

# WORTH EVERY PENNY *joycast*<sup>TM</sup>

Sarah Petty: As promised, here is part two of our advice series with my 100K YAY award-winning boutique photographers. These photographers earned as much as \$400,000 last year in their photography businesses, and you'll hear directly from them what their favorite tips are for growing a profitable photography business. If you haven't listened to part one last week yet, go on back and listen for all of these great tips from photographers who are in all different stages of their photography journey, but they're all making over six figures. Let's get started with part number two.

So the real question is, how are portrait photographers like us able to run a profitable business and still put our families first without selling digital files for cheap and working all the time? I'm Sarah Petty, your host of the Worth Every Penny Joycast, and I went from a stressed out, overworked mama with three babies to being named one of America's most profitable photographers without working my kids' lives away. Each week, I'll show you how to find and serve boutique portrait photography clients in a world where we compete for free thanks to everyone having a digital camera in their pocket. Take the first step to adding more joy and profit to your life by downloading your free photography business tools at [joyofmarketing.com/podcast](http://joyofmarketing.com/podcast).

Tim Gray: Hi, this is Tim and Jill Gray from Higher Focus Photography, and we are in St. Louis, Missouri.

Jill Gray: And we'd like to share with you some of the habits that we have incorporated into our business that has helped us to consistently hit six figures for about the last seven, eight years.

Tim Gray: Yeah, six years.

Jill Gray: Yeah, it's been a while. One of the things that we do every year, every month, every quarter is really get down to planning and figuring out exactly what we need to do to hit our numbers, exactly who we're going to interact with, how we're going to spend our time, how many sessions we need for everything to make our numbers, but also how do we want to spend our time networking and getting out in the community and meeting more people.

Tim Gray: Yeah, that's right. Because networking has, especially with our Chamber, has just brought us headshots, family portraiture, branding, some of our headshot clients have become branding clients, and it led us to our Dream 100, one of our Dream 100s, actually. And they took us to Dubai.

Jill Gray: Yeah, that's definitely a Dream 100, right, when they take you halfway across the world? But since then, she's also introduced us to a lot of other business owners that we get to do great personal branding shoots for as well, as well as

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some other really high-powered business people in our community. So that has been a fantastic connection for us. And in this trip to Dubai actually, that really helped our social media presence too.

Tim Gray: Oh, absolutely it did. And just the content that we created while we were in Dubai, we had no idea how many of our clients and former clients were still following us on social media.

Jill Gray: Yeah, some people that we actually only met one day two years ago, the next time I saw them said, "Oh, so how was Dubai?" And we had no idea they were still following us, but we were staying top of their mind because we had some really interesting content that we were putting out there. So the social media aspect of it has really kept us in front of our clients. And we have a great relationship with our clients.

Tim Gray: Because we serve them so hard.

Jill Gray: We do, we do.

Tim Gray: Yeah.

Jill Gray: We become friends with them. They don't feel like clients after we've worked with them. By the time we have consultation and the shoot and the sale and installing it in their home and all of these great things, they're much more friends. And so, those referrals have been really important too.

Tim Gray: Oh, they've been huge. Yeah.

Jill Gray: So between really planning out what we do, networking in our community and really getting to know so many business leaders where we live, our social media presence and the referrals that we get from clients, we don't actually do any advertising at all.

Tim Gray: No, we don't.

Jill Gray: It's really kind of cool. But those things have proven really successful for us for the last eight years.

Tim Gray: Yes.

Jill Gray: All right, well, good luck.

Tim Gray: Yep. Make it a great day.

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Jill Gray: Bye.

Jenn Kerfeld: My name is Jenn Kerfeld. I am from Central Minnesota and I've been doing photography for about 21 years. 16 of those years I have been an entrepreneur owning my own business in Sauk Center, Minnesota. It's actually right in the middle, so right in the middle of the state, but in Sauk Center, Minnesota for 16 years. And so when I was asked to share a few things that I do to consistently hit 100K or a six figure income in my business, I had to kind of sit and think and make a list of some of the things that I do that I don't even consider saying no to. And a few of those things are community involvement, memberships at my Chamber, a rotary membership. I'm very involved in both my local Chamber and my Rotary Club. And the reason for that is because I just make such good connections.

And so I served on the board for the Chamber for about three years. And what that did for me was not only just being a Chamber member, being a Chamber member is great, but really getting involved within my Chamber and volunteering to serve in my community really made a huge difference, because I not only was able to serve my community on a higher level, but I was also able to really make some great connections. And some of the people that are within our Chamber and that I served on the Chamber board with are really great friends of mine now. I have a great relationship with our director and her and I meet and we collaborate and sometimes we talk about my business and sometimes we talk about what can we do to make our area and our town better? What can we do? And so we collaborate that way and I just think that's a really great way to build strong relationships within your community.

I do the same for the Rotary Club. I volunteer. I served as rotary president. So more than just a regular membership, really getting involved within those clubs and within those organizations and volunteering and making sure that you are showing people that you really do care about the community that you're living and working in. Some of the other things, of course, going along those same lines like shopping local, using local vendors. Anytime I do a project, if I'm doing a construction project or if I'm building something or if I'm doing something, I'm always calling local people. I don't order supplies online. I buy those local. Anything I can get local and anything I can do local is something that we always do. I don't even consider the alternative. Staying authentic to myself and my values are a big part of my business. Staying authentic to who I am as a photographer, but also who I am as a family person and who I am in my faith.

Those are really important to me and it's really important for me to show that to my clients so that they can get to know me on a bigger, more personal level. And then finally, something that I did different in 2022 was that I got really annoying about my numbers. And I say annoying because it was annoying to

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myself, but I just monthly tracked my numbers. But more than monthly, I was like almost weekly tracking my numbers because I wanted to know exactly where I was. I wanted to know what I needed to do to get to where I wanted to be, and I wanted to know exactly how, either short I came up for that month, or how much ahead I came out for that month, so that at the end of the year I didn't have a big hole to climb out of to reach my financial goal. I didn't want to leave everything for fourth quarter.

Fourth quarter is always a busy time of year for photographers, but I didn't want everything to pile up at the end of the year. So I got really crazy about my numbers this year and it paid off in a big way. Making a plan to reach those goals and following through with those plans. It's a non-negotiable thing for my business to hit six figures because it's my only job. And so a big part of my business and hitting six figures is being able to support my family in a way that I can both be there for them and have the flexibility of owning my own business, but also I can be a financial supporter for our family. So coming in less than six figures is non-negotiable for us because financially, my family needs that and depends on that. So I hope that's helpful. Thank you for listening.

Kaycee Joubert:

Hello, friends. My name is Kaycee Joubert and I've owned Real Life Photographs for over 16 years. And I am going to share a handful of things that I think have really helped move the needle in my business and help me achieve that six figure mark. The first thing would be to move your body. I think it's important that you find something that you enjoy to do because then you'll want to do it every day. But I know for me, it's very easy to get stuck behind my computer as a photographer, and by moving, it's helped me change my state. So if I am stressed or feeling anxious, I'll go for a walk or a run or do some yoga, or even just jumping up and down for 60 seconds will help change your state. I wanted to start off by talking about moving because this is so helpful with having a healthy mindset. Moving and having a great mindset go hand in hand.

I'm not saying that I don't ever have negative thoughts, but I've become more aware of them. Thank you, Jill Liebhaber. Where do you spend your focus? Do you focus on what's missing or do you focus on what you have? I love this quote by Wayne Dyer. He said, "When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change." Mindset has been instrumental in me achieving the goals of my business, and I've particularly been working on my money mindset. Oftentimes, we are brought up with limiting beliefs around money. For example, I was told money doesn't grow on trees or that's too expensive. And as a small business owner for a long time, I've had a lot of head trash and limiting beliefs over the course of my career, particularly around the value of my work, what I charge, as well as my worth.

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And having awareness around it has been half the battle. But this one tool has changed a lot with my limiting beliefs. Our subconscious mind doesn't know the difference between reality and what we tell it. So thoughts are things. We have this part of us called the RAS, the reticular activating system. The RAS is a bundle of nerves at our brainstem that filters out unnecessary information so the important stuff gets through. That's the best way I can explain it. It connects the subconscious part of our brain to the conscious part of our brain. The RAS is the reason you learn a new word and then you start hearing it everywhere you go. Or if you've ever bought a new car, typically we'll research that car, we'll choose the color, a lot of focus goes into choosing out that car that we want, and then once you buy that car, everywhere you go, you see that car on the road and it's simply just because you've brought your focus to it.

This is the reason why I think a vision board is so powerful because you're focusing your brain on the things that you want to achieve. I had never done a vision board until last year. I'd always wanted to do it, but I just never made the time. And honestly, I dare you to try it. More than half the things on my vision board happened. Another exercise that I've been practicing for the last couple of years that goes hand in hand with the vision board and the RAS is this evening practice, and I do it mostly every night. I'm not perfect, nor do I want to be, but I keep a journal by my bed. And I learned this practice from a successful entrepreneur by the name of Rachel Hollis.

She has her own podcast and she's also a New York Times bestselling author, and she is a speaker, all the things. But she credits her success to this one practice. And if you want to do a deep dive on it, it's episode number 72 on her podcast. But I'll share the gist of it right now. First, I write down five things that I'm grateful for. By having a gratitude practice, it puts you into a beautiful state. You can't be fearful and grateful at the same time. And then, being specific with your gratitude by sharing the beautiful moments of your day, it really helps put you into an amazing state. So although you can say, I'm grateful for the roof over my head, I challenge you to really focus on what happened during your day that brought you joy or just that made you feel amazing. The next thing would be to write down 10 goals and dreams, but the key is to write them down as if they've already happened.

She gave some examples, and I think this really helped me grasp the concept. So I'm just going to share a couple of things. A mistake I made early on was I wrote down my business is going to make six figures. And what I learned was that your brain focuses on the going to part. So be very specific in the details such as write my business earns six figures with ease, or I have six figures in the bank. But also what I learned is don't limit yourself. I write down Real Life Photographs earns multiple six figures with ease by serving her clients at a high level while providing an amazing experience. I have the best clients. Real Life Photographs

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earns thousands of dollars for charities that are near and dear to her heart. Last year, I had written down Real Life Photographs earned \$10,000 for a specific charity, and I did earn that, but I don't want to limit myself now.

So now I put down an even higher goal. So it's crazy when you start to dream big, your brain will actually wrap its head around it. So I encourage you to dream really big. I also like to put my personal goals on there, such as I'm an extraordinary role model to my kids and we have the best relationship. I'm an amazing partner who communicates with ease and is fun-loving and I put my family first. This practice was also talked about in the last book that Sarah gave us, the Ultimate Sales Machine by Chet Holmes. And he talked about saying your dreams out loud. Tony Robbins also talks about saying your dreams out loud, although he brings it to the next level and he does it while he's moving and he calls it incantations. So when I start looking at these role models who have these practices and who are crushing it in their field, I don't know. I'm just trying to emulate it. I'm not saying I'm perfect or have it all figured out, but it can't hurt.

The next thing would be to feed your mind. It goes hand in hand with everything that we've been talking about. Read, listen to podcasts, watch YouTube videos. There's so much wonderful content and information out there, and most of it's for free. Even with books, like authors who have put so much time into researching their topic and we get to gobble up that knowledge for 20 bucks. That's a pretty inexpensive education. So if someone I look up to recommends a book, I'm going to read it. If Sarah's going to recommend books, I'm going to gobble all those up. Books and content by Tony Robbins, Joe Dispenza, Louis Howell, Sarah Petty. Have you guys read Worth Every Penny? That's another fantastic book. Again, find people who have what you want and learn from them. I love Audible. I love to listen while I'm doing my chores. Exercising. I drive a lot where I live, so I like to plug into the car. I'm just constantly feeding my mind.

My last little nugget for y'all would be to find a coach and a tribe who are crushing it in their business. We are the sum of the five people we hang around most, and I believe that this has made the biggest impact on my business was that I joined Peak Performers and hired Sarah Petty as my coach. I've done sports all my life, so the whole coach thing resonated with me. I love that she was a volleyball player and played into college. But apart from that, she's created this wonderful group of photographers who have the most amazing hearts, who are generous, who are giving back to their communities and who are crushing it in their business.

And I have the honor of surrounding myself with this fabulous crew on the daily who are crushing it in their business. I chose Sarah not only because she's

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generous, she's such a positive giving person, but she runs one of the most profitable portrait studios in the country. And she serves her clients at a high level and has all of her systems in place for her business, all the while putting her family first. Heck yes. When I heard that, it all resonated with me. I was like, check, check, check, check. That's who I want to learn from. And it has made all the difference in my business. In closing, move your body. Choose what you focus on. Feed your subconscious mind with your dreams and your goals. Dream big, get out of your comfort zone. That's when the growth happens. And find your tribe. Wishing you all the success, love and gratitude.

Jean Lachat:

This is Jean Lachat. I have two things I wanted to talk about regarding reaching just shy of 200k this past year. I ended the year at about 194k. So two of the things that were major in this past year for getting to that point in my business, the first one would definitely be my mindset. And this has come and evolved with regular coaching with Jill Liebhaber both in the group and one-on-one. And just learning how to accept myself and what I do as I'm believing in myself that I provide something that people do definitely want and are willing to invest in it. And the more that I can believe that for myself, the easier it is for me to go and talk to other people about it. So, in the past year, I did have a 10k sale and I also had several 5k sales.

And really what that came down to was just believing in what I was doing, knowing I was talking to the right person and being confident in myself and in my pricing and what I could do for them. And that made the difference in those sales. So that mindset and the belief in yourself is really everything when it comes to succeeding. And they often say, whether or not you believe it, it's true. And I have found over the last couple years that is definitely true. So I am dealing with my own mindset issues on my own, and that's helped a lot just by being able to overcome thoughts and turning them around. And being a more positive person about all of this has helped tremendously.

The other key element to my business in the last year was really, really concentrating on getting out in my community, getting involved, and this also has been an evolving aspect of my business because I am very extroverted, so it is easy for me, but even for people who are introverted, this is really the key is getting out and meeting people and talking to them about what you do.

And I've done that in a couple different ways. Of course, it's through the auction plan that Sarah teaches and getting in touch with nonprofits and being able to donate to their silent auction as we've been taught to do at a very basic level. But I've also taken time not to just donate to the charities and their events, but getting to know the people that I'm talking to from the charity. And that has led to more conversations and getting to know people. Also, I joined a local charity organization, Suburban Service League here in Frankfort, and met some great

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ladies. And it's a lot of fun, but I also have made a lot of connections that probably otherwise wouldn't have come through. And feels good to do something like that in my community as well, and so I think it adds to your credibility when you're out there and you're visibly doing good in your community.

I belong to two local Chambers. I serve on the board of my town, Mokena's Chamber of Commerce, and I found that to be a very positive experience and has gotten me to meet Chamber members and businesses that I otherwise probably wouldn't have. That's been really good and it's also enjoyable, so that's a bonus. And they're so willing to promote what I do and it helps a ton. So that's very exciting. And I also belong to our neighboring town of Frankfort's Chamber, and I've made a point of getting more involved there. I'm not going to serve on two boards, but I have volunteered to serve on a committee for this upcoming Women in Business Awards, which has been fun and I've made some good contacts through that. I've sponsored some of their events with smaller level donations, and that helps too, because not only does your name get out there, but then people recognize you.

And I think to some point it legitimizes you as a business when you are able to afford to sponsor events. People feel like this business is successful and they're able to do these kind of things and that means that they're making money. So I think that both the good feeling that it gives you and then also the way perception is out there in your communities is really important. And the Chambers are inexpensive to belong to. And I did sponsor the Women in Business event because I thought that was really cool, and in turn, I'm going to be volunteering at some other stuff. And you just have to first meet people before you expect to reap any reward for your business from it. And sometimes it may not reap financial rewards, but you never know how that's going to go and who they're going to introduce you to.

And if they get to know you as a person and you're a good person, then that's an easy sell for them to tell people to work with you. So volunteering, joining the Chamber, networking, any networking groups, I have a women's networking group that I also belong to. And that sort of thing has been tremendously helpful, not only in helping my business grow, but also in making me feel better about the state of my business and feel proud of what I can do in my community. People know my name. And that all helps with the mindset too because it's a continuous positive cycle that goes on. You're doing good, you're feeling good about what you're doing, other people perceive you as doing good things, and that just helps tremendously to kind of build up your reputation and get people to know you as a person and they are more likely to tell others about you if they actually like you and they know you'd be easy to work with. So those are the two points I wanted to touch on. Thanks a lot. Bye.

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Amy Wellenkamp: So what are some of the habits that I have adopted to help me hit six figures? One of those that I know that I was really lacking in is follow through with every single client and making sure I get them everything that they ordered and making sure I don't leave any stone unturned, asking them, especially like my senior portrait clients, would you like to follow up and schedule your family session? Is there anything else I can do for you? Making sure I send them their mobile site's digitals immediately as soon as they have made their payments and things like that.

And also following up with people that haven't placed orders yet instead of just hoping that they are going to get in touch with me. I think that really has been empowering for me. First of all, I'm serving my clients best by helping them out because we all have things that are just looming around over our heads and hanging over our heads. And when I reach out and help these people complete the process and place their orders so they can enjoy these memories in their home and on their walls, they are so grateful.

And the other habit also that I have done is just when I meet with people is to be more sweetly encouraging for them to finish their order when they're with me, so that again, we don't have all this decision making to keep taking place and people are like, oh my gosh, I don't think I can come in and see my photos for the first time and make these decisions. And then they are so surprised that they can and it's just such a weight off their shoulders. And so for me also to feel empowered to be able to encourage them to do that because over and over again I see this happening has given me a lot more clarity in how to direct and guide my clients as well.

Hi, this is Amy Wellenkamp, owner of Amy Wellenkamp Photographer. I am so excited to share about how I hit over 100k in my portrait business in 2022. So I was in desperate need to either make this work in the portrait business or go back to corporate America, which I did not want to do desperately. I stepped out of weddings and needed to fill the spot of my wedding and events that I was no longer doing. And so, the one big change I made was I fully committed and did every step of the process for Boutique Breakthrough. I changed out everything to just be focused on portraits for families and high school seniors. So I had a singular focus really. I went through all of the lessons completely. I didn't skip anything, which is not like me, but I fully committed to that, which was amazing. And then I went through all of the handouts and also worked on and redid all of my price lists and practiced on the training, and then I launched into doing the program and not skipping steps with any of my clients.

This paid out in huge dividends. I couldn't even believe it. Did it work for every client? Of course not. But that was where I was finding if I had found my right fit people or not. And then I ended up, to my surprise, finding a lot more right fit

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people than I thought would happen. And then also in the follow through with all of my in-person sales presentations as well, because everybody was already so already well versed with the pricing because we had done in-person consultation, we had talked on the phone at least once or twice. And so by the time I took the pictures, I felt just so much freedom knowing that everybody knew the investment they were going to be making. And when it came time to ordering, nobody was surprised and they were happy to write me checks, send me Venmos for the thousands of dollars in their orders.

It was incredible. And the thing that really has been amazing to me is these clients thank me every time they get something in the mail, when I should be the one thanking them, and I do. But it's insane. They are sending me cards in the mail after they just spent \$2,000 with me on portraits of how much they love them. People when they receive and put their framed artwork on the wall are sending me text messages with crying emojis of how much they love it. Again, another \$2,500 order. And I'm crying also. Not only am I filling a need for people that just treasure their families and want to put them on their walls, but it's also filling a need for me to be able to pay my bills and really be paid for my expertise. I didn't realize how to price everything in my business beforehand.

I have been in business for over 16 years, and I was making it, but barely. And then also just with my time, I was taking on any kind of job that I could get my hands on. So I'm working six, seven days a week through some of the seasons, burning out all the time. It was not working. And so to really be able to take a step back and go through this process, because I had a marketing background, but I did not have a sales background. I really needed help in strengthening my sales process. Because I could get people to reach out to me, but I didn't know what to do with them if they reached out to me. One of the biggest things I did find is talking to people on the phone. People are so grateful. Some people dodge me and never want to talk on the phone, and that's okay.

They just end up not being my people. But the people I get on the phone are just thanking me so much for calling them right back or setting up a time to talk from their email or their text message or their Facebook message they sent me. And to really invest and figure out what they really are looking for and sharing about what I do, rather than just sending out messages saying, this is how much it is, and they have no idea the value of what they are going to be investing in. And then they get sticker shock perhaps and they don't have any connection with me and so they end up never booking. So anyway, I'm so grateful for this program. I'm so grateful for everyone that shares all of the nitty gritty details and is so encouraging. And that's my story.

Cindy Kotecki:

Hi, my name is Cindy Kotecki, and I'm the owner of Natalia Mae Photography, and I'm located in Portage, Michigan. And I am so excited to share with you guys

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my journey as a boutique photographer and how it led me to reaching my goals as earning a six figure income. I've been in business for over 13 years, and I've always wanted to have a successful and profitable business. But with the digital era and pretty much doing shoot and burn, I was doing a lot of work and serving my clients fully. I just wasn't getting paid enough for my time. After the epidemic, I decided to make some changes in my business. One of the things I implemented in my business was education. I'm talking like on top of the education that we already do. So I really wanted to dive deep into how I as a photographer could be more successful.

So I decided to do one of Sarah's five day Booking Boost challenges, and I was so motivated to learn her approach to find those right fit clients that I so desired. After the one week challenge, I joined Sarah's Boutique Breakthrough program during a very hectic time in my life. My son was getting married, my husband had just got hit with a \$9,000 car repair. My daughter was dealing with a terrible gymnastics career ending injury while she was being recruited for college athletics. And let's not forget, we were just coming out of the epidemic. It was questionable whether it would be a smart investment during this stressful time in a program that would put me in more debt, but could vastly increase my family's financial freedom. So there were a lot of discussions between my husband and I on whether this was a suitable time or not. He would say next year would be the best time.

Sometimes he'd say maybe in a few years. But I knew in my heart that if I did not take the risk, that there would not be that reward that I was so looking for. So I borrowed some money, I had put some on credit, and I motivated myself to jump right into Sarah's program, taking the advice and education that she was so eager to give her students, and I put it all into action. One of the biggest changes that I made in my business to hit my goal of a six figure income this past year was my mindset. Before starting Sarah's program, I was insecure about my skills, I lacked confidence in myself big time, and I always compared myself to other photographers in my area. I just wasn't happy anymore doing what I loved. I lost the love of photography. How sad is that?

During Boutique Breakthrough, Sarah challenged us to get a \$1,000 client in eight weeks. That gave me two months to try to figure this all out. One of my first clients to use the boutique business model was a shoot and burn client. The session was 20 minutes, and I was terrified to put into action all the training I had learned, and the fear of failure was so real. But following the process, my client became my first Julie. Not only was she my first client, a \$1,000 client, but she ended up spending over \$6,000 with two sessions, a 20 minutes mini session and a first birthday session within that eight week program. I was speechless. Right then, my mindset changed. There actually were clients who valued what I was offering them, and even though I was terrified of rejection, I

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received the complete opposite. My confidence soared from that day on, and I had to get uncomfortable to become comfortable in achieving the goals that I had set for myself.

I would network with local businesses. I started conversations with strangers asking them how they displayed their images in their homes, and I was even vulnerable to fellow photographers taking Sarah's program, learning that they weren't my competition. They were actually my support system, and it was okay to lean on them. So I instilled several habits that I had practiced with my clients which has helped me reach my six figure goals, becoming a six figure photography studio. One of those habits was being consistent in my brand, having a system in place for each client from the time of the session inquiry to the time that they actually left my studio with all these gorgeous, beautiful artworks. Going through the process and making sure I didn't miss one step for each and every one of my clients, that was key. And so this has been so helpful in making sure my clients are being served at my highest level.

Another habit that I had formed is knowing how to deal with rejection. This was important for me because let's be honest, we all have budgets, and what I may invest in photography may be vastly different than what someone else may invest. And that's okay, because before I would cry, I'd question my abilities and I would give discounts. Now, no, it just means that they may not be my right fit client and I move on with my day. It's okay to have a no. With the education and systems in place, I know when one door closes, another one will open. And to be grateful for those who are invested in their family memories as I am capturing them. I'm excited to continue my photography journey once again, which I regained the love for, and want to become one of the leading photographers in our community.

It has been an exciting year for me and my family, and I look forward to creating more goals and building a brand that is rewarding, profitable, and sustainable. And let's not forget, being a boutique photographer, I have been able to travel more, I have been able to go spend some time with my daughter who has gone off to college to actually do college athletics. The money is much better for my family. I'm able to help and provide. And so I want you guys all to keep crushing it and do what you have to do and let's get going.

Chianne Coffman:

Oh, wow, this is so cool. Hey, everyone. I'm Chianne Coffman. I have a business called Chy Creative in Windsor, Colorado, and I'm so happy to be here today. I'm going to share with you the top three changes I made in 2022 to my business in order to have a successful 2023 year where, in fact, I earned a six figure business while taking three months off to be with my family. So number one, I would say narrow your portfolio. I sat down and I looked at my books from 2021, and I really categorized them. Where did my income come from? So the

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top three categories that brought in the most revenue for me were high school seniors, kids and family, and then tweens. I looked down and I really dialed down the numbers. What's the bottom line of each of these categories? So in my high school seniors, I served 13 seniors with a sales average of \$7,667.

I had 14 families with a sales average of \$4,421. And last, my tween market, I served six families with an average sale of \$4,781. All in all, that added up to 33 clients with a sales average of \$5,765. All in all, sorry to throw a bunch of numbers at you, but facts are important, right? And numbers always tell the truth. Then I thought, okay, how can I serve these top three categories at the highest level? Because the truth is that I was also serving many other categories. My branding category barely brought in anything. I served minimal clients there. And baby, and of course the headshot category. All of those categories were a lot of work for me, and the average sale was very low. So I needed to pivot there, and I knew that. So that's one of the things that I changed is that I decided, you know what?

I'm going to really focus on my top three categories. If you're looking at your portfolio from last year and you served 175 clients and your sales averages, because of that amount of clients, your sales averages perhaps dropped substantially, maybe narrow that down. Maybe start looking at where did the most sales come from, and then that's where you allocate your marketing.

The second thing that I did was I looked at my sales by product summary. What this did was it told me my top three products that were selling off my price list. These are products that basically in every IPS were selling. And I can know that because I kept very good records and I can look at it, right? Like I said earlier, numbers don't lie. And it is so important to understand where your profits are coming from, and this is why. Because in those top three items, I am able to now look at my price list and adjust my prices for that next year.

So my albums and my large canvases in two different sizes, I did increases on those as well as my series. Just by making this minor adjustment, I was able to maintain a six figure business and take even more vacation time, which is always good, right, to spend more vacation with the people you love the most in this world.

The third thing I'm going to tell you is a very simple thing that will help you so much in your business, and that is stay front of mind. So what do I mean by that? What I mean by that is stay involved with your clients. Be engaged, and really show them like, I care about you. I like to follow my clients on social media and pay attention to their lives. When their kids earn an award at school, no matter what age, I comment on that post or I send them a note of joy and let

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them know, "Hey, I saw Kaleigh in the newspaper, and I just think that that is so awesome that she earned a 4.6 grade point average. Wow."

This really helps me stay engaged. And then when I see them out in the community, I can say, "Hey, Nicole, how's it going? How's Kyle doing in school?" And you know what inevitably happens? Almost every single time is Nicole says, "Oh, Chy, hey. Yeah, thanks for that note of joy. I need to actually get back in. It's been three years or so since we've had family photos." And I am intentional about keeping good records about my clients. So when I get back to my studio, I make a note that I saw Nicole out and she's wanting to come back in. This reminds me to always follow up with them. By keeping a healthy database, I am only keeping the contacts that I know, like, and trust or people who I want to get to know, like and trust. So they're very important. Don't just fill your database with all of the Chamber contacts for years and years and send hundreds of marketing pieces out to people that are not going to be your ideal clients.

Good record taking and a healthy database allows us to plant seeds that will eventually bring a good harvest. So a few quick takeaways here. Serve your top three categories at the highest level possible. Pay attention to your price list and what your customers are buying. And then last, stay engaged. Stay front of mind with your client, and always, always, always let them know that you care about them. Thank you all for inviting me on here today. I'll leave you with this last thought. The difference that makes the difference is always action. Your prosperous year is up to you. Now, go make it happen.

Sarah Petty:

Wasn't that incredible? You've heard from photographers who are just like you, juggling the demands of life and a family with the love of making photography and wanting time, freedom and flexibility. And now you can see what is happening for them right now in this economic climate. And I want this for you too. I hope this short series has shown you what is possible as a boutique portrait photographer, and I hope you'll make it a goal next year to be receiving the 100k YAY Award or any of the awards on my stage at Go Boutique Live. I would love to be the one to give you that award. Keep working hard, make that a goal, and I will see you on my stage next year at Go Boutique Live 2024.

Hey, photographer, it's Sarah again with a quick question for you. Do you ever wonder why some photographers make \$300 a session and others make 3,000? I know I did. So I dug deep into what's going on, and I wrote a book for you called Worth Every Penny. You can get a free copy at [joyofmarketing.com/freebook](http://joyofmarketing.com/freebook). Inside this book, you'll learn four ways to price your photography and why there's just one pricing strategy that attracts the best clients. What to do when you need clients, and why paying for ads doesn't work and what to do instead that's way cheaper. The dos and don'ts of social

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media, what most photographers are doing wrong that lowers their profits, and what to do instead. I'm not sure there's a book on the planet that more photographers have read. 23,124 photographers have it already, so I want you to have it too. Grab your copy of the hardcover book free here. Just pay a little for shipping and handling at [joyofmarketing.com/freebook](http://joyofmarketing.com/freebook).