

A black and white photograph of a wedding couple. The bride is wearing a white wedding dress with a full skirt and a flower in her hair. The groom is wearing a dark tuxedo with a bow tie. They are standing on a paved path in front of a large, multi-story stone building with many windows and a clock tower. A large evergreen tree is on the left side of the frame.

Action plan

Steps to book your first 30 weddings as a wedding photographer

by Jennifer Hejna

www.jenniferhejna.com

Getting your name out there and your first clients as a wedding photographer is a huge step when you just start out. This e-book will help you with the first steps to improve your google ranking and meet people to build your network. In the jungle of things to do when you start I want to take you by the hand and help you realizing these steps. They wont make you photographer of the year but they might be the beginning of your successful carreer as a wedding photographer. Let's do it, let's get out of the comfort zone.

1. PORTFOLIO

As a starting photographer you probably don't have a huge archive of images but when you are searching for clients you should have some work to show. Choose 10 -20 of your favorite images. Choose them wisely because these images will define your future clients. They will book you for the images that you show them.

Action Box

Step one: Choose your first portfolio 10-20 images that reflect the kind of weddings you want to photograph.

2. GOOGLE

Ok this is a huge topic and these are just a few fundamental steps to be found on Google.

Do you use Wordpress? Install „Wordpress SEO by Yoast“.

Make sure your homepage, about you page and your contact page have the following information:

A good meta title

A good meta description

Using the plugin from Yoast you can easily add these informations for each single page.

Let's use the example of a wedding photographer from Amsterdam. Let's call him John Smith (makes me remember Brad Pitt from Mr.&Mrs Smith).

For the title use wording like: Wedding Photographer Amsterdam

And for the description for example: As a wedding photographer from Amsterdam John Smith photographs weddings in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Den Haag and the Netherlands.

(it is important you make this a real text and not just keywords)

Use Blogstomp for your blog images (you will thank me later if you don't use it yet, it will save you hours of time) and name your images for your website:

wedding-photographer-amsterdam-vondelkerk-james-smith.jpg

You should use the city, the wedding location and your name in the jpg title.

Action Box

Step one: Install SEO Yoast if you use Wordpress

Step two: add meta titles and meta description to your main sites

Step three: create good jpg names for the images on your site

3. CONTACT OTHER WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHERS

I know there are many photographer groups out on Facebook (and I am part of those too and I love them) but believe me this one contact will bring you a lot more referrals than one email where you and 20 other photographers are named as referred photographers.

Choose 1 photographer you want to contact first. Back when I started out there were not many other photographers around to contact so I really just contacted one.

Connection Box

- this photographer should be in your area, he (let's call him a he but don't be afraid to contact a female photographer instead)
- first and most important: from what you see on his website you should like him. This is about building a friendship and you won't want to build a relationship with somebody you don't like
- he should have at least a slightly similar style to your photography (when you just photograph with available light and a shallow depth of field you shouldn't contact the photographer who is flashing all day long photographing at F8)
- he should be in the same price range to refer each other to wedding couples (when he refers you back and you cost twice as much as him chances are small that his couples will book you)
- tell him straightforward you want to invite him for a coffee, that you like his style of photography and that you would like to meet him as you search for a photographer to refer when you are already booked.
- build a genuine relationship with him. Real friendships and relationships with other photographers will always be the best for your first year in business and for the years to come!

Action Box

Step one: Choose one photographer you want to work with

Step two: Call him, tell him you like his style and you search for a photographer to send wedding clients too when you are booked

Step three: Meet him, build a friendship

3. OTHER VENDORS

Other vendors are a great way to not only build a network to work with but also to get referred when their clients need a photographer. Don't only think about venues just because they are mostly booked first in the chain of wedding planning. Think about all kinds of people that are part of a wedding. The more you give (the more you refer) the more it will come back to you. Don't underestimate the power of giving. (You never know if one time a make-up artist may refer you because they are booked first.)

Action Box

Step one: Research your area to see who would be interesting to connect with (jewellers, bridal shops, make-up artists, DJs etc.)

Step two: Make a list of people you want to contact

Step three: Contact three people to meet with them. Build a relationship.

Tell them you are a new photographer, you like their work and you would love to meet them and work with them.

You want more resources to build your photography business? Head over to the [blog](#) and read our section for photographers or to our [shop](#) for marketing materials for photographers.