do you want people to know about you, your personality and your lifestyle?

Create a theme for your photo shoot. What is the main message or story that you want to tell creatively through your photo shoot?

BRAND PHOTO SHOOT

What story do I want to tell with these photos? *(How do I want people to see me? What kind of woman do I want to be?)*

What kind of lifestyle is in alignment with my brand? What lifestyle do I want to have strongly featured in my photoshoot?

What emotions do I want to communicate? *(Joy, happiness, confidence, competent etc.)*

LOCATION

What scenes will provide the best backdrop for your photo shoot?

Which locations will be “on brand” and best suited for this?

Is there a fee for using this location?

Will I need permission?

Please note that you should consider having a lawyer prepare a location release for you if you are using a location like a hotel etc. Some locations may not ask for it, but it's always a good idea to have one.

How long in advance do you need to book it? Is the space available and "on brand"?

Which three people (celebrities or other people in your industry) best embody the style you are trying to portray?

Go over to Google images and search for images of them that best embody your style for inspiration. Study what you like about the images and take notes of things that inspire you and how you bring your own iconic style into your photos. You can create your mood board using Pinterest (*you can set it to secret if you don't want to share it publicly*)

Create Two (2) Mood Boards

1. Hair and Make-up: remember not to get too carried away trying some new hairstyle that you wouldn't typically wear, on the day of the photo shoot. It's not the time to experiment with a new hairstyle you may not like in long-term. Be true to your own personal sense of style and let that shine through.

Who will do your hair and make-up?

2. Art Direction Mood Board: this includes wardrobe, backdrop and scenery. Write down the key scenes you would like in your photoshoot e.g. Office, lounge etc. **List your artistic direction for each page on your website e.g. Home Page** (*Lounging on couch in living room*).

On average you may receive 200 photos with 20-40 edited photos depending on your contract. Be sure to clarify what you are getting when you speak with your photographer. I suggest selecting a few photos (1-3) that will be used consistently in your marketing to create stronger brand recognition. These would typically be signature photos used on your website, social media profiles and other marketing material.

Ensure that you get the following types of photos:

 **A head shot**

 **Image for your sales pages**

 **Brand Result:** A photo that reflects the lifestyle your client will achieve after working with you.

How many photos do you need for your website? Plan scenes by page e.g. home page etc.

How many photos do you need for social media? What type of photos do you want for social media?

Are there any special photo scenes that you require for the promotion of products/services?

WARDROBE

Once you have your mood board, you can now work on your wardrobe selection for the shoot. This can be both a fun and frustrating experience. If possible work with a stylist that can help make the process easier. Here are some tips: *don't over think it and don't do anything too weird!*

Maybe you already have a fabulous wardrobe or may need to buy some new clothing. However, an option that you can use, is renting some stylish high-end pieces to give your photos a high quality look, with well tailored clothing.

Working with a professional stylist can give your wardrobe planning an edge. Someone who can objectively look at the big picture of what you are trying to achieve and help you select the right clothing to suit your vision.

What type of mood do you want to project through your clothing?

You may choose 1-3 different moods depending on your contract with the photographer and how many wardrobe changes you are allowed in the shoot. I suggest not going past three changes as both you and the photographer will be creatively drained going through too many scene and wardrobe changes. (e.g. *Sporty, Casual, Elegant, Glamour, Business*).

PROPS

Props can really help set the right mood for a photo if done well. Think about the type of details you want in your photo shoot e.g. reading a book: *what book?*, a glass in hand: *wine or coffee?*, fresh flowers (*what type of flowers reflect my brand image?*), etc.

What props will you need during the photo shoot? (*Think about things that you use every day in your line of work that convey your lifestyle and story. It is a good idea to determine this ahead of your shoot and arrange to take them to the location or request that it be made available to you*).

PHOTOGRAPHER

Now that you have a clear idea of the mood for your photo shoot, it's time to find a photographer that can best capture it. Once you have selected a few photographers, compare their portfolio to the style of image that you are trying to accomplish. This can help you determine if the photographer is a right fit for you.

Once you have made your decision, you can continue the planning process with his/her guidance.

Who is a good fit to take your photos?

(Name and URL. You can list three options and then make a decision based on their portfolio and style).

For a good photographer that will deliver high quality photos that you will be proud to say "this is my website address..." budget around \$US1500 and US\$995 for a stylist.

CONTINGENCY

On the day of my photo shoot, it rained like there was a hurricane on the way. This required several changes to the plan and the scheduling of an additional day of shooting, which was an additional cost.

You need to cater for variations in your plan. It may not always be convenient for your photographer to schedule another day especially if he/she is flying in for the shoot.

Create a contingency plan *e.g. out door photos, etc.*

What alternatives do I have to replace the outdoor or indoor shoots that may not be possible?

SITE VISIT

I initially selected the location for my photo shoot based on the location's website. When I did a site visit, the set up of several of the areas I wanted to use had been redesigned.

This required making changes in the art direction to facilitate the changes, because I was still in love with the location. Where possible always do a site visit or request that recent photos of the location be sent to you.

If possible, do the site visit with your photographer so that you both can discuss and determine what is feasible or not.

FOOD AND TRANSPORTATION

Will you need to cater for lunch expenses for the photographer, you and anyone else on set or is it part of the photographer's fee?

Are there any transportation cost involved?

PHOTOSHOOT BUDGET

COST BREAKDOWN

Wardrobe

Photographer

Personal Stylist

Props

Transportation

Location fees

Meals

Contingency 5%

TOTAL COST

PHOTO SHOOT DAY CHECKLIST

When packing for your photoshoot ensure that you have the following:

- Props
 - Iron all clothing and place in garment bag
 - Face Towels
 - Wet wipes
 - Dress sheild
 - Scarf (*great for covering your face to avoid getting make-up on your dress*)
 - Umbrella (*in case it drizzles you won't ruin your hair*)
 - Scissors
 - Safety Pins
 - Sewing Kit
 - Light dressing robe
 - Comfortable slippers
 - Mirror
 - Phone charger
 - Laptop charger
 - Pen
 - Hair accessories
 - Sunglasses
-
- Lipstick/make-up
 - Lip balm
 - Eye drops
 - Emergency kit (*Tylenol, antacid, anti-histamine, bandages etc.*)
-
- Protein bars/snacks (*moving around you'll need something in between*)
 - Sunscreen
 - Insect repellent
 - Bottled water
 - Jewelry
 - Shoes for each outfit change
 - Props

Ensure that your nails and hair are done the day before before the shoot (*shampoo, re-colouring, etc.*)
It's always a great idea to have a spa treatment (*e.g. body scrub*) a few days before your photoshoot so that your skin beautiful and subtle on camera.

WARDROBE TIPS

You may want your stylist to assist you this process. Taking photos with your phone while wearing the outfits can give you an idea of how it will look when photographed. Be true to YOU. I remember everyone disliked the red dress I chose for my photo shoot when I showed them the picture from the website but my gut feeling told me that this was the exact look I wanted. Now they all love it and more importantly, so do I!

I am spending time on this subject because the woman in the dress matters so much for shaping your brand image. Here are some additional tips:

- 1) Try to coordinate colours instead of being matching.
- 2) Keep in mind where on your website you want to place the photo and what message you want to convey for that particular page.
- 3) Ensure that your clothing compliments your body and accentuates your best features. Avoid clothing that is too loose fitting or too big, these tend to make the photos look sloppy. Well-fitted looks are neater, especially if you are not very tall.
- 4) Solids are always a great choice especially if you want your photos to look timeless. However, if you do use print ensure that it goes with the mood of your photos and doesn't look too busy in the location you will use.
- 5) If you choose to wear winter jackets, coats or blazers, remember to take some shots without it, as those photos will be on your website 365 days in the year and need to look like the ideal lifestyle of your audience.
- 6) Ensure that your undergarment is appropriate for the clothing you will wear and avoid revealing bra straps and lacy underwear that doesn't leave smooth lines on your clothing.
- 7) You don't need to wear the same colour shoe and dress.
- 8) Classic white is always a winner especially on darker skin tones. Go for timeless styles.
- 10) Walk with additional styles on the day just in case. A change in the planned scene, weather, etc. are all factors that need to be considered. Be ready.

ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR YOUR DAY

Negative Space: Ensure that you take some photos standing on the very right with negative space on e.g. the left, so that you have space for your logo and compelling headline when you place it on your website.

The photos you will use for your header should be landscape and in high resolution format. You may want to take some standing in the middle of the frame as well, depending on the general artistic direction of your photo shoot.

Body Language: Women should be mindful of letting your feminine side shine through in your photos (e.g. *soft hands and relaxed feminine poses*). Photos are also a great way to tell people what action to take on your website. You may want to take some photos looking left, right, up and/or down.

You want to also humanize your photos by having natural laughing scenes, again depending on the mood of your brand.

Leaning shots are also great options (e.g. *leaning on a desk, table or leaning forward or back to laugh*). Remember you are still positioning your self as the expert and competent professional, so add some power shots in the mix.

Once you have your wardrobe together, practice your poses in your mirror and take some shots with your phone to see how it looks. If you are wearing pants, look out for unwanted bulging at the crotch or skirts that are too tight and riding up.

Go through your checklist and ensure you have everything you need. On the day of your shoot, you may want to have an assistant on hand to help you dress and set up, so you are not overworked and over-stressed. If you are working with a stylist even better!

HOMework SUGGESTIONS



Complete the worksheets and templates in this workbook.



Print the PHOTO SHOOT DAY CHECKLIST in this workbook.

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Join the Facebook Group at this link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/thecreativebrief/>

