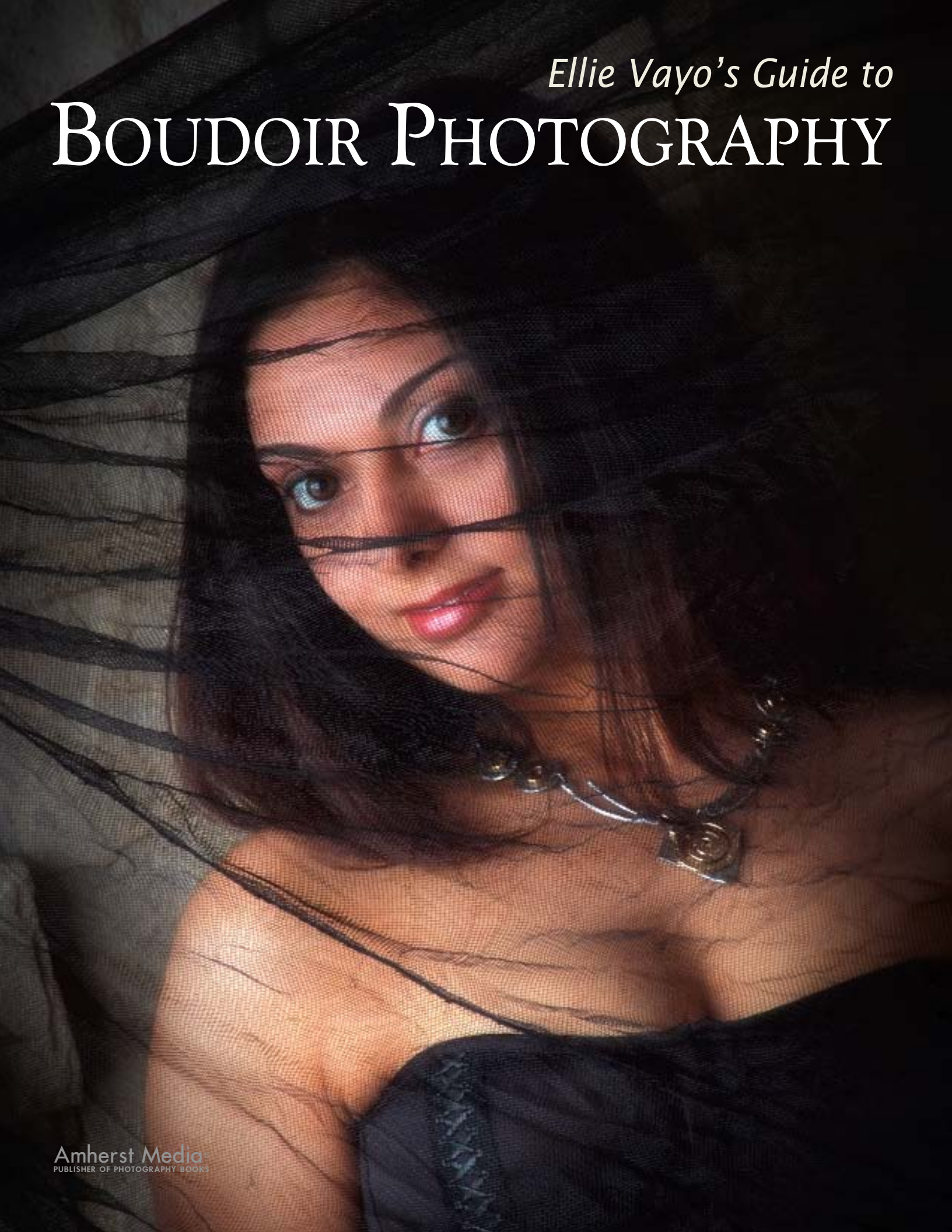


*Ellie Vayo's Guide to*

# BOUDOIR PHOTOGRAPHY



Copyright © 2009 by Ellie Vayo.

All photographs by the author unless otherwise noted.

All rights reserved.

Published by:

Amherst Media®

P.O. Box 586

Buffalo, N.Y. 14226

Fax: 716-874-4508

[www.AmherstMedia.com](http://www.AmherstMedia.com)

Publisher: Craig Alesse

Senior Editor/Production Manager: Michelle Perkins

Assistant Editor: Barbara A. Lynch-Johnt

Editorial Assistant: John S. Loder

ISBN-13: 978-1-58428-253-2

Library of Congress Control Number: 2008942237

Printed in Korea.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopied, recorded or otherwise, without prior written consent from the publisher.

Notice of Disclaimer: The information contained in this book is based on the author's experience and opinions. The author and publisher will not be held liable for the use or misuse of the information in this book.

# Contents

About the Author . . . . .	6
<b>1. Getting Started . . . . .</b>	<b>7</b>
Finding Clients . . . . .	7
Print Ads, Media Ads, and Web Sites . . . . .	9
The Slide Show Consultation . . . . .	14
Products Offered . . . . .	15
Booking a Prepaid Session . . . . .	23
Preselling from a Price List . . . . .	24
Pricing à la Carte versus Packages . . . . .	24
<b>2. Preparing for the Session . . . . .</b>	<b>26</b>
Studio Session . . . . .	30
Music . . . . .	34
On Location at Her Home . . . . .	34
The E-Touch Makeup Line . . . . .	36
<b>3. The Psychology of the Woman . . . . .</b>	<b>39</b>
The Studio Atmosphere . . . . .	40
The Relaxed Session . . . . .	42
Wedding/Bridal Boudoir Sessions . . . . .	43
Pregnancy Boudoir Sessions . . . . .	44
<b>4. Equipment and Lighting . . . . .</b>	<b>48</b>
Camera and Lenses . . . . .	48
Lighting Equipment . . . . .	49
General Equipment . . . . .	51
Studio Lighting Styles . . . . .	51
Old Hollywood Lighting . . . . .	51
Indoor Lighting . . . . .	54
Ambient Window Lighting . . . . .	55
Outdoor Lighting . . . . .	56
Outdoor Sets . . . . .	58
Bringing the Outdoors Inside . . . . .	60

<b>5. Posing Women of All Ages . . . . .</b>	<b>63</b>
Posing the Thin, Small-Framed Woman . . . . .	65
Posing the Full-Figured Woman . . . . .	66
The Lingerie Session . . . . .	67
The Seminude Session . . . . .	68
<b>6. Backdrops and Props . . . . .</b>	<b>72</b>





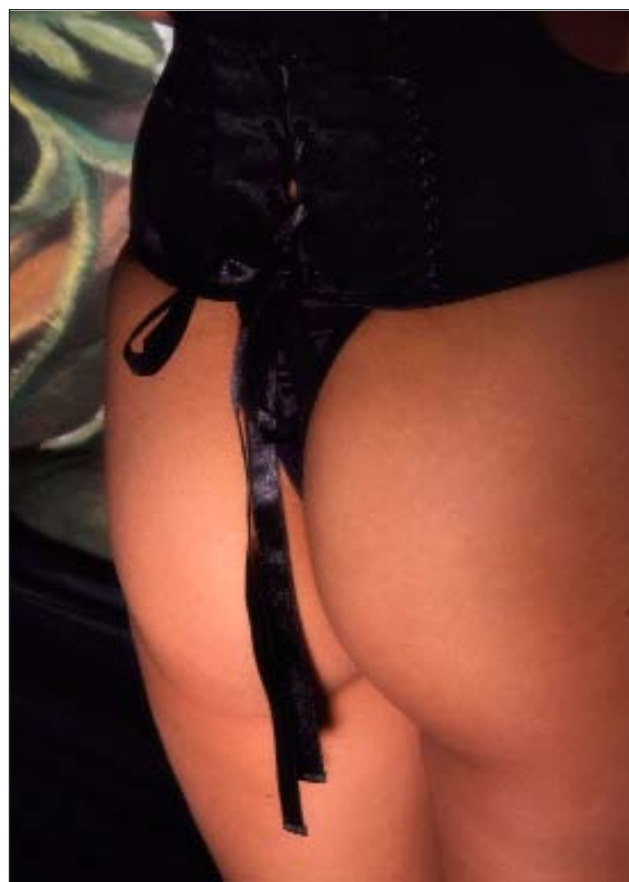


**7. After the Session** . . . . .75  
 Her Personal Slide Show Presentation . . . . .76  
 Making a Top-Dollar Sale . . . . .76

**8. Postproduction** . . . . .81  
 Retouching on a Younger Woman . . . . .81  
 Retouching and Light Face-Lifts on  
 the Mature Woman . . . . .82  
 Tactful Enhancements and Reductions . . . . .82  
 Advances in Technology . . . . .83  
 Software . . . . .84  
 Labs, Printers, and Scanners . . . . .85

**9. Employees** . . . . .86  
 Employee Handbook . . . . .88  
 About the Company . . . . .88  
 Our Studios . . . . .88  
 Our Philosophy . . . . .88  
 Our Mission Statement . . . . .89  
 Employee Information . . . . .89  
 Equal Opportunity Statement . . . . .89  
 Employee Records . . . . .89  
 Probationary Periods for  
 New Employees . . . . .89  
 Evaluations . . . . .90  
 Raises . . . . .90  
 Promotions . . . . .90

Employee Status . . . . .90  
 Full-Time Regular Employee . . . . .90  
 Part Time Regular Employee . . . . .91  
 Temporary Employee/Intern . . . . .91  
 Termination of Employment . . . . .91  
 Resignation . . . . .91  
 Reasons for Termination . . . . .91  
 Scheduling and Pay . . . . .91  
 Schedule . . . . .91  
 Time Sheets . . . . .92  
 Lunch Periods . . . . .92  
 Attendance and Tardiness . . . . .92  
 Reporting Absences . . . . .92  
 Unavoidable Lateness . . . . .92  
 Payday . . . . .92  
 Payroll Deductions . . . . .93  
 Overtime . . . . .93  
 Bad Weather Closing . . . . .93  
 Employee Benefits . . . . .93  
 Hospitalization . . . . .93





Dress Code .....97  
 Communication .....98  
 Bulletin Board .....98  
 Grievances .....98  
 Making Suggestions .....98  
 Using Company Equipment .....98  
 Acknowledgment Form .....99

10. Special Events .....100  
 The Celebration of the Woman Campaign ..100

11. Case Studies .....110

12. Conclusion .....117

Bereavement Pay .....93  
 Holiday Pay .....93  
 Vacation Pay .....94  
 Leave of Absence .....94  
 Professional Development .....94  
 Employee Discounts .....95  
 Company Parties and Events .....95  
 Company Regulations .....95  
 Code of Conduct .....95  
 Confidentiality .....96  
 Personal Calls and Mail .....96  
 Employee Parking .....96  
 Safety Regulations .....96  
 Moonlighting .....97  
 Studio Image .....97  
 Representing the Company .....97  
 Housekeeping .....97



Appendix A: Sample Press Release . . . . .	119	Appendix E: On-Location Checklist . . . . .	122
Appendix B: Follow-Up Press Release . . . . .	120	Appendix F: Vendors and Suppliers . . . . .	123
Appendix C: On-Hold Script for Glamour Event . . . . .	120	Index . . . . .	124
Appendix D: Letter to Models . . . . .	121		

### ***About the Author***



Photo by Cindy Wiseman.

Ellie Vayo Photography, Inc. was founded over thirty years ago in Mentor, OH. Since then, the company has grown to be one of the largest, most successful portrait studios in the country. Ellie currently operates two full-service studios, and she employs eleven employees. Her studios employ graphic artists, and there are also four full-time photographers and licensed makeup artists on staff.

Ellie's spacious studios are located in Mentor, OH, and Solon, OH. Each

studio utilizes state-of-the-art digital technology and offers a wide variety of eclectic, traditional, and artistic backgrounds. Both studios feature expansive, park-like outdoor photography areas. Ellie also maintains a satellite office Miami, FL, which specializes in on-location photography.

Ellie and her staff have won numerous awards for both photography and marketing from such prestigious organizations as Professional Photographers of America (PPA) and Senior Photographers International (SPI). In the past several years, Ellie has lectured throughout the country at many major state conventions and seminars as part of the Fuji Talent Team. She is also an accomplished author whose articles on senior portraiture have been featured in several professional photographers' magazines including *Rangefinder*, *Studio Photography & Design*, *Lens*, and *Professional Photographer*. She is also the author of *The Art and Business of High School Senior Portrait Photography*, available from Amherst Media.

Outstanding photography and aggressive marketing have helped Ellie Vayo Photography become a leader in the fine portrait industry. The studio continues to grow and become more successful by maintaining the same objectives it had when it first opened:

- Do the best job possible.
- Give the best quality possible.
- Give the best customer service in the area.
- Give as much back to the community as possible.

Ellie holds a Master of Photography and Craftsman degree, is PPA certified, and holds an Ohio CPP designation. She has won numerous photographic print exhibit awards, including the J. Anthony Bull Award for the most outstanding portrait in Ohio. Five of her images have been Loan Collection prints and have been published in PPA's prestigious Loan Collection book.

# Getting Started

Photography has always been my passion. Boudoir photography is one aspect of the art that has ignited all of my senses and continues to keep this business exciting.

I have found over the years that women of all ages, shapes, and sizes want to look and feel beautiful. Many things go into creating the masterpiece of the woman. The Hollywood actresses and models of today look much different in the real world. Makeup artists, clothing designers, digital artists, and others help create the stunning finished product we see on screen or in print. A woman who agrees to have a boudoir photography session is your clay. You are the sculptor who will help shape and mold that raw material into something beautiful, timeless, and artistic. The photography techniques covered in this book will teach you how to create the highest-quality portraiture possible in the industry today. The sales and marketing techniques covered in this book will help you operate a successful studio that allows you to make a living doing what you love.

***Women of all ages, shapes,  
and sizes want to look  
and feel beautiful.***

In this book, I'll discuss several enhancing skills:

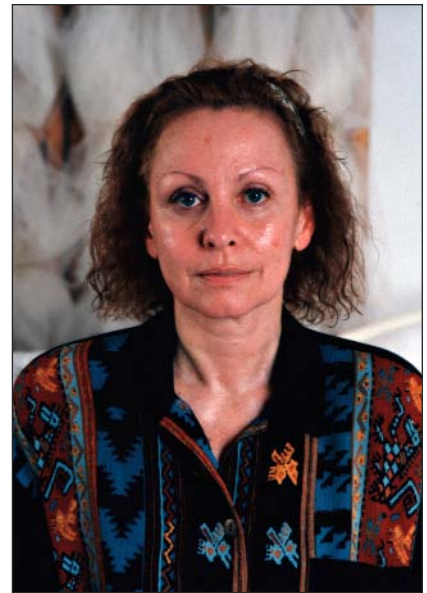
- Makeup and wardrobe
- Posing and lighting
- Digital finishing and printing

## *Finding Clients*

The question most photographers ask is: how do I get women to want to have a boudoir/glamour session?

**Existing Clients.** Over the years, I have used several different techniques to book these sessions. The most cost-effective form of advertising is to market to the people who are already in the studio. My studio photographs hundreds of high school senior girls. Their mothers are my target audience. Mom is watching her daughter's session and she is getting caught up in the excitement of the event. If I feel that a mom may be open to tasteful boudoir portraiture, I'll show her a slide show of previous clients. This can be done while I finish her daughter's session, during outfit changes, or after the session when her daughter is packing up her clothes





Here are before-and-after portraits from the film days. The large image is the glamorous “after” shot. The smaller image shows the subject prior to the photo session.

and accessories. I also display striking yet tasteful boudoir wall portraits throughout the studio. I mix these prints with samples of families, seniors, and children to show potential boudoir clients that these images are truly works of art that would look great in any home.

I photograph ten to twelve high-end weddings a year at this point in my career, and I advertise boudoir photography directly to my brides. I offer a session of the bride in her gown, which includes some intimate shots for the groom with every bridal package I sell. The bride almost always purchases a For Your Eyes Only album (available through General Products).



**Networking.** I find many of my clients through networking. Several years ago, I went into hair salons to photograph their clients. The salons displayed a small “before” shot and a large wall portrait that represented the “after” shot. At one point I had two salons, in different parts of town, displaying my work. The salons were able to showcase their talents, and I had additional locations to display my art and generate business.

At certain times in our lives, we all deal with difficulties and challenges. This business, just like life, is all about turning those difficulties or challenges into opportunities. I was recently inspired to participate in the creation of a firefighter’s calendar that benefited the Susan G. Komen Foundation. I agreed to donate my time for this foundation to show support for my mother’s personal battle against cancer. I photographed seven different area firehouses and used those images to create a twelve-month calendar. The entire process used up a great deal of my time and creative energy, but the exposure my studio received in the local press made the project worthwhile. During the project, I handed out coupons for discount boudoir sessions to the firefighters’ wives and girlfriends. Now that the project is complete, I’m booking sessions with women who purchased the calendar. Charity is such an important and effective way to grow your business. It’s so important that I’ve dedicated an entire chapter of this book to discuss one event in particular.

#### *Print Ads, Media Ads, and Web Sites*

The time and effort you’ve spent advertising and introducing yourself to your market will bring customers to your studio. However, most of your prospective customers still need more information before they book a session. This is why you need a dynamic, interesting, and informative web site that is easy to locate and navigate. Women thinking about booking a boudoir session want an anonymous way to see samples and get more information about session styles. Remember, most studios do not even offer this high-end service. I have used this style of photography and the examples on my web site to distinguish myself from the competition. Be sure that the sample images you post online are tasteful and used with full permission from your subjects. Also, I do not show pricing on my site. I want women to get excited about the process, not discouraged by the cost. I’m confident that once a woman sees her images, she’ll order as much as she can possibly afford.

**Direct Mail.** If you create a direct mailer, use the following criteria:

- *Impact*—Your direct mail piece must grab the viewer’s attention. This can be accomplished in many different ways. Use creative design, striking images, and a unique color scheme.

**Women thinking about booking a boudoir session want an anonymous way to see samples.**

- *Style*—Your piece should convey your studio’s style. Your clients should know right away if your studio’s style is contemporary, classic, elegant, etc.
- *Professionalism*—Whatever style you choose to convey, make sure your marketing pieces appear polished and professional. If you are not an experienced graphic designer, consider consulting with a professional. You can also collect and use ideas from other direct marketing pieces that you like.
- *Samples*—Your direct mail pieces should feature portraits created using past clients. Use your own work, not stock photography. Select your best portraits, just make sure they are tasteful. Hire a printer to output your high-quality mailers. The reproductions of your images should reflect the quality clients can expect to receive in their finished portraits.
- *Readability*—Don’t bog your audience down with too much text. Make sure all text is easy to read and understand. Get to the point quickly and provide readers with enough information to spark their interest. Select simple fonts and make sure the text color contrasts with the background.

**Facing page**—We created a variety of looks for this client using a variety of backdrops and a few clothing changes. The “before” image is shown on the top right.

**Television.** In addition to direct mail, I have used television as a way to promote the boudoir/glamour photography aspects of my business. In years past, I did a promo with a show called *Cleveland Tonight with Michael Stanley*. I provided makeovers for three local women and aired the event on Valentine’s Day. I took a “before” shot of the women in plain clothes without makeup. Next, with the help of a local lingerie store, I dressed them in draping lingerie, gave them a facial makeover, and photographed the women. This show generated hundreds of calls, and it all started with one phone call. I called the television station to promote my ideas, and they agreed to cover the story.

***Your clients should know right away if your studio’s style is contemporary, classic, elegant, etc.***

**Radio Advertising.** Recently, my studio advertised boudoir/glamour photography on a local radio station. We produced three commercials that ran for a total of eight weeks. The commercials were thirty-second spots and served to introduce one of our specials. We offered a \$99 session that included enhanced makeup application, an hour-long session, twenty-four preview images, and a framed 5x7 print. Average orders for this promotion were between \$300 and \$500 each.

One of the DJs at the radio station hosts an event called “Women Who Wine” at a local winery. Meetings are held each month, and different speakers are given twenty minutes to promote their business. I presented my seminar to over one hundred and fifty women. Each woman had registered online to attend the event, and I had access to their contact information for direct marketing purposes.



The morning of the event, I photographed one of the radio station's employees. We retouched the images (except for the "before" shot) and created a slide show to present at the event. She was one of the women present and provided an outstanding testimonial about the session and experience.

At the event, I gave out a goody bag that had discount coupons for local retailers. I also gave away three grand prizes, which consisted of a free session and 5x7 print. After the event, I sent follow-up e-mails to each person in attendance. Over twenty women booked sessions that evening, and I'm still receiving calls based on that event.





# Ellie Vayo Photography Glamour & Boudoir Photography



**Before Ellie's Glamour Make-over**

Roll your mouse over the pictures above to see the glamorous results or over the model at right to view the boudoir gallery



# Ellie Vayo Photography Glamour & Boudoir Photography



**over**

Roll your mouse over the pictures above to see the glamorous results or over the model at right to view the boudoir gallery



This is the main page for the boudoir/glamour section of my web site. The second image shows what happens when a client mouses over a thumbnail image.



**Web Sites.** Potential boudoir clients tend to be shy. They will try to find your web site before calling for information. Make sure they can easily find your company using any of the major search engines. I include samples of some of my best work, including before-and-after shots, rather than a lot of information on my site. I want my web site to prompt phone calls so my staff and I can convince prospective clients to stop by the studio. Once I get someone in the door, I'm confident that she will book a session. I do not put pricing on my web site. This is high-end portraiture, and we charge accordingly. I don't want potential clients to see a number without fully understanding the true value of the product.

This page shows a few thumbnail samples. These images enlarge when the client mouses over the thumbnail. The snow image was taken several years ago at our local beach park. It was very cold (about 32 degrees). I brought an assistant who held a silver reflector. The photo was taken with a 150mm Tamron lens on a Bronica ETRS body, which was on a tripod since the lighting was low. The exposure was f/8 @ 15 seconds. This allowed for the apparent softness in the snow.

The Internet can be your company's best friend or worst enemy. You can use the Internet to effectively market and promote your business, but there is a downside. Clients who have had a bad experience or even competitors can post anything they want on a number of consumer complaint sites. Every business has a customer or two who for one reason or another didn't like the service or final product. That's simply a part of being in business. You do need to search for any instance of your name or company



name. If you come across anything negative, you need to respond. Recently, one of my employees who dealt with public relations noticed that a former customer posted negative feedback on two separate sites. He quickly responded to the comments to ensure that we had our say. All of us take pride in our art and business, and it's easy to react with strong emotion and negative words. Keep any responses that you post as professional as possible. Remove yourself from the situation and let an employee respond to negative comments; just be sure to review all responses that come from your employees.

### *The Slide Show Consultation*

One of the most important steps in the boudoir photography process is to have the client visit your studio and sit down with you. This gives you the opportunity to discuss her session, build rapport, and show her your consultation slide show. Your job is to not only build excitement regarding her session but to educate her about the entire photography process. When I receive the first phone call from a client, she usually can't quite pronounce the word *boudoir* (bood-wah). By the time she picks up her finished prints, she's an expert. An educated client is your best source for referrals.

To begin this process, I need to learn more about my client, so I ask a number of questions. Here are a few examples:

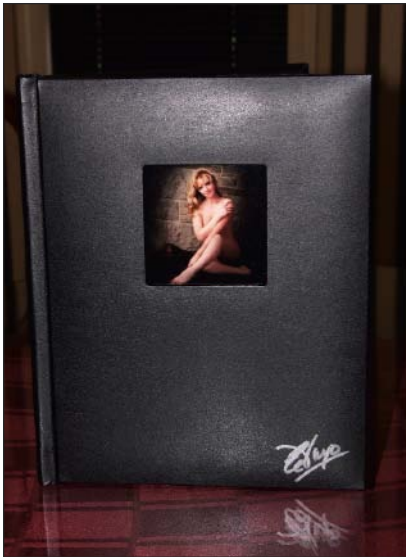
- How did you get referred to me?
- Are you planning this portrait for a special occasion?
- How much time do we have to finish our product?
- Who is the portrait for?
- Do you have a budget?
- Where would you like the session to take place?
- What are your expectations for the session?
- When would you like to have your session?
- Do you have any concerns or fears related to the session?

Each question serves a specific purpose and helps you begin to understand exactly what your client wants and expects. You will likely have your own set of questions. No matter how you phrase your specific query, be sure to ask the basic who, what, where, when, why, and how questions.

I will not photograph a client unless she has had a consultation. I do make exceptions for past clients who have sessions every few years. In each case, whether she is a new client or an old friend, it is very important that you understand your client before you actually photograph her.

You should have a variety of slide shows representing women of all ages. If you have an older client, do not present a slide show filled with young,

***I will not photograph a client unless she has had a consultation.***



These portfolios are examples of finished, saleable products. **Top left**—Eight-pose galley. **Top right**—For Your Eyes Only Album. **Bottom left and right**—Twenty-page 8x10-inch albums. They are available through General Products.

beautiful women. Show her examples of women who are closer to her age and body type. My ideal client is in her forties. Today's woman in her forties typically has an established career and liquid income to spend on her portraits. If you're just starting out as a boudoir photographer and don't have a large portfolio of samples, offer to photograph friends and family. These people can be your best spokespersons and models.

### *Products Offered*

One reason why a pre-session consultation is important is that it allows you the opportunity to show clients the products you offer. Be sure you have the best examples of your work on display. If an album is wearing out, replace it. Also, be sure to keep the images fresh.

After successfully meeting your client, have her fill out a questionnaire similar to the one presented on the following page.

*Ellie Vayo Photography, Inc.*

BOUDOIR PORTRAITURE QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire was designed to better serve you! Please take five minutes to answer all of the questions below.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Hair Color: \_\_\_\_\_ Height/Weight: \_\_\_\_\_

1. How were you referred to our studio? (Circle one)

- a. Newspaper
- b. Radio
- c. Friend
- d. Magazine
- e. Internet
- f. Other \_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you ever had this type of session before? (Circle one) yes no

3. Will you be bringing any specific outfits to wear? (Circle one) yes no

If yes, please describe. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Is this portrait to be given to your:

- a. Husband
- b. Boyfriend
- c. Self
- d. Husband, boyfriend, and self

5. Each of Ellie's photographs are tastefully done. Have you seen any that you are opposed to? If yes, please describe. \_\_\_\_\_

6. Are there any poses that you definitely want? (Circle one) yes no

If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

7. What features would you like us to emphasize? \_\_\_\_\_

8. What features, if any, would you like us to de-emphasize? \_\_\_\_\_

9. If these are for a surprise gift, how we should notify you when they are ready? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Do you wear contacts or glasses? \_\_\_\_\_ If contacts, does light affect your eyes? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Do many snapshots taken of you show you blinking or squinting? (Circle one) yes no





**Facing page**—My client questionnaire allows me to gain an understanding of my client's needs prior to the start of the session. **Above**—This session was done at the studio using our senior outdoor sets. If you follow your creative impulses, you will often come up with some great, unique set ideas. We have a 10x13-foot barn, made from siding purchased at a home improvement store. The roof was made from fiberglass panels, which diffuse light for a softer, more flattering light effect.







*Give him the Bridal Gift  
that he'll cherish Forever...*  
...an intimate portrait of yourself.

Surprise Him for:

- Your Honeymoon
- Your Anniversary
- His Birthday
- Sweetest Day
- Valentine's Day
- Any reason at all

*Evayo*  
Evayo Photography Inc.  
8358 Mentor Avenue  
Mentor, OH 44060

Award Winning  
Photography  
Evayo Photography  
has an all woman staff

Call Now: 440.255.7877 or Toll Free: 800.924.5238  
Visit our website at [www.evayo.com](http://www.evayo.com)

**Facing page**—This image was taken years ago using a Bronica film camera. This is one of my favorite poses. It's a great way to lengthen and tone legs and hide any problem areas. Canvas muslin (all one piece of fabric) was used as a backdrop. **Top left**—My studio offers twenty-five outdoor sets, the most popular of which is the waterfall. The twenty-foot-wide waterfall cascades down in three levels, which start at seven feet. It was built using a kit from Aquascape Waterfalls. A rubber pool liner was set up and covered with rocks to give a natural pond look. A pump at the base recycles the water all day. We've further enhanced the set by adding a bridge purchased from Off the Wall. **Bottom left**—I write a personalized letter to each client if I'm going to use her images for high-profile events or projects. Again, people can be very nervous about showing their images to the public. After all, they had boudoir pictures taken to give a special gift to themselves or a significant other. Look at Appendix D in the back of the book to see an example of the personalized letter I sent to the models included in this book. **Right**—This beautiful waterfall shot was taken many years ago when I was still using film cameras. I hiked approximately two miles with a photographer colleague, Al Fess. We had one tripod, a Tamron 300mm lens mounted to a Bronica ETRS body, and our subject. Our main light was directly overhead and filtered through clouds (overcast lighting). I shot this image at f/11 to get detail and dragged the shutter to about  $\frac{1}{8}$  of a second to get the soft, flowing look on the water.





These are examples of the head-and-shoulders poses we use for our Spotlight session.

We offer three session styles:

**The Spotlight Session.** This one-and-a-half-hour session includes makeover, use of lingerie, jewelry, and wardrobe. You will choose from fifteen head-and-shoulders and three-quarter-length poses.



**The Boudoir Session.** This two-and-a-half-hour session includes makeover, use of all lingerie, jewelry, and wardrobe. You choose from up to thirty poses. These poses include a mixture of head-and-shoulders, three-quarter-length, and full-length shots.

During our boudoir sessions, we focus on more three-quarter or even full-length poses. We usually do more risqué work for this session style.





**The Outdoor Session—Our Secret Garden.** This session will open up our half-acre secret garden to you. The session includes a makeover, use of all lingerie, jewelry, and wardrobe. You will choose from an unlimited number of poses. These poses include a mixture of three-quarter-length and full-length shots. Our secret garden has two beach areas, a mini barn, waterfall, and beautifully landscaped scenes. We can shoot here or work on location.

I never list the session fee on my marketing materials. I want to be able to adjust the price according to demand. Typically, the spotlight session is \$100, the boudoir session is \$150, and the outdoor or on-location sessions range from \$200 to \$300.

Here are two examples of on-location portraits.



#### BOUDOIR SESSION CHECKLIST

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for reserving your boudoir session on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.

Please be aware that your prepaid session fee is for the photographer's time and will not be deducted from your order.

Please review the checklist below, which outlines the items we would like you to bring in order to help make your boudoir session a success.

- Any special jewelry
- High heels or boots
- Special faux or real furs
- Leather jackets, hats
- Any special lingerie
- Black and white thongs
- One white strapless bra
- Any push-up bra

If you have any questions, please contact us prior to your session date. We look forward to working with you!

***Outdoor lighting is most beautiful in the early morning and evening.***

#### ***Booking a Prepaid Session***

You'll soon find out that a full session takes both preparation and time. After the client chooses her session, you'll want to make sure you allow enough time. You'll also need to determine what time works best. I have found that the best time in my studio is the evening, when most of my staff has left for the day and things are less hectic (especially during high school senior season in the summer). You'll also want to work around her schedule. Does she have a day off? If she has taken the time and interest to book this, she'll probably work around you. Remember, outdoor lighting is most beautiful in the early morning and evening.

The next step is to always get the session prepaid. This session cost covers my camera fee and time, and the amount is not deducted from her invoice. The checklist shown above is given to my client when I book her appointment.





I keep a real fur coat in our studio wardrobe. It photographs beautifully and hides a lot.

### *Preselling from a Price List*

Your session went well. Now what? You want to continue the excitement generated during the session. I do that by first scheduling a date for her to come in and view her personal slide show. Remember, people need to spread out their dollars in order to pay for this experience. You want to get the most money possible to compensate for your time and artistic energy. No one else can create the work that you just created!

I bring out the price list after her session and presell a few items. I don't actually take an order for anything, but I plant the seed that she'll need a For Your Eyes Only album or a calendar or some other product. By introducing the products that I offer well in advance, and showing her the prices, I'm preparing her to spend. Most clients come to their ordering session prepared with a deposit and a good idea of what they want. This is just one part of the boudoir photography sales process. We'll discuss more about the sales process later in the book.

### *Pricing à la Carte versus Packages*

I have put a great deal of time and effort into creating my boudoir price list. In the past I've offered both package style pricing and à la carte style pricing. At this point, I offer primarily à la carte items to my clients. This



# Boudoir Collection

**For Your Eyes Only**  
24 Beautiful Images  
Fully Enhanced  
\$799

**Wall Portraits**  
Texture or Canvas  
20x24 - \$1299  
16x20 - \$999  
11x14 - \$699  
8x10 - \$310

20% frame credit on 16x20 or larger frame

**Unlimited 8x10 Image Album**  
Fully Enhanced Up to 20 pages  
\$1399

**10 image Wallet Foldout Album**  
only \$99  
when an order of \$499 or more is placed

**Gallery Folio of eight images**  
\$499

**Glamour Calendar**  
1-8x10 for each month  
January thru December  
\$799

**Bonus Package - One Favorite Pose**  
4 wallets, 1-5x7 - \$125  
when an order of \$499 or more is placed

50% off any wall portrait when minimum  
\$499 Boudoir Collection  
order is placed

*Mentor Studio*  
4758 Mentor Avenue  
Mentor, Ohio 44060  
440 255 7877

*Solon Studio*  
32300 Aurora Road  
Solon, Ohio 44139  
440 747 9257



Elite Photography Inc.



**Above**—This is our studio boudoir price list. This slimline piece was created by Buck-eye Color Lab. **Left**—Most of my clients purchase an album, calendar, and/or wall portrait. I have a number of sample boudoir wall portraits in my salesrooms and studio. I want my clients to recognize that this style of photography is a form of art, and that their images are suitable for hanging in their home. I always explain that wall portraits are the perfect romantic accessory for the bedroom.

allows the client to get exactly what they want. I offer unique products to my boudoir clients, and the package method doesn't work as well with these clients as it does with families or seniors. Most of my boudoir clients want something other than a bunch of 8x10s, 5x7s, and wallets. That's why I offer specialty items that clients can share with their significant other in a less public way. I also try to up-sell my clients at every opportunity. I don't do this just to make more money, I do this because I've seen so many different situations over the years, and I want to make sure my clients order enough to meet their needs. Most women will purchase one album for a significant other. I always ask those clients, "What happens if something happens to your relationship? Who will keep the For Your Eyes Only album?" Also, I tell my clients that their significant other will want to look at this album all the time, and that it may get worn out in time. I ask, "What happens if this book gets lost or damaged?" These questions will often allow you to sell a second album. Don't be a shady salesperson. Explain what you've seen in the past and make your best recommendations.

*Note:* You must have beautiful lighting, posing, and expression to be able to sell a wall portrait, as this is true art.

## *Preparing for the Session*

Your clients have so much to think about when scheduling and preparing for their sessions. Make it as easy as possible for your clients during the entire boudoir photography process. Let them see lots of sample images and get a feel for what they are going to wear well in advance of their session. Make sure that they do not spend all of their dollars on lingerie and then have no money left for the beautiful images you're about to create. Some of the best images are created using clothes that the client already has in her (or her husband's) closet. Even a plain white T-shirt can be very attractive if the posing and lighting is done correctly.

Again, here are some items that I tell my clients to bring. These sample images show how I use specialty items and the client's clothing to create unique images.

Client to provide:

- Any special jewelry
- High heels or boots
- Special faux or real furs (we stock both)
- Leather jackets, hats
- Any special lingerie
- Black and white thongs
- One white strapless bra
- Any push-up bra

***Even a plain white T-shirt can be very attractive if the posing and lighting is done correctly.***

I always ask what the client's husband or boyfriend does for a living. Consider incorporating props or clothing that reflect his interests or career—or hers.

Example:

- Policeman—Get his shirt, cap, badge, etc.
- Fireman—Use the coat or helmet in the portrait.
- Musician—Incorporate a guitar or other instrument in the portrait.
- Military—Have her don a uniform or shirt.
- Nurse—Give her professional attire an alluring spin.



Consider using a uniform or props that she, or the portrait recipient, wears on the job.

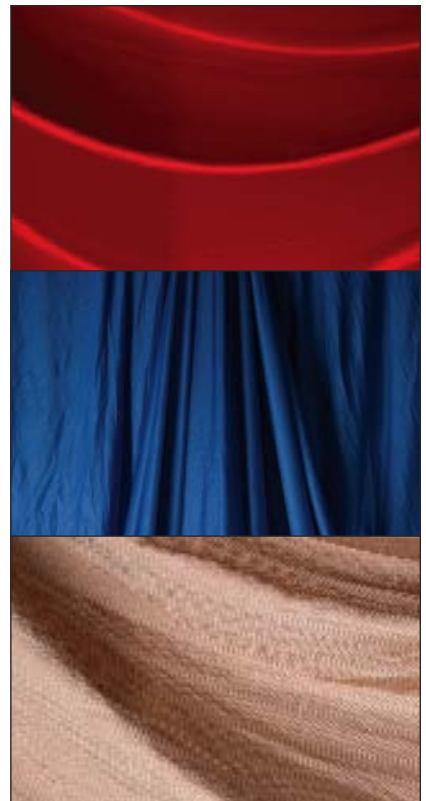


We keep a lot of materials, drapes, netting, etc., here at my studios. Netting drapes create a beautiful effect when applied to the client. Experiment with the position of the drapes to best accentuate your client's positive features. Drapes are great for hiding trouble spots or accenting points of focus. When I started photographing boudoir sessions, I spent a lot of time in the fabric stores. I still visit these stores to keep my inventory of fabric fresh and in style. I categorize all of my fabrics by color and store them in clear plastic boxes for easy access in my camera rooms. The only things I



do not supply are corsets, garters, lacy hose, and special bras. Most clients have something suitable to use, and my brides already have these for their wedding night or honeymoon.

We do supply a lot of costume jewelry and accessories. I like to stock long strands of pearls, rhinestones, and boas in all colors. I also stock black angel wings for those clients who feel a little more daring or want to feel



**Left**—We stock angel wings from Mother Plucker Feather Company. **Above**—We stock several colors of satin waterbed sheets, including the red, blue, and gold samples shown here.



These images show the use of fabrics, drapes, and props in use during actual sessions. Mosquito netting is a great choice as it is sheer and adds texture.



like a Victoria's Secret model. Denim and leather photograph well, so I keep a variety of jackets and vests in stock. Check out local thrift stores to build an inventory of items to use in your sessions.

I like to use a lot of texture when creating portraits, so I keep black and white mosquito netting hanging in my camera rooms. I also stock a number of fabrics, rugs, and even furniture with leopard or zebra patterns to create dramatic images. Even if you don't have a lot of money to spend on drapes, you can improvise. When I was starting out, I purchased a variety



**Above**—This beautiful, inexpensive drape was purchased through dynamic designs, and we stock this material in several colors. It is beautiful when used as a drape or backdrop. **Facing page**—We keep several colors of ostrich feathers in stock.

of different color waterbed sheets. These sheets can be split in two, and the built-in corner pockets allow them to drape easily over a background stand.

### *Studio Session*

The actual session should be private. You and your client should have plenty of time in the camera room with no distractions. I like to work with my clients one on one, but I do recommend that male photographers have a female assistant in the camera room at all times. I also use an assistant on occasion if I'm pressed for time or if I'm training one of my photographers. In each case, ask your client what she wants and what would make her the most comfortable. I learned a long time ago to keep spouses and friends out of the camera room. Spouses or boyfriends are distracting and tend to limit your creativity. Your client may be less willing to try certain







The setup shots on the right show how you can create a low-cost backdrop using a few stands and clamps and fabric.

poses if her significant other is in the room. I've found that friends or sisters can be too judgmental and vocal during the photography process. Sometimes they are jealous that so much attention is being paid to my client. They may even be jealous of how good my client looks after having a professional makeup application. So as a rule I only allow myself and my assistant (if needed). I prefer to book sessions in the late afternoon or evening around the time my studio closes. There is less activity in the stu-





The images on this page show how a few yards of sheer fabric can be used to create a veiled portrait setup. A few samples of such images are shown as well. Creating unique effects in the camera room guarantees that finished portraits will look natural. They won't have any "fake" or obviously digitally enhanced looking aspects. The veiled setup is a great way to create a unique look without relying on digital effects.

dio in general, and I can ensure that there are no distractions in the camera room. I don't have a phone in my camera room, I ask my client to turn off her cell phone, and I play soft, relaxing music. My actual sessions take anywhere from one-and-a-half to two hours. I always make sure that I don't have to be to my next appointment for at least two to two-and-a-half hours. These sessions are very long, tiring, and emotionally draining. You do not want to constrain your artistic abilities by imposing a time limit, and you want to ensure that you have enough time to recover.

### *Music*

I always ask the subject what type of music she would prefer to hear while I photograph her. I love soft jazz and keep a CD of mellow music on hand for my boudoir sessions. I also allow my clients to bring in an MP3 player so they can listen to music of their own.

### *On Location at Her Home*

On-location photography can be challenging. You are in an unfamiliar surrounding and have far less control than you do in the comfort of your camera room. While you may feel out of your element, your client will feel

more comfortable in a familiar setting with access to all of her clothes, makeup, and accessories. She won't have to worry about forgetting anything, because everything she needs will be readily available. Even though these sessions are challenging, they can be the most profitable and rewarding boudoir sessions.

Be mindful of your composition. Notice the proper exposure, posing, and lighting done in-camera to create this stunning, on-location image. The light setup is detailed in the image below.







**Above**—It is always great when you have art as a background (note placement of subject against background). One 6-inch grid covering a 375 watt Calumet background light was used as a main light to photograph the mask of her face. I used my Sekonic meter to measure the ambient light in order to properly set my exposure. My camera was set to ISO 400 and mounted on a Manfrotto tripod. I used an f/8.5 aperture to maintain detail and set my shutter to  $\frac{1}{4}$  second to bring in the ambient light. **Right**—Take advantage of unique features of your subject's home, especially areas with large amounts of available light. This image was created by first using a Sekonic digital light meter to get the incident light reading off of her right cheek. I used all available light for this image. Available lighting is great when you're on location. You save so much time by not having to set up lights. I always bring a reflector on location so my assistant can bounce light wherever it's needed.

Generally, I bring a small studio light setup, muslin backdrops, and drapes in a variety of colors. Be sure to bring clothespins for your drapes and clamps for your background. I always bring a main camera and a backup camera in case something happens. Bring plenty of memory cards so you don't run out of space if you get really inspired. I bring reflectors to take advantage of available light and better control my studio lights. Even though I like to handhold the camera for a lot of poses, I always bring a tripod for longer exposures. A more detailed list is available at the back of the book in Appendix E. If you can afford to, set aside a complete light kit for on-location use only. As your business grows, your time becomes more and more valuable. The time it takes to tear down your studio setup, pack it up, and then set it back up after the session is significant. If it takes two hours to prepare for an on-location session, you're wasting money!

It would be a good idea to visit the location in advance of the session. You'll want to visit the home or location at the same time of day as the session to analyze the lighting conditions. Pay attention to ceiling height. It can be difficult to set up a full light kit in a home with low ceilings. If you are a male photographer, bring a female assistant whenever you meet with the client at her home or other location.

Ideally, you will want to photograph her during daylight hours at her home. You can pull beautiful ambient window light into any scene you create. I try to take advantage of north light whenever possible.

When photographing on location, you may find yourself working with mixed lighting. Carefully meter each light source for the best-possible results.





This boudoir image, literally created in the subject's bedroom, was created using one 750 watt main light with an umbrella (as seen in the previous diagram). One 375 watt background light was used to illuminate the background. Be very careful of mirrors! Watch out for the reflection of photography equipment, your assistant, and anything else that doesn't belong in the room. This gorgeous image will hang in the room in which it was created. This technique ensures that the finished portrait will match the room's décor perfectly.

### *The E-Touch Makeup Line*

Many of my clients used to do their own makeup or went to a hair salon before their session. Times have changed and convenience is the key. People's driving habits have changed, and people don't want to travel to several different places if they don't need to. I recognized this and added another sales opportunity to my business. Five years ago, I invested in my own makeup line. The E-Touch cosmetics line is my own brand of makeup, and my clients love the products available. I use this makeup for my higher-end senior sessions and for all boudoir and glamour sessions. I found a company, Columbia Cosmetics (see vendors list) in Texas, and actually



Before-and-after makeup image series. The halo effect in the right-hand portrait was created by placing one of my background lights between the shoulder blades. Be sure your background light is 1½ to 2 stops hotter than your main light.



The bold eye makeup suits the bolder scene we created. The fabric in the foreground is actually an inexpensive throw blanket.



**E-touch Cosmetics**  
*ellietouch.com*

*Ellie Vayo Photography wants you to look your best all the time! That is why we have created E-touch Cosmetics. All of our make-up is hypoallergenic and safe to use on any skin type. We have a wide variety of shades and fun colors to choose from.*

Small Eye Shadow.....	\$7.5
Large Eye Shadow.....	\$9
Triple Shadow.....	\$15
Creme Eye Shadow.....	\$9
Eye Dust.....	\$8
Cake Eyeliner.....	\$8
Pencil Eye Liner.....	\$6
Liquid Eye Liner.....	\$9
Brush A Brow.....	\$8
Mascara.....	\$10
All Around Cover-up.....	\$16
Velvet Facial Lotion.....	\$13
Liquid Foundation.....	\$15
Matte Finish Foundation.....	\$14
Loose Translucent Powder.....	\$12
Pressed Translucent Powder.....	\$12
Loose Mineral Powder.....	\$14
Pressed Mineral Powder.....	\$14
Starbust Powder.....	\$18
Blush.....	\$12
Shimmer Paint.....	\$7
Happy Hour Lip Gloss.....	\$7
Lipstick.....	\$9
Lip Gloss Tubes.....	\$8
Pencil Lip Liner.....	\$6
Shadow Brush.....	\$9
Angle Brush.....	\$12
Blush Brush.....	\$12
Powder Brush.....	\$15

Mentor: 410 255 7877    Solon: 410 512 9257




As you can see, I sell the makeup products used on my clients. They've already seen the beautiful results of the makeup application, so it's natural for them to want to take home some of the products. I use this makeup line for high school seniors, families, and businesswomen, in addition to my boudoir subjects.

picked out my own line of colors, products, etc. This company provides the same formula of makeup for many well-known retail chains. The E-Touch cosmetics line has been a profitable addition to my company. The makeup fee is built into the session price structure, and it allows us to have a beautiful finished face before we have to do any digital retouching.

## *The Psychology of the Woman*

***Every part of the session should be positive. There are no negatives about a woman's body.***

The key to successful boudoir or glamour photography is developing trust between you and your client. Developing trust does not happen with just one phone call or one consultation, it happens gradually over time. Many aspects of my business are devoted to developing trust with all of my clients, not just my boudoir clients. I have worked hard to earn a positive reputation in my community. You need to do the same, and please understand that it takes time to earn a positive reputation. For nearly thirty years, I've been developing a relationship with my community. It doesn't take quite that long to get your first boudoir client, but you should always be mindful that each volunteer opportunity, each networking event, each session in your camera room is another chance to build your client base and earn trust in the community. You must consistently support that reputation by maintaining a clean facility, conducting business with the highest level of integrity, and continuing to give back to the community.

Many women fear the way they will look in front of a camera. With the exception of her high school senior year and wedding day, she probably hasn't been photographed by a professional. For years she has only seen snapshots, and that affects her confidence level. The consumer cameras (point and shoot) have built-in, on-camera flash, and those are the cameras that wash people out or flatten the images, making the person look wider than they actually are. It is up to us to create a stunning image with proper lighting posing, clothing, and digital work to allow the client to have trust in what we do from a professional photographer's perspective. The portraits on your studio walls should reflect that style, and they should scream "artistic." The portrait that was taken twenty-five years ago should look timeless and be cherished today.

The first thing out of my client's mouth when I am setting up the very first shot is, "Oh I'm so nervous and excited at the same time." It is up to the photographer to calm her and gain her trust. I start with the "before" shot and take a few headshots to get her warmed up to the camera.

Every part of the session should be positive. There are no negatives about a woman's body. A lot of women will make the comment, "Oh, I'm so fat." I then explain to them, "What you have are curves, and we are



Boudoir photography is about creating a sensual, dramatic mood. It is not about making sure your client smiles in every picture. These images will be presented as a gift to a significant other and should represent a range of emotion and passion.

only going to show the right curves to the camera through proper posing and lighting.” Gaining trust is the key to a great sale and getting a client for life. Most of my boudoir clients have stayed with me throughout my career. I photograph their families/children/high school seniors and whatever else their needs are. I have now established a client for life who will refer others to my studio.

### *The Studio Atmosphere*

Your studio and camera room should always be clean and free of excess camera equipment lying around. Get rid of the clutter. Clutter is distracting and looks unprofessional. Unfortunately, photographers like to keep everything. I include myself in that group. Each piece of equipment in my studio represents a financial investment and sometimes an emotional attachment. I know it is hard, but once a year, get rid of the junk. I sell my old equipment on an online auction site or display old cameras in a showcase. Make friends with your colleagues and offer to swap props or backgrounds so you’ll have a steady supply of new equipment to work with.



Your studio should be neat, orderly, and welcoming. I decorate using deep, rich colors and traditional furniture. I also integrate boudoir samples with other sample images on my studio walls. Make sure the portraits are framed appropriately and are up to date.



***Your clients judge you  
by the condition of  
your studio.***

Your clients judge you by the condition of your studio. It's the first thing they see, and it should be as inviting as possible. It's easy to be so busy that you neglect aspects of your business. Pay attention to the condition of your building and the surrounding environment. Watch for weeds growing out front, wash your windows, and pick up any trash that may have blown into your parking lot. If you work out of a home studio, be aware of smells that might bother your clients. Does the house smell like last night's dinner? Can you smell a litter box? If you have a pet at your studio, let your client know in advance in case he or she is allergic to your animal. Clients notice everything. Are your prints faded on the walls? Get new images and update those old and tired looking frames. You need to have plenty of updated albums and prints. With the



exception of a few remarkable images, I replace my samples at least every couple of years.

### *The Relaxed Session*

Soft music should be playing as the client enters the camera room. Leave your phone outside of the camera room. If you have a small studio and you can hear the phone ring when you're in the camera room, turn off the ringer and let calls go to voicemail. Keep spouses, friends, and children away from the camera room. Do all that you can to avoid making the client feel rushed. All of these factors play a role in creating a successful, relaxed session. She shouldn't be rushing from work to get to the session and then have to rush home to get Joey to his baseball practice. Many clients and other photographers have asked if I supply alcohol. The answer is *no!* Never! The risks are too great. You can get your client to relax without alcohol. Imagine getting sued because you gave a client a few glasses of wine



I used only soft draping from Dynamic Designs to create this relaxed yet intriguing pose. I stock a wide variety of gauze-like material in many different colors and opacities.

This portrait was taken years ago using a film camera with a Nikon soft focus filter over a Tamron lens. Hair, clothing, and accessory styles will change in time, but your portrait should be timeless. You want your clients to hang their portraits on their walls for generations.



and she gets into an accident while driving home. We really have to think about lawsuits in the times we live in today. Protect your business and keep alcohol away from your clients.

#### *Wedding/Bridal Boudoir Sessions*

I've stopped advertising that I photograph weddings. They became too time consuming and less profitable than other areas of my business. Even though I don't advertise for weddings, I still end up shooting them. All of my weddings come from referrals or past high school seniors. I probably photograph ten to fifteen weddings a year. They are all high-end and generally include digitally designed coffee-table style albums. I use books provided by General Products for my wedding albums. My brides are perfect



clients for a free twenty-four- to thirty-pose session one to two months before the wedding.

When the client comes over for a pre-bridal session, I photograph her with her veil, create some corset and garter shots, and whatever she'd like to present to him the day of the wedding. This gives me a chance to bond with my bride prior to her wedding day. During the session and the sales process that follows, I'm building her trust and confidence in my work.

One of my brides presented her new husband with a For Your Eyes Only album at their wedding reception. I'll never forget when she grabbed him from the dance floor and asked me to follow them to the lobby. She presented the book when no one was around except for my camera and I, the bride, and the groom. When he opened it, the look on his face was one of complete surprise. Tears welled up in his eyes, and they hugged each other in a very tender, loving manner. I usually don't get to see the moment when a woman presents her images to her significant other. It was a beautiful moment, and one that makes my job worthwhile.

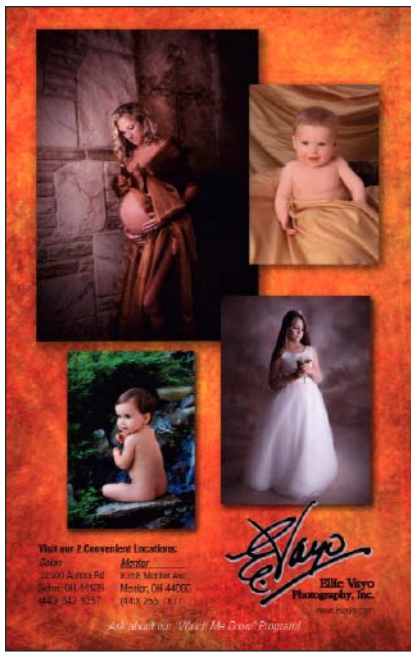
These are priceless moments in your career that you never forget!

### *Pregnancy Boudoir Sessions*

You've spent a great deal of time developing a relationship with your bride. I always mention pregnancy boudoir photography to my brides, and they usually come back for another session when the time comes. The preg-

nancy boudoir portraits.





**Top left**—We ran this ad for a full year in the Northeast Ohio edition of *Modern Babies and Children*. Notice this ad has a simple layout, yet dramatic images. Use more images than words to sell your studio. Whenever you advertise in a magazine like *Modern Babies and Children*, you may have your ad placed next to another photography studio. That is why your images must stand out and be the best examples of your work. The posing and lighting should be flawless. I always ask for my ads to be placed on the right side of a magazine or other print ads. Most people tend to look at the right side of the pages when flipping through magazines. If your images are dramatic enough, they'll stop and take a closer look at your ad. **Bottom left and right**—I purchased four yards of this bronze, lightweight material from a Joann Fabric and literally wrapped the subject in it, tying it in a bow above her baby belly. The clients purchased a 16x20-inch print for the nursery, and we also printed a studio sample.

nancy boudoir portrait sessions are short and sweet, but nine out of ten clients purchase a wall portrait for the nursery. I advertise this service in carefully targeted magazines and at women's health offices. I also contact my past brides and solicit pregnancy boudoir sessions whenever I meet a









**Facing page**—Though we don't specifically advertise pregnancy boudoir photography as a family event, we do permit fathers and children to be a part of the session if they wish. A pregnancy is a special time in the lives of the mother-to-be and her extended family. I usually ask the mother-to-be if she would like to involve her family in the boudoir photograph process. This is the only time when I'll let family be involved in a boudoir session. **Above and right**—These images were created when the client was nine months pregnant. Try to book a date close to the due date for the roundest, most obvious pregnant form.

new client close to full term. I have photographed women the day before delivering! You'll want to make sure she is eight to nine months along before you actually photograph her to get the most dramatic images.

I ask my client to bring a solid color robe to the session. We do supply a white terry cloth robe just in case she forgets hers. Be mindful that your client may be sore and uncomfortable. Ask her if the temperature in the camera room is appropriate, and be sure to have plenty of bottled water. I'll end up taking between twenty four and forty images of my client. I mix up the posing to include full length, side posing, just belly shots, and more. I use various draping to hide any unflattering areas and be able to control the level of modesty. I also ask her to bring a white pregnancy bra.

A woman who is photographed at this stage of her life is beautiful. Her skin has never looked more radiant. Normally my pregnancy clients are glowing, and they have no problems with me posing them. I do a lot of standing poses because sitting can sometimes cause cramps. Ask your client what works best for her.

## *Equipment and Lighting*

I've been in this business for nearly thirty years, and the change from film to digital was a challenge. Many of my colleagues chose to go out of business rather than make the switch. I was very nervous about relying on new technology. I've worked hard to develop a good reputation for outstanding quality, and I didn't feel the original digital cameras met my or my clients' expectations. At this point, it's clear that digital photography equipment has finally come up to the same standards as our old film equipment.

The digital photography process as a whole is much more time consuming for the photographer than film photography. In the past, I sent a 220 roll to my lab in a small bag and the film came back with the proofs. I didn't have to do a thing from a production standpoint. The photography process in the camera room was quite different as well. I used Tamron softening lenses on my Bronicas. I didn't need a computer and Photoshop to create a softer effect. I spent a lot more time setting up my shots because I didn't want to waste film. I had to make sure the lighting and posing were precise because I couldn't see anything on a little preview screen on back of the camera! Now I put a CompactFlash card in the camera, format the card, and take as many images as I please. I'm actually able to see and perfect my posing, clothing, and lighting. I love it! However, now I have clients who expect absolute perfection from their images. Retouching has become almost as important as the photography. This has added significantly to my costs since I now employ digital artists and have more computer equipment than ever before.

***I now employ digital artists and have more computer equipment than ever before.***

### *Camera and Lenses*

I use the latest generation of Fuji professional-quality digital SLR cameras. Right now I'm using the S-5, but I've used S-3 and S-2 models in the past. I've developed a good relationship with the people at Fuji, and I will continue to use their products as they are updated or replaced by newer models. My primary lens is the Tamron DiII 18–250mm aspherical DII lens. I can go from 18mm to 250mm with just a  $\frac{1}{4}$  turn of the lens. This is really helpful when I want to quickly capture a close-up after shooting three-quarter or full-length poses.

**Top left**—A 1250-watt Photogenic main light with a 4x6-foot Larson softbox. **Bottom left**—A 750-watt Photogenic fill light with a 36-inch umbrella. **Top right**—I use LiteLink remotes from Calumet to trigger my main lights. **Right center**—A 160-watt Photogenic hair light with a 12x36-inch Larson softbox. **Bottom right**—This image shows where my lights are placed in relation to my subject.



***I use umbrellas to soften main and fill lights when on the road.***

### *Lighting Equipment*

I use Photogenic lights in the camera room. My main light is 1250 watts, my background lights, hair lights, and fill lights are all 160 watts. I stock a variety of grids and gels to increase my lighting options. When I go on location I take a three-light setup from Calumet. This kit includes two 750-watt lights and one 375-watt light. Whether I'm working on location or in the studio, I use Calumet LiteLink remotes to trigger my lights. I hate getting tangled up in sync cords!

I use umbrellas to soften my main and fill lights when on the road, but in the camera room, I use 3x4-foot Soff boxes (softboxes) from Larson Enterprises on women over thirty. This softbox provides beautiful lighting that I can precisely control. I get the best results working from the



12"x36" Larson Hair Light (160 watt Photogenic)

3'x4' Soff Box w/ Photogenic Light (1250 watt Photogenic)

Fill light with umbrella, placed on opposite side of main light directly behind camera (750 watt photogenic)





**Facing page**—I usually set my camera's ISO to 320 for boudoir photography. This is due to the fact that I am shooting a little more loose than normal to accommodate props and full-length shots. The image was created with a large softbox on the left side of her face. The main light was metered at f/11. One 750 watt (metered at f/16) was fitted with a green gel. The light rimmed the subject's body and played up the backdrop, snake, and boots.

edges of the box. I do not use broad lighting techniques or barn doors in the camera room unless I'm creating something more theatrical.

### *General Equipment*

I use Lexar Professional CF cards. I like to keep 2 GB cards around so I hold a decent number of Raw images. I use a Sekonic digital light meter to accurately measure the output of my lights.

Please note that by the time this book is published, my studio may be using different equipment based on technological advances. I will continue to upgrade my lenses and cameras, but will stay within the same brands (Fuji and Tamron) based on the results I've had so far.

### *Studio Lighting Styles*

The proper lighting for boudoir is a little different style than what I do for families, high school seniors, etc. Lighting is critical if you want to slim, enhance, or change the way she looks without doing everything in Photoshop. Get it right before you spend forever at the computer monitor. Get your life back, and don't spend all your hours at your computer. You're the creator. Hire someone else to do the retouching and printing. If you must do your own computer work, make it easier on yourself by shooting correctly in the camera room. There's very little room for error when shooting digital. Fixing improperly exposed images in Photoshop works to some degree, but the image quality suffers. Meter your lights, and pay attention to the settings that work best for certain circumstances. This helps you to easily and quickly set up your lights when you have a client in the camera room.

The distance from your client to your various light sources is very important. At this point, I have memorized the distances for the setups that I use the most. Until you get comfortable, use spike marks or string to make sure you are setting up your lights as consistently as possible. The last thing you want to do is fumble with your lights in front of a client. Practice whenever you have time. Looking professional and polished will help your reputation and increase your sales.

My favorite lighting is a large light source. I like to use the edge of the softbox to get a softer look on boudoir portraits. This lighting is harder to control on smaller light sources. My 1250-watt Photogenic has digital controls so I can adjust my light to a wide variety of output levels.

### *Old Hollywood Lighting*

This style of lighting was taught to me by my great teacher Frank Criccio at the old Winona School years ago. I absolutely love using this style of lighting on younger women. This lighting is harsh, however, and not very



**Left**—As you can see, the lighting is very harsh. You must carefully control the light so it doesn't spill onto other areas of the subject's body. If you cannot achieve this with a grid, use a snoot. **Above**—This image was created using one spotlight (with a grid) aimed directly at the mask of the subject's face (160 watt light source, metered at f/16). **Facing page**—I brought the background light closer to the subject for this image. I placed the subject closer to the background to create the shadow. I used a 750 watt light with a grid as my main light (metered at f/16). I also used an umbrella fill light behind the camera.

flattering for older clients. In years past, I used barn doors on an older Studio Master main light. If you can't find an old Photogenic Studio Master, I suggest using a small light source. I currently use 6-inch light reflectors and a grid aimed directly at the mask of the subject's face. Like everything else in photography, this technique takes lots of practice. Make sure you're confident using this technique before you try it on a client. Fiddling with





your lights and taking forever to set up your shots frustrates your subjects and ruins the atmosphere of the session.

### *Indoor Lighting*

Photographing the subject with indoor studio lights should look or appear as natural as possible unless you are going for a harder look. I'll discuss several examples of my common lighting setups and techniques.

All of the glamour/boudoir sessions that I do show beautiful lighting, and some soft effects are done in Photoshop. We use Nik Software Inc.'s plug-in filters (see Appendix F) to create a much softer look than what we produce for our seniors, children, and families. Years ago, I used Tamron soft focusing filters as well as old Norman filters on my larger-format film cameras. On occasion, I'll use one of my old film filters screwed onto the

This is my standard studio setup. I can quickly move or adapt my lights for any situation. Note that my main camera room is 30x22 feet.





**Top left**—To adequately light this shot I used my on-camera flash as a fill to illuminate her back and emphasize her tattoo. I metered the main light, which again was ambient light from my north lit window, one stop hotter than the fill light. **Top and bottom right**—This shot was created using a north lit window. The subject was sitting approximately three feet away from the window. I used the window as my main light source. My fill light was provided by a large 42-inch silver reflector, which bounced the available light from the sun back into her eyes. Don't overuse your reflector. Try to keep shadows and highlights in your images. If you shine too much light back onto your subject using a reflector, you can flatten out the lighting and turn a great shot into a mediocre one. Use just enough reflected light to highlight her eyes.

end of my lens. This doesn't always work, and you may have to invest in step rings or other adapters.

### *Ambient Window Lighting*

The more ambient light used, the softer the boudoir image will look. You can hide a lot of imperfections using ambient light. I have a bay window that faces north in my small camera room. I create some of my softest, most intimate portraits using the ambient light that filters through this window. If you're going to show any part of the window, be mindful of the background. Parked cars, stop signs, and telephone poles can be distract-



ing. Also, be aware of who is outside your window! My bay window faces the parking lot, so I have to be careful that other clients aren't able to see the woman in the middle of her boudoir session. Always respect your client's privacy.

### *Outdoor Lighting*

This winter outdoor portrait session was created for the subject's husband several Decembers ago. My Mentor, Ohio studio is located near the shores of Lake Erie, and our winters can be harsh. This session was actually shot at the beginning of a major snow storm. In order to make going on location worth my time and effort, I set a minimum order of \$500 and guarantee a wall portrait. My client called three weeks before Christmas and requested a 24x30 wall image rushed for the recipient's Christmas gift. I

I used all available outdoor light to create the image series shown below and on the facing page. The overcast sky and snow filtered the natural light. It was like the sky was a giant softbox. The temperature was only 30 degrees, so the subject was wearing a heavy jacket. I brought a white mosquito net to use as draping. The winds were high, and I knew the breeze would lift the mosquito netting to create a unique effect. The model was wearing a very lightweight bodysuit, so I had an assistant available to get her jacket on as soon as possible after each shot. If you work with an assistant, make sure you have worked with that assistant before! I carefully train each of my assistants to ensure that they work well with me and understand exactly what I need from them. They should know the proper way to use a reflector, a light meter, and they should know what every other piece of equipment does. This situation requires that you work as fast as possible. If you and your assistant know your equipment, you can work fast but still get amazing results.





Let nature be your assistant, too. The wind interacted beautifully with the model and the background during this session. This customer returned to place an order for Valentine's Day. We created a customized greeting card using images from her December session. One session can generate business throughout the year. I've had clients purchase prints for their husband's/boyfriend's birthday, anniversary, and other special occasions. I use a client management software system to keep track of special days in the lives of my clients. When such a day is getting close, I'll send an e-mail to see if they need any prints from past sessions or would like to schedule a new session. If you don't have client management software, set up reminders in any basic calendar program.







Each of these portraits was created at our outdoor waterfall set. Always use a tripod and drag your shutter to make the most of moving water.

photographed these portraits on an early morning at our local beach sand dune area. The order was well over \$1,000, and it was well worth the challenge.

### *Outdoor Sets*

I offer twenty-five different outdoor sets at my studio. All of those sets took years to create. Before you decide to build even one outdoor scene for your studio, it is a good investment to hire a landscape architect to evaluate the space. When I purchased my current building, the outdoor area had little more than weeds and unruly trees. Even if you hire a landscape architect, you need to make sure that his plan works for photography. Take sample images of different areas of your lot at different times of day to determine where you have the most favorable lighting.



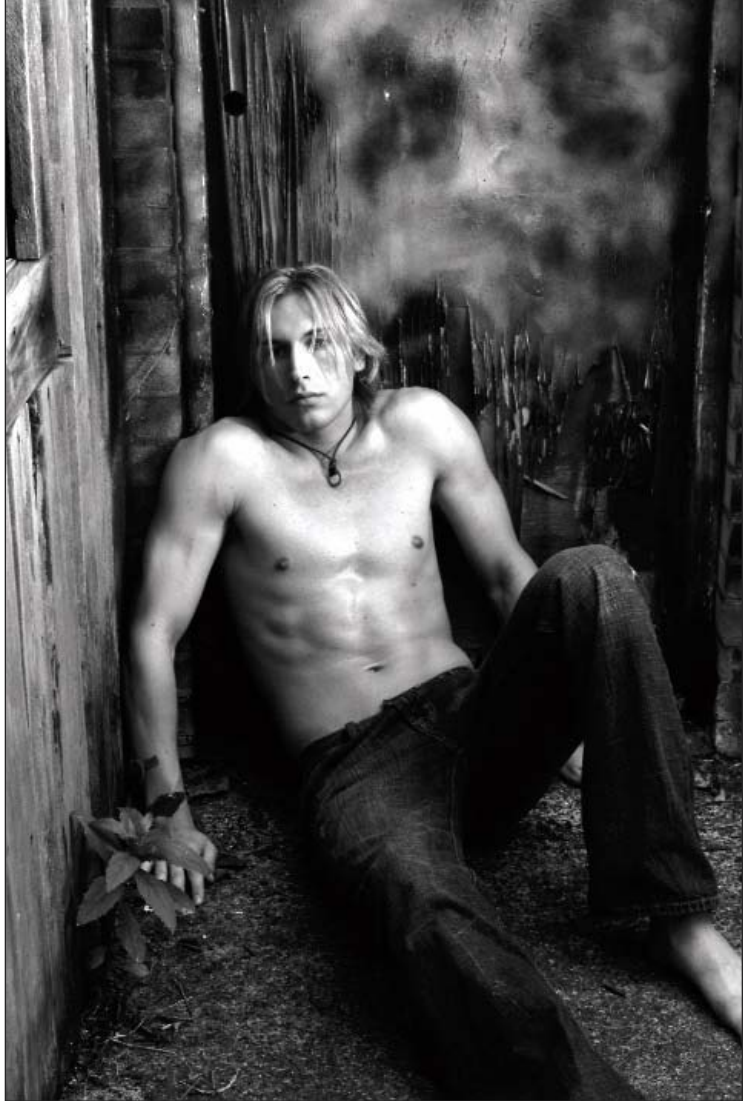
Set a realistic budget and stick to it. Don't worry if it takes several years to create the perfect outdoor setting for your clients. Offering even a few outdoor sets can help differentiate you from the competition.

The most popular set in the past few years has been the waterfall scene. The waterfall is 20 feet wide and cascades in three tiers, starting at a height of 7 feet. It was built using a kit from Aquascape Waterfalls. I actually ordered the kit online. The pond's natural look comes from covering the rubber pool liner with plants, rocks, and other landscape features. A pump at the base recycles water all day. I turn off the pump at night or on days when I'm only shooting indoors. This helps reduce evaporation, save energy, and save wear and tear on the pump. Use a high-quality, commercial-grade sump pump for best results and reliability. The waterfall provides nice background noise and helps relax my clients. It's the signature fea-



**Above**—I use a Larson or Photogenic reflector to bounce light and fill in shadows. **Top and bottom right**—These two images were photographed using Bronica film cameras. I did not have the technology available to digitally enhance these images. These images were shot using late afternoon light, which was filtered through the trees. The only supplemental light source was provided by a large silver reflector, which I used to highlight the subject's eyes. Early morning and late-afternoon light conditions are the most favorable for my outdoor area. I schedule my sessions based on this fact.





Although most of our boudoir clients are female, I do occasionally photograph males. I always make sure I have an assistant, preferably a male assistant. I do not photograph full-frontal nudity. I meet with male clients before the session to determine exactly what they are looking for in their portraits. I don't want any surprises in the camera room.

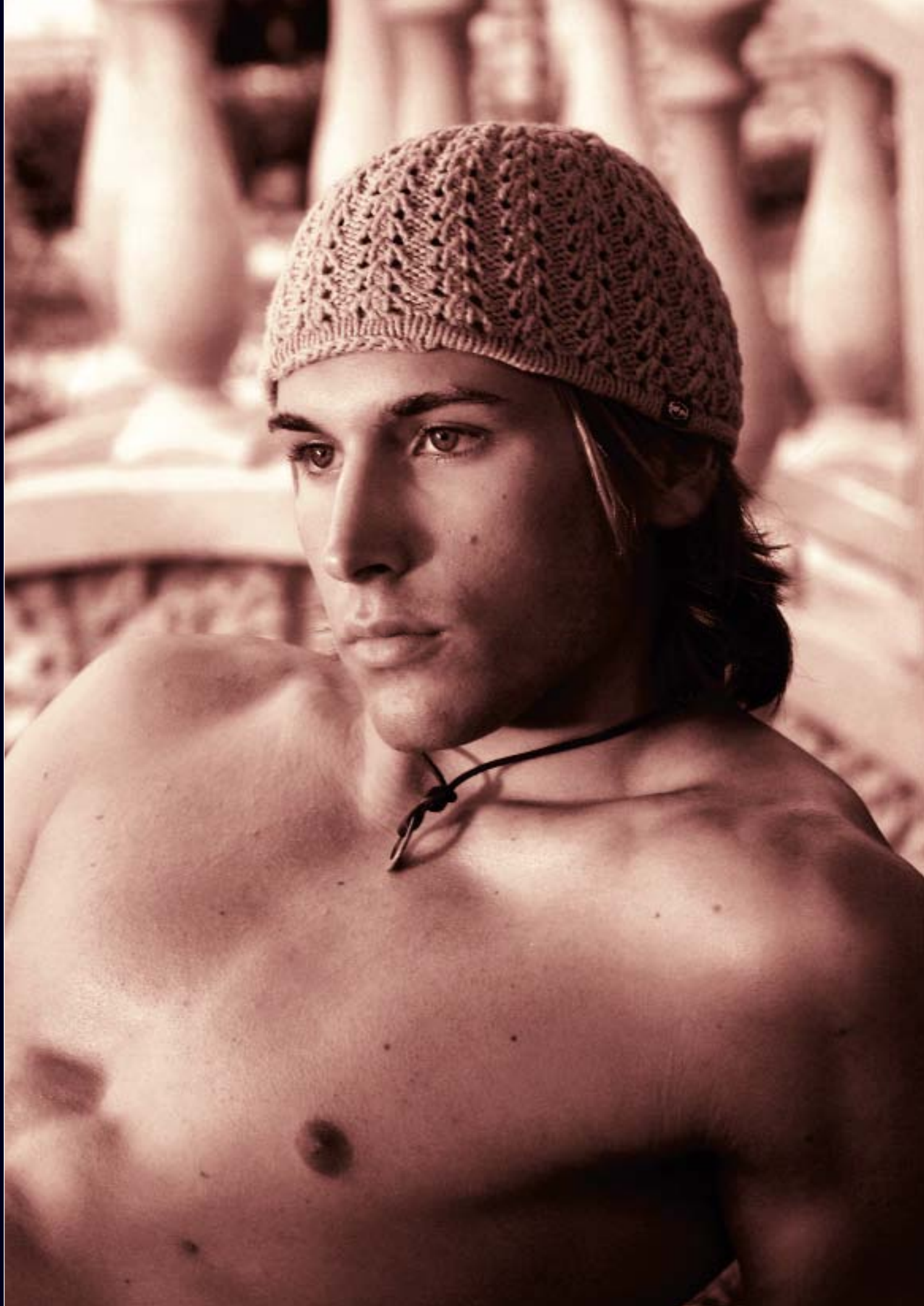
Late afternoon or early evening light is the best natural lighting for outdoor portraiture. Long exposures create beautiful images. Always try to bring the subject's face back to the main reflective area. I created these images by mounting my camera to a tripod. I used a long lens, approximately 200mm, to ensure depth of field. A large silver reflector provided the slight highlight in the subject's eyes. Be careful not to overuse your reflector and flatten out the face by shining too much light on your subject. You still want to see shadow and highlight on your images.

ture of my outdoor area, and many clients have booked sessions because of the waterfall.

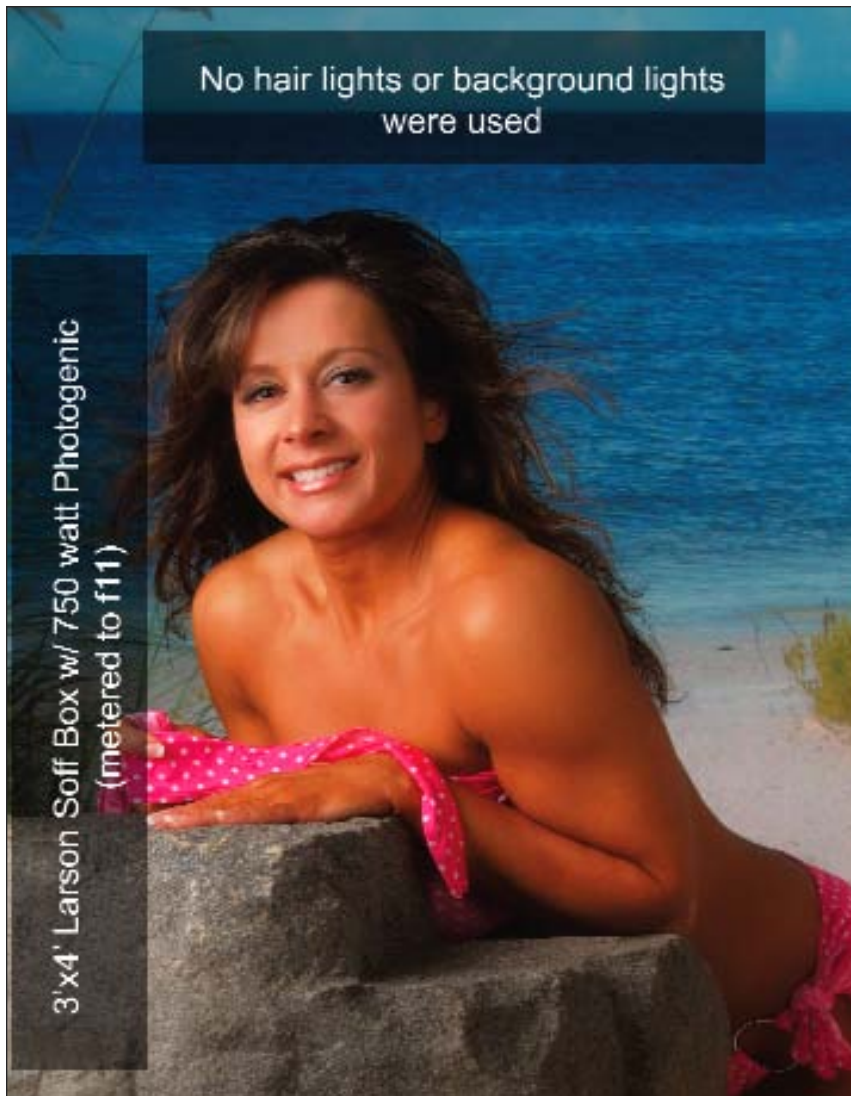
### *Bringing the Outdoors Inside*

I know not every studio has access to a true outdoor area. Even though I have an extensive collection of outdoor sets, the weather often chases me inside. Many of my boudoir sessions are done in the winter months as well, so I needed to find a way to photograph outdoor sets in the comfort of my indoor studio. I use a beach scene from Denny Manufacturing to create beautiful images year round. It's important to let your background light wash evenly across the background. Hot spots can make this style of back-drop look unnatural.









**Top**—This client originally came in to create a portfolio for bodybuilding. She ended up booking a separate boudoir session after seeing the results from her first photo shoot. I created the wind-blown look using a wind machine. If you don't have a wind machine, simply use a fan or hairdryer set to cool. I usually position my wind machine on the same side as my main light. **Bottom**—Here's the set used in the previous portrait. It's a Denny Manufacturing beach backdrop with real rocks used as a prop. As you can see, you can create an outdoor feel in the comfort and privacy of your camera room!



## *Posing Women of All Ages*

Most any photographer can achieve amazing results when photographing young, beautiful models. The problem is that most young, beautiful models do not have enough disposable income to make photographing them worth your time. If you're looking to make money doing this style of photography, you need to target the right clients. I've found that middle-aged women make the best customers because they tend to be in stable relationships and respond well to instruction. They also recognize that grav-



I used my main light to shape this subject's leg. The background light is approximately 1½ to 2 stops hotter than my main light.



Don't be afraid to combine black & white or sepia-tone images when presenting images to your client. The left-hand portrait is an example of the veiled lighting technique. Again, be sure to have your main light behind the mosquito netting and set your camera to manual focus. I used one background light and pulled in a little ambient light from the window behind the subject. I tipped the angle of my camera on the tripod to create a little more interest. If you use this technique, be aware of any lines in the background. I always look for symmetry in my images. I brought her hands together to create a nice triangle and cover any undesirable areas. The right-hand image represents an example of one of the first images I take when starting a boudoir session. I have the client wear something comfortable and pose her in a very relaxed style. These are still beautiful, saleable images, and they always start off the session in a positive way.

ity and time are taking a toll on their bodies, and that they should act now before it's too late.

Generally, 18–30-year-olds purchase an 8x10-inch print or similar product, 30–40-year-olds purchase For Your Eyes Only albums, and 40–60-year-olds buy wall portraits, calendars, and other larger packages. Once you find a client who has a desire for boudoir photography, you need to give her confidence that she is attractive and that her significant other will love the prints. It's your responsibility to properly pose your subjects in order to emphasize their best features.

I've had family members of now deceased clients express their gratitude for the images my studio created of their departed loved one. This occurs more and more now that I'm approaching my thirtieth year in the photography business. Keep situations like this in mind when you're photo-



graphing your clients. You are creating timeless portraits that will be enjoyed for decades.

### *Posing the Thin, Small-Framed Woman*

Photographing the very thin woman can be a challenge. There are many ways today to enhance her body and alleviate any fears she may have.

The captions for the images on this and the facing page outline some of the ways in which we can visually maximize the subject's curves.

**Below**—I helped create cleavage for this client's image by having her lay forward and bring both arms together. Remember, the camera does add ten pounds, so add it only to the good areas! There are a lot of products on the market designed to enhance the breast line. Suggest that smaller-framed clients bring a push-up bra to their session. I position a thin-framed model more "straight-on" to the camera and show more of her body to add more weight. If she has a bony structure, I will hide those areas with drapes. This will add more weight to the image. We often use the liquify tool in Photoshop to enhance the bustline. **Top right**—The first image features examples of the muslin tent backdrop lighting technique discussed earlier in the book. The muslin is lit from the backside with multiple lights. Notice I posed my subject with her back to the camera. I shot this at an angle to accentuated her curves, both in front and in back. **Bottom right**—The third image was created using one main light (3x4-foot softbox mounted to a 1250-watt Photogenic light). This body part shot was created to focus on her spouse's favorite feature on her body.



### *Posing the Full-Figured Woman*

Photographing full-figured women is challenging, but they are often my best clients. This is where your talent will shine. Remember to hide the least attractive features like midriff rolls and varicose veins and chisel out the good features. Not every culture desires the waif-thin runway model look for women. You'll find that many men prefer women with curves. The challenge is finding clients willing to accept and be proud of their bodies. You start discerning your client's comfort and confidence level way back at the consultation stage of the boudoir photography process.

If you are photographing a heavy subject, a good rule of thumb is to keep the weight to the back of the image. Always chisel out the good features. For instance, if a woman has large hips and heavy arms, hide the arms behind a prop or draping and take the portrait from the waist up. If your client has a double chin, avoid using reflectors under her eyes. This would draw attention to the chin area. Change the angle of your shooting

**Left**—Here is an example of having your subject stretch out in order to eliminate wrinkles or double chins. Notice how the hands define her chin and neck area. **Right**—I created a timeless, old-world look for this image. Her arm is lit in a manner that sculpts and thins. Her hand is posed to focus on her wedding ring. I photographed her at a high angle with her chin tilted up slightly to slim the neck line. I used a spotlight on her upper body to shape and accentuate that area. Her husband absolutely loved this image. I stock many different types and colors of feather boas, including reds, pinks, whites, and blacks. I purchase my boas from [motherplucker.com](http://motherplucker.com). I've found that the turkey feather boas hold up the best and hide a lot of imperfections.





**Left**—Only one light was used in this portrait. Note the “S” curve of the subject’s body. Every photographer should visit his or her local art museum and study the lighting and posing of the old masters. You’ll see examples of triangles, symmetry, hand placements, proper lighting, and more. We’re in a digital age now where we think we can fix anything using our computers and Photoshop. Computer editing should be our last resort. We need to properly photograph our subjects in the camera room. **Right**—Not every pose or outfit needs to be risqué. Invite your client to bring evening gowns and accessories so she can use some of her portraits as gifts to her children or parents. These are the poses that will hang on her family’s walls for generations.



so that you are at a higher angle. Have her look slightly upward but avoid creating too much eye roll.

### *The Lingerie Session*

Some of my clients want to come to the studio with a trunk full of lingerie. I explain to them during the consultation that while lingerie is an element of boudoir photography, it is not the most important factor. I





**Left**—Holiday themed boudoir portraits can make for an unforgettable, one-of-a-kind gift. **Right**—Nik Software Inc.'s Color Efex Pro russet filter was used to enhance this beautiful portrait.

will be wearing. I have built a network of vendors who send me clients. In exchange, I refer clients back to them. One example is my good friend Mary Wood who owns Next to Me, which is a high-end clothing boutique and lingerie store. If my clients are going to spend money on lingerie, I want that money to go to another small business, not some large chain or department store.

Lacy and sheer sets are gorgeous when lit properly. Since it would be far too expensive to keep a large collection of lingerie in stock, I feature feather boas, netting, satin sheets, furs (both real and faux), and a couple extra-large teddies which I alter using clothespins.

### *The Seminude Session*

I offer seminude sessions for the woman who wants these images “for her husband only.” I love this style of session because I know I’m helping rekindle passion in a couple’s relationship. I typically show only the upper body and other select features. I’ve always felt less shown is best in great

explain to my clients they want to invest in the images, not the accessories or clothing that they

lighting! I love to chisel out her best features; however, I have never done a full-frontal nude, as I try to keep these sessions as tasteful as possible. I am, after all, a photographer of children, high school seniors, families, and more. My reputation in my community as a mother and school photographer would never allow me to do this style of portraiture.

The associate pastor of my church commented years ago that if more men looked at their wives, they wouldn't struggle these days looking at porn on the Internet and in magazines. I really appreciated that comment. The images I produce and hang on my studio walls are a celebration of the woman, not an objectification.



Draping fabrics lends softness, texture, and interest to your boudoir portraits.





One of my favorite parts of this session style is focusing on certain parts of my subjects in addition to the whole body.





## CHAPTER SIX

# *Backdrops and Props*

Both of my studio camera rooms have various sets to allow me to create an intimate session. My Mentor and Solon studios have a neutral fireplace that looks great in a boudoir setting. These false fireplaces were purchased at a local home improvement store (you can find one at Lowe's, Home Depot, etc.). Various sized chairs (especially armless ones) are also great for this type of session.

Earlier in the book, I mentioned that I also use mosquito netting to soften an image, conceal imperfections, and add texture in an image. When I started out, I used quite a few mosquito nets in each setting. You can readily find mosquito netting in a variety of colors from stores like World Market or Pier1 Imports.

Here are a series of images featuring some of the various props and back-grounds used in my studios.







**Top row**—Antique chairs and ottomans make great props for boudoir photography. **Bottom row**—White leather is beautifully suited to high-key portrait photography. Notice the couch is not a focal point of the image; it is simply a backdrop, and it should remain in the background. Note that shooting from a high angle will help to smooth out wrinkles and elongate the neckline.





**Top left and right**—Valentine’s Day is another opportunity to sell your clients on boudoir photography. We stock numerous red backdrops and accessories for this holiday. A little ingenuity goes a long way toward maximizing your budget and creativity. The rose-covered backdrop shown on the right is a piece of folding foamcore purchased at OfficeMax, covered with red satin and netting. We used a glue gun to affix the roses. Turn to page 78 to see a trio of portraits in which this backdrop was employed. **Bottom left and right**—Another great set for boudoir (and high school senior) sessions is the stone wall. If you don’t have a real stone wall at your studio, you can purchase a rubber version (right) from Denny Manufacturing.



You can also build a nice selection of backdrops by purchasing muslins. I use light tan, black, gray, brown, light pastels, and more. Install your backgrounds on a track system for quick and easy changing.

Keep an eye out for interesting props and backdrops when you’re out shopping at major retail establishments, yard sales, and estate sales or antique stores for things that can help create a great atmosphere in your camera room.

## *After the Session*

Remember that you cannot spend all of this time and energy and not make money. These intimate sessions are priceless, and over the years, I've had people (especially husbands) stop me tell me how much they still cherish that beautiful For Your Eyes Only album. My clients often say that their session was just like spending a few hours at the spa. This type of session, if done well, can be inspiring, allowing you a chance to ignite all of your creative ideas and bring your client's self-esteem to new levels!

*My clients often say that their session was just like spending a few hours at the spa.*



It is very important to get the images retouched in Photoshop and create a slide show within a week (the sooner the better, as she'll be excited). We always get a slide show presentation no later than a week later.

On the following pages, you'll see a wide variety of portraits created for a boudoir client in a single session.

### *Her Personal Slide Show Presentation*

I usually schedule these personally with the client, though sometimes she will surprise her partner by bringing him unbeknownst. This can be great, especially if it is a surprise for their anniversary. I have found that the husbands will want the images that she tends to not like. Remember, men have a different view of their spouses. Women may think that they look "too fat," but husbands love every curve and the shape of her body. They will want her to spend more, especially if this is out of character for her. We have our clients come in close to the end of the day when our studio winds down and things are a little quieter. Her personal slide show presentation can be created in any number of readily available slide show creation programs. Simply use the one you and your staff find the most user-friendly and effective. Be sure to use royalty-free music, or music you have the rights to.

I usually shoot around forty great images, from which can pick twenty-four 4x5s for her For Your Eyes Only album. Remember, I've already presold the session and a guarantee of \$500.00 minimum purchase.

All images are already color corrected, cropped, some made black & white or sepia, and any additional special effects have been applied. The words out of your client's mouth should be things like "wow." When you "wow" her, money shouldn't be an option, as this is the best that she's ever going to look!

### *Making a Top-Dollar Sale*

After showing the client the slide show, it is time to get the best dollar for your time and product. At our studio, all of the products are à la carte.

Our multi-image album has become quite popular, as we design the pages customized to their session. Our average sale should be around \$1500.00. Though these sessions are time consuming, they are profitable and psychologically rewarding. We usually get half the money down, with the remainder due upon delivery of the product.

***After showing the client the slide show, it is time to get the best dollar for your time and product.***















# Postproduction

## Retouching on a Younger Woman

Posing, lighting, and the amount of soft focus on any image will determine the amount of retouching needed on a younger woman. But, as any photographer knows, the younger the person, the more great skin tones and less wrinkles to retouch. So in images of subjects in the twenty-one to thirty age range, we mainly take out any uneven skin tones, retouch under the eyes, add a little softening, etc. The more you can slim the subject by posing, the less time you'll have to spend at your computer using Photoshop's liquify tool. A rule of thumb is that the subject should look like she does in real life, only enhanced. You want her to be as beautiful as possible, but you want her husband to be able to recognize her!

We lightly retouch all images included in the slide show presentation. We take one special image and do full retouching to show her what we can do. This greatly helps increase the sale of our “digital enhancements” and showcases the skills of our digital artists. We've found that the younger

**Left**—We use this digital enhancement price list for all of our studio portraiture. **Right**—We call this style of retouching and digital effect our “Illusion” technique. It's very popular with our younger clients and truly takes advantage of digital technology. We create this image in Photoshop by simply drawing a box in a new layer, adding a layer effect (usually a shadow or a glowing edge), and burning in the edges of the image to create a subtle vignette.

*Elle Foto Photography wants you to look your best in your pictures! That is why we have created T+touch digital enhancements. Minor complexion retouching is included with the price of your pictures, but sometimes there is a need for more. The pricing below is priced per pose.*

<b>EYES</b>	
Glass Glare Removal.....	\$30.00
Opening Squinty Eyes.....	\$35.00
Eye Color Enhancements.....	\$20.00
Under Eye Bag Removal.....	\$25.00
<b>TEETH</b>	
Braces Removal.....	\$60.00
Teeth Whitening.....	\$25.00
Adding Teeth.....	\$40.00
Shortening /Lengthening Teeth.....	\$40.00
<b>FACE</b>	
Extreme Facial Shine.....	\$25.00
Nose, Check, Neck or Ear Reductions.....	\$20.00
Piercing Removal.....	\$35.00
<b>HEAD</b>	
Head Swaps.....	\$40.00
Filling In Thinning Hair.....	\$25.00
<b>BODY</b>	
Tan Line Removal.....	\$25.00
Jewelry Removal & Fix.....	\$30.00
Scar, Tattoo Removal.....	\$35.00
Nail Polish Fix.....	\$20.00
Waistline Reduction.....	\$20.00
Chest Reduction or Enhancements.....	\$20.00
<b>FULL DIGITAL FACELIFT</b>	
Choose up to 5 above.....	\$75.00
<b>SPECIAL ENHANCEMENTS</b>	
Coloring Parts Of A Black & White Image.....	\$25.00
Adding People to Groups.....	\$100.00
Changing Backdrops.....	\$100.00
Mentor: 140 255 7875    Solist: 310 542 0257	

*Elle Foto Photography*  
Digital Enhancements  
images.com





boudoir clients will be more critical of their body than the older client. So, a price schedule of enhancements is very important.

### *Retouching and Light Face-Lifts on the Mature Woman*

After a light retouching of the mature woman's portraits, we show her our slide show. We then tell her what we can really do. It is very important to go over all of the images and point out specific digital enhancements that she would want. I always ask, "Okay, how many years do you want us to take off?" She'll laugh and say, "Give me the works." At that time, we'll print proof sheets and mark the images with exactly what retouching she wants. A full digital face-lift costs \$75.00 extra. I sell these face-lifts by explaining how much time it takes to properly retouch and image. I also explain that this is a one-time fee. If she wants reprints of an image we've already retouched, there are no additional retouching fees. If she still objects, show her a completely retouched image of herself and compare that to the original file.

### *Tactful Enhancements and Reductions*

My average client for boudoir is around thirty-five to forty-five years of age. Most of these women will want to "hide" parts of their body. The parts that she wants to hide may very well be her significant other's favorite parts, so address this when you meet with her. Ask her what her needs are, what her fears are, and what her spouse/boyfriend likes best about her figure. At this point in her life, she wants something that will be remembered forever.

**Left**—Here is a portrait that has not been digitally enhanced. I obviously would not want to present this image to my client without doing some retouching. **Right**—Here is the final image as presented to the client. My digital artists used a combination of Photoshop editing tools (healing brush, liquify, patch tool, color brush, burn and dodge tools, and more) as well as the Nik Software Inc.'s Color Efex Pro 2.0 software to create this finished image.



This image pair shows how our before-and-after pictures look on close-up images. We don't want to change a woman's appearance too much. We simply soften harsh lines and smooth wrinkles, but the overall appearance of the woman is unchanged. The transition to black & white was done in Photoshop.



Don't overdo digital reductions or enhancements. You don't want to turn a 34B into a 34D—it will look unnatural to the client and to the person who will be receiving the finished portraits. Your goal should be to simply enhance your client's natural beauty, not to create an entirely new person who only exists on your computer.

### *Advances in Technology*

It took me almost a year to pick up my first digital camera. I had used film for so long, and I refused to change. I waited until the technology advanced beyond film's capabilities. I feel that has happened in the past few years, so I use digital exclusively. I never thought that I'd embrace digital the way I do today! It has really helped me to fine-tune my lighting and posing. Being able to review expressions in-camera, instantly, has saved me so much time in the camera room and greatly reduced the need for retakes in all areas of my business. The icing on the cake is the software used to create the perfect finished images. I feel that I have more control over my finished prints and more options for expressing my creativity.





### *Software*

I use a variety of software programs to create my finished prints and to sell my products. Adobe Photoshop is the program we use for all of our retouching. I upgrade Photoshop whenever a new version is available to ensure my staff has the latest technology available. It's expensive, but it's necessary to create the highest-quality work. Photoshop serves as the base program for all basic retouching, advanced retouching, and digital effects. My digital artists use a variety of Photoshop-compatible plug-ins and filters to create special effects. You can find what you need at [www.graphicauthority.com](http://www.graphicauthority.com). I also recommend the use of Nik Software Inc.'s Color Efex Pro, Sharpener Pro, and Dfine.

I use ACDSee Photo Manager to create simple slide shows of my clients' images. I also use this program in the sales room. I can quickly change an image from color to black & white, show sepia tones, and even rate images on a scale of 1 to 5. Rating images helps narrow down the client's choices and speeds up the sales process. If a client absolutely hates the way she looks in a certain pose, I rate it low and hide it so she doesn't focus on that image. I want her to have anywhere from eight to twenty-four poses that she cannot live without.

Recommend that subjects avoid tanning prior to the session. Though a little color from the sun looks nice, fake orange tans and noticeable tan lines look terrible in portraits.

I use Photo One from Granite Bear to manage all of my studio operations. This program tracks our workflow, sales, appointment scheduling, employee time sheets, customer data, and more. As a studio owner, this program is one I couldn't do without.

#### *Labs, Printers, and Scanners*

***It is tough to beat the quality produced by a professional color lab.***

It's tough to beat the quality produced by a professional color lab. I send almost all of my images to a professional lab. Occasionally, a print will come back with unacceptable color. Whenever this happens we have to determine if this was a lab error or a processing error on our part. Make sure you keep your monitors calibrated to your lab's specifications. My lab knows that I like very rich, vibrant color, so they print my images accordingly. I do have a printer at the studio that I use for odd jobs, certain promotional pieces, and anything that needs to be done right away. I use the Epson Stylus Pro 4000 for any in-house printing. The color of the prints looks great, and the software is easy to use. The printer can print on a roll, but I normally use precut luster paper for my images.

My studio doesn't scan many images since we've been working digitally for several years now. Occasionally, clients want us to scan in old images or we'll need to scan some of our old prints. We use an Epson Perfection 1200 Pro for scanning prints. We use a Nikon Super Coolscan 8000 for scanning film. These scanners work fine for our purposes. If you are doing a lot of photo restoration, you'll want to get an updated model.

I'm often asked if I use a Macintosh or PC. My studio's first computer was a PC, and we've stuck with that system for our network over the years. I do have employees who work on Macintosh computers, but I use a PC for business purposes. I haven't noticed any difference between images that were processed using a Macintosh and those that were processed using a Windows operating system. Use the computer that works most efficiently for you.

# *Employees*

Boudoir or glamour photography is a highly personal, intimate process. As I mentioned earlier, I spend a great deal of time developing a relationship with my clients. I make sure my studio is neat and inviting. I make sure the camera room is warm and filled with soothing music. I, however, am not the only person who works at my studio! Boudoir or glamour photography clients are often self-conscious or nervous about participating in a session. They often have a negative self-image or are concerned about who will see their pictures.

Protecting my clients' privacy is one of my greatest concerns. Since I photograph women, I have female staff members involved in each step of the photography process. If you are a male photographer in the business of photographing females, I suggest you hire at least one female to be present during your session. We live in a litigious society, and even the illusion of impropriety can be enough to tarnish your reputation. When hiring, carefully screen your new employees. The quickest and easiest way to do a background check is to search public court records. In my area of the country, local and county courts provide free online access to both civil and criminal records. Use any major search engine to find the appropriate site. If you cannot find the information yourself, it's worth hiring one of the many background check firms to investigate potential hires. You may have to spend a little bit of money to do a thorough check, but you'll gain peace of mind that you can pass along to your clients.

I employ both males and females, so I'm careful to be sensitive to my clients' needs. I train my male staff members to refer any calls regarding boudoir or glamour photography to one of my female staff members. At this point, my guys can recognize a client as a potential boudoir or glamour client based simply on her tone of voice. For example, one of my best clients called to inquire about a boudoir special. A male employee answered the phone and asked how he could be of assistance. Once the caller identified herself as someone interested in the "special," he immediately detached himself from the call. He was trained to say, "I work in a separate division, and I am not familiar with all of our specials. Let me transfer you

***Protecting my clients' privacy is one of my greatest concerns.***



to someone who can help.” If not for this slight intervention, the caller may have chickened out and hung up the phone!

The caller was transferred to a female sales representative who was able to ensure her that no male would see her pictures (except the man she was giving the pictures to). From there, my female staff member was able to describe the special, the consultation, and the photography process. By the end of the call, I had another session prepaid and booked. This is just one example of how training your staff to overcome objections and recognize a client’s true needs benefits the studio as a whole.

Whenever I have a boudoir or glamour session on my schedule, I let my staff know in advance. They know to stay away from the camera room and not disturb me or my client. I want to make sure that my client feels safe, secure, and in the most private or intimate environment possible. When my client enters the front door, I have a female staff member at the front desk, preferably the one who booked the session. The client and my employee have already bonded, and this helps put the client at ease.

As I’ve mentioned over and over, you want your studio to be as professional as possible. Your employees are a key element to creating a professional work environment. I have high expectations for my employees, and I outline those expectations in my employee handbook. Developing an employee handbook is a long and difficult process. (My employee handbook is included at the end of this chapter for your reference.)

I review my employee handbook on an annual basis and make additions or changes as necessary. It seems like every time I turn around, there’s another security threat to our computer network, or some new liability has cropped up in the news. I want to make sure my company is protected by having the proper policies in place. After all, if something happens to my company, each employee suffers.

***I review my employee handbook annually and make additions or changes as necessary.***

# EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

(Revised March 2007)

## ABOUT THE COMPANY

Welcome to Ellie Vayo Photography, Inc. We are sure that you have many questions about our company and its workings, procedures, functions, and your role here. We have prepared this employee handbook to help answer these questions for you. Always feel free to speak to your supervisor with regard to questions, suggestions, or problems that may confront you. We feel sure that our company has made the right decision in hiring you and that you have made the right choice in joining us. We are proud of the people who make up our company team.

We feel that there is opportunity and challenge for everyone, regardless of position.

To all new employees, we extend a hearty welcome, and wish you a rewarding future here at Ellie Vayo Photography.

## OUR STUDIOS

Ellie Vayo started the company in 1979 out of her home. The growth of the business required Ellie to obtain a storefront on Mentor Avenue. The business was later moved to its current location in historic Mentor, where it has grown to be one of the largest and most successful photography studios in the country today.

Our building is a historical stone cottage built in the 1940s. The stone used in this building was taken from the old Fairport Harbor break wall. The 3,500 sq. ft. area offers the space to work with more than one client at a time. The studio is situated on a fully landscaped half-acre lot which includes a gazebo, beach, swing, barn, stone waterfall, and much more!

In 2005, Ellie Vayo Photography opened a new location in Solon. We also have a satellite studio in Miami, FL.

## OUR PHILOSOPHY

From the moment Ellie started her business, the goal has been to deliver the best-possible product and customer service to our clients. Our success is due to hiring bright and talented people who work well together toward that common goal. The company's past growth is the result of each employee's hard work. Future growth depends on our additional efforts as a team.

Every service and function that we perform here is a team effort. Every person here is expected to do his or her job well. With the support we give each other and the excitement and enthusiasm we generate together, excellence never seems far from our collective reach. Please join us in this team philosophy. We are a company that is expanding and moving constantly on to new and different challenges. We cannot do it without you!

***Every service and function that we perform here is a team effort.***

***It is important that employment records are kept up to date.***

**OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

Since the day the studio first opened, the objectives of the company have stayed firm:

- Do the best job possible
- Give the best quality possible
- Give the best customer service in the area, and
- Give as much back to the community as possible

These are the qualities that have built a solid bond with our community and have kept the business growing through the years.

**EMPLOYEE INFORMATION**

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT**

Ellie Vayo Photography hires and promotes employees on the basis of their qualifications without regard to race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, or a disability unrelated to the job in question.

**EMPLOYEE RECORDS**

It is important that employment records are kept up to date. Be sure to notify the management if there are any changes in any of the following:

1. Name
2. Home address
3. Home telephone number
4. Marital status
5. Emergency notification phone number
6. The number of dependents
7. The beneficiary for employee's group life insurance
8. Military status
9. Corrections to Social Security number
10. Any other information that would influence the employee's work schedule

**PROBATIONARY PERIODS FOR NEW EMPLOYEES**

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Hire Date: \_\_\_\_\_

End Date of 90-Day Probation Period: \_\_\_\_\_

All new employees are considered to be on probation for the first 90 days of his or her employment. Ellie and the manager will internally evaluate your performance by your 90 day anniversary. If approved, you will be considered a regular full or part time employee. If your employment is continued, your evaluation will be discussed



with you and a copy will be made for your personnel file. If your work is unsatisfactory, the management may dismiss you on or before the probation period ends. The management may, at their discretion, extend the probationary period for another 30 days. A second performance evaluation will take place at the end of this second probationary period.

*Regular Employees:* Employees no longer on probation whose work appears below standard will receive a verbal warning. If the employee does not improve his or her work behavior in two weeks, the employee will receive a written warning. At this time the employee will be placed on a four week probationary period. The employee will have an evaluation two weeks into the probation and again at the end of the probation. At the second and final evaluation, management will decide whether or not the employee will be dismissed. Management will document all evaluations and provide a copy to the employee.

### **EVALUATIONS**

Performance evaluations take place in January of each year. Ellie or the manager will fill out the evaluation form and provide a copy to the employee. The employee will then have a meeting with management to discuss the evaluation. Evaluations affect an employee's promotions and raises. If an employee feels that an evaluation is unfair, the employee may schedule a meeting with management to further discuss and review the evaluation.

### **RAISES**

Wage or Salary reviews take place in January of each year. Wage and salary increases are based on merit rather than length of service. Management may conduct a special review in cases of promotion or change in job responsibilities. Wage or salary reviews do not guarantee the employee a pay increase. These reviews are conducted to determine a suitable raise as well as to assess the employee's progress.

### **PROMOTIONS**

Ellie Vayo Photography, Inc. makes every effort to promote from within the company. Management considers employees with the required knowledge, skill, ability, and interest before filling positions from outside sources. Management may place a current employee in the position on a trial basis. Seniority will be a factor for determining promotions.

## **EMPLOYEE STATUS**

### **FULL-TIME REGULAR EMPLOYEE**

A full-time regular employee is one who is scheduled to work 32 hours per week, 52 weeks per calendar year, and has successfully completed the 90 day probationary period.

***Reviews are conducted to determine a suitable raise as well as to assess the employee's progress.***

### **PART-TIME REGULAR EMPLOYEE**

A part-time regular employee is usually assigned to work less than 32 hours per week, 52 weeks per year, and has successfully completed the 90-day probationary period. Part-time employees are ineligible for certain benefits explained in this handbook.

### **TEMPORARY EMPLOYEE/INTERN**

Temporary employees and interns are hired with the understanding that their employment is not permanent and that they are ineligible for certain benefits. Both temporary employees and interns are expected to follow all studio policies.

## **TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT**

### **RESIGNATION**

Management requests a formal, written, and signed letter of resignation from any employee who decides to resign his or her position. Studio policy also requires the employee to complete a Separation of Employment statement.

### **REASONS FOR TERMINATION**

An employee will be subject to dismissal for the following reasons:

1. He or she cannot do satisfactory work after a fair amount of time on the job with sufficient instruction.
2. He or she demonstrates frequent lateness or absences without an acceptable reason.
3. An employee will be automatically terminated if he or she is absent two or more days without reporting to his or her supervisor with an acceptable explanation of absence.
4. He or she violates the Codes of Conduct explained in this handbook.
5. Working or appearing for work while under the influence of alcohol (including hangovers) or nonprescription drugs.
6. Any person caught in a dishonest act while employed will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.
7. He or she views unauthorized Internet sites that are not morally suitable for the workplace environment.

***Both temporary employees and interns are expected to follow all studio policies.***

## **SCHEDULING AND PAY**

### **SCHEDULE**

The schedule is posted the week before it is to begin. The schedule is for a two-week period. If an employee needs time off, they are required to advise the management and record it in Photo One at least one week before the schedule is made.

### TIME SHEETS

Each employee is required to clock in and out and account for any lunch or work breaks on a daily basis. The amount of the employee's paycheck will be determined by the time card report. Employees are responsible for recording their own hours. All overtime must be approved by Ellie.

### LUNCH PERIODS

Employees working more than five hours in a work day must take a half-hour lunch break. Employees working less than five hours do not qualify for a lunch break but must take a fifteen-minute break. The lunch period should be taken at the earliest convenience but no sooner than four hours after the start of the employee's shift. The lunch period should be taken in the order of the employee's starting times for the day. Only one employee from the studio may be on break at a time. If the employee remains in the studio for his or her break, that employee may not disrupt other employees who are currently working. All employees are required to account for lunch or other breaks on their time cards in Photo One.

***Employees must have regular attendance in order for the studio to operate efficiently.***

### ATTENDANCE AND TARDINESS

Employees must have regular attendance in order for the studio to operate efficiently. An employee is expected to report for work on time and to work to their scheduled ending time.

An unsatisfactory attendance report, frequent tardiness, and/or long lunch breaks may be cause for probation. Should this continue, the employee's attendance record could be cause for dismissal. The employee's attendance record can be a significant factor in evaluating job performance.

### REPORTING ABSENCES

If an employee is unable to report for work, he or she must notify a manager as soon as possible. The employee must provide the reason for missing work and an anticipated date of return. This procedure will enable the manager to make the necessary adjustments to the work and appointment schedule.

Absence without notification may result in termination of employment. If the employee does not report to a manager for two workdays, management will assume the employee has left his or her position.

### UNAVOIDABLE LATENESS

Management understands that on occasion, lateness cannot be avoided. Please make every effort to contact the studio to provide an estimated arrival time.

### PAYDAY

Paychecks are prepared every two weeks by an outside payroll service. They are distributed before the close of business on Monday. The pay period is for the two



weeks prior to payday. The pay period is from the Sunday to Saturday, ending the Saturday previous to the payday.

#### **PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS**

Federal, state, local, and social security taxes are deducted from bi-weekly earnings as required by law. These deductions may fluctuate due to changes in earnings, number of dependents, marital status, or by legislation. Employees should refer to management if they have any questions regarding payroll deductions. These questions will be passed on to the agency that processes payroll.

#### **OVERTIME**

Employees' cooperation and willingness to work overtime as needed is vitally important. All overtime must be approved by Ellie. Ellie Vayo Photography will pay overtime 1½ times the employee's hourly rate for all hours over 40 hours per week.

#### **BAD WEATHER CLOSING**

In the event that the studio or lab is closed due to bad weather, the employees will not be paid for time missed. Vacation time may be used by full-time employees in this situation.

### **EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**

#### **HOSPITALIZATION**

Ellie Vayo Photography, Inc. offers medical insurance to full-time employees. This plan is provided for single coverage only. Ellie Vayo Photography, Inc. will pay a percentage for group hospitalization for full-time employees at the employee's request. The employee is responsible for the rest of the premium.

Due to the high cost of medical insurance, the company may make frequent changes to the plan. Please refer to insurance company provided guidelines for specific details regarding coverage.

#### **BEREAVEMENT PAY**

The company will give a full-time employee up to three days off with pay in the case of the death of a parent, spouse, child, brother or sister. An additional 2 unpaid days may be taken in conjunction with the bereavement days if necessary. Ellie is open for discussion on this matter.

#### **HOLIDAY PAY**

Full-time employees who have completed the probationary period qualify for paid holidays. Employees must work the business day before and after the holiday or they will forfeit the holiday benefit. Any other arrangements must be authorized by Ellie. The paid holidays include New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day.

***Employees' cooperation and willingness to work overtime as needed is vitally important.***

## VACATION PAY

The amount of vacation pay an employee is entitled to is based on the length of time he or she has been a full-time employee. The vacation eligibility date will always be the most recent anniversary of full-time employment.

Length of full-time service completed:

1 to 5 years—1 week (5 days)

Over 5 years—2 weeks (10 days)

Vacation days must be approved by the manager two weeks prior to the vacation dates requested. Due to the nature of our business, the manager can limit vacation time during busy seasons. If two or more employees request the same dates, the dates will be given to the employee with seniority. Vacation days may be taken consecutively or on an individual day basis. Vacation time can not be rolled over to the following year. If a holiday falls during a vacation, it counts as a vacation day. No additional days off will be allowed.

***Due to the nature of our business, the manager can limit vacation time during busy seasons.***

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A long-term leave of absence consists of more than five working days which an employee is unable to work due to a medical condition, jury duty, or for personal reasons. Ellie must approve a leave of absence. Leave of absence is without pay. Time off during a leave of absence does not count toward an employee's length of employment. Ellie Vayo will continue to pay 100% of insurance premiums during maternity leave and jury duty.

- Maternity Leave—Maternity Leave is granted to a pregnant employee or new mother. This leave must end no later than 8 weeks following delivery.
- Jury Duty—Jury summons must be presented to management in order to receive a leave of absence.
- Personal Leave—Long-term personal leaves must be approved by Ellie. This leave is limited to 1 month. The person's employment is guaranteed for 1 month, but his or her position may change.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Pursuing additional schooling or membership in photographic associations shows the company that you're looking to advance in the company. If the studio requests that an employee attend a class or seminar, the studio will pay for some or all of the costs at the studio's discretion. If an employee would like to attend a seminar or class that pertains to that employee's job duties, the company may pay a percentage of the cost.

## EMPLOYEE DISCOUNTS

Employees that have completed the 90-day probationary period are qualified to receive a discount on employee purchases. The discount is only for the employee and their dependents. A completed sale cannot leave the studio until the order is paid in full. Each employee will be given one free studio session per year. Additional sessions will be full price. In addition the employee will receive a 50% discount off retail prices for finished portraits. Ready-made and custom frames are discounted 50% off retail including the price of mats and glass. Any other inventory items such as folios, folders, and mounts will be discounted at 50% off retail prices.

## COMPANY PARTIES AND EVENTS

Ellie Vayo Photography, Inc. will usually hold at least one sponsored social event for all employees during the holiday season. Attendance is encouraged but is not required.

## COMPANY REGULATIONS

### CODE OF CONDUCT

Ellie Vayo Photography, Inc. prides itself on creating a clean, orderly, safe, and healthy environment. All employees are expected to help maintain this atmosphere. To ensure this, the following rules of conduct must be followed at all times.

#### *Prohibited Acts*

- Excessive tardiness, absenteeism, or inability to work scheduled hours
- Loafing, loitering, or leaving work during working hours
- Distributing written material on company premises
- Selling productions on company premises without authorization
- Causing rework or constant monitoring of work due to substandard workmanship
- Causing loss of inventory or equipment due to carelessness
- Failing to follow written or verbal job instructions
- Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Violating a company safety rule or practice
- Refusing to perform an assigned job or other insubordination
- Falsifying company records or information
- Leaving premises during work shift without supervisor's permission
- Sleeping on company premises during work hours
- Misusing, destroying, or damaging any company property
- Provoking an undesirable situation or disturbing fellow employees during working hours or on company property
- Treating the owner's office as anything other than private space or entering the office for any reason other than business with the president or to use the office equipment

***Ellie Vayo Photography, Inc.  
prides itself on creating a  
clean, orderly, safe, and  
healthy environment.***



- Using company property or premises for personal work inside or outside the building without permission of the owner
- Violating acceptable codes of decency or morality
- Misusing the Internet for personal use

#### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

General information concerning our clients, their needs, and the operations of our business should not be discussed outside the company. This is very important when socializing with our competition.

The files maintained by Ellie Vayo Photography and the information they contain are not to be released to anyone without the owner's approval. Failure to comply with this rule will be cause for immediate dismissal.

Employees' personal information, addresses, phone numbers, or other personal information is never to be given to a client in person, via telephone, or by e-mail.

***Employees are not permitted to make calls concerning personal business.***

#### **PERSONAL CALLS AND MAIL**

Employees are not permitted to make calls concerning personal business. Phones may be used for emergencies only. Please do not abuse this privilege. If absolutely necessary, friends and families may call on the second or third line (255-4910 or 255-9130).

Any mail addressed to an employee will be delivered each day. Postage for personal outgoing mail is to be paid by the employee.

#### **EMPLOYEE PARKING**

Employees are to park in the back of the building if possible. If no spaces are available in the back, park in a space by the street in the front parking lot.

#### **SAFETY REGULATIONS**

Employees are expected to follow basic rules of safety for the health and protection of themselves, their colleagues, and the company. Please review the following general guidelines.

- Do not try to lift and carry anything heavy by yourself. Ask for assistance.
- Report any injury, large or small, to your manager.
- Be aware of the location of the studio's first aid kit.
- Report any safety hazards to your manager.
- Be familiar with the location of all fire extinguishers.
- All employees should have their own alarm code and know how to use the panic button.

### MOONLIGHTING

An employee may receive offers of work from other studios, individuals, or may wish to work on his or her own project. The company makes no attempt to exert control over employees during nonworking hours. However, an employee who uses his or her company affiliation, company equipment or facilities for outside personal gain does so at an obvious loss to the company. Such a person cannot be considered loyal or working for the best interests of his or her employer. Outside assignments of this nature are discouraged and may be cause for termination.

### STUDIO IMAGE

#### REPRESENTING THE COMPANY

When you are on assignment, you are a representative of the company. You are expected to look and to conduct yourself in a professional manner. The dress code must be followed when on assignment. Upon completion of the assignment, be sure to clean up after yourself. Smoking is not permitted in the presence of a customer, on company premises, or on the site of a shooting location. Drinking alcoholic beverages is not permitted during working hours. Any violations will result in immediate termination.

#### HOUSEKEEPING

Our clients' first impression of the studio is of the utmost importance. It is imperative that all sales rooms, bathrooms, and the lobby are clean and organized. Check and straighten sales rooms at the end of each sale and at the end of each business day. Employees should empty garbage as needed, and at the end of the day. Vacuum and clean the bathrooms daily before opening or after closing. Check bathrooms after each session for items left behind and for cleanliness. Clean if necessary.

Employees share the responsibility of housekeeping. All employees are to keep their work areas clear of clutter or waste. It is everyone's responsibility to pick up litter and to prevent trash and dirt from accumulating. Report anything that needs repair or replacement to your supervisor.

#### DRESS CODE

Personal dress and grooming are important elements in the photography business. Employees must make a good first impression.

The dress code varies from job to job and sometimes from day to day. Employees should report to work dressed neatly and appropriately including well groomed hair and makeup for women. Any person having regular contact with clients at the front desk, in sales rooms, or in the camera room needs to adhere to the dress code below. However, if an employee has been assigned an intense cleaning day or other maintenance task, he or she may dress appropriately. Please bring a change of clothes for after the task is completed.

***Personal dress and grooming are important elements in the photography business.***

- All clothes and shoes must be tasteful, clean, and neat (ironed, tucked in, etc.).
- Skirts and shorts must be as long as or longer than fingertips when arms are straight down at sides.
- Blue jeans, overalls, sweat pants, cutoffs, and faded pants are not acceptable. Dress pants and khakis always look professional and are a good choice.
- Shirts must cover the midriff. Please note, open-weave or translucent shirts must be worn with an undershirt.
- Jewelry should be worn tastefully and kept to a minimum. No dog chains, hemp jewelry, etc.
- Sandals are acceptable, but please keep them conservative. If sandals are worn, feet must be clean and pedicured. Flip-flops are not permitted.
- Hair must look clean and neat.
- Nail color should be of a conservative color. Black, blues, greens, and purples are not considered appropriate for professional business.
- Classic makeup is essential for the female staff members to look professional.
- Proper undergarments (e.g., bras) must be worn while at work.

An employee will receive one warning for a dress code violation. He or she will be sent home to correct the violation.

## **COMMUNICATION**

### **BULLETIN BOARD**

All information regarding changes in policy or procedures will be posted on the downstairs bulletin board. Each employee is to check it daily and initial any new items to verify that those items have been read.

### **GRIEVANCES**

Any questions about the employee's duties, wages, or anything related to the position can be frankly and fully discussed with management. If not completely satisfied with the manager's answer, the employee may request a meeting with Ellie.

### **MAKING SUGGESTIONS**

Ellie and the management welcome and encourage suggestions on improving studio procedures, atmosphere, and productivity. The studio becomes more profitable and the work becomes easier if the studio becomes more efficient.

### **USING COMPANY EQUIPMENT**

The working tools and equipment entrusted to employees' care are both valuable and varied. Remember that careful handling and maintenance of all equipment will insure the standard of quality and service expected by our clients. If you do not understand the operation of a piece of equipment, do not attempt to use it without proper instruction.

***All information regarding changes in policy or procedures will be posted on the bulletin board.***



*Ellie Vayo Photography, Inc. reserves the right to amend any part of this handbook and its policies at any time.*

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM**

All employees shall receive the Employee Handbook at the time of hire or when the policies have been revised. Ask the owner or manager for clarification of any questions. By signing the form below, the employee indicates his or her understanding of everything required while in the employment of Ellie Vayo Photography, Inc.

I have read the Employee Handbook and fully understand the rules and regulations as explained within.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please sign both copies. Keep one and return the other to your manager.

# *Special Events*

## *The Celebration of the Woman Campaign*

This marketing campaign was designed to do two things: raise money for a local charity and raise awareness for my business. In order to accomplish this, I ended up spending thousands of dollars! I never spend money on my business unless I have a careful plan for recouping that expenditure. In this case, the “free” publicity I received from local media outlets was worth more than I spent. I booked clients long after the Celebration of the Woman campaign ended.

**How It Started.** As I mentioned in the chapter dealing with employees, it is important to surround yourself with talented people. I’m fortunate to have a well-rounded staff with a variety of skills and interests. We were brainstorming ways to drum up business for the New Year at our January meeting, and one of my staff mentioned partnering with a charity. We did some research online and discovered that a local women’s shelter was recently shut down due to a flood. The concept of the Celebration of the Woman campaign was born.

In order to start the process of working with this charity, I simply made contact with the director and made a general proposal. At this point, the final details were far from being worked out. In the meantime, two of my employees worked on brainstorming a broad list of terms that relate to boudoir or glamour photography. Words like “romance, love, passion” easily made their way onto the dry erase board. Other employees added words that were more risqué or somewhat off-topic, but that’s okay—brainstorming is about letting creativity flow. Telling employees that they made a bad choice at this point only limits their creativity and willingness to participate in similar activities in the future. You never know where the next great idea may come from, so be sure to nurture your employees’ creativity at every opportunity.

The point of this brainstorming exercise was to find the words we wanted to use throughout the campaign. Once we found our concept words, we used them for all of the advertising and public relations for the campaign. This helps the public understand the event, its purpose, and establishes a “brand identity” for the event. After refining the concept and

***The campaign was designed to raise money for a local charity and raise awareness for my business.***



These three images are typical for special glamour events. The posing and lighting is still artistic and of the highest quality. I may be donating my time to create these images, but I don't want the quality of my art to be diminished at all. Remember, I'll try to up-sell my client after the event. Even though I shoot each image in color, I do plan certain poses knowing that I'll have my digital artists convert those images to black & white and/or sepia tone.



focusing on a goal, we were ready to contact additional vendors to help make this fund-raiser a success.

**The Final Concept.** Our final concept included a glamour photography event that involved a local hair salon, clothing boutique, and restaurant. Each of our clients donated \$199.00 to Forbes House and received hair-



styling, makeup application, lunch, and a glamour photography session as a thank you. The clients even received a few prints at this low price. Normally, my clients would pay much more than \$199.00 to receive anything close to this deal. I would only offer such a package during the traditionally “slow months.”

I did not take a percentage of the \$199.00 donation; every dollar went to Forbes House. That was a risk considering the amount of time my staff and I ended up spending on the event. I had confidence in my staff and the quality of my photography. I trusted that my sales representatives could up-sell my clients at a later date. I gave away more than the \$199.00 collected for each session, but once my clients saw their portraits, they couldn't walk away without spending hundreds more.

**The Media.** The local media played a huge role in making this event a success. You need to get to know members of your local media. This is the single most important aspect of growing your business, developing consumer confidence in your work, and capitalizing on all the volunteer work you've done for the community. For example, for the past ten years I've photographed a local golf outing that benefits teens who wouldn't ordinarily be able to afford a college education. The figurehead behind the outing is a local radio personality and comedian who happens to be part of the highest-rated morning show in Cleveland, Ohio. I don't get paid for photographing this event. I don't get paid for donating a gift to the silent auction or providing free prints to each team member. I do, however, earn the right to appear for ten to fifteen minutes on his morning radio show. I have the opportunity to talk about the golf outing and all the other products and services my studio offers. I went on the air to introduce the Celebration of the Woman Campaign and talk about glamour photography in general.

This type of advertising is priceless! Many people change the station during commercial breaks or mentally “tune out” during breaks. I know the listening audience is “tuned in” when I'm bantering with the radio host. After ten years of sacrificing a day in the studio in order to help out this cause, I've earned the right to appear on the air when I want, and when it's most beneficial to my company.

We involved more than just a single local radio station in our cause. We sent press releases to every major market newspaper, television station, and radio station in the area. If you decide to help a charity, and believe in the cause, you'll be surprised at the opportunities that present themselves. The release we sent out for the Celebration of the Woman campaign appears in Appendix A.

I sent press releases to every major media outlet in the Cleveland, Ohio, area, and had only one “hit.” That's the way it goes sometimes. I've had

**Facing page**—This image represents one example of use of accessories. My client applied false eyelashes to create additional drama. I created this soft, feminine image by focusing on a few of my client's strengths: a smooth complexion, pretty face, and long hair. Her long hair frames the image and provides contrast. Notice I kept her nose within her cheek line, and that her eyes are looking in the same direction as the rest of her face. I used an appropriate amount of shadow and highlight to give dimension and shape to her face. Finally, the background is not distracting. It simply adds softness and texture to the image.





The “after” image (above) was retouched and features effects available from [www.graphicauthority.com](http://www.graphicauthority.com). The “before” image (right) was unretouched.

a number of articles published in the past, for free, that didn’t benefit nearly as many people as this event. The most important thing to realize about press releases is that they don’t always provide the coverage you need. Sometimes you need to spend a few dollars to get the attention your company deserves. In this case, I spent part of my advertising budget to purchase a commercial that aired on a local television station. This gave me some leverage with the news department, and they agreed to send out a camera crew to videotape the check presentation. Thousands of people saw my commercial and the check presentation. They saw samples of my



work in the commercial and heard my company described as a “charitable, community-oriented business.” I would have spent much more money sending out postcards to reach all of the people who saw my commercial and news story. I always try to diversify my advertising to reach the largest possible number of prospective clients.

In addition to the television coverage, the station agreed to provide three months of exposure on the station’s web site. My company was listed in the popular contests and giveaway section of the site. I offered to give away a glamour photography session and package to the contest winner. The winner was a name randomly selected from hundreds of contestants. All the contestants had to do to enter was to provide their names and

This portrait pairing illustrates how an unretouched “before” image (below) was treated with effects available from [www.graphicauthority.com](http://www.graphicauthority.com), resulting in the image on the right.





Here is another example of digital enhancement. The “before” image (right) is straight from the camera, and the “after” image (above) features another effect from [www.graphicauthority.com](http://www.graphicauthority.com).

e-mail addresses. After the contest was over, I had to pay for the winner’s session and package, but I received hundreds of names and e-mail addresses of potential clients in exchange.

Of course, I didn’t let the opportunity to market to hundreds of specifically targeted clients go to waste! I made everyone a winner! My potential clients may not have won the full glamour photography session and package combination, but they won a free session during the months of March and April. These months are typically my slowest months. I’m usually planning for the upcoming session season, or I’m out on the road speaking and teaching. The camera room tends to be empty a few days a week during this period. I gave away the glamour photography sessions to keep the camera room busy. I knew that if I gave my time to my business,



the quality of my art would convince my clients to purchase something from their session.

I didn't get free coverage in some of the local newspapers, so I placed a few advertisements. Now I had all of my bases covered. If you turned on the local news, listened to the most popular radio station in the morning, or read the paper, you would see something about my company, my charity, and my art. This was by no means an easy process, but it ended up being a worthwhile investment of my time, money, and energy. Remember, this entire campaign generated two or three months' worth of business for my company, and it started with just one staff meeting.

Achieving a variety of portrait looks is easy with some quick clothing and backdrop changes. The green backdrop shown on the left is a piece of wrinkled silk purchased for just ten dollars at the fabric store.

What's the point of investing time, money, and energy if there aren't adequate results? Well, there's not really much of a point at all! That's why experience and careful planning should play key roles in developing your charitable events. I've probably given away hundreds of thousands of dol-







This four-image set of samples represents a portion of my interpretation of the Celebration of the Woman theme. The top-left image shows intimacy and curiosity. The bottom-left image shows interest and an emotional connection with the viewer. The top-right image is designed to be playful and fun. The lower-right image has a hint of shyness and shows off some curves. Each image represents one small part of a woman's personality. Imagine how excited her significant other will be to see the images! Participating in this event offers so many opportunities to feel good, which is important in difficult times. Clients felt good about themselves, it feels good to give to a worthy cause, and it feels good to do something for that special someone.

lars worth of goods and services in my nearly thirty-year career as a professional photographer. Not all of that money was spent as well as it could have been, but I've learned and grown from my experiences.

At this point in my career, I'm very selective about what I give away—and when. The last thing I want to do is spend a day away from my studio during my busiest season. I carefully evaluate the cost of donating goods and services. I want to make sure that my business benefits from the donation, but I also want to ensure that the charity benefits equally, if not more.

In the case of the Celebration of the Woman campaign, my studio had the opportunity to donate nearly \$3,000 to the Forbes House. That is a significant amount of money; however, I wish it could have been more. I truly support and applaud the Forbes House. The victims of domestic violence need a safe place to reside until their lives stabilize. Even though this event is over, my desire to help this particular charity lives on. I will continue to look for ways to help the Forbes House serve those in need.

Once the campaign was over, I needed to send out one final press release to the community. This release showcased the results of the event and helped me gain favor with the local media that did not print or present information regarding the event. I had my public relations coordinator send out a press release that recapped what we did to raise money for Forbes House, and it expressed how much money we raised for the cause. This helps lend credibility to future press releases and helps to ensure that local media outlets will listen to phone messages, read letters, or read e-mails when they see that a press release came from my company. You can view the “results” press release in Appendix B.

During the scheduling process that led up to the event, we changed our on-hold message. Whenever we placed a client on hold, they would hear more information about our studio and the Forbes House event. The complete script is located in Appendix C. We update our on-hold script at least once a quarter to reflect current specials. This valuable tool ensures that our clients are always learning something about our studio, even when they are on hold. Be sure to select music to accompany the script that matches your studio's brand identity and the message you are trying to get across. For example, soft piano music accompanies information about boudoir photography. Rock/alternative music accompanies our senior on-hold scripts.

# Case Studies

There are a nearly infinite number of types of boudoir clients: big ones, small ones, tall ones, and short ones will find their way into your camera room. Introverts, extroverts, and all personalities in between will book sessions with your studio. How do you deal with all of the complex issues surrounding boudoir photography? Unfortunately, there isn't a quick answer, but I can provide a few tips to make your sessions more successful.

I've spent thousands of hours in my camera room with thousands of different clients. This chapter provides a number of case studies to help you learn about the different personalities you will meet as a boudoir photographer. Although I have changed the clients' names and have *not* provided their portraits in this chapter, each story is real. These women will appear at your studio, and they will expect you to create timeless works of art using them as your subject. Hopefully you will learn from my mistakes and benefit from my experience.

## Case #1

Boudoir photography is more than posing and lighting; it's about building confidence, trust, and, of course, producing the highest-quality art. The consultation is my first opportunity to gauge my client's body type, personality type, and confidence level. The questions I ask help me understand my client's needs. For example, I had a somewhat heavy woman, Ms. Posner, come in for a consultation. I figured she would be shy, introverted, and uncomfortable with her body based on my initial impression of her. My first impression couldn't have been farther from the truth! She was a confident woman who had worked hard to lose hundreds of pounds. The body type that I considered to be heavy was actually a representation of an important milestone in this woman's life. She felt that her weight had cost her the opportunity to enjoy long-term relationships with men. After hearing about her struggle to lose weight, and her pride at her accomplishments, I couldn't wait to give Ms. Posner an outstanding boudoir photography experience.

When Ms. Posner returned to my studio for her session, I could tell she was acting differently than she had during her consultation. At her con-

***The consultation is my first opportunity to gauge my client's body type.***

**Facing page**—The veiled setup used in this image can be seen on page 33. The only difference was the fabric used.







sultation, she and I met after hours, the studio was quiet, and we had time to get to know one another. When she came in for her session, the phone was ringing, there were a couple of people at the front desk, and a guy crossed in front of her on his way to his department.

It doesn't take much to discern a client's mood. As soon as I noticed she was feeling a little stressed about all of the activity, I paid her a compliment. "Ms. Posner, I love your hair! Last time you had it in a bun, so I didn't realize how long your hair really was. I'm going to be able to do so much in the camera room with your hair alone! Let's get you to your changing room and introduce you to my makeup artist!"

I wasn't as concerned with her hair as I was with distracting her from her fears! I quickly moved her from an uncomfortable situation into a safe, relaxing environment. My client's changing room, makeup application room, and camera room are all separated from the distractions of the rest of my studio. When I have a boudoir client in my camera room, she is my main focus. All telephone calls or visitors can wait until I'm done! My staff knows this and never interrupts the photography process.

Ms. Posner was an example of a client who wanted a boudoir photography session to show her how far she has come. She is rebuilding her self-

Shooting from a high angle can hide a double chin and create an interesting, dynamic portrait view.

confidence and esteem as she loses weight. My job as a photographer was not to impress a significant other; rather, I was entrusted with the job of providing “a second opinion.” I was able to show Ms. Posner that she was a beautiful person, both inside and out, with my photography. She is actively pursuing positive relationships, and I know that my work helped her gain the confidence to start dating again.

Not every session will be a life-changing event; however, each session has the *potential* to be a life-changing event! Don’t let personal opinions influence the outcome of your client’s session. You may make a huge difference in a person’s life and never even realize it. Remember, if you decide to become a boudoir photographer, you are signing up to be much more than a photographer. You are becoming a psychologist, a friend, and a confidant.

Our studio wardrobe includes a large denim jacket. Denim never goes out of style. The lighting for this image was simple. A 750-watt light was shone into an umbrella, and a silver reflector was used to fill in the shadow side of the woman’s face. No background light was used.





## *Case #2*

At one point in my career, I was photographing approximately twenty boudoir or glamour sessions a week. This is a much higher volume than I want to do at this point in my career, so I'm more selective with my clients. If you decide to do a high volume of sessions, you'll find that you don't get the opportunity develop deep relationships with your clients. That's fine if you've marketed your business as high volume/low prices, but you still need to make some sort of effort to find out some details using questionnaires, consultations, etc. As I've stressed in this book, developing a relationship with your clients is very important to the boudoir photography process. Getting to know as much as possible about your clients may help you avoid the situation discussed in this case study. I'm not providing a client name for this case (not even a fake one) due to the sensitive nature of this case.

My studio, like most businesses, has a main entrance as well as a few other doors that access the outside. These doors are usually off limits to my clients, but I do let them use these doors if the situation is appropriate. One client in particular had a boyfriend who certainly needed an alternate way to leave the building. I had photographed a typical boudoir session and had developed a little rapport with my client. Everything went well, and she seemed excited to see her images. She asked if she could bring her boyfriend to the studio so they could look over the images together. I told her she was welcome to bring her boyfriend. I did mention that most clients prefer to surprise their significant others with the finished prints, but she insisted on having her boyfriend along with her.

I always make sure my clients book an appointment to order to ensure that I have adequate staff and room available to provide the best customer service possible. On the day of this particular client's order, I reserved one of my more private sales rooms so the couple could take their time reviewing her proofs and not be disturbed. My client showed up on time and introduced her boyfriend to me and my front desk girl. I shook hands and led my clients back to the sales room. After offering water or coffee, we sat down to review the proofs. A few minutes later my front desk girl knocked on the door. She came in addressed my client and said, "There's a man here to see you."

"Who is it?" asked my client.

"He didn't say, he just asked for you," the employee said.

I had my receptionist go back to the lobby to get more information. I was a little embarrassed that she didn't know the guy's name when she came back to interrupt us. As I was thinking about that, the boyfriend got up and starting looking around the room. He asked, "Does that door go outside?" I told him that it did, and he took off without another word. I

***He asked, "Does that door go outside?" I told him it did, and he took off without another word.***

This oversized, hand-painted muslin was draped over a background pole and clamped down, adding a soft, beautiful look in the portrait.



asked my client if he was coming back and she said, “Probably not. I bet that guy up front looking for me is my husband.”

She was right—it was her husband, her very angry husband! Thank goodness for back doors! The husband came back to the sales room a few seconds after the boyfriend left and confronted his wife. She explained that the images were for him, and he calmed down. That was certainly one of the most awkward moments in my career! Even though I was sweating and nervous, my client and her spouse calmly reviewed her images. They spent some time looking, placed an order, and left. I wonder if the husband

noticed that there were three coffee mugs on the table and only two people in the room when he first came in. I never did find out what happened in the long run with that client. As you can imagine, I tried to distance myself from that client as quickly as possible. This event prompted a few procedural changes in the way I booked my boudoir sessions. The biggest change involved my consultation questionnaire.

I added question #4 to the questionnaire provided in chapter 1 because of this experience. Question #4 simply asks, Is this portrait to be given to your:

- a. Husband
- b. Boyfriend
- c. Self
- d. Husband and boyfriend

I never considered it that important to know precisely who will be receiving my client's finished portraits. I figured that was her business, not mine. As you can see from this example, knowing that bit of information could have prevented this situation from occurring. I would never want to get in the middle of something like this, so I would have declined to take her pictures. I guess the moral of this story is to know your client, and maybe do your boudoir sales in a room with two exits!

### *Case #3*

This final case study involves a very loving and dedicated wife who was placed in a very uncomfortable situation. She came to my studio when I was having a low-price glamour photography special. During the course of her session she opened up to me and explained why she was having a session. She said that she couldn't normally afford my pricing, but she wanted to take advantage of my special. She mentioned that her husband had battled drug addiction for years and was incarcerated at the time of her session. She wanted to give him something special for Valentine's Day since they couldn't be together.

I tried to put myself in her shoes and imagine what it would be like to be separated from someone I care so much about. Of course, I try my best to create outstanding images for each client, but certain clients provide even more motivation to be as artistic as possible. I hope my client's husband looks at her images everyday. I want him to see how beautiful she is and how much she cares for him.

***I hope my client's husband looks at her images everyday.***



# *Conclusion*

Boudoir portraiture is cyclical. What I mean by that is you'll find that demand increases during some years and decreases in others. I've found that this cycle can be tracked by what's going on in the world and our country. Demand increases when times are tough, when the economy is struggling, or when there is a conflict. Whenever this happens, increase your advertis-



A softening filter used on-camera allowed me to avoid creating the effect in postproduction. The ostrich-feather boa and wings the client wore add a sense of mystique to the image.

ing! Let the community know that you provide a service that will make everyone feel better!

Boudoir portraiture has been my most rewarding style of photography. If and when I retire, I truly hope to just concentrate on this style of photography. If you can make your client look and feel gorgeous, you'll have her as a customer for life. This style of portraiture is demanding and very high end, so make sure you charge for it. You'll find that most photographers will attempt to offer this style, and most will fail by not capturing the emotion and beauty that the subject wants to share. Studying art, lighting and composition, and knowing your equipment will make you very successful in creating these fine art images!

Sensual upper-body shots taken from high angles are very popular with my clients. Client comfort is important in getting an image like this. In this case, the subject was positioned on foam padding, with her head resting on a black satin pillow.



# Sample Press Release

\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\*

## *Vayo Photography's Celebration of the Woman Campaign, 2008*

Ellie Vayo Photography, Inc. would like to announce a special arrangement with Forbes House, Lake County's shelter for battered women and their children. Ellie Vayo Photography will be donating a portion of all glamour portraiture proceeds to Forbes House in response to the recent flood, which caused many thousands of dollars worth of damage.

Vayo Photography will be hosting a glamour photography event on February 4, 2008. Volunteers from Vayo Photography, Jenniffer & Company Salons, and Next to Me Intimate Apparel will work together to create stunning glamour portraits of event participants. All proceeds from the February 4, 2008 event will benefit Forbes House.

Can't make the February 4th event? Plan on booking a glamour photography session from now until February 12th, and 10 percent of the proceeds will benefit Forbes House.

All participants from now until February 12th receive a customized session, makeup application, one 5x7-inch print, and four wallet-sized prints for only \$199.00!

Participants may bring up to two outfits for the session. Frames, gift packaging, and specialized products will be offered in addition to the prints included with the session.

Vayo Photography artfully celebrates the strength, passion, beauty, and empowerment of today's woman through fine portraiture. Participants can be assured

that all poses are tasteful and designed to showcase the love, sharing, and emotion that occurs in all positive relationships. Vayo Photography strives to create an experience that shows women their true beauty. Participants will leave with energy, a greater sense of self-esteem, and increased self-confidence.

Ellie Vayo Photography, Inc. is a female owned and operated studio founded over twenty-five years ago in Mentor, OH. Master photographer Ellie Vayo and her staff are committed to serving their clients with the highest level of professionalism in the industry. They also dedicate many hours to charitable organizations such as the Susan G. Komen Foundation, the Cleveland Scholarship Program, and more.

Call (440) 255-7877 to book your session in Mentor or (440) 542-9257 to book your session in Solon. Prime appointment times are filling up fast, so call today!



## ***Follow-Up Press Release***

\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\*

### *Vayo Photography's Celebration of the Woman Campaign, 2008*

In early February, Ellie Vayo Photography, Inc. introduced the Celebration of the Woman campaign, which raised money for Forbes House, Lake County's shelter for battered women and their families. All proceeds from a glamour photography event hosted on February 4, 2008, as well as a portion of proceeds from all other glamour sessions were donated to Forbes House. The February 4, 2008 event featured hair and makeup styling by Jenniffer & Co., lingerie from Next to Me, and food from Mama Primozz. A check in the amount of \$2,877.50 was presented to Mary Barnes of Forbes House by Ellie Vayo of Ellie Vayo Photography, Inc., and Jennifer Pealer of Jennifer & Co. on March 3, 2008.

The following Mentor-area businesses contributed a total of over \$200.00: Mentor Beverage, Manhattan Deli, Spats, Mama Primozz, and Next to Me.

Forbes House is in the process of recovering from a December 2007 flood. More donations and help are needed to fully reopen Lake County's only shelter for battered women. Visit [www.forbeshouse.org](http://www.forbeshouse.org) for more information.

Although the shelter is currently closed, women in need of the services of Forbes House may contact the shelter at (440) 357-1018 for assistance.

## ***On-Hold Script for Glamour Event***

For over twenty-five years, Ellie Vayo Photography has been on the cutting edge of creative portrait photography, creating treasured photographs of families, children, and high school seniors. Ellie Vayo Photography also offers glamour, boudoir, wedding, and sports photography.

Ellie Vayo Photography is headquartered at 8358 Mentor Avenue, OH, just one mile east of Great Lakes Mall. Ellie recently opened her second full-service studio at 32300 Aurora Road in the KSK Color Lab building in Solon, OH. Both studios offer expansive indoor and outdoor photography settings. Whether you're

photographed in Mentor or Solon, you can expect the same outstanding service and portraiture.

Ellie Vayo Photography is proud to announce a special collaboration with Forbes House, Lake County's shelter for battered women. Both studios will be hosting a glamour photography event on February 4th. All proceeds from the February 4th glamour photography event and 10 percent of proceeds from all other glamour sessions from now until February 12th will benefit Forbes House. Be sure to ask one of our associates about this project.

# *Letter to Models*

3/3/2008

Ms. Smith  
1234 Main St.  
Northern, OH 44000

Dear Ms. Smith,

Ellie Vayo Photography is pleased to announce the publishing of a boudoir photography book. This book will be released in 2009 by Amherst Media. This elegant instructional book is designed to help teach photographers the art and business of boudoir photography. Ellie has personally selected over two hundred images from approximately thirty models to use in her book as sample images. These images were selected based on the posing, lighting, and expression of her subjects.

Please review the enclosed thumbnails to see the images from your session that Ellie has selected for her book.

This book is designed for professional photographers and will be available for sale on major Internet sites and most national bookstore chains. If you do not want to be featured in the book, please contact Ellie Vayo Photography at (440) 255-7877 as soon as possible. If we do not hear from you by February 1st, 2008, we will include your images in Ellie's book. Ellie has spent many hours reviewing her work and selected your images as among the best of thousands of images. Ellie and her staff sincerely hope you decide to remain a part of this exciting project.

Best Regards,  
Ellie Vayo Photography, Inc.

# *On-Location Checklist*

**Client Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Main light

\_\_\_ Tripod

\_\_\_ Fill light

\_\_\_ Reflectors

\_\_\_ Background light

\_\_\_ Gels

\_\_\_ Light stands

\_\_\_ Light meter

\_\_\_ Muslin backdrops

\_\_\_ Spare batteries

\_\_\_ Variety of drapes

\_\_\_ Sync cord/remote sync

\_\_\_ Clothespins

\_\_\_ Other materials based on specific job (list below):

\_\_\_ Background stands

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Clamps for drapes/backgrounds

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Main camera

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Back-up camera

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Memory card

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# Vendors and Suppliers

## Backdrops

Cole and Company  
www.coleandcompany.com

## Lenses

Tamron DiII 18–250mm  
www.tamron.com

## Cameras

Fuji S5  
www.fujifilmusa.com

## Photoshop Filters and Plug-ins

www.graphicauthority.com

## Mats for Calendars

Albums Inc.  
www.albumsinc.com

## For Your Eyes Only Albums

General Products  
www.gpalbums.com

## Lingerie

Next to Me  
www.nexttome.cc

## Drapes and Scarves

Dynamic Designs  
www.dynamicdesigns1.com

## Beach Scene and Backdrops

Denny Manufacturing  
www.dennymfg.com

## Mosquito Netting and Props

Pier1 Imports  
www.pier1.com

## Studio Management Software

Photo One  
www.photoonesoftware.com

## Softboxes (“Soff Box”) and Reflectors

Larson  
www.larson-ent.com

## Feathers and Angel Wings

Mother Plucker Feather Company, Inc.  
www.motherplucker.com

## Cosmetics

Columbia Cosmetics Manufacturing, Inc.  
Phone: Dinah Beverage (817) 416-0551  
e-mail: Dinah@mustangllc.com

## On-Location Lighting

Calumet  
www.calumetphoto.com

## Studio Lighting

Photogenic  
www.photogenicpro.com

## Fine Portrait Printing

Buckeye Color Lab  
www.buckeyecolor.com

## Printer

Epson Stylus Pro 4000  
www.epson.com

## Light Meters

Sekonic  
www.sekonic.com

# Index

## A

Accessories, 8, 28, 66  
Adobe Photoshop, 48, 51, 65, 67, 81, 84  
Advertisements, 9–11, 45  
Age, client, 14–15, 69–71, 82  
À la carte pricing, 24  
Albums, 8, 15, 44, 64, 75, 76  
Alcohol, 42–43  
Appointments, booking, 32–34, 85  
Assistants, 30, 32, 60

## B

Backdrops, 55–56, 60, 72, 74, 102  
Background lights, 52  
Backgrounds, *See* Backdrops  
“Before” and “after” shots, 39  
Black & white portraits, 64, 83, 101  
Boas, 66  
Body type, 110  
Bridal images, 43–44

## C

Calendars, 9, 25, 64  
Camera angle, 66, 73, 112  
Cameras, 48  
Camera room, 30, 49–50  
Campaigns, marketing, 100–109  
Charities, 9, 102–2, 107–9  
Checklists, 23, 122  
    session, 23  
    location work, 122  
Christmas, 56

Clients, 7–14, 15  
    consultation, 14–15  
    existing, 7–8  
    finding, 7–14  
Clothing, 26, 27–29, 47, 64  
Computer platform, 85  
Criccio, Frank, 51

## D

Depth of field, 60  
Direct-mail ads, 9–10  
Double chins, 66, 112

## E

Effects, special, 105  
E-mails, 11  
Employees, 30, 32, 60, 85–99  
Equipment, 40, 48–62  
    barn doors, 52  
    cameras, 48  
    gels, 49  
    grids, 49, 52  
    lenses, 48, 60  
    lighting, 49–51  
    memory cards, 48, 49, 51  
    reflectors, 52, 60  
    snoots, 52  
    softboxes, 49–51, 65  
    umbrellas, 49  
Exposure, 51

## F

Fabric, 27–30

Family, 30, 47  
File format, 51  
Film, 48, 54–55, 85  
Filters, 54, 68  
Flash, 39, 49  
Forbes House, 101–2  
Friends, 30  
Fund-raisers, 9, 101  
Furniture, 72, 73

## **G**

Grids, 49, 52

## **H**

Holidays, 10, 55, 56, 116  
Hollywood lighting, 51–54  
Hot spots, 60

## **J**

Jewelry, 26

## **K**

Koman Foundation, Susan G., 9

## **L**

Labs, 48, 85  
Lenses, 48, 60  
Lighting, 49–58  
    background, 52  
    barn doors, 52  
    corrective, 51  
    fill lights, 49  
    gels, 49  
    grids, 49, 52  
    Hollywood, 51–54  
    main lights, 49  
    outdoor, 56–58, 60  
    reflectors, 52  
    remote triggers, 49  
    snoots, 52  
    softboxes, 49–51  
    umbrellas, 49

## *(Lighting, cont'd)*

    window, 54  
Lingerie, 67–68  
Liquify tool, 64

## **M**

Makeup, 7, 32, 36–38  
Marketing, 7–14, 100–109  
Media ads, 10–11, 102–9  
Memory cards, 48, 49, 51  
Men, 60–61  
Models, letters to, 121  
Modifiers, light, 49, 52, 65  
Music, 34, 42

## **N**

Networking, 39  
Nik Software, Inc., 54, 68, 82, 84  
Nudity, 60, 69; *See also* Seminudes

## **O**

On-hold script, 120  
Outdoor portraits, 56–60

## **P**

Packages, 24–25  
Photoshop, Adobe, *See* Adobe Photoshop  
Posing, 47, 63–71  
    corrective, 66, 67  
    full-figured clients, 66–67  
    thin clients, 65  
Pregnancy images, 44–47  
Press releases, 104, 119, 120  
Pricing, 24–25, 38, 81  
Print ads, 9–10  
Printing, in-studio, 85  
Products, 8, 9, 15, 25, 44, 64, 75, 76  
Props, 28, 29, 74  
Psychology, client, 39–47, 75, 110–13  
Publishing images, 121



## *Q*

Questionnaire, 16, 116

## *R*

Referrals, 16, 68

Reflectors, 60

Retouching, 49, 51, 64, 67, 81–83

## *S*

Scanners, 85

Seminudes, 68–69

Sepia-toned portraits, 64, 101

Sessions, 20–22, 23, 30, 32–36, 56–60

    home, 34–36

    outdoor, 56–60

    prepaid, 23

    studio, 30

    times, 32–34

    types, 20–22

Sets, 58–62

Slide shows, 7–8, 14–15, 24, 76, 82

Snoots, 52

Softboxes, 49–51, 65

Special events, 100–109

Spouses, 30–31

Studio atmosphere, 40–42

Suntans, 84

Suppliers, 123

## *T*

Tripods, 60

## *U*

Umbrellas, 49

Uniforms, 26–27

## *V*

Valentine's Day, 10, 56, 74, 116

Vendors, 123

Vignette, 81

Volume, studio, 114

Volunteer work, 102

## *W*

Wall portraits, 25, 64

Wardrobe, studio, 24, 47, 69, 113; *See also* Clothing

Waterfall set, 60

Web sites, 13

Wedding sessions, 43–44

Wind machine, 62

Window, 55–56

Winona School, 51

Workflow, managing, 85

Wrinkles, 73

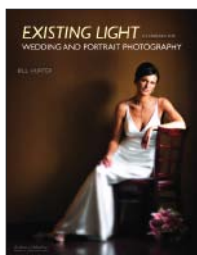
OTHER BOOKS FROM  
**Amherst Media®**



**THE ART AND BUSINESS OF HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY**

*Ellie Vayo*

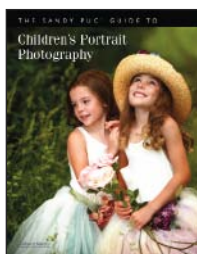
Learn the techniques that have made Ellie Vayo's studio one of the most profitable senior portrait businesses in the U.S. \$29.95 list, 8.5x11, 128p, 100 color photos, order no. 1743.



**EXISTING LIGHT TECHNIQUES FOR WEDDING AND PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY**

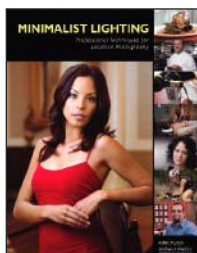
*Bill Hurter*

Learn to work with window light, make the most of outdoor light, and use fluorescent and incandescent light to best effect. \$34.95 list, 8.5x11, 128p, 150 color photos, index, order no. 1858.



**THE SANDY PUC' GUIDE TO CHILDREN'S PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY**

Learn how Puc' handles every client interaction and session for priceless portraits, the ultimate client experience, and maximum profits. \$34.95 list, 8.5x11, 128p, 180 color images, index, order no. 1859.



**MINIMALIST LIGHTING PROFESSIONAL TECHNIQUES FOR LOCATION PHOTOGRAPHY**

*Kirk Tuck*

Use small, computerized, battery-operated flash units and lightweight accessories to get the top-quality results you want on location! \$34.95 list, 8.5x11, 128p, 175 color images and diagrams, index, order no. 1860.



**THE KATHLEEN HAWKINS GUIDE TO SALES AND MARKETING FOR PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHERS**

Create a brand identity that lures clients to your studio, then wows them with great customer service and powerful images that will ensure big sales and repeat clients. \$34.95 list, 8.5x11, 128p, 175 color images, index, order no. 1862.



**SIMPLE LIGHTING TECHNIQUES FOR PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHERS**

*Bill Hurter*

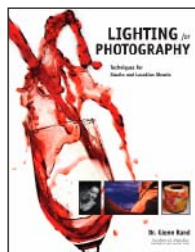
Make complicated lighting setups a thing of the past. In this book, you'll learn how to streamline your lighting for more efficient shoots and more natural-looking portraits. \$34.95 list, 8.5x11, 128p, 175 color images, index, order no. 1864.



**PHOTOGRAPHER'S GUIDE TO WEDDING ALBUM DESIGN AND SALES, 2nd Ed.**

*Bob Coates*

Learn how industry leaders design, assemble, and market their albums with the insights and advice in this popular book. \$34.95 list, 8.5x11, 128p, 175 full-color images, index, order no. 1865.



**LIGHTING FOR PHOTOGRAPHY TECHNIQUES FOR STUDIO AND LOCATION SHOOTS**

*Dr. Glenn Rand*

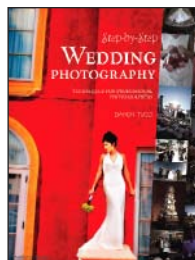
Gain the technical knowledge of natural and artificial light you need to take control of every scene you encounter and produce incredible photographs. \$34.95 list, 8.5x11, 128p, 150 color images/diagrams, index, order no. 1866.



**SCULPTING WITH LIGHT**

*Allison Earnest*

Learn how to design the lighting effect that will best flatter your subject. Studio and location lighting setups are covered in detail with an assortment of helpful variations provided for each shot. \$34.95 list, 8.5x11, 128p, 175 color images, diagrams, index, order no. 1867.



**STEP-BY-STEP WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHY**

*Damon Tucci*

Deliver the the top-quality images your clients demand with the tips in this essential book. Tucci shows you how to become more creative, more efficient, and more successful. \$34.95 list, 8.5x11, 128p, 175 color images, index, order no. 1868.



## LEARN TO CREATE GLAMOROUS, FLATTERING IMAGES OF ANY WOMAN—REGARDLESS OF HER AGE, SHAPE, OR SIZE

Every woman wants to look and feel beautiful. With these techniques from Ellie Vayo, you'll learn how to make that happen in sensual images women will love—either as gifts for their significant others or just as keepsakes for themselves. From getting clients in the door, to managing a successful session, to making a big sale, Vayo covers all the ins and outs of building a successful boudoir

photography business that clients can trust will give them a great photography experience and make them look great.

### FEATURES:

- Ideas for attracting boudoir photography clients to your studio
- Determining what products to sell and designing appealing packages
- Managing an effective consultation so clients know what to expect and can prepare for their session
- Conducting boudoir sessions in the studio or at the subject's home
- Selecting the optimal camera and lighting equipment for boudoir photography
- Designing appealing sets and creating a variety of looks in your images
- Posing techniques for lingerie and seminude session—with tips for flattering your subject's unique figure
- Postproduction techniques for tactful enhancements
- Creating boudoir images for special events, such as weddings, and for mothers-to-be
- Presenting the client's images and making a top-dollar sale

**Amherst Media**  
PUBLISHER OF PHOTOGRAPHY BOOKS

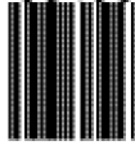
PO Box 586  
Buffalo, NY 14226

[www.AmherstMedia.com](http://www.AmherstMedia.com)

ISBN-13: 978-1-58428-253-2



9 3495



9 781584 282532

**\$34.95 USA**  
\$38.95 Canada

#1882