

# 5 SUREFIRE WAYS TO GROW YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY BUSINESS



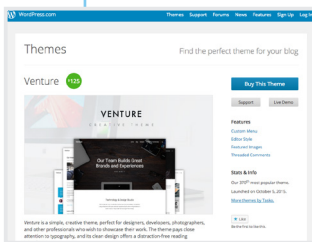
Growing your photography business is hard work, and it's not always obvious where to start. However, there are steps you can make today to get you on the right path. Whether you've been in business for years and want to expand your reach to a wider audience or are just getting started, the following 5 tips will inspire you to reach your goals.

## 1. CREATE A WEBSITE OR BLOG

For every photographer working to build a thriving business, a website and blog will certainly help expand your reach. Use your website as a platform to describe your services, products, contact information, overall approach and what sets you apart as a photographer. From your site, link to your blog, an organized feed, updating visitors on your latest work, thoughts, outtakes, reviews and more. When creating your site and blog, you have several options. A

web designer can create a custom site for you, which can be costly, but a custom design will build a strong branded impression, helping you stay top of mind among your audience.

A less expensive route is using a website and blog builder like [WordPress](#) or [Squarespace](#), which make setting up a beautiful website easy, even for first-timers. Once your website and blog are live, a great way to monetize your new digital storefront is to offer site visitors the option to purchase your photography on the site. ■



## 2. SET UP SHOP

Your website should either link to an online store, or have a shop function on the site. Note that if you have a shop on your site, you will be responsible for the packaging and shipping, as well as printing the products themselves.

While this is great for photographers who enjoy making prints or framing pictures through sites like [Ritzpix](#), if you don't have printing and



framing experience, it's better to automate the process with a service that can handle your printing, framing, packaging and shipping for you.

In that case, you're better off using a site such as [Redbubble](#) or [Society6](#). These sites help you by printing your photos on canvases, giclée, pillowcases, phone cases, t-shirts and more. Your control over pricing varies with the site, but since you don't have to foot any of the overhead like production or shipping costs, it's a great way to get your art in the hands of customers. ➡

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## 2. SET UP SHOP (CONT'D)

If you do prefer to make everything yourself, but also want to use a bona fide selling platform where your photography can be found when potential customers are looking for similar products, try [Etsy](#).

Markets and craft fairs are also a good way to sell your products on the local level. Be sure to include some shots of nearby scenery or landmarks, as locals love shots that have a regional flavor and vacationers usually want to bring home a memento from their trip.

## 3. BUILD COMMUNITY & PROMOTE YOUR PRODUCTS

Now you need to expand your work's reach. This is a two-step process in which you first make connections with industry peers, interest groups and potential customers through social media, then use your growing networks to promote your goods.

There are a few social media accounts to help promote a successful photography business: [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [Tumblr](#). These are all simple, image-rich social media (or in the case of Tumblr, micro-blogging) platforms that will put your photos front and center, encourage followers and help you build an audience.

### Join Our SOCIAL CIRCLE



Be sure to interact with and take part in the photography community's overall conversation by liking, following and commenting on pages and posts that promote work similar to yours, and submitting your photos to these pages for consideration. On Instagram, get your work noticed and grow your following by learning how to use hashtags in order to give your photos a wider reach. ➡



You can also build your audience and promote your work on [Flickr](#) and other photo-sharing sites – but make sure you know your rights for posting your creative content to protect your work.

After you set up your profiles and grow your community, start advertising your products, offering deals and sending bigwigs in your industry promotional pieces in exchange for an honest review. These are all great ways to get your work out into the world.

## 4. THINK THEMATICALLY

Humans are drawn to visual cohesiveness. Choose a motif for your work and stick to it: Do you photograph with lots of shadows? In black and white? In bright, saturated color? Only at night? You will grow an audience fastest if you provide reliable pieces that always deliver on your theme, so focus on showcasing your main style.

Make sure to use themes within individual galleries as well. Don't just upload every photo to your store and online gallery; try to pick the best 4-5 photos that share a similar theme – winter, desert landscapes, black and white portraits – and gradually post them, then move on to your next best set of photos. This will help you develop an aesthetic and look for your overall body of work. It also helps you plan your photography sessions and excursions, and gives focus to your work. ➡

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## 4. USE THEMES WELL (CONT'D)

Of course, that doesn't mean you shouldn't photograph whatever you want to experiment with during your photo sessions, on commission or to take your business in a new direction. But starting with a niche and building from there is a great way to start taking a serious approach to your photography.

## 5. USE PROFESSIONAL BRANDING

It's important people recognize your work and know who you are. Therefore you should create a logo and color scheme for your brand that is consistent across all of your online and offline platforms. If you want, you can hire a professional designer to do this for you. If you're trying to cut costs, use a site such as [Fiverr](#), where you can receive a range of services – including logo creation – for only \$5. Later on, once business is booming, if you want to improve your logo, you can hire a graphic designer to create you a more customized logo.

Now it's time to order some business cards and stationery that fits your branding scheme.



You can use full-face window envelopes to deliver proofs to clients and traditional #10 envelopes for invoicing, and have your logo and address printed in the upper left corner of each. You may also want to use an addressing service for your address and mailing lists, such as [Envelopes.com](#) offers. All of your envelopes will come pre-addressed, so you don't have to spend time writing out names and addresses by hand. Another way to market your business is to use photo greeting cards to send work samples out to prospective customers and build business that way. These are just a few branding ideas, of course; there are many more.

As you now know, there are ways to take action right now, which can help you grow your business and get your artwork into the hands of the people who admire and appreciate your photos. Start a photography website, sell your products through a variety of means, and build a community that is excited to see the world through your lens. Remember, we said it was simple, not easy. You will still have to work hard, take risks and have faith in yourself. But eventually, you will build something of which you can be proud. We know it. ■

