

WORTH EVERY PENNY *joycast*[™]

Hey photographer. There are more reasons right now than ever to pull back or quit your photography business, right? The economy. COVID. I bet you've thought to yourself, businesses are closing and people are losing their jobs, so I can't possibly grow a photography business, or maybe you've thought this one. My kids are at home, I'm the teacher, and we're sharing one computer so I can't possibly grow my photography business right now. Not to point any fingers, but I see you over there. You're the one thinking, "Oh my gosh, nobody in my community is even leaving their house because of the coronavirus, so there are no photography clients anywhere to hire."

Well, photographer friend, here's the thing. We all look for proof of our false beliefs. We want to be right so darn bad that we'll self-sabotage our dreams. It's a real phenomenon called confirmation bias, and it's standing in the way of you in that photography business that you want. The business that can solve your money problems, the business that can solve your relationship problems, and I'm going to show you how to kick confirmation bias to the curb. Once you do that, your photography business can actually start growing again. Yes, even in this economy. The real question is, how are portrait photographers like us able to run a profitable business and still put our families first, without selling digital files for cheap and working all the time?

I'm Sarah Petty, your host of the Worth Every Penny Joycast, and I went from a stressed out overworked mama with three babies to being named one of America's most profitable photographers without working my kids' lives away. Each week, I'll show you how to find and serve boutique portrait photography clients in a world where we compete with free, thanks to everyone having a digital camera in their pocket. Take the first step to adding more joy and profit to your life by downloading your free photography business tools at joyofmarketing.com/podcast.

When I started my photography business, I was giving all of my clients proofs of their images because I really believe that I was serving them. I felt like, "Oh my gosh, I took all of these images. This way, they get a copy of it and then they can order large wall art from there."

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I heard a speaker at our state convention. He told us to scan the negatives, use a projector, and present our images, and he was in a suit. I don't know, he just looked very "salesman-y." I don't even know the man's name and I never saw him again, but the impression of mine was that, "Yuck, I would not want that done to me." He just did not do a good job of explaining this. Again, reinforced the decision that I was serving my clients better by giving them proofs, and so that's what I looked for.

I looked for others in my market who were doing that too and I would say, "Hey, look, they're doing proofs too, and now with digital, it's easy to find confirmation of this bias, right? Everyone else is doing digitals, so I should too." Well, years of suffering later, I ran into someone else. Her name's Sam Pugh. She's a photographer out in Colorado and a friend of mine and an industry leader. She was working a booth for a framer there, and she stood there and talked to me for such a long time and she said, "Sarah, you really have to do this. Like, here's why you're serving the clients better," and I couldn't even believe it.

I remember being so frustrated with people not buying anything. I couldn't understand it. I was giving them these great choices. They were telling me they loved them, but they weren't ordering anything. She explained to me how we serve our clients by helping them make a decision. Picking photos is hard. If we just invest more time with them, at the least everyone will order something and they'll be happy. They don't go home and struggle with, "Oh, we don't know. We don't know. We don't know," and then they never order. It changed everything for me because for years, I had looked for proof of what I thought, right? I believe that I was serving my clients the best way, so I looked for proof of that.

All along, I wasn't making money. I was suffering. I was not serving my clients, and I almost went out of business because of it. I want you to look at how confirmation bias might be showing up in your life. For example, if you're telling yourself, people have lost their jobs in businesses during this pandemic and the economy is hurting right now, that's true, right? I'm not denying that, but if you make one slight change and you start looking for proof of the opposite, it's there too, right? There are families out there who have two incomes who are

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doing very well, and they have disposable income because they can't travel. They aren't spending their money going to concerts, or doing all these activities that they typically do.

They would be great clients. If we look for those clients, we look for the proof of people who are remodeling their homes and people who are doing all the things with their money because they haven't been able to spend it on travel. They are doing other things. They have money to invest on other things, and we are part of a home decorating budget. We absolutely are, so find those people who are rocking, who are successful. I have a newer student. Her name is Bernadette Wells, and she has a brand new photography business. She just spent two months with me during COVID learning how to start a photography business. She just messaged me in Instagram, and here's exactly what she said.

"Oh my goodness, Sarah, I got my first Julie, \$1,462!!!! Thank you so much." There is proof right there that someone brand new could learn how to price profitably, learn how to attract the right client, learn how to serve them at the highest level and get an order over a thousand dollars. For anybody who just hop in upon this Joycast for the first time we call a Julie, someone who invests over a thousand dollars, and we celebrate Julie's here at the Joy Of Marketing at our event, Go Boutique Live. It's a really big deal when you get a Julie, because if you can get one Julie, you can get another Julie and another Julie.

We named Julie after my very first right client who came in and just bought everything, gushed on me and loved me and shared me with all of her friends, and has just been such a breath of fresh air. After that client, even when I wasn't even that great of a photographer, it was 17 years ago, and I remember feeling completely differently about myself. I want you to have a Julie too because it will change everything. Now, another bias you might have is you're saying, "My kids are having to do online school at home and they're little." Now my kids are bigger, but I remember these days so you have to help them, right? You're telling yourself I have to help them. It is impossible to homeschool and run a business. Okay.

Most of you got homeschooling chosen for you during this pandemic. If that's the bias you have and you're thinking, "Oh my gosh, I can't do both," look, I get it. There are a lot of

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people who are quitting, who are throwing in the towel, who are saying, "You know what, I'm going to wait until my kids are older. I'm going to wait until we get through this," but look, you don't have to look for proof of that. There's plenty of people out there, but there are also some who have figured it out, who are making systems, who are managing and is it perfect? No, they're the ones looking around to see who's out there, who's not in the corner with the adult beverage before noon and just trying to get through.

No, they're looking for the ones who are saying, okay, that's not an option, that's not a good choice. For anyone who's tried that, it's definitely not a good choice when you're having to parent, be a teacher, and run a business, but there are people, photographers out there who are doubling down on their business and their families. Okay. You don't have to neglect your family to run a profitable business. Look for the proof. Here's some proof if you're looking for it. My top level coaching students have made a group together with those who have young, school aged kids and they're helping each other, and they're holding each other accountable while they're implementing co-marketing partnerships, pet photography events and high school senior marketing plans, right?

When they start letting fear or overwhelm jump into their life, they reach out to the group and they say, "Oh my gosh" and then a bunch of people jump in with strategies and tactics to help them, right? Sometimes you just need to know that you're not alone and that others are getting those results. Look for the proof that people are succeeding and if you're not getting enough proof right here, follow me on Instagram, go follow us at Joy of Marketing on Facebook. It's for photographers because we're sharing these stories over and over again. Not for us, for you so that you can see people are doing it. I want you to look for the proof that people are doing it.

You might be saying to yourself, "Nobody's leaving home because the pandemic, so my photography business can't possibly survive because there's nobody to photograph." Guys, there's not a market where nobody is leaving their home. For sure, there are people with high risk who shouldn't leave home and they're staying safe, and they're making good choices. There

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are some cities that are at higher risk right now than other cities and look, I'm not telling any of you to break the law or take unnecessary crazy risks, but there are safe ways to create images for people because people need images right now, they're suffering. Everybody's suffering right now.

These images can help the teens who are having their high school lives, sports, extracurricular activities ripped away from them. Let me tell you, I have a high school senior right now, and it's not easy. It can help families reconnect since most of their plans have been canceled and they haven't been able to have cool experiences. A photo session is a cool experience. These images can help all of the young people who are struggling with mental health challenges because they all are. It'll make them feel loved. It'll make them have hope. It'll make them celebrate this time and I always tell them, you're going to be telling your grandkids about this year.

There are safe things happening in your community, whether you're looking for them or not. Okay? Here's some proof of that. We created an entire campaign for our coaching students to generate cash flow from home during the pandemic and they've been using it, and they can use it anytime their city gets a COVID flare up. Here's what we did. We created materials for them to teach iPhone lessons to kids, so their kids can do it while they're at home, while their parents are working, and it's a fun activity. We gave them the core syllabus, the promotional strategy, the pricing, the tactics, all of the graphic elements they need to position themselves as boutique because we know coming up with the money for professional design is hard.

They needed to look valuable with professional design, right? You can't just design that stuff yourself and think it's just going to magically sell itself, but this group of them from across the country joined in with each other and taught it together. They had a blast, they made money, and they nurtured future clients. Jean Lachat a photographer student of mine up in Chicago even did it with the girl scouts, so the girls could earn a badge. Then she got to build a relationship with all of these girls and their families, right? Why aren't you hanging with people

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like this who are doing it right? They always say you're a combination of the five people that you spend the most time with.

If you're hanging with people who are negative nellys and in the dumpster and talking about how terrible their life is and how nothing can happen, there's the proof that's confirming the bias. Confirmation bias right there. I get it, 65% of businesses fail within the first 10 years, which is what the US Bureau of Labor Statistics shares, but I really think that number's higher. I think way more businesses who never even become official businesses because they fail before it even happens. There's proof that you're going to find, right? Especially in this economy, it's going to prove your confirmation bias, but again, stop looking at those people who are suffering and struggling and look at the ones who are succeeding.

Every day, people are succeeding. If you aren't having success in your business because you're not following the steps it takes to be successful, that's something you can change. Look at my student, Debra Lawrence. In April, she joined my Boutique Breakthrough Program and ditched the digitals during COVID. Forty-five days later, she had sold \$10,000, actually over \$10,000 in wall portraits. You can see the exact steps she followed. I put it on a website and if you have a pen, write this down because I want you to go and hear her story, and what we did to help her from pricing, marketing, and selling. You can hear her story, go to joyofmarketing.com/debra, spelled D-E-B-R-A.

I want you to watch that because look, if you're looking at all the shoot and burn photographers who are competing in a price race to the bottom, you're going to have confirmation that that's what everyone's doing, right? No, I want you to look at what successful photographers are doing right now. Joyofmarketing.com/debra. Is this going to be hard? Absolutely, but pressing the pause button or escape button on your business because of the confirmation bias you have, it's not going to get your business. Any traction. I do believe that this pandemic will clear out shoot and burn photographers, right? They're the ones who are giving it like a jump drive or a CD to people for a couple hundred bucks.

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They're in the price race to the bottom. They're selling jump drives of digital files because they're selling to clients who are struggling the most. Before the pandemic, these were price sensitive clients who nickel and dime them to death and didn't want to pay and invest in artwork. They just wanted whatever was cheapest. They didn't value photography, and it might've been a stretch for them to even pay 200 bucks. You think that's going to be any easier now or harder to get them to spend more than that when their finances haven't changed, or maybe even they've lost income. It's not going to get better if you're a shoot and burn photographer. Start looking for confirmation of that.

The boutique photographers are the ones that are surviving that are going to be thriving if they're not thriving now, and the shoot and burn photographers are going to start folding, like what do they say? Folding chairs. My dad used to always say that. I was looking for the analogy, but you know what I mean? I get it, life is hard right now. We are all experiencing a year that we never saw coming and we're all having to pivot and manage every new thing that, oh my gosh, it feels like it comes at us every single day.

If you're a photographer who has been looking for confirmation that this isn't the time or that you can't possibly succeed right now, changing that belief into the belief that you can grow your photography business right now, and I'm going to look for the proof, that's what's going to change everything for you. If you want to hang out with a group, a community of people who will lift you up, come and join us in learning. My students are doing it every single day, and there is so much proof that it works. Surround yourself with proof that it works because if you don't make that choice, you're going to be finding a lot of proof that things don't work, right?

More than ever, I want you to look for the proof that boutique is the answer because it is. It's what's going to get you through this pandemic. It's what's going to get you access to the clients who have money to invest, not the people who are suffering right now. All right? Keep working, keep studying, keep learning, keep listening. I appreciate everything you do for us at the Joy Of Marketing, and I appreciate you when you rate our podcasts, and just keep coming

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back here and sharing this with your friends, because you do not have to listen to the proof that it's not going to work because it is. It's working for a lot of people right now. I want that to be you.

Hey photographer, you may be wondering why I'm doing this podcast. Well, I have one goal, to change the landscape of our industry from one that has been so devalued, the photographers feel like they have to be cheap to get clients to one where we can feel great about what we do and make a living doing it. If you want to be part of this movement and help lift our industry, here's how you can help. Go over to Apple podcasts or wherever you're listening to this and leave a rating and a review. This is how we'll get the word out that photographers like you are worth every penny.