



The 7 Biggest  
Mistakes Brides Make  
When Hiring a Photographer for  
Their Wedding  
and How to Avoid Them

westmount *photography*





# TheIntro

## Thank you for reading my booklet.

This booklet will help you pick the best wedding photographer for **you**. Picking the right photographer for your big day can be confusing and stressful, and you want to make sure you **make the right choice**. Education is the best way to help you make this decision. That's why I wrote this booklet.

Why am I qualified to write such a report? Let me tell you a bit about myself before I get into the main topic.

I have been a professional wedding photographer for over 30 years. **Whoa!** Wait a minute...that's old! The truth is, when it comes to shooting people, events in people's lives and bringing a rock solid confidence allows for a much more advanced level of artistic expression and professionalism.

And that goes a long way in today's day and age when **everyone** is a photographer. I also teach and am well known all over the world for my relentless article writing, presentations and workshops. I am truly 'plugged in.' I know weddings, and I know photography.....keep reading.





## The 7 Biggest Mistakes Brides Make When Hiring A Photographer For Their Wedding And How To Avoid Them

**MISTAKE #1-** You pick a photographer based only on price. The old adage is true. "You get what you pay for." This is especially true in the photography industry. If you want good photography, you should decide to work with a photographer because of the **overall value you receive**, NOT because they are the lowest priced.

Nowadays, the market is flooded with "photographers" who's only game, besides owning a nice camera (they likely bought at Costco, is offering a really attractive price.





## It's economics 101

It is impossible for any company in any industry to offer the cheapest price, have the highest quality, and provide the best service all at the same time.

You can get high quality and super service, but you can't get both and still get the lowest price.

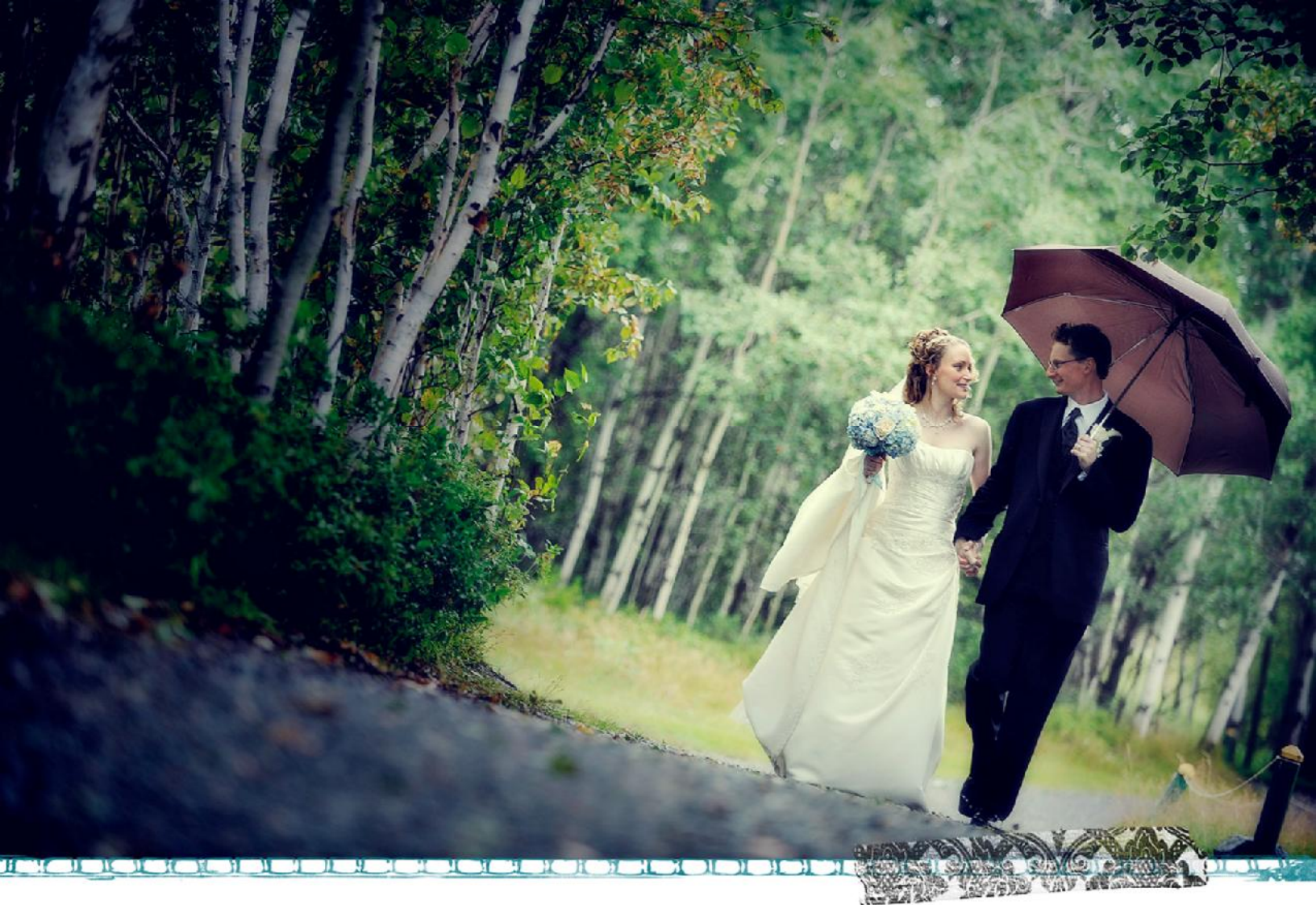
Just like in any business, you would hire the best people and buy the highest quality product--consequently, you have to charge more for your services.

Total value is all three. **Quality, Service and Price**

The common problems YOU WILL have when you pick a photographer who only offers the lowest price...next







## **There are some things you should watch for when you shop around for your wedding photographer:**

\*Booking too fast- Shop around, take your time. Don't ever feel pressured into making a decision on the spot or that day, unless of course you've done your homework and feel very comfortable with your choice. Then nab 'em before it's too late.

\*Read what you are signing- Some vendors use certain tactics to get people to sign a contract. Then they may not follow through on the "verbal" promises made. Unfortunately this makes the entire industry look bad.

There is a simple solution. Take your time and read the contract. If your prospective photographer makes a promise, get it in writing.





\*Hire a photographer with a distinctive style and expect different results- You choose a photographer because they will deliver a certain product, a "look". If you like what they offer, then you can be certain you will like the results that they will deliver of your wedding day. It sounds simple, doesn't it? Many brides cut corners and expect better than expected results from their photographer.

\*Obvious signs-smells, clutter, dirty, booze, bad manners. Trust your intuitive side, your instinct. If something is wrong you can bet it is only the tip of the iceberg. Some obvious signs are dirty studios, clutter and disorganized. If they are slob, what are they like on your wedding day and with your photos after the wedding day? This all sounds basic and it really is nothing more than using common sense.


\*Look for a photographer that obviously loves doing what they do. Sadly for too many photographers your wedding is just another "job". Look for someone who radiates passion, and love of the craft. If photographing your wedding is drudgery for them, your photos may be fine, but will they really shine for you the way an artist who is truly passionate about their craft can make them?

\*Experience. Nothing beats it. If your photographer has photographed many weddings and has a strong vibrant reputation in your community, you can rest assured they got there with experience. Outstanding wedding photographers are not taught in school or by acquiring some degree or by winning awards. They get there through experience.






**1. The first problem** with dirt cheap photographers is they don't stand behind their work if they make a mistake, or worse yet, ruin all the pictures and then the problem is way beyond fixable. Or you may have pictures that are okay, but you hoped for more. In that case there isn't a lot they can do. The end result is you get what you pay for. A little money saved up front can cost big in the end. There is a saying I like to tell my clients: *"What cost are you really paying for photographs you don't like?"*



**2. The second problem with a photographer who offers the lowest price** is they tend to also offer the lowest quality. Your wedding photos are your most important and valuable investment.

The value you place on choosing the right photographer will show for many years. It is a long term investment. Why risk so much and throw away such great memories for a few pennies saved up front?







3. **And the third reason why hiring the cheapest photographer** is a problem is that you might get suckered into believing their talents, skills and abilities. Many 'photographers' today have a lot passion and love of the craft. They think shooting weddings is a cinch. They rely on industry known tactics such as 'spray and pray'. This passion, enthusiasm and false sense of confidence can easily misguide you.



# Mistake number two

You think all photographers are the same.



Photography is art and craftsmanship combined. Most people who hire photographers don't truly understand that despite all the technological advances being made, photographers still use the same quality work habits and techniques as they did 25 years ago.



Every photographer is different. No two are really the same. Every photographer has different equipment, and has different skills and abilities and different employees; these all bring a complete mix of abilities to their product but will not guarantee consistency.



Contrary to what a lot of people think, photography is not just picking up a camera and clicking the shutter. It takes craftsmanship to turnout quality work. Photographers have to know how to capture the right moment, how to compose properly, how to expose properly and how to use light, shape and form in order to get the most flattering and artistic results and poses.



Wedding photography is not a generic product. Ask these and other relevant questions and it will become obvious who the right choice will be for you. You will notice a marked difference in attitude, quality, creativity and experience. Remember, this is your special day. Do you want to hire an amateur to take experimental photos or a pro who will create a masterpiece?

### **Communication is the key to hiring the best photographer for YOU**

- \* Ask what style of work they do- ask to see some samples.
- \* Ask to see the wedding contract. Some will make big promises and do something else- because their contract backs them up.
- \* Ask to see samples from recent weddings
- \* Ask them who will be photographing your wedding.
- \* Ask them how long will it take to see the images after the wedding
- \* Ask them if they retouch or enhance the final images.
- \* Ask them what it will cost and exactly what do you get- how many images are included.
- \* Ask them how many weddings they've photographed.
- \* Ask them (this is a good one) what their philosophy is on wedding photography.







### **MISTAKE #3- You have several photographers competing with each other for your work.**

You may think this is a good way to do business. And it is to some extent. But here is why it usually isn't a good way to deal with photographers.

A good photographer has enough loyal customers that they don't have to deal with price shoppers.

Once you find a good photographer, it is important to stay loyal to them. If you flip-flop, most photographers won't be motivated to keep YOU as a customer.





## **MISTAKE #4- You think having the right equipment is all a photographer needs to do the job right!**

Many photographers own wonderful equipment. That doesn't mean they know how to use it properly. You can have all the "latest greatest wiz bang lenses and digital wonder cameras," but if you don't know how to use it properly you are no better off than anyone picking up a camera and pointing and shooting.

Many photographers have tools that have a lot of bells and whistles, but if the photographer has little or no technical and creative know how, he may as well be from fifty years ago.

Make sure the photographer knows how to use their tools to the very best of their capabilities. You risk not only pictures that could have been outstanding, but worse yet, utter let-down because of lack of technical know how.

I see it all the time, where people think having the right camera is all you need to create high impact images. The truth is, it's in the photographers ability to seeing, use lighting and composition.





## **MISTAKE #5- You don't give the photographer enough time to get the job done properly!**

Mistakes happen when you rush!

Or when there are not enough instructions. You concentrate so much on getting all the details organized, you forget to tell the photographer.

Be organized! Be organized! Be organized! And communicate all the details to your photographer, and also let him know any special needs, shots or relevant details, so you will not be let down.

Before the wedding get them involved. Let them know what your hopes and plans are. Who knows they may have some really cool ideas that might just thrill you or some useful tips on making sure your plans go smoothly.





You can save time, money and headaches from the very beginning by communicating with your photographer. You should think of your photographer as one of your wedding planners. Consult with your photographer.

The time you start looking for your photographer is also an important consideration. You can't expect very many good ones to be available if you start shopping only a few months before your big day.

Most of the better ones are booked way ahead of that, often a year or more in advance.






## **MISTAKE #6- You hire an amateur, friend or relative, or an unqualified photographer and expect top-notch wedding photographs.**

You may have seen a top notch wedding photographer in action at the wedding of a friend or relative. A really good wedding photographer makes it look so easy, almost effortless.

There is a very simple reason for this. Experience.

The **biggest** mistake any bride can make is asking a friend or relative to capture their day, and when the results are not there the responsibility and ill feelings can be crushing.



Most, if not all untrained wedding photographers simply cannot handle the stress and responsibility that goes along with capturing a wedding. The pace, the stress and the speed are way too much for them, let alone being creative.

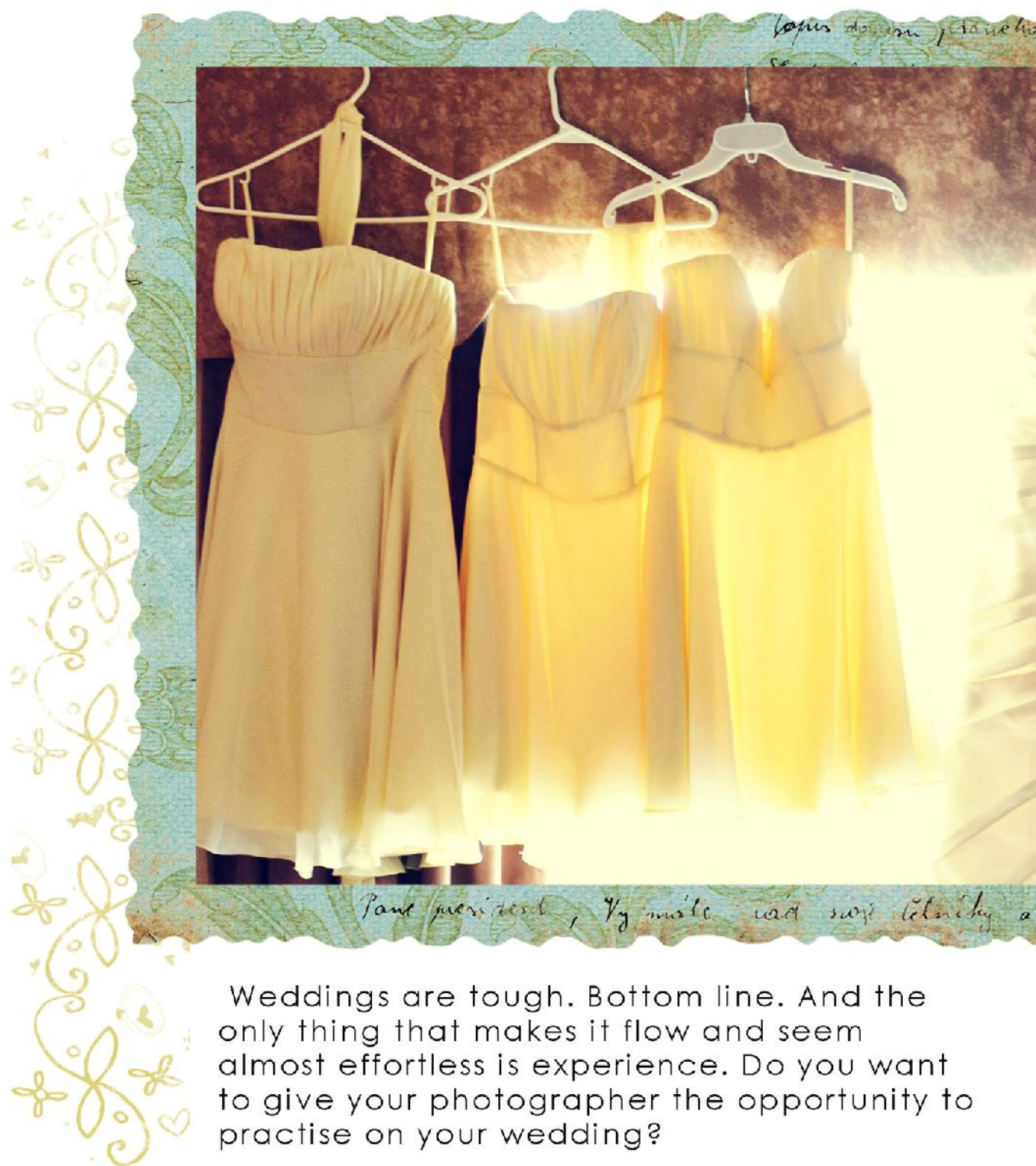
There is nothing wrong with hiring an amateur, as long as you have **realistic expectations**, and know you are going to be getting amateurish photographs.

Even a professional photographer in a different field such as commercial photography will have a rough go of photographing weddings.

Wedding are unique.







Weddings are tough. Bottom line. And the only thing that makes it flow and seem almost effortless is experience. Do you want to give your photographer the opportunity to practise on your wedding?

Of course a photographer can't guarantee wedding pictures because of the very nature of weddings. A wedding is an event. Once your wedding is over, it's over. You have your photographs as your memories, so ruined photos won't matter much even if you get all your money back.



# Mistake number seven

You don't ask for references.



This is easy to solve. You can ask the photographer for actual names and ask to see actual samples from recent weddings, but let's face it, this is almost too embarrassing for most of us to do. There is an easier way. All you have to do is ask around.



Call the local limosine service and ask them who they would recommend. Don't forget to ask the actual drivers. They hear a lot of feedback and experience a lot of photographers in action. Call many of the vendors who service the wedding industry. They know a lot about many of the local photographers.



You'll be surprised. You will discover many positive leads that will make your search very fruitful, and it is so easy to take a few minutes and call or email around. Most people will treat you very warm, and they will be eager to answer your questions.





I LOVE

shooting

weddings

people

kids

families

smiles

joy

moments

details