



THE  
**WEDDING SCHOOL**  
RELOCATING YOUR BUSINESS



# I'VE BEEN THERE!

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- ▶ I moved in 2008
- ▶ It absolutely affected my business
- ▶ No brides knew who I was
- ▶ No venues knew who I was
- ▶ No vendors knew who I was
- ▶ I had no SEO on my website for my new area
- ▶ I couldn't show new work for my new area



# STEP ONE : LEARN

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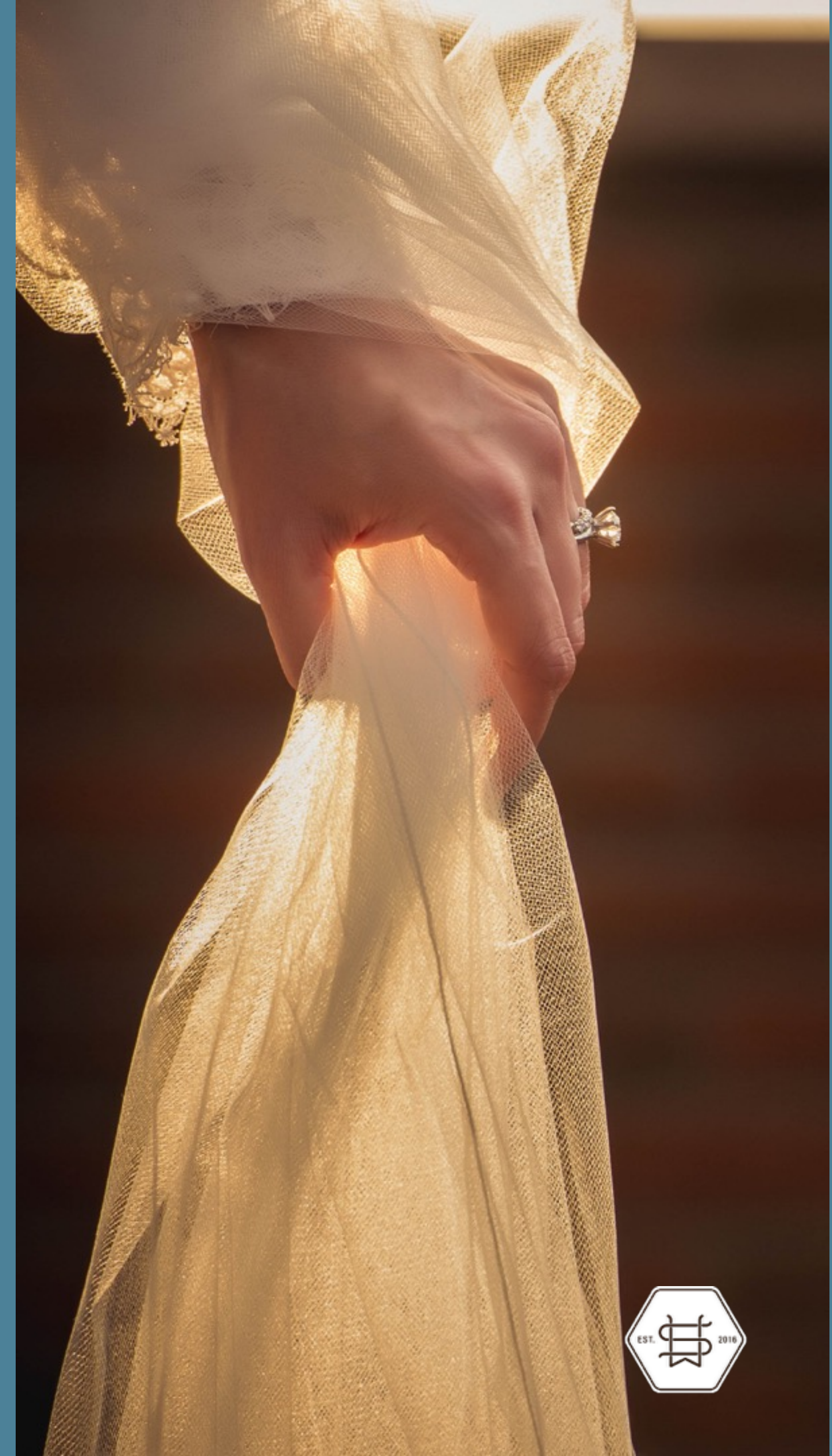
- ▶ What is the market like?
- ▶ How can I legally work here?
- ▶ How many weddings are there?
- ▶ Run a report from The Wedding Report
- ▶ Are there a lot of venues?
- ▶ Are brides local or destination?
- ▶ Take some time to google and search, read local magazines, blogs, and Instagram feeds



# STEP TWO : PORTFOLIO

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- ▶ You've already got one, that's a good start!
- ▶ However, it's not new-city specific
- ▶ Find someone, anyone, and take some pictures
- ▶ Hire a model and go to popular locations
- ▶ Shoot outside and inside if you can
- ▶ Don't work without permission or permits
- ▶ Try to shoot with a few couples for variety





# STEP THREE : RESEARCH

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- ▶ Where do you want to work?
- ▶ Who do you want to work with?
- ▶ Who is already working there?
- ▶ How do you know all of this stuff?
- ▶ Isn't this really hard work?
- ▶ Isn't this going to take a lot of time?

# WHERE TO WORK

- ▶ Start with a simple Google search
- ▶ I googled “Most expensive New York wedding venues”
- ▶ I looked at venue search websites and compared price per head
- ▶ I looked at venue search websites and looked at site rental fees
- ▶ This is the most boring part of the research, because it’s numbers
- ▶ After I have a list, I look up reviews for each venue and make sure they’re reputable
- ▶ I find contact information for each venue, and file it away



# WHO TO WORK WITH

- ▶ Identify vendors who often work at these venues
- ▶ I start with wedding planners, because they're easiest to find
- ▶ I google the venue that I want to work at, with the phrase "wedding planner." For example, "wedding planner carlyle hotel new york"
- ▶ This is almost hilariously tedious work
- ▶ I look at the Instagram feed of planners and find other vendors : florists, bands, calligraphers, bakers, caterers, and yes, other photographers



# WHO IS TALKING?

- ▶ Start reading, subscribing to, and commenting on local blogs
- ▶ Follow local Instagram accounts
- ▶ Follow Instagram accounts that feature local venues and vendors
- ▶ Is there a bigger market? Is your market a small fish in a big pond?
- ▶ Are there vendors that aren't local, but who travel to work there?
- ▶ Are there local tastemakers and influential people you can follow and get to know?
- ▶ Who is a big deal in your community?





# WHO IS WORKING THERE

- ▶ You're looking for friends, not competitors
- ▶ Though don't be deceived, there is competition to be had
- ▶ Who is working at the venues you want to work at and with the vendors you want to work with?
- ▶ The best source for this is Instagram. Start with the venues and vendors, see who is shooting with them.
- ▶ Let yourself fall down the rabbit hole!
- ▶ Look at vendor directories, read reviews





**NOW GET TO WORK**



# SHOW THE WORK

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- ▶ Start posting the work that you've shot
- ▶ Tag the venues on Instagram and Facebook
- ▶ Get the images in your portfolio
- ▶ Blog the images, making sure to use keyword-rich text and descriptions
- ▶ Share, share, and share again
- ▶ Sprinkle in your old work so that what you're doing isn't super obvious



# REACH OUT TO VENDORS

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- ▶ Be forewarned, this will probably get you nowhere
- ▶ When I moved to New York, I created a small book of my images, press, and info, and mailed it to **EVERYONE**
- ▶ It got me nowhere, but I was remembered later
- ▶ Find Facebook groups. Engage, engage
- ▶ Find and follow them on Instagram and Facebook
- ▶ Comment and engage with them
- ▶ This is like dating. It takes time!



# MAKE PHOTO FRIENDS

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- ▶ Real friends, not just online friends
- ▶ Join Facebook groups - I just found nine for New York wedding photographers alone!
- ▶ Go to get-togethers, get out of the house
- ▶ Go to conventions, go to workshops, GO!
- ▶ When you can, refer work to them
- ▶ This takes time, too. Be patient!



# DON'T BE AFRAID

- ▶ I know this is a MONUMENTAL amount of work
- ▶ I also know you can do it!
- ▶ This will be your full time job for awhile
- ▶ I was very fortunate that I had photographer friends in New York, as well as destination clients who lived here
- ▶ Think outside the wedding world. Get involved in your community
- ▶ Make real friends. Live your life!



## Venues

The Carlyle  
Loeb Boathouse  
The Plaza  
Mandarin Oriental  
The Pierre  
Cipriani  
The Four Seasons  
Gotham Hall  
NY Public Library  
Angel Orensanz  
Oheka Castle  
Blue Hill @ StoneBarns  
Museum of Nat History  
Gramercy Park Hotel  
The Bowery Hotel  
Chelsea Mansion  
Wave Hill

## Planners

Baton NYC  
Marcy Blum  
Preston Bailey  
Lindsay Landman  
Tzo Ai Ang/Ang Wed.  
Sidekick  
Fete NY  
Victoria Dubin  
Guerdy Abrarira  
Bella Fare  
Christine Paul  
Just ABT Married  
Firefly Events  
Bella Fare  
Leslie Gesser Price  
Daughter of Design  
EAP Weddings

## Florists

Saipua  
Nancy Liuchin  
Ariston Flowers  
Matthew Robbins  
Fleurs NYC  
Amy Merrick  
Frank Alexander  
Bess Wyrick  
Bride and Blossom  
Jamie Rothstein  
Bob Lamsback  
Tantawan Bloom

## Vendors

Darcy Miller  
Sylvia Weinstock  
Bentley Meeker  
Stacie Ford Weddings  
Vera Wang  
Once Upon a Bride NY  
Face Time Beauty  
One Girl Cookies  
White Rose Collective  
Mr. Boddington  
Monique Lhuillier  
Ceci New York  
Nine Cakes  
Patina Vintage Rentals  
Josie Sanchez  
The Rhythm Shop  
Hank Lane

## Photo

Christian Oth Studios  
Ira Lippke  
Heather Waraksa  
Ryan Brenizer  
Samm Blake  
Fred Marcus Studios  
Anthony Vasquez  
Brian Dorsey  
Emin Kuliyevev  
Bethalee Photography  
Jen Huang

## Video

Kiss the Bride Films  
Pennylane Productions  
Ray Roman  
Rob Adams  
Ira Lippke  
Cinematicake  
Allure Films  
Brett Culp Films  
Love in Progress  
Joseph Minasi Films  
Cinema-Roll  
Doug Rivers

## Insta

Bridal Bar  
Carats and Cake  
Brooklyn Bride  
Style Me Pretty  
WedLuxe  
BHLDN  
Stone Fox Bride  
Kleinfeld  
100 Layer Cake  
Lovely  
The Style Co  
Elizabeth Anne Design  
B Loved Weddings



# VISIT AND REVISIT

- ▶ Even if you're not new, do this research
- ▶ Keep a running list of venues and vendors
- ▶ Keep an eye on the industry influencers
- ▶ Revisit this yearly
- ▶ The industry is always in flux
- ▶ I learned a LOT about my business and my competition doing this, even though I've done this before!







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