



BUILDING A BUSINESS ON A BUDGET

# THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF BUDGETING

I was scrolling through LinkedIn the other day and I noticed something. It was easy to tell who had **invested in their headshots** and who had taken them just to check a box. And if I can tell just by scrolling through, you can bet an employer can tell when they search a profile.

On top of that, I could see the way that someone was **marketing themselves** and using each platform to its fullest extent, and that was a dead giveaway as to not only how long they'd been in the industry, but also how much they had invested in themselves.

How you **present yourself online** in today's world can really give you a leg up on the competition. If you want others to see that you're worthy of investment, then **invest in yourself first!**

Now, you may be asking how best to spend what might be, for many of us, a limited source of funds. Well, I've compiled a few different ways I've spent my own money in the form of **Do's and Don'ts**, including how it has (or hasn't) paid off in the long run...



**Do...**

**Get professional headshots.**

Getting professional headshots is one of the most sure-fire ways to invest in yourself, and these are honestly some of my favorite photos to take as a photographer because they allow me to help my clients truly achieve their goals. You will use these for everything, so make sure you're looking your best on the big day. (If you're not sure how to do this, I've got another freebie for that!)



**Do...**

**Plan ahead.**

Any good businesswoman knows that a budget is successful if it's been planned ahead of time. Know you want to start investing in yourself soon? What are your priorities—new branding? Headshots? Education?

Figure out your goals as a business, what direction you'd like to go in, and how much you're willing to dedicate to it. Only then can you really jump in without hesitation.



**Do...**

**Take advantage of free resources.**

I know we're talking about ways to spend your money, but not everything that will build up your business will cost you. Honestly, I've found some pretty incredible content free online from other photographers by just providing my email address. Work smarter, not harder!



**Do...**

**Support other photographers.**

As much as some people treat it like it is, I firmly believe that this isn't a dog-eat-dog industry. There are plenty of sessions + clients to go around, and life gets so much easier when we can be colleagues as opposed to competitors. Plus, there are so many photographers out there providing super helpful content, and many of them have much more experience under their belts that I do. If I were to try to compete with them, I would miss out on their amazing services, courses, and podcasts that are full of gems for any young entrepreneur. Lean on them, and allow them to lean on you in return.



## Don't...

### **Purchase presets.**

Okay, this isn't a hard-and-fast "don't," but one thing I regret doing is letting someone else's presets become a crutch for me as I was trying to define my style. I didn't like the idea of my photos looking just like someone else's. To avoid this fate, I'd recommend going to Pinterest and setting up a board of the photos that seem to scream "me!" That's how you'll really find your style, and you won't be doing it on anyone else's terms.



**Don't...**

**Make decisions on a whim.**

This harkens back to the “planning ahead” section, but I need to reiterate it because it’s so important. As a young business owner, the only way you’re really going to make it is when you plan + strategize.





**Don't...**

**Upgrade your equipment before  
upleveling your education.**

This is actually a piece of advice that another photographer gave me a while back when I was deciding if I should invest my money in a course or an upgraded camera body. She told me that the camera could be paid for within only a few sessions that I would schedule after learning from the course, and she was so right. In this industry, education is critical but often overlooked, so don't forget to seek this out before looking for any equipment upgrades.



**Do...**

**Forget to budget!**

Budget yourself out, find what you can really afford, and then jump in. What are you waiting for?

So, make the investment. Whether it's in education, branding, content, or another area, choose where your business needs to grow the most, and what will be the most enduring. And whether you invest in me or in another photographer, make your professional side a priority. You're worth it.

