

Own The Spotlight

How To Prepare For Your Branding Photoshoot

BY
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About Belinda

Hello Beautiful!

My name is Belinda Vickerson and I am a branding and portrait photographer based in SW Georgia. I've been photographing women for over ten years and I specialize in helping women feel beautiful and confident in front of the camera. In addition to my photography, I consult and coach female entrepreneurs in branding and marketing strategies to grow and scale their businesses.

I believe entrepreneurship is the path to financial freedom, I believe representation matters and I believe we need more female leaders in every industry and political space!

I love helping women create profitable businesses and powerful brands. I hope this information helps you to create the business and life you love!

Belinda

What's In A Brand?

According to Wikipedia, "A brand is an overall experience of a customer that distinguishes an organization or product from its rivals in the eyes of the customer." Personal branding is the practice of people marketing themselves and their careers as brands. If you are doing business or marketing online, how you present yourself matters! The right images and content can help you attract the right customers and grow your business.

Whether you are hiring a pro photographer or creating the images yourself, here are some tips and best practices I have learned along the way. I hope this helps you to create amazing content for your brand and your business!





Before You Begin

Every personal branding session should start with your intentions and goals. Here are some questions you should consider.

- What message do you want to convey?
- Who is your target audience?
- Do you have a color palette or brand colors?
- How do you want people to view you?
- What is your brand identity?
- What is your brand story?
- How will you use the images?

Communicate this to your photographer along with your marketing goals so they can help you come up with a session that reflects who you are and what you do in the best light possible.

Choose Carefully



So now that you have a good idea of what you want your brand to be, it's time to choose a photographer! There are many ways to go about your search; there's Google, referral services like Thumbtack, or recommendations from your community.

Start with your community. Do you know a business owner whose brand you love? Reach out and ask them for a referral to their photographer! And don't forget the power of Google, you can find photographers based on niche or city. You can also read reviews and get links to their portfolios.

A few things to consider.

1. Find a photographer that specializes in personal branding or routinely works with people in your industry. Photographers with experience can help you craft the messaging and content that works for your business.
2. Don't let price be the deciding factor. You get what you pay for! While price should be a consideration, don't just go for the cheapest option. This is your business and your brand, choose the person who can help you meet your goals.

The Consult

The consultation is always an important step in my process. It's where I get to know my client, learn about their business, goals and dreams. Also, this is the time where we plan how your session is going to look and feel based on your brand and personality.

You should be prepared to discuss your personal brand, how you want to use the images, and what's important to you.

Are there specific locations you want to shoot? Are there any props you want to include? How do you want to look and feel?

Are there any insecurities that your photographer should be aware of?

Be honest with yourself and your photog!
The more information you can give, the better prepared your photographer can be.





What to Wear

This is probably the first question I get during every consultation! The answer is different for every client but there are some things that remain the same.

1. The fit is important! Your clothes should be form-fitting but comfortable.
2. I love the look of solid colors, but don't be afraid to add some simple patterns or textures to your wardrobe.
3. I suggest shapewear if you are concerned about your tummy or hips. It helps to smooth you out and give you a more polished look.
4. Stay away from trends! Go with classic pieces like tailored suits, white button down shirts, wide leg pants, wrap dresses, fitted slacks, or a-line and sheath dresses.
5. Hire a wardrobe stylist! A great stylist can help you create looks that compliment your style.



Accessorize

No look is complete without the right accessories! Do you wear glasses? Don't forget to include them in some of your shots. For jewelry, think about statement pieces, earrings, necklaces, bracelets and watches.

Shoes? Try a mix of pumps, boots and stilettos if you dare. For a more casual look try sneakers, loafers or ballet flats. And bring comfy shoes to your shoot, there is often quite a bit of walking!

Scarves, hats, belts and hosiery should all be considered! Get creative and use accessories to show people who you are.

Hair Goals

Don't try a new cut or color right before you session unless you're sure! Choose a hairstyle that is reflective of your personality and brand.

Your session might include a hairstylist, checkout their work before you go and talk to your photographer about what styles work best for you.

If you have your own stylist, talk to them about choosing a look that fits your face, your overall look and your brand.

Remember, people should recognize you in these images so don't create a look that is not reflective of who you are.





Makeup

I ALWAYS suggest a professional makeup artist, even for men!

Professional makeup gives you a polished, professional look. Pro makeup covers blemishes and discolorations while keeping your skin matte and fresh for the camera.

Don't go too bold and just like your wardrobe, stay away from trends! These images should stand the test of time. Ask for a full face, soft look with neutral tones. If you'd like to add a pop of color, go with a red or fuchsia lip, your MUA should be able to find the perfect one for your skin tone.

You can research different makeup looks online. Download a few images to send to your makeup artist so they know exactly what look you're going for. And be honest with your artist, if there is something that you don't like, mention it before your session so it can be fixed!

Before The Shoot

- If you pluck, wax or shave, do it a day or two before your session so your skin won't be red & irritated.
- Try everything on before your shoot.
- Make sure all your outfits are cleaned, pressed and on hangers.
- Confirm date, time and location with your photographer. Take this time to go over the details of your session and ask any questions you may have.
- Make a checklist of everything that you will need so you don't forget. Accessories, shoes, props, etc.



Shoot Day Prep

- Get a good night's sleep! It will help you to look awake & refreshed.
- Take the day off! The last thing you want is to be rushed or unprepared.
- Go over your checklist to ensure you have everything you need.
- Prepare some snacks and bring water, some sessions can last a half a day or more.
- Bring your makeup kit, your makeup artist might not be on set the entire time and you may want to touch-up or change your makeup during the shoot.
- Arrive early. Get to your session at least 15 minutes early.
- Go over all your looks and details with the photographer.



Relax, Breathe & Have Fun

You've done your prep, you look amazing and now it's your time to shine!

Take a deep breath, relax and get ready to have fun! The more relaxed you are, the better your final images will be. Trust and listen to your photographer, they will help you with the right poses and expressions to make you shoot a success.

Enjoy this experience, make the day all about you. Use this as an excuse to celebrate yourself and what you have accomplished. Being a business woman can be stressful and taxing at times, we all need to take a break and celebrate ourselves for a minute!

I hope this helps you ROCK your personal branding shoot! If you have questions, feel free to reach out and please share this info with a friend!





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