



HOW TO THRIVE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

#GetToWork

If someone told you a year ago that you would have to reschedule all of your spring sessions and postpone everything on your calendar because of a global pandemic ...you likely would not have believed it. It's okay - us, too!

So now that this has become our reality, what do you do now?

You put on your business hat, and do what you have to do to thrive during this unprecedented time.

You may be wondering what you can possibly do to THRIVE right now. That's where we come in.

We have not only pulled together resources and advice from industry leaders, but we've also put together a checklist of things you can do NOW to come out stronger on the other side of this.

So take that artist hat off, and put on your business pants!



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APRIL 2, 2020

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BRING IN MONEY NOW WITHOUT PHOTOGRAPHING CLIENTS



SALES

As an industry, we always promote printing photographs. Now is a great time to put on your sales hat and get some revenue.

1. Re-open archived galleries and offer sales for products
2. Pre-Design albums for clients, then offer at a discounted rate
3. Offer 'Pay In Full' options for clients: For clients who book with you now, and pay the session fees upfront, offer a small discount. This gets cash in your pocket now, and provides clients a nice 'thank you'
4. Push to book sessions now - with no discount

BONUS: New Iris users can receive up to \$1,000 in free processing with Square. Sign up for a free trial to learn more.

Not sure how to launch these sales? We've included template wording you can use to get these sales out the door. ***Make sure to alter the text in bold.***

BRING IN MONEY NOW

Sample sales announcements

Reopening archived galleries:

Ready to smile? For a limited time, I've reopened your previous gallery and I'm offering a special sale for you!

Save **(insert your specific sale here)** by placing an order before **(insert sale end date here)**.

Now is as good a time as any to get some of your photos printed and displayed in your home!

Pre-designed albums:

As you may have guessed, I've had some extra time on my hands lately! I used some of that time to design an album for you!

View Your Album Here (include link)

If you're interested in purchasing this album, we can work together to tweak the design. PLUS I'm currently offering clients **(insert sale here)** for any albums ordered!

Pay In Full Option:

As a small business owner, and one whose business relies primarily on interacting with people, I am doing all I can to ensure that I continue to run my photography business.

For the next month, I am offering those clients who book with me now a discounted rate. To receive the discounted session rate, simply pay in full today and we will put a tentative date on my calendar.

To get started, click here **(insert booking calendar)**.

Push to book (no discount):

The current global pandemic has truly increased the importance of my job as your photographer. Documenting moments in your life, documenting you and your loved ones, and capturing a moment in time in photographs is all we will have to look back on one day.

Book your fall or winter session with me now by clicking the link below. The year 2020 is one we will never forget, our children will most certainly remember, and I want to help preserve the happy moments we are sure to have on the other side of this pandemic.

To get started, click here **(insert booking calendar)**.

BE PROACTIVE WITH CLIENTS

At this point, there are many unknowns about when you can go back to sessions as normal again. Rather than waiting for your clients to reach out about rescheduling, or even cancelling, use the below template to be proactive - contact your clients to let them know your process.



{{client_first_name}} -

I hope you're doing well with all that is happening right now. We are clearly living in an unprecedented time.

I'm so grateful for you and although it is disappointing that we need to reschedule your upcoming session, I do believe it's necessary at this point in time.

I am offering my clients one of two options right now. First, we can tentatively reschedule you for a date sometime in June or after. Secondly, we can keep you on my list to reschedule at a later date. If you prefer to do this, I will reach out to you in late May/early June to reschedule.

I believe our country is going to get through this pandemic and I will be back to photographing soon. Any payments you have made towards your session will be transferred to your rescheduled date.

Thank you again for supporting my small business. I am looking forward to seeing you soon. Please stay safe and healthy!

{{studio_name}}

RESPOND TO REFUND REQUESTS

You will, no doubt, have some clients who request a refund. Ideally, your contract contains the appropriate force majeure language that you can reference in your response. However, we thought having a starting point on how to respond to clients who request a refund, rather than the option to reschedule, may be helpful.

Obviously, this response will not be helpful for events (weddings, ceremonies, etc). Given COVID-19 is no-one's fault, as much as you can work with your clients who are forced to reschedule their events, it's in your best interest to do so. It is simply good for client retention.



{{client_first_name}} -

I hope you're doing well, staying healthy and safe with all that is happening right now. We are clearly living in an unprecedented time.

COVID-19 is not anyone's fault. But unfortunately, it is our current reality. I am not able to offer refunds, but will work with you to find an agreeable date to reschedule our session. Any payments you have made towards your session will be transferred to your rescheduled date. I will do my best to accommodate your requests.

I am offering my clients one of two options right now. First, we can tentatively reschedule you for a date sometime in June or after. Secondly, we can keep you on my list to reschedule at a later date. If you prefer to do this, I will reach out to you in late May/early June to reschedule.

Thank you again for supporting my small business. I am looking forward to seeing you soon. Please stay safe and healthy!

{{studio_name}}

STIMULUS PACKAGE

WHAT HELP IS AVAILABLE

Due to the impact the pandemic is having on our country's small businesses, the administration has passed a stimulus package which offers various options for small business owners and even self-employed individuals. CNN calls the CARES Act an 'economic lifeline' for freelancers and self-employed individuals.

Below is a short synopsis of what has passed and been signed by the President that may apply to you and your business. Find out more on the [Small Business Administrations website](#), or on the [COVID-19 Business Resource Center's website](#).

Pandemic Unemployment Insurance

As of March 30, 2020, new federal law allows states to extend unemployment benefits to the self-employed. As stipulated in the bill, freelancers can receive an additional \$600 per week in unemployment insurance.

As most photographers are self-employed, find out what your state is offering by going [here](#).

Emergency Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL)

The stimulus package allows for small business owners and the self-employed (including sole proprietorships) the option to apply for the EIDL. Additionally, business owners can request a \$10,000 advance on an EIDL that does not have to be paid back, even if you do not qualify for a Small Business Administration loan.

[Read more about what is needed to submit your application here.](#)

Grant Options

[Freelancers Relief Fund](#) - Offering \$1,000 to freelancers for necessities
[Hello Alice](#) - \$10,000 emergency grants to small businesses

Student Loans

If you have federal student loans (within the last 10 years), there will be automatic payment suspensions for any student loan held by the federal government. Check your account over the coming weeks to view your current amount due.

Q&A on the Stimulus Package

INVEST IN YOURSELF AND YOUR BUSINESS

You may find yourself with a little time on your hands while you aren't holding sessions. You can do one of two things - sit back and relax and enjoy this 'time off'. Or you can get to work on your business. This can be a slew of things - but one is furthering yourself and honing in on your craft.

We've put together a list of resources you can check out to learn a new skill, or further your business knowledge.

1. [Creative Live](#): Creative classes taught by the world's best
2. [Sue Bryce Education](#): Portrait Education
3. [Audible](#): Audio Books, many business options
4. [FStoppers](#): Tutorials, articles and insights into photography
5. [KelbyOne](#): Online Photoshop, Lightroom and Photography Education
6. [The Collective](#): Educational content from industry and business experts
7. [SLR Lounge](#): Online workshops, training and educational content
8. [StompSoftware](#): Learn how to easily design albums and blog posts.
9. [Entrepreneur.com](#): Online business courses available. Including [this one](#) for learning Adobe Creative Cloud Suite.
10. [Udemy.com](#): Online learning for nearly anything. Including [this one](#) on Quickbooks Online.
11. [JasmineStar.com](#): The queen of social media and building a brand.
12. [Six Figure Photography](#): Weekly podcasts, online training modules, and hands-on workshops from Ben Hartley.
13. [The Milky Way](#): Online learning for newborn and family photographers.
14. [The Iris Marketplace](#): Get workflows from industry leaders, like Kayla Locke and Rachel Vanoven, exclusively available to Iris users. Plus import contracts from TheLawTog directly into your Iris account.
15. [Fundy](#): Design wall art, cards and magazines with ease.

STAY RELEVANT

How do you stay top of mind with clients when you don't have new content to post? When you aren't working, what do you do to keep up on social media and be present with your clients?

1. Dig through your archived galleries and post images from previous sessions that you maybe haven't shared before.
2. Ask clients to post their favorite image of them you have taken.
3. Photograph your family, pets or surroundings. Document this time and share those images. This will help your clients relate to you.
4. Put together a tutorial for your clients on how to photograph their kids/families. Your clients can't have you photograph them right now, but you can still be a resource for them. They'll remember that when this is over.
5. Use something like [Canva](#) to design some graphics. When your calendar is ready for booking again, you can run some ads to your client base and their friends.
6. Speaking of ads, spend some time learning Facebook/Instagram advertising. [Here's a great resource from TheModernTog.](#)
7. While you're home and unable to photograph people, try your hand at landscape or nature photography. Offer up the high-res images to your clients for free.

WORK ON YOUR BUSINESS

We always hear that there's never enough time to focus on the business side of photography because we are constantly shooting and editing. Well now there's no excuse. Here are some things you can do for the business NOW.

1. Revisit your workflows. Review your emails, questionnaires and contracts to make sure you have everything you need to communicate included.
2. Review your current pricing. This requires you to review your cost of doing business (including expenses). Know your numbers.
3. How do you get to know your numbers? Get an accounting system in place that streamlines this for you. Quickbooks or Wave Accounting are two options to consider.
4. Clean up your website. Spend some time adding new images and refreshing your content.
5. Catch up on blogging. Whether it be sessions you haven't blogged yet, or a round up of your favorite images from last year - get some new content up.
6. Check out your [Google Listing](#). Make sure you've claimed your business and take charge of how people can find you.
7. Get ahead of the game. Put a plan together for the rest of the year. Think out any mini sessions, holiday offers, sales and promotions - and then get all your assets ready so when the times comes you are ready to roll.

ADVICE FROM INDUSTRY LEADERS



Chasing Galilee Photo
@chasinggalileephoto

"Keep working. This industry is not all about shooting and delivering sessions. Connection is key and it won't be forgotten. There is a ton more you can be doing to keep yourself in front of the right people because when everything turns around- and it will- you need to be remembered when everyone is ready to start booking again. After all we are all glued to our phones."

- Alyssa Hollis, Chasing Galilee Photo

Read more about exactly **WHAT** you can do from Alyssa on our [instagram feed](#).

"Stay positive and hopeful. We'll all get through this together. Utilize this time to catch up on client galleries, update client guides or show your website some TLC. Take this time to grow as an artist. Dive into online education, learn something new! Most importantly fill this time with activities to strengthen the love within your family."

- Jesse Salter, Jesse Salter Photography



Jesse Salter Photography
@jessesalterphotography

"This too shall pass and you can always rebuild what has fallen. Meanwhile, when opportunity does not knock, build your door. Use this downtime to finish edits, practice shooting products around your house, new updated photos of your kids or new headshots for you. Take new online courses, get ahead with knowledge and working on your craft. Update your website. Clean up who you follow on IG. Follow people who inspire you, who will hire you and who you want to support."

Tiffany Burke, Tiffany Burke Photography

Read more about what Tiffany has to say on our [Instagram feed](#).



Tiffany Burke Photography
@tiffanyburkephotography

ADVICE FROM INDUSTRY LEADERS



Lisa Digeso & The Milky Way
@milkywayfun

"Dear Ones. This too shall pass. Take this as a beautiful opportunity to re-evaluate what has been working, and what hasn't. Maybe its the space & time to revamp your website, or double down on learning by revisiting courses or classes you haven't taken. Or finally taking the time to set up your CRM. Clients will return, and new ones will come into your life. Trust in yourself and your talents too. So much Light & Love"

- Lisa & The Milky Way



Denise Marie
@denisemarie.photos

"Don't waste this quarantine pouting; there is so much you can do! 1) Now is the time to work on that skill that has always intimidated you: off camera lighting, Photoshop/Lightroom, bookkeeping, etc. 2) Write new blog posts, social media posts, etc and schedule them out to create buzz around your business and remind your people that you're still in business and stronger than ever! You NEED to show your clientele that your brand is built to last and a pandemic won't hold you back. 3) speaking of social media, people are on their phones right now more than ever, take advantage of that and stay regular with your updates. 4) GET CAUGHT UP! When this quarantine is over, the business is going to come back and come back alllll at once; you don't want to be behind before you've even started. 5) Organize your office, files, gear. Purge and sell all of the things you no longer need."

- Bobbi Sheridan, Bobbi Photo



Bobbi Photo
@bobbiphoto

"My biggest piece of advice is to use this down time to build up the back side of their business! There is SO much more to a photography business than just taking photos. And this is a great opportunity to sign up for Iris Works, learn the program and develop your workflows. All the while keeping full faith that this will pass and when it does you will have a seamless process to handle the workload."

Denise, Denise Marie Photos

www.iris-works.com