



By Mark Zucker, CEO/President, Zookbinders Inc.

Your Business Needs to Lose 1,000 Pounds

Last quarter I spent Tuesday and Thursday afternoons hosting a program called "Lunch & Learn." Clients in the Chicago area had an opportunity to voice their biggest business obstacles and learn how Zookbinders can help grow their sales. Russell Lowe, a professional photographer with nearly 20 years of experience, summed up the major concern: "combating the low prices offered by the new range of 'low-end' newbie photographers." Russell referenced the challenges presented by what I call "shoot & burn" photographers – weekend warriors who are cheap and attractive. For a few hundred dollars they shoot the event and give away the image files; no album is delivered.

The Sobering Statistics

These days approximately 55-60% of all weddings are shoot & burn jobs – this includes some that are shot by full-service photographers. The popularity is no mystery. These vendors can charge next to nothing because they run bare bones operations and they give a new generation of clients exactly what they want – the images! If full-service business models don't adapt to this reality, I estimate that the shoot & burn market-share will reach 75% by the end of 2010 – a scary thought for the full-service pro. Going head-to-head with the shoot & burn competition means tackling the hard truths of pricing, production and policy. Let me explain...

Pricing & Production: Lose 1,000 Pounds

The average starting price for full-service wedding coverage in the United States is approximately \$2,500. Shoot & burn photographers charge as little as \$500. That's a big price disparity. The full-service photographer who wants to stay busy and profitable needs to go on a serious "diet" and shed \$1,000 of waste from operations. Strip the non-valued-added functions from your workflow and you can lower prices by \$1,000 while maintaining comparable profits. My "less is more" fitness program entails less shooting, less editing, less designing, less overhead and more time behind the camera and in front of clients.

Too many photographers shoot themselves in the foot with excessive habits. It takes discipline and courage to limit digital capture to a few hundred shots, delegate workflow to those who are most efficient, and move from expensive storefronts to home offices. You price yourself out of the market when inefficiencies and expenses inflate the cost of doing business.

Release the Grip on Digital Files

With any kind of "weight loss" program comes major lifestyle changes. Higher efficiency and lower prices are only half the battle of the bulge. Shoot & burn photographers are so popular because they make owning the digital files affordable. Parting with the image files is a hard pill to swallow, but holding out hope for reprint orders is unrealistic. The key is to repackage your services to include image files with a basic album order at a competitive price of \$1,500 and make the same profit as you did at \$2,500. Now that we're offering the PhotoBook Plus, you can shave \$200 off of your album costs by substituting them in place of a more expensive Zook Book. When a client is able to spend more for a "full meal" (album and ancillary products like photo books and frames), give them the images AND a disc of the entire album design as a bonus.

When you overcome the obstacle of including the images in exchange for non-valued-added services you turn a negative into a positive. Not only is the client happy and likely to generate repeat business, but you get wider exposure and better endorsements via social media like Facebook than via paid advertising. So talk to your lawyer about a simple agreement that allows you to license images to clients for personal use while retaining your copyrighted ownership.

Full-Service Isn't Dead

Not every client is looking for the low-price option. For discerning clients, sell the benefits of full-service photography and assemble collections of products with different price points (see Pages 18 & 19 of our 2010 Catalog). As our friend Russell Lowe articulated so well at Lunch & Learn, "Coming up with creative ways to present a product has always been key to [my] success and having the right ammunition like knowing how a product is made, gives me more authority in making that presentation." Clients are unwilling to pay for inefficiency and excess, but they will pay for enduring quality and value-added services if they understand the difference.

Our goal at Zookbinders is to help clients stay viable with resources like Lunch & Learn, compatible products that increase sales, online tools at zookbinders.com, and the periodic kick in the pants from this column. We're here to help you strip out the excess workflow, distinguish how our products outshine the competition, and develop marketing strategies that price you back in the game. The reward is emerging as a healthier company that is "lean and mean" and poised for growth!

Mark

Introducing PhotoBookPLUS™

- Bigger Books at Less-Than-Premium Prices

We supersized and upgraded our photo books to create **PhotoBook Plus!** Now you can offer larger photo books with premium covers at about half the cost of our finest leather albums. PhotoBook Plus is available in 12x12, 10x10 and other large sizes making it ideal as a primary album. Leather covers are available with and without cameos making this a true *Zook Book® Lite*. The "Leather Spine" option is the most contemporary cover and is available in over 30 colors.

These beautiful albums are printed on HP Indigos and are ideal for the client who appreciates above-average quality at an affordable price. PhotoBook Plus

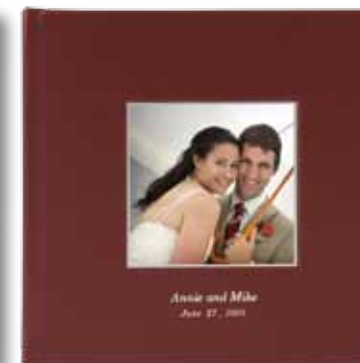
is destined to be the bridal album of choice for many contemporary brides. See Pages 4 & 5 of our 2010 Catalog for a closer look.

Bigger PhotoBook Means Bigger Sales Opportunities

- Large format and premium album appearance with smaller price tag
- Lay-flat pages are thicker than the original PhotoBook
- Select from Leather Spine, Wraparound Cover, and Full Leather with or without Cameo
- Choose from 32 leather colors in four leather styles
- Gloss or matte finish
- Smaller size replicas available with all PhotoBook Plus
- Perfect for every occasion or milestone
- Easy online ordering
- Two-week turnaround



12x12 LS (Leather Spine)



12x12 FL (Full Leather) with 5x5 Cameo



12x12 FL (Full Leather)



12x12 WC (Wraparound Cover)

PhotoBook Plus – 10x10, 12x9 & 12x8					
Number of Sides	10-18	20-28	30-38	40-58	60-90
PhotoBook Plus WC (Wraparound Cover)	\$125	\$140	\$155	\$170	\$200
PhotoBook Plus LS (Leather Spine)	155	170	185	200	230
PhotoBook Plus FL (Full Leather)*	175	190	205	220	250
PhotoBook Plus – 12x12					
PhotoBook Plus WC (Wraparound Cover)	\$155	\$170	\$185	\$200	\$230
PhotoBook Plus LS (Leather Spine)	185	200	215	230	260
PhotoBook Plus FL (Full Leather)*	205	220	235	250	280
PhotoBook Plus – 9x12, 8x12					
PhotoBook Plus WC (Wraparound Cover)	\$110	\$125	\$140	\$155	\$185
PhotoBook Plus LS (Leather Spine)	140	155	170	185	205
PhotoBook Plus FL (Full Leather)*	160	175	190	205	225

* Includes standard leather with name & dated printed on cover. Pricing effective through December 2009. Please refer to Catalog article on Page 2 and 2010 Catalog Price Sheet for information on 2010 price structure.

Additional Options

Cameo \$36 • Glove Leather \$24 • Distressed or Napa Leather \$36

2010 Catalog

More Ways to Display Your Creativity and Please Clients



Zookbinders' annual Catalog is debuting earlier than usual so you can get a jump on our amazing array of new products – like PhotoBook Plus (featured on Pages 4 & 5 of the Catalog) – and start planning for 2010 before the holidays. Here's what else is new and different:

Refreshed Zook Book®

The award-winning Zook Book – our all-panorama-style album – has new features that make this album better than ever...

- **New Cover Linings (A)** – a richer, more modern pattern graces the inside front and back covers.
- **New Type Font (B)** – the new "Modern Font" imprinting option beautifully complements the album's contemporary styling.



12x8 Horizontal Zook Book

We keep improving on the award-winning Zook Book so you can keep marketing it as the ultimate in digital storytelling. See Pages 10 & 11 in the 2010 Catalog for the complete story on the refreshed Zook Book.



New horizontal sizes broaden your options and sales opportunities.

Horizontal PhotoBooks are the perfect complement.



Soft Cover Press Books

Our new soft cover books are ideal as proof books, inexpensive parent books or low-cost gift books. See Pages 8 & 9 in the 2010 Catalog for size options.

Separate Price Sheet | Simpler Price Structure

To make it easier to share Zookbinders' Catalog with your clients, we pulled the price charts and dedicated more space to product samples, collections and specifications. Included with your 2010 Catalog is a separate price sheet with charts that correspond to each section of the Catalog. You'll also notice that our price sheet features a new simpler price format for albums and photo books while retaining certain key benefits.

- **All-Inclusive Value** – Our album and PhotoBook Plus pricing still offers outstanding value and simpler pricing by including standard leather, two lines of cover imprinting and studio stamp on the inside cover.
- **Pay-as-You-Go Value** – All albums, PhotoBook Plus and PhotoBooks now feature incremental pricing, which means that you pay for the precise number of sides you order and no more.

Pricing Highlights

- **No Price Increase on Album Options** – All options for albums (leathers, cameos, Reflectionz™ cover) priced the same as 2009.
- **No Price Increase on Printing** – Printing remains the same price for the third year in a row!
- **New 10% Discount** – All ancillary products (Parent Books, Frames, PhotoBooks, etc.) receive 10% off when ordered with an album or PhotoBook Plus.
- **Lower Frame Prices** – Frame prices are 10% lower than 2009 when ordered with an album or PhotoBook Plus.
- **Volume Pricing** – Order 10 or more PhotoBooks or Soft Cover Press Books and receive from 20% to 30% off (discount supersedes other PhotoBook discounts).

# of PhotoBooks	Discount
10-49	20%
50-100	25%
101-500	30%
500+	Call for discount

Now grab a cup of coffee or glass of wine and kick back with Zookbinders' 2010 Catalog. You'll see how PhotoBook Plus, the refreshed Zook Book, Soft Cover Press Books, and new font, finish and size options are going to make your world easier and more profitable in the coming year. Cheers!

Smart About Art

Zookbinders is fortunate to be an established creative company with an abundance of resources. Naturally, it makes good sense to redirect extra supplies to young artists seeking an early introduction to the arts.

One of the first recipients of our surplus materials is Chicago Math and Science Academy, a public charter school that opened in the fall of 2004 and graduated its first senior class this past spring. Don't be misled by the school's technical name; the fine arts are an important part of the curriculum. We are delighted to support CMSA and see the students put to good use our scrap leathers, poster board, chip board and gilding foil.

What's good for education is also good for the environment. By reducing waste and redirecting resources to needy organizations, we are demonstrating that the professional photography industry can be smart about art!

Catch the Ziser Tour

It's not too late to catch David Ziser's 2009 Digital Wake-Up Call Tour. Learn the best techniques and strategies from one of the industry's most renowned photographers and sharpest business minds. Zookbinders is pleased to co-sponsor this tremendous learning opportunity.

For more info on David's program and the remaining cities and dates, visit www.digitalwakeupcall.com. Tell them Zook sent you!



Holiday Deadlines & Closings

Before you know it, the holidays will be here. Now is the time to plan album, photo book and frame orders to avoid RUSH charges. To receive completed orders by Tuesday, December 22nd, orders must be received at Zookbinders by Friday, November 20th.

During the holiday season we do not offer 3-Day and 5-Day Rush Service. All rush orders received Saturday, November 21st through Friday, December 11th will be completed by Tuesday, December 22nd and will incur a rush surcharge of 30%.

We will be closed for the holidays on November 26th and 27th, December 24th, 25th and 31st, and January 1st. Zookbinders wishes you a safe and happy holiday season!