



THE
WEDDING SCHOOL
PRICING EVOLUTION AND OPTIONS

MY HISTORY

- ▶ BFA in Theatre in 2000
- ▶ No formal photography training at all
- ▶ One semester long internship
- ▶ One “photography class” in college
- ▶ One wedding for a friend-of-a-friend in 2001
- ▶ I had a digital Rebel, one lens, and one flash



MORE HISTORY

- ▶ 2002 = 2 weddings
- ▶ 2003 = 20 weddings
- ▶ 2004 = 25 weddings
- ▶ 2005 = opened studio
- ▶ 2006 = destination weddings
- ▶ 2007 = bought studio, was miserable
- ▶ 2008 = 32 weddings, moved to New York
- ▶ 2009 = 30 weddings
- ▶ 2010 = 47 weddings
- ▶ 2011 = 42 weddings
- ▶ 2012 = 50 weddings
- ▶ 2013 = 54 weddings



FINANCIAL HISTORY

- ▶ 2001-2003 = no profit, but also no loss
- ▶ 2004-2005 = small income
- ▶ 2006-2008 = supporting family + studio
- ▶ 2008 = on my own again, supporting self 100%
- ▶ 2009 = began investing, began saving
- ▶ Every year since 2008 has been more profitable
- ▶ Every year I have worked harder and smarter



WHEN TO CREATE PRICES

- ▶ You have to get a working portfolio first
- ▶ I shot for free once, and for less than \$500 three times
- ▶ I didn't have a price list, I just talked to the client and quoted each one
- ▶ Be honest about your skills and experience
- ▶ Do not mislead prospective clients
- ▶ There does have to be a time that you turn a profit
- ▶ No excuses!



2002

Wedding Photography Pricing Guide

Photography Fees

*(The photography fees include the photographer's time, film, developing, and an Art Leather proof magazine **new!**)*

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| Basic Coverage (up to 10 hours) | \$1,200 new! |
| Additional Hours (more than 10) | \$100/hr |
| Bridal Session | \$100 new! |
| Engagement Session | \$100 new! |

Albums

| | |
|---|-------|
| Large Leather Bound Album (40 photographs) | \$600 |
| Small Leather Bound Album (25 photographs) | \$400 |
| Small Natural Paper Album (24 4x6 photographs) new! | \$125 |
| Large Leather Art Box (30 matted photographs) | \$800 |
| Small Leather Art Box (20 matted photographs) | \$500 |

Other custom albums available upon request

Proofs

| | <u>3 1/2 x 5</u> | <u>4x6</u> |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------|
| Full set of standard proofs | \$250 | \$350 |
| Full set of custom art proofs | \$375 | \$475 |

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- ▶ Why this works:
- ▶ It's simple
- ▶ Why this doesn't work:
- ▶ I'm not profitable
- ▶ \$1200 is okay at 6 hours
- ▶ ...but not at 10
- ▶ \$100 is not enough for OT
- ▶ Albums can't be cost x2
- ▶ Proofs too close to cost

2003

coverage options

a. the top of the line (the signature service) for \$5000 includes:

up to 10 hours of coverage by susan on the day of the wedding
600 proofs presented online and in a custom proof magazine
an engagement session
a 24 page 10x14 queensberry album

b. the most popular package for \$3800 includes:

up to 8 hours of coverage by susan on the day of the wedding
500 proofs presented online and in a custom proof magazine
an engagement session
a 24 page 9x12 leather craftsman album with 60 images

c. a very nice package for \$2800 includes:

up to 6 hours of coverage by susan on the day of the wedding
400 proofs presented online and in a custom proof magazine
an engagement session
a 24 page 5x7 leather craftsman album with 60 images

d. none of the above for \$2000 includes:

up to 5 hours of coverage by susan on the day of the wedding
300 proofs presented online and in a custom proof magazine
a small art box with 10 matted 3.5x5 prints

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▶ Why this works:

▶ It gives options

▶ Why this doesn't work:

▶ I'm not profitable STILL

▶ Coverage A isn't profitable

▶ Coverage B isn't profitable

▶ Coverage C isn't profitable

▶ Coverage D isn't profitable

▶why not?

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| PACKAGE COSTS | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| <u>EXPENSE</u> | <u>COST</u> |
| Five hours of coverage | — |
| 300 proofs in a proof magazine | \$125 |
| Small art box with 10 matted prints | \$250 |
| | |
| | |
| Total Cost | \$375 |
| Base X 4 | \$500 |
| Album(s) X 3 | \$750 |
| Base + Album Markup | \$1250 |
| <u>PROFIT</u> | \$750 |

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| PACKAGE COSTS | |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| <u>EXPENSE</u> | <u>COST</u> |
| Six hours of coverage | — |
| 400 proofs in a proof magazine | \$150 |
| 24 page album with 60 images | \$350 |
| Engagement Session | — |
| | |
| Total Cost | \$500 |
| Base X 4 | \$600 |
| Album(s) X 3 | \$1050 |
| Base + Album Markup | \$1650 |
| <u>PROFIT</u> | 1150 |

| PACKAGE COSTS | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| <u>EXPENSE</u> | <u>COST</u> |
| Five hours of coverage | — |
| 300 proofs in a proof magazine | \$125 |
| Small art box with 10 matted prints | \$250 |
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| Total Cost | \$375 |
| Base X 4 | \$500 |
| Album(s) X 3 | \$750 |
| Base + Album Markup | \$1250 |
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| PACKAGE COSTS | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| <u>EXPENSE</u> | <u>COST</u> |
| Eight hours of coverage | — |
| 500 proofs in a proof magazine | \$175 |
| 24 page 9x12 album with 60 images | \$500 |
| Engagement Session | — |
| | |
| Total Cost | \$675 |
| Base X 4 | \$700 |
| Album(s) X 3 | \$1500 |
| Base + Album Markup | \$2200 |
| <u>PROFIT</u> | 1600 |

| PACKAGE COSTS | |
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| <u>EXPENSE</u> | <u>COST</u> |
| Five hours of coverage | — |
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| Total Cost | \$375 |
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| PACKAGE COSTS | |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| <u>EXPENSE</u> | <u>COST</u> |
| Ten hours of coverage | — |
| 600 proofs in a proof magazine | \$200 |
| 24 page 10x14 Queensberry album | \$750 |
| Engagement Session | — |
| | |
| Total Cost | \$950 |
| Base X 4 | \$800 |
| Album(s) X 3 | \$2250 |
| Base + Album Markup | \$3050 |
| <u>PROFIT</u> | 1950 |

| PACKAGE COSTS | |
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WHAT DID I LEARN?

- ▶ While each package went up in profit, it also went way up in work
- ▶ I was giving away my time. Eight hours of wedding day coverage AND an engagement session AND creating product for a profit of \$1,600?
- ▶ That “profit” was pre-tax. Uh oh, now the profit really doesn’t seem so ...profitable!
- ▶ There were too many choices
- ▶ No more “up to” numbers of hours

event photography rates

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| commissions | our photography commissions are structured to give you the freedom to design your photography package. this a-la-carte pricing allows you the flexibility to choose the services and products important for your celebration. |
| included | pricing is based on a pre-event planning session, hourly coverage by the photographer, processing, an entire set of wedding day 4x6 art prints, a password-protected private online gallery of images, negatives and/or digital files (one year after the wedding), and travel up to 100 miles. additional services are priced separately. |
| prices | photography commissions begin at \$2,500 for four (4) hours of photography. each additional hour is \$250. |
| albums | (see below, midpage) |
| special | lower rates may be available on weekdays (monday through thursday) except holiday weekends. please inquire for further details. two (2) hour coverage may also be available for intimate events and special circumstances. the rate for two (2) hour coverage is \$1,000 and is available on a limited, time-determined basis. |
| travel | if travel for the wedding is over 100 miles and the round-trip can be completed on the wedding date, there will be a travel fee of \$200. for travel that cannot be completed on the wedding date, individual fees will be compiled to cover hotel stay and/or airfare as needed. travel quotes will be subject to sales tax and added to photography pricing as needed. |
| tax and terms | pricing does not include 7.5% florida state sales tax or special shipping. a retainer of \$500 is due to reserve your date. |

album prices

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| description | fine photography is best complimented by our collection of handcrafted and traditionally matted albums, books, boxes, and folios. each is custom designed and includes professional prints. custom black and white prints and enhanced prints are available for an additional per print fee. samples of the albums are available for viewing in the studio. |
|--------------------|---|

2005

tax and terms pricing does not include 7.5% florida state sales tax or special shipping. a retainer of \$500 is due to reserve your date.

album prices

description fine photography is best complimented by our collection of handcrafted and traditionally matted albums, books, boxes, and folios. each is custom designed and includes professional prints. custom black and white prints and enhanced prints are available for an additional per print fee. samples of the albums are available for viewing in the studio.

queensberry matted album \$2,400 ... 14x10 book, 70 asst. photos
\$2,000 ... 12x12 book, 70 asst. photos

modern digital album \$2,000 ... 11x14 book, 70 asst. photos
\$1,300 ... 8x10 book, 70 asst. photos

parents matted album \$900 ... 5x7 book, 48 4x6 photos
\$600 ... 5x7 book, 24 4x6 photos

ribbon folio \$85/\$110 4x6 double/triple fold with photos
\$100/\$120 ... 5x7 double/triple fold with photos
\$140/\$170 ... 8x10 double/triple fold with photos

watercolor note cards \$125 ... 25 5x7 watercolor cards with envelopes
\$225 ... 50 5x7 watercolor cards with envelopes
\$400 ... 100 5x7 watercolor cards with envelopes

tax and terms pricing does not include 7.5% florida state sales tax or special shipping

additional service rates

description the photography commission includes everything needed for complete coverage of most wedding days. A couple may choose to add an engagement session, a pre-wedding bridal portrait sitting, or rehearsal dinner coverage to any commission.

engagement session **\$200** ... up to two hours of photography, proofing available online, original prints delivered with wedding images

bridal session **\$250** ... up to two hours of photography, proofing available online, original prints delivered with wedding images, one (1) 11x14 enhanced print (the 16x20 substitution fee is an additional \$50)

rehearsal dinner **\$600** ... up to two hours of photography, proofing available online, original prints delivered with wedding images

WHAT DID I LEARN?

- ▶ \$2500 for four hours IS profitable
- ▶ Getting smarter with my overtime - \$250 is much better than \$100!
- ▶ Albums are finally profitable. I am taking into account the design time, revision time, etc.
- ▶ This price list has to go because it's way too wordy and complicated to get through



2007

susan  stripling
wedding photography information

collections

- collection 1.** *eight* hours wedding day coverage by susan and an assistant.
susan's travel to the wedding city and location.
password-protected online image gallery.
a choice between a 11x14 modern or 10x14 traditional book with 100 images.
two matted leather parent fine art books with 50 images apiece.
wedding day digital files.
\$10,700
- collection 2.** *seven* hours wedding day coverage by susan and an assistant.
susan's travel to the wedding city and location.
password-protected online image gallery.
a 9x12 modern book with 80 images.
wedding day digital files.
\$8,100
- collection 3.** *six* hours wedding day coverage by susan.
susan's travel to the wedding city and location.
password-protected online image gallery.
fine art book with 50 5x7 images.
wedding day digital files.
\$7,000
- collection 4.** *six* hours wedding day coverage by susan.
susan's travel to the wedding city and location.
password-protected online image gallery.
wedding day digital files.
\$5,900

add on items

add on items

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| proofs | \$600 a set of 4x6 bordered proof prints. |
| day after session | \$500 one hour of photography in the wedding city, digital files available with wedding images. |
| engagement session | \$300 one hour of photography, digital files available with wedding images. |
| bridal session | \$300 one hour of photography, digital files available with wedding images. |
| rehearsal dinner | \$800 up to two hours of photography, digital files available with wedding images. may not be available for all dates. |
| overtime | \$400 available on the wedding day (by the hour) |
| additional photographer | \$600 subject to availability of photojournalist, additional travel fees may apply. |
| reprints | reprints begin at \$10 for a 4x6, \$20 for a 5x7, and \$40 for an 8x10. reprints are available for ordering through your online gallery of images. these are not traditionally added onto wedding packages but are available for ordering after the event. |

online image galleries and album designs

natalie + todd | the la playa in naples, florida
shannon + chris | the yachqt club in tampa, florida
julie + jose | cartagena, colombia
deirdre + brad | boca grande, florida
hilary + tom | rosemary beach, florida

natalie + todd's modern book
kilty + robert's fine art book
katie + matt 's very funky modern book
kendra + kyle's classic traditional book

** the fine print: a retainer of 1/3 the amount of your collection is required along with a signed contract to reserve your date. we are not able to "hold" dates without these two items. the next 1/3 of your contracted rate will be due 90 days before the wedding and the final 1/3 due 30 days before the wedding. specific deadlines and due dates for products and items will be spelled out in detail in your contract. we hope to work with you soon!*



WHY DOES THIS WORK?

- ▶ Finally, all collections are profitable
- ▶ I've added on an assistant, but still profitable
- ▶ I was wise enough to factor in travel costs
- ▶ I was wise enough to factor in travel times
- ▶ I stopped saying "up to" with hours
- ▶ I no longer gave away albums, engagement sessions, or other types of sessions
- ▶ I was conscious of income tax

WHERE TO POST-2007?

- ▶ I kept the same packages for a few years and tinkered with the rates
- ▶ When I moved to New York, I actually lowered my rates by \$1,000 per package. Why?
- ▶ Eventually I rebranded, and rebranded again
- ▶ The package structure stayed the same, but the rates raised and lowered throughout the years



COLLECTION ONE

\$9,700

- Ten hours of wedding day photography by Susan Stripling, an assistant, and a second photographer
 - A password-protected online image gallery for easy viewing and ordering of prints
 - A 9x12 library bound album with 85 images
 - The edited wedding day digital files

COLLECTION TWO

\$7,500

- Nine hours of wedding day photography by Susan Stripling and an assistant
- A password-protected online image gallery for easy viewing and ordering of prints
 - An 8x10 library bound album with 50 images
 - The edited wedding day digital files

COLLECTION THREE

\$5,300

- Eight hours of wedding day photography by Susan Stripling and an assistant
- A password-protected online image gallery for easy viewing and ordering of prints
 - The edited wedding day digital files



ADDITIONAL ITEMS

PARENT ALBUM

\$1,000

An 8x8 library-bound album with 30 images (purchased post-wedding, \$800 pre-wedding)

8x10 ALBUM

\$2,300

An 8x10 library bound album with 50 images

9x12 ALBUM

\$3,000

A 9x12 library-bound album with 85 images

PROOFS

\$600

A set of 4x6 proof prints

ENGAGEMENT SESSION (FULL)

\$950

** Two hours of photography in NYC, Brooklyn, or Philadelphia. Edited digital files are included.

ENGAGEMENT SESSION (MINI)

\$400

*45 minutes of photography on-location at Susan Stripling Photography Studios in Crown Heights, Brooklyn. Edited digital files are included.

OVERTIME

\$400

Per hour, available by the hour

SECOND PHOTOGRAPHER

\$1,500

**A second photographer for your wedding day

* Engagement sessions (full) are scheduled on Tuesdays and Thursdays in NY with occasional Friday availability. Philadelphia engagement sessions are scheduled on Fridays only.

** Second photographer coverage will run consecutively with Susan Stripling's coverage

WHAT HAS CHANGED?

- ▶ 8 hours went from \$6,700 in 2007 to \$5,300 in 2015
- ▶ Yet it's more profitable. Why?
- ▶ No hotel stays, no two days of travel, no paying assistant to travel. I was averaging \$750 in travel per wedding when I was at \$6,700.
- ▶ I increased my volume.
- ▶ In 2015, I went from \$5,300 to \$5,900 and didn't slow down. I tried to push to \$6,400 and hit a wall.
- ▶ Where will you hit the wall?



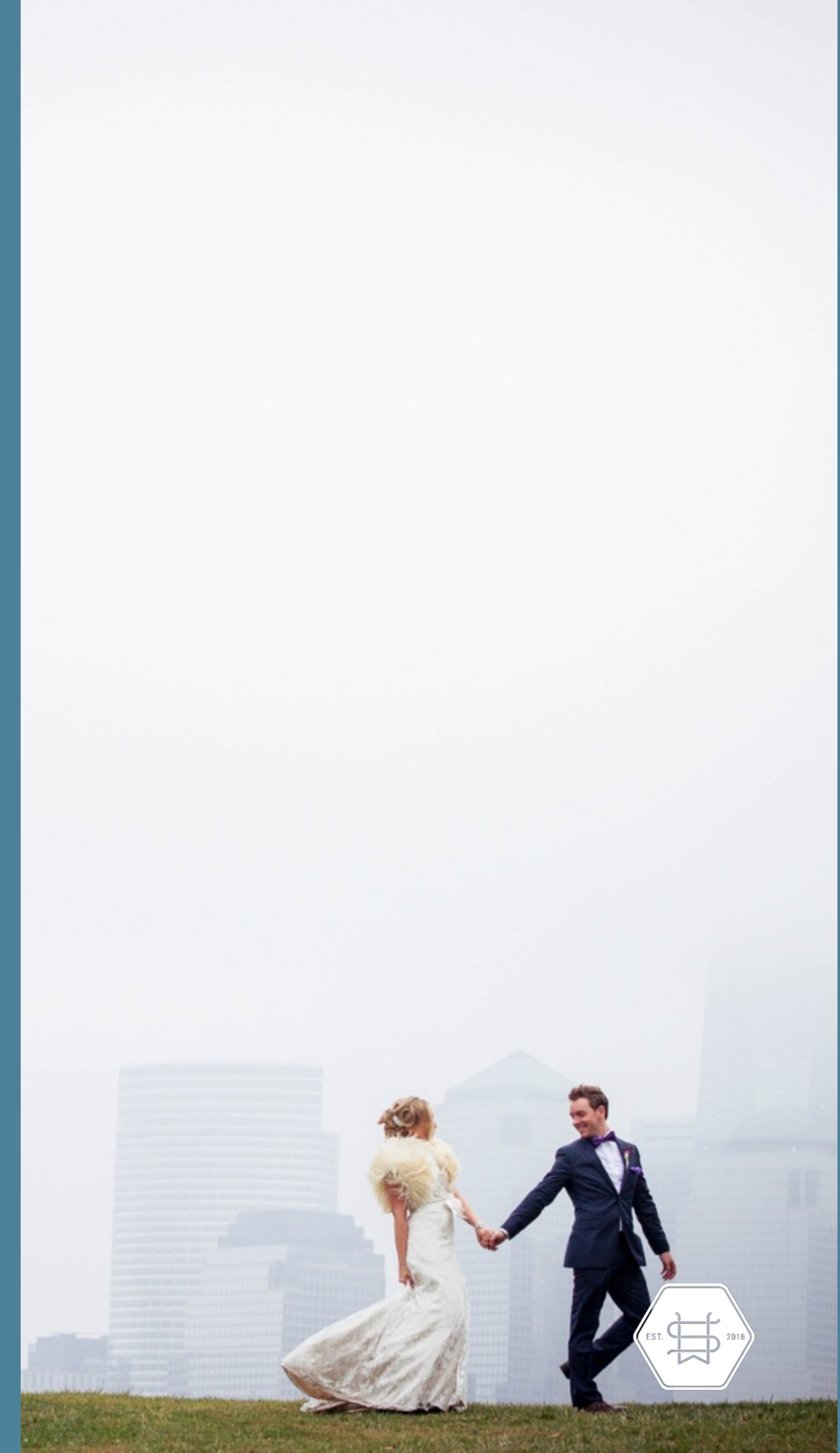
WHAT WORKS BEST?

- ▶ This is just my opinion and my observations in my market
- ▶ A three-package structure, even though the middle package doesn't sell
- ▶ A base collection with time and files
- ▶ A middle collection with more time and a small album. For a larger wedding, it's not enough time, and the book is never big enough
- ▶ A top collection with more time and an even bigger book
- ▶ Most opt for the base or the top, the middle is just there to push them to the top



RAISING MY RATES

- ▶ 2014 : 8 hours was \$4,000, \$4,200, \$4,600, \$4,900
- ▶ 2015 : 8 hours was \$4,900, \$5,300, \$5,900, \$6,400
- ▶ I got stuck at \$6,400 and went back down
- ▶ I reconfigured, added a 2nd shooter, and went back to \$6,400
- ▶ Raise rates quarterly, per set number of bookings, or per revenue goal
- ▶ Don't be afraid to go back to where you were





THE
WEDDING SCHOOL