



*Learn From The World's Number One
Photography Business Coach.*

PRICING YOUR PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY

*An eye-opening insight into pricing your
portrait photography so clients will buy
more.*

**TRANSCRIPTION FROM A PRO PHOTOGRAPHER JOURNEY
PODCAST**

BERNIE GRIFFITHS

Introduction

Bernie Griffiths has owned and operated three successful wedding/portrait studios over a period of many years.

Having a solid, predictable and consistent pricing structure is the heart and life blood of any photography business, and as part of his role now as an Award Winning Photography Business Coach, Bernie teaches photographers how to set up a successful price structure.

You can easily lose thousands of dollars if you do not have the right prices for your work.

Imagine if you only increased your average sale by just \$100, over 50 sales that would equate to \$5,000!

Most photographers do not have a well structured and thought out price list that leads the customers to buy.

That is why they fail, in the most important part of their business, and that is why ninety-five percent of photographers are failing in creating a good income.

Bernie Griffiths was announced a Winner of the World's Ten Outstanding Photography Professional Awards for photography business coaching which recognized his contribution to the photography industry, as a photographer and as a worldwide photography business coach

The judge's comments were...

"Bernie's approach to the Business of Photography is a powerful concept that offers photographers good marketing and sales skills. He is doing a phenomenal job of coaching photographers to think "business" which is often neglected. Bernie guides photographers with practical and relevant skills that are necessary to run a successful photography business."

About this E-Book.

Here is a transcript from a podcast when Bernie was a special guest with presenter Chamira Young from Pro Photographer Journey Podcast.

The podcast deals specifically with pricing for portrait Photographers.

You can listen to the full podcast here. <http://prophotographerjourney.com/183-2/>

Change what you are doing and you're going to succeed.

For more information on how to grow your photography business.....

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TRANSCRIPT FROM A PRO PHOTOGRAPHER JOURNEY PODCAST

This is Chamira Young from Pro Photographer Journey podcast, bringing you tips, business strategies, and interviews with award-winning photographers.

I'm here with Bernie Griffiths. Bernie is a coach to photographers, he is a business aficionado, and he is a repeat guest of this podcast because he is so awesome.

Chamira - Bernie, how are you?

Bernie - I'm good Chamira, thank you for that introduction. I'm humbled by that.

Chamira - I really wanted to mention the number of times you've been on the show but we couldn't figure it out. During our little pre-interview chat we couldn't remember. I think maybe this is - Three? - the third. - Four? - Yeah. - At least three, maybe four. - Yeah. - And so the way we start off every podcast, even though this is your third, slash, fourth time being on, why don't we have you just kind of give a brief introduction of yourself, for the benefit of those listeners who may be just tuning in.

Bernie - Well my story is simple. I was born to be a photographer. I've never done anything else. At the age of 15 I started to work in the photography industry. I worked on a ship photographing the passengers for two years, traveling the world. I was born in England. Came to Australia on the ship, saw what I liked, so I emigrated there when I was 23 years old, and started my photography business within six months. I bought an established photography business, and I had that business up to about six years ago, and then I started full-time coaching. So it was a wedding and portrait business which I built from sort of the ground up, and we had a great success with it. So, now I find myself as a full-time photography business coach, coaching photographers around the world, and they're all at different levels of their photography journey.

Chamira - Fantastic. And I still, even though I've heard your story before, I still get a bit jealous when you talk about being on the cruise ship, being a photographer on a cruise ship, because that sounds like a lot of hard work but a dream.

Bernie - It was amazing. I was 23 years old. I was number one photographer, I had three photographers under me. I was with P&O Lines and we used to just travel the world. You name it, we went there. Japan. All down the West Coast of America and so on, Panama Canal, through Cape Town, South Africa, Australia, a lot of islands and yes, we worked hard, we photographed the passengers. Then we'd have to process the film and then do prints and then the following morning, we would display the photographs of them aboard for the passengers to purchase. And I was in charge of first class. So, mine was the harder job because first class passengers, it was sort of no big deal for them to be on a cruise ship standing next to the captain because they were probably more important than the captain of a ship. But the tourist passengers, they were the ones that put the money together over a long period of time, who have to save to go on this fantastic holiday. So, being photographed next to a captain was a big deal. So, our bigger sales were from the tourist side of the ship rather than the first class side.

Chamira - Nice, nice, and so these days you mentioned you are a full time coach to photographers. What range of photographers do you work with?

Bernie - It's mainly portrait so we could say portrait slash wedding. And because I coach photographers and have over the last six years around the world it's, the coaching time can vary dependent where in the world I am. So, you know, I've got some clients I've talked to at eight o'clock in the morning or some clients I talk to later on at night. Like, while I was in New York last year, my working day was from, say, six o'clock in the evening 'til midnight. Because instead of changing the timing, I just left it the same and just adjusted myself. -So it was sort of like working a night shift instead of a day shift but I'm allowed, I can do that. I've got that flexibility and that's what I love. I like the job I do with photographers.

Chamira - Okay, so with every successful photography business, there are key elements that essentially make it successful, and what I like with you, Bernie, is that you have described five key elements of a rock solid photography business, and you've mentioned that to me, and that you wanted to talk about that today, and we're going to pick out one of the most painful of the five to really dig into. So, I guess to start, could you kind of give us a list and brief description of the five key elements of a photography business?

Bernie - Yeah, sure, so it's the five Ps, and the five Ps are five parts of the photography business jigsaw, and if we get each one right and we can focus on each one and improve each of those five elements, we stand a much better chance of success in our photography business. So, we're going to talk about pricing today but don't forget we have to remember pricing also relates to the other four Ps, the positioning. In other words, if you position yourself high in the marketplace as an upmarket photographer, your prices are obviously going to be higher. Your Product, the type of product you sell. If you're selling a lot of large acrylic prints or you are selling 30 by 40 canvas prints, those are the products you want to sell if you're high end. So your prices will be higher rather than if you're selling just individual prints or you're selling files or you're selling portrait boxes et cetera, the other two elements, Photography and Promotion. So, your price also relates to your photography. In other words, if you're starting off and you've only had, say, six to 12 months photographing, one can expect your photography is not that technically good and expressive and creative, so we don't expect your prices to be high. We expect them to be at a level where the photography is perceived to be. And then the other thing is Promotion. Well, that's your marketing so, in any marketing you do, it has got to be to show off where you sit in the marketplace to your target audience. So, the price is the thing in the core, and then floating around it, your positioning, your products, your photography and your promotion. And as the core product, as the core, the biggest P of all, and that is Pricing, and that's the one when I start coaching of clients, we start with first. We craft a price list.

Chamira - And, you know what I love about pricing is that when a photographer gets their pricing right, it affects and improves the photography industry as a whole. I firmly believe that. We have photographers running rampant under-pricing their work and I was definitely one of them so I'm not trying to criticize anybody but when we undervalue our work that affects the industry as a whole. I mean I'm sure, and I've had people write into me about this, listeners of the show, so frustrating when they're trying to give a quote to a client and get to their pricing, and then the client says well, oh well we know another photographer who will do it for half that price, or for free.

Bernie - Remember also some photographers are overpricing their product.

I have seen photographers, people trying to sell their photography and it's just not worth it. There has to be value with it. There has to be some sort of value so it's okay for photographers to be cheap. The question is, where do you want to sit in the marketplace. You know, what journey do you want to go on? I've only known one photographer that I mentored for many years and he became the most successful photographer that I've ever mentored. He became a multimillionaire, and retired when he was 50 years old. But, actually 40 years old, he's just 53 last week. So yeah, 40 years old, time goes quickly. - Wow - But, he started at the top. He didn't start any other way. He said, Bernie, I want to be the number one, five star photographer in my area. So that's where he started. And he started five stars. So, instead of in those days where there's just 35 millimetre film and he was doing what all the photographers having the biggest print they could do was 11 inches by 14 on the wall, he said I want to do bigger than that. I'm going to buy a medium format camera. So, we bought a Hasselblad and started shooting medium format. We had these, you know, 30 x 40s on the wall. Well, that totally separated him from everyone else, and he was more expensive than everyone else because that's where he wanted to sit, right. He's the only one I've ever known start at the top. It's a hard place to start. It takes a very strong mindset, and it's a bit risky.

Chamira - I can imagine.

Bernie - In fact, I tried it. I tried it with one of my clients, and say it is, it doesn't matter, Marcus won't mind but Marcus Anthony who is a photographer in North Carolina, he's in a little town called Wilmington there, and we decided to start him at the top. And it didn't work. It just didn't work. After a month, with some test and measure, we sort of pulled back, we went too quickly in having high prices, so we started again.

We created a different sort of price structure and now, Marcus, if you talk to him, and I've suggested that you maybe like to do a podcast with Marcus, because he will tell you he is "living the dream."

Chamira - Oh, I'd love to.

Bernie - After, just over a year he has a great photography business. He tells me every week I speak to him, how are you Marcus, I'm living the dream. He's just loving it as a photographer. So, we do have to be careful, and methodical so we evolve with our pricing, and to climb the ladder step by step, and try not to miss any of those steps.

Chamira - I like it, I like it.

Bernie - So that's the methodology. You'd said to me earlier, Chamira about, you know when you started off your pricing, you've made every mistake in the book. Well, you have to make those mistakes because the only way you learn is by making mistakes. It's very important that you make some mistakes.

Chamira - You know, absolutely. And it's even just, full disclosure, I mean I've shared this before, maybe with you, maybe with someone else on this show but when I first started, I was charging \$25 an hour doing portraits. So family, senior high school. - Wow. - Yeah, wow. And you know, I have a mindset of, oh well that's kind of what I made at my last job, so, why can't I make the, I had no idea about business expenses or planning, taxes and insurance, and talk about learning quick, Bernie, I mean, when a family found out they could get me for four hours for a hundred bucks. - Yeah. - That was After that photo session, I was like alright, something has to change here 'cause I was bone tired. A hundred bucks. - Yeah, yeah a hundred bucks. - Yeah. - And it's like that and that's where a lot of photographers, and a lot that may be listening now, are at that level and maybe they want to go through that experience or maybe we can help them-- - Right.

Bernie - And just accelerate a little bit in their progress.

Chamira - Well, let's dive into, let's dive into your pricing structures. - Yeah. - Because I really like, so you have three pricing structures?

Bernie - Yeah, so with the pricing structures let's say, it's more about the structure than the price. And what is price, you know. Who sets prices to anything anyway. Who says that house is worth a million dollars. Who says that car is worth \$12,500. Who says that coat is worth \$500. Who puts these prices on these things? - Are you asking me? - I mean where does it-- - Do you want me to guess? - Well, I'm, it's an open question, yeah, have a guess. Who does it? - Is it? You said houses, I'm thinking is it the market? Is it supply and demand? - Well that's one thing, that that, etc, at the higher end, probably supply and demand. But then again, that could be the lower end because it's not a demand, and there's plenty of supply. - Right. - And prices come down. So it's this thing, what's it worth. What's a photograph worth. Who decides on the price, is the question, isn't it? - It is, yeah. - And there's only one person who decides that price and that's the customer because they pay it. Or they don't. So they decide on what we charge. It depends on which part of the marketplace we get to whether they're going pay it or not. If they can't afford it, just like maybe, you know you can't afford a Ferrari. - Hmm. - Or you can't afford a Rolls. Or you can't, you can't afford it. It's not so much you can't afford it, it's just that you don't want it enough, you don't want to sacrifice enough. There you go - We can all afford anything we want, right, and that's why banks exist and make massive profits most of the time. Because, we all buy houses we can't afford, because banks make it affordable. They say, you can have 30 years to pay, and it can be yours. All you have to do is pay \$300 a week. And you're okay, now you can afford it. So, it's interesting about price and what it is actually when we price a product. But the question is, we've got to start somewhere. So how do we craft some sort of price structure that to the customer is perceived as really good value. Because

when we buy anything I suppose what we're looking for is good value. We don't pay too much for something that we're not happy with, and that we perceive as having a higher value.

Chamira - Exactly.

Bernie - So, this is the sort of conundrum and the mixture of things that we have to look at. As I say, it depends on the area we're in, right. If we're in a community that's not so well off. If, you know, there's no money around, can we expect to have high prices? Maybe we should move to a better area. I know of my friend I was talking about, Danny, he went from a small area an hour out of Sydney into Sydney and moved there because obviously a lot more money. And then from there he moved to San Francisco and opened a studio there. So, he knew his target market was going to be five stars. He went for the big money. We have to think where we are. What interests me a lot, one of the problems we have and, you know, photographers have listening to this, you've decided to start a business in the area you live in without any research about whether there's a need, you know. They say that the crucial thing you need when you open a small business is a hungry crowd, right? So you don't know in your own area whether you have a hungry crowd. You don't even know whether the people are out there, at any price that want to buy your product.

Chamira - So how do you price something that you don't even know whether there's a market for it. Are you saying that we should, as far as where we start, even before we get to setting our prices, we should do research, on the market.

Bernie - Oh most certainly. - And where we are. - Certainly. Yeah, what I would love to do, and I haven't done it yet, but it's been in the back of my mind, if I was opening a studio and yeah, I am in now, I'd spend a day or half a day walking the streets and just walking to people and asking a lot of people. If I saw a mother pushing a baby, I might go and ask her a couple of questions and look at affordability. But, we don't have to do that. One of the great things we can do it with is Facebook, right. So, we can look, is there a hungry crowd out there with Facebook. So, I'm not going to get too involved in Facebook but I'm just saying we can do it that way. And if we get a great response to our ad, we know there's a hungry crowd. So once we ascertain we've got a hungry crowd then we go, okay. So, did I attract the right or wrong crowd with this and what I did and so on. But, regardless of that we have to set at some sort of pricing structure. Because once we market we get an inquiry, people want to know price.

Chamira - Definitely, definitely. So walk us through, walk us through the pricings-- - Your three pricing structures.

Bernie - Yeah, so there's three different pricing structures that we look at with clients. And it depends on where they are with the journey. So you'd expect, say, a photographer as a qualified, master photographer as an award winning, has been established for, you know, 20 years, has a nice retail studio somewhere. You would expect them to be of fairly towards the more expensive end. And, what I came up with was a price structure where it's a, you buy two get one free type of structure.

Chamira - Okay.

Bernie - So within the price list anything you buy is just around a thousand dollars, whether it's a canvas wall portrait, whether it's a portrait box, whether it's, you know, 20 files or whatever, it all, all of the products around a thousand dollars. So, buy two get one free. So it means that clients, if they buy two, in other words if they buy a canvas at say 950, and let's supposing they buy a portrait box at \$1,100 which means they've spent \$2,100 just under \$2,100, they also receive 10, 10 by 8 inch prints. As a gift. So by offering the third free item after they buy the first two, do you find that, that clients are seeing that as additional value? That is a way that I've used to get photographers to have an average of two thousand dollars.

Chamira - Really?

Bernie - I mean regularly. Well, think of, think of it if you were a consumer and you saw that opportunity. Now, it doesn't have to be at the thousand dollar mark. If you're looking to get an average of say a thousand dollars, supposing you're starting off. And let's supposing your products were priced at five hundred dollars so there's nothing they could buy under

\$500. That means if they bought two products that to be a thousand dollars, and then they get a product free. So, the products we created in the free box are things like say 10, 10 by prints. What does that cost you? \$30? Or \$50? What about if we say, if you buy two you get one free, and one of the free ones is all the files, hi-res. Your offer must be a lot higher and perceived value than the two products they're buying. - I see, so with the free item it's like a list of things that they can, they can't get anything for free. But a specific free list. - Yeah, they can get, say, four different products which are a high value and you put the value on them. Because those products can also be on the price list.

Chamira - I like, what I like about this is that I can see this, number one people are getting more For their money so there's value and I think even on the

Bernie- Which is, which is what they're looking for,

Chamira . - Right, right.

Bernie - They're looking for value. They're looking for more, they're looking for an add-on. Ah, really, I get to buy that, I get that one.

Chamira - Definitely, and as a photographer we don't want to be trying to rip anyone off.

Bernie - Correct. - Or, as in we're happy to offer something, you know to make them get more value for their money. - Yeah.

But also I can see so using the five hundred dollar example then, if you didn't have the buy two get one free price list, I can see people just being fine with one thing. Let's say spending five hundred dollars. But once they see they can get something for free if they spend a thousand dollars instead of 500, then they buy the two items for a thousand, they get the free additional, you know, the additional value added item and then everyone walks away happy, and they feel like they got a great deal.

Bernie- Correct, that's the perfect way of putting it, yeah. Everyone is happy, it's a win-win, and also they're getting like double the value all of a sudden.

Chamira - Right, yeah.

Bernie- So they're getting twice as much for the money and that's perceived value isn't it. Now, the value to them of say 10, 10 by 8 inch photos is like, if your 10 by 8 price was two hundred dollars that's like two thousand dollars.

Chamira - Okay.

Bernie- So, your price can be whatever but it should be a high, perceived high value. - Right. - You know if your files are normally priced at \$1,500 for 20 files then it's, but it's not costing you. The perceived value for them is \$1,500. - Exactly, exactly.

Bernie- But it's not costing you, it's not hitting your profit at all.

Chamira - Very cool, I like it. - And that actually works well. I've done it with many photographers and- And it's so simple.

Bernie- Yeah, but it's got a downside, alright.

Chamira - What's that? –

Bernie- I'll tell you the downside. And we'll talk about a la carte in a minute. But the downside is it limits your sales.

Chamira - Hmm, okay.

Bernie - So, where I've got one client on one hand getting consistent, you know when I go, when we, at the end of the month go through his sales and we look at the average it's \$2,200 or 2,100. And I say, tell me your sales and he says, like, you know, \$2,100 \$2,500 \$2,400 \$1,950 it's all around the \$2,000 so it's limiting any possibility that there may be of doing higher sales.

Chamira - Good point.

Bernie- Which you can get when you do a la carte.

Chamira - So the a la carte is that the second pricing structure?

Bernie- Yeah. So with a la carte it means that you've just got that sort of open price list. You've got your canvas prices with two or three different sizes. You've got your acrylics, you've got your portrait box, you've got, you know your files and, I'm in favour of selling digital files. They're a product whether we like it or not. They're a product people want to buy.

Chamira -They do.

Bernie - Let's not stop them buying them. Let's not stop them buying what they want. Don't question why they want them, or what they're going to do with them, sell them to them. They're just products and I mean if you went and bought a car, they're not going to, they don't care where you're going to drive it, or if you get it dirty and don't clean it every week, or whether you get it serviced. They've sold you the product, what you do with it is up to you.

Chamira - That's a good point.

Bernie - You've paid the money for it so, so with a la carte you can buy different products, different sizes, different prices. So it's an open price list. I've got a client that does that but she's more high-end with her prices so she does sell those, and get those bigger sales

Chamira - Okay.

Bernie- Like four, five, \$10,000 she's done a \$20,000 on a portrait sale so, the other structure stops you doing that. Because you're basically giving them a lot for the money.

Chamira - So here's a question for you, Bernie, something I've come up against. Maybe, that's, I don't want to frame it in such a negative connotation but with an a la carte I've tried different pricing structures for my business and I remember when I was offering an a la carte price list to specifically family, so non-business clients, so family, senior high school photos et cetera, a lot of people would just want to buy the digital files and nothing else - Right, sure. - How do you feel about that? 'Cause I found it so frustrating because instead of getting any canvases or acrylics, they buy these digital files with the intention, everyone you know, good intention of getting things printed but nine times out of 10 they didn't print, they never print anything. - Yeah, price saved. - Or they'll get it printed and it's not the way they wanted it, I mean—

Bernie- It's their choice, isn't it?

Chamira - Ah, it's so frustrating.

Bernie- Why it's frustrating for you is, maybe, what would you rather sell, an acrylic for a thousand dollars or 10 digital files for a thousand dollars.

Chamira - I would personally rather sell an acrylic because I know they're getting something physical from me that they can put on the wall.

Bernie- Okay, let's take the personality out of it. - this is a business Chamira. This is not a relationship you're having with your business, this is a separate thing. Don't get emotional about your business. You're going to make-- - when you take the emotion out. - a lot more profit.

Chamira - You're right, yeah, absolutely.

Bernie- It's about profit. - If you just get the files instead of an acrylic then yeah, it's far more profit. - And why should you tell them what they need. - Because they need guidance.

Chamira - But you're right, you're right. - Give them what they want. You can't tell them they need something on the wall. That's their choice.

Bernie - Well, one thing I'm telling photographers, I say you've got to take the emotion out of the business. Look at your numbers. Numbers are everything, that's it. End of story. If your numbers aren't on the plus side, you can't continue your business. You've got to make a profit. So in my example there, you're going to make far much more profit if you just sell them the files instead of what you want them to have but they don't want it. They've told you so, and that's the difference. If you sell files, yeah price them high.

Chamira - That was gonna be my next question. Is there a minimum amount with an a la carte price list that we should stick to per item? Or I could, it would probably depend on the business but-- - Yeah, yeah.

Bernie- We wouldn't want it too low right? - It's a bit harder because with an a la carte, theoretically, you have to have individual prints like a 10 by eight or a five by seven or a whatever, individual 'cause that's what a la carte's about. You can choose different things. So, it's sort of unrealistic in a way if you had a 10 by 8 priced at six hundred dollars. - Right.

Although there's some photographers do charge that but it's sort of a bit unrealistic. But you can do a 10 by 8 for \$200, \$250, \$275 even, one print, people want to buy one print. But then again you've only got a sale of \$275 which is, there's no profit there. - It better be a darn good print. Yeah. - Well, well it's called a waste of time. I mean, personal profit. So to the business owner, that's the downside of a la carte, and also the upside. With a la carte there's a downside and an upside, right.

Chamira - Right.

Bernie - You can make massive sales, but you can also make lower sales. So you have to be very fine tuning and targeting. And when you're doing your marketing that you get the right type of clients in and that they're quite aware that they're going to spend, you know, two thousand dollars upwards.

Chamira - Definitely.

Bernie- So those are two types and those have worked very effectively. So the a la carte is how most photographers start off and it's not the one I recommend. The other one we mentioned about buy two get one free that's for more experienced photographers, but could also be incorporated into a price list for a photographer starting off. It'd just have to be crafted a little bit differently.

Chamira - Before you get to the third, I'm sorry to interrupt, with the buy two get one free price structure, have you ever had a photographer try buy three, get one free, or kind of switch up the numbers at all?

Bernie- So two is like the sweet spot. - Yeah, I think if photographers, I think an average of two thousand dollars for a portrait business is quite a good result.

Chamira - Hmm, yeah, true.

Bernie- If you get it consistently. I think, and if you've got a turnkey type of operation where you just get an average of two thousand dollars all the time, it's pretty cool, right.

Chamira - I'd be happy with that, yeah.

Bernie-So, it's just that multiplication factor. You know.

Chamira - Gotcha.

Bernie- So, that's the, that's the thing. And there comes a point where you have to decide whether you want to grow your business or whether you're happy just, you know, where you are with the amount of money you're making, so. That two for one idea came because, you may know with most cosmetic industries that's one of their major marketing ploys that they use on you women. Buy this and you get this gift which is actually worth—

Chamira - yeah, true.

Bernie- Worth more than what you'd bought. Now the gift is normally samples of their other products, right? So then you use those up and then you go back and buy those products but that's where that came from and it's just worked within the cosmetic industry for years, buy this get this gift free.

Chamira - Good point, yeah. - Women go for that. - Yeah, we do.

Bernie- It's called saving money. 30% off, if you buy you've saved your husband money, you know. - Right, it's all the perceived value. Perceived value, yeah. - Yeah, you get it. Come on, I've saved 30% and the guy says, well, if you hadn't have bought it, you could have save me more money, but that's not the point. Or for the working women who are spending their own money, by the way, that would be. Yes that's exactly right. And, they can spend it whatever they want.

Bernie- That's right. - They earned it. So they can, they can do what they want. - So then the third pricing structure. The third one is a combination in a way, it can be a la carte with an add-on collections. The add-on collections is perceived value. So, you've got your individual sized prints, which again can be canvas, acrylic, wall art, can be portrait pops, can be files, whatever. But, you've also got as well, four collections. Now, what you can do with this price list, and this is what I recommend as a starting off price, because it just makes sense. I'm just crafting one now for a new client I've got. This price list was very, very messy, and he'd had, he tried to put everything on it. You know there were six different sizes of canvas, and six different sizes of acrylics and six matted and framed and, it's just too confusing, and that's the other thing about a price list, it has to be simple so the consumer understands it. If they don't understand it, if they can't work out in their own mind what is great perceived value for them they won't go for it, right. They just get confused. Confusion leads to not making a decision, and that's no sale. - Huh, definitely. - So we have to keep it simple. Now, if we have say two different sizes of canvas, two different sizes of acrylic, we just have one portrait box with 20 photographs in, and we just have one size, and we just have one album on size, and so on. And then we can add on to that. Four different collections. So, we a collection, a first collection, it's the least amount of money, the minimum order in a way. So if you wanted your minimum order to be five hundred dollars. - Hmm. - Collection one, it could be say one 10 by eight inch print and then three, let's say, three five by seven inch prints, matted, ready for framing, right.

So, they're having four, four products really. And let's say we made that \$495 or, even at the lower end if you start it at \$395, you're just starting off but let's go \$495. So that becomes like your minimum order, right. Because collection two, three and four are going to go up from there. And each time we go up, we go up in price but we go up with more value. In other words, you're not getting much for \$495 theoretically. In fact, I think most of the structures I've done, it's just two five by seven, yeah, three five by seven and a 10 by eight. So there's only four images. But supposing our next one which goes up a little bit from 495 to 675, so it goes up nearly a couple of hundred dollars, and instead of three five sevens we give them say, five, and we give them two 10 by eights, and we also give them some social media files of those images that they've purchased. So, you're getting a lot more for your little extra money. And then we keep going up. So, as we go up from \$675, we might go up to, you know, \$890. So at \$890 we might get eight five by sevens and three 10 by 8, and maybe we'll give them the hi-res files of those images. So that means they're getting more product and they're getting more, but it's not so much more in price, so we can lead people to see the best perceived value. And if you create a price list like this, just show it to friends and just ask people and say what do you think of this? Which would you go for? That's all you need, which would you go for? If they pick the one you want which is generally the number three, and if number three collections is where you want your average to

be. So let's suppose you want an average of about 800 and collection three is 890, and people say yeah, I'd probably go for that, number three.

Chamira - So, just to make sure I understand, with this combo pricing structure, you mentioned we have a la carte items and then these, in this example, four collections, so with that, clients can pick either whatever they want from the a la carte menu, and or the collections, so even if they just want something from the a la carte, they could go that route. But it's not as much value.

Bernie - Yes, but what, yeah, but what you do with the a la carte, you take away individual 10 by eight and five by sevens. So they can't buy just one 10 by eight. Are you with me?

Chamira - I think so, say it one more time. Sorry, it's evening time.

Bernie- So, on the a la carte. On the a la carte part of the price list, we take away individual five by seven and 10 by eights.

Chamira - Oh, so that they have to buy'em and a certain number of them, like a certain number of 10 by eights.

Bernie- Correct, in other words when you're speaking to people on the phone, you say we make a time to come back and have a look at the photographs, show your slideshow, and I go through all the prices and products and from there it's up to you. The least expensive thing we do is 495. That does include three prints by the way, ready for framing so that's a good start for you. And then the collections go up from there, and we do have an a la carte price list if you're looking for more wall products, where there's portrait boxes and files, so when's a good time to, you know, you know what I mean?

Chamira - I like it.

Bernie - So that's your pricing done.

Chamira - I like it, Okay.

Bernie- That's all people need to know about your pricing, isn't it. And it's like a minimum order. Now, if they're, if they're not willing to spend what you've created as your minimum order, which in in this case is 495, you don't want them in the door.

Chamira - Such a good point.

Bernie- If 495 scares them then let them go somewhere else.

Chamira - So this is not something we spring on them after the photo session. We should be having this conversation before, right?

Bernie - Of course. We all want to know what things cost, right. There's another perception as well. At lot of photographers say, but Bernie, you know, my customers are already winging about my prices saying they're too expensive. So, what do I do about that? Well, you get some new customers.

Chamira -And I think that's painful for a lot—

Bernie - You've got the wrong customers.

Right, and it's painful for some reason. I know it was for me, to say no, or to let a client go, but I've found that it was one of....I know.

The best things, not that I was letting everybody go, but if you're not the right fit. - Yeah, yeah, yes, say no. Then you don't have to work together, yeah.

I know, it's the hardest thing to do. It's like you're please, please don't let me photograph you. It doesn't matter, you know, I'm going to pay you to photograph you. Right.

Bernie- I'm going to spend all my money and time and I want you so much to have these photos. Let them make the decision. And that's a very good point you made, of the same knowing and finding the right customer. Now sometimes it does take time if you've been going for a while, even a short while and you've started to collect these people and the expectation. But the thing is, what you've got, prices are just numbers alright. Prices are only numbers. That's all they are. And that's the way you talk about them. There's nothing more. You don't have to justify them. They're just a number. And let's face it, every photographer in the world charges different prices. There's not set rule. In my business I just have to say that, you know, I read a lot and working out your pricing and working out a percent of cost of goods and all of that, I'm not a believer in that. I just don't get that. Because, the question to ask is, how much money do you want to make? Right, how much money do you want to make in your photography business? For me, there was only one answer. And that was as much as possible. So how could I work out my prices, on a multiplication factor of what it cost me. You know, I've got some information here. The real cost of an 8 by eight and it breaks it down to the print price, retouching, the box, the postage, the sleeves, the stickers, whatever, total cost \$22.75 it costs to actually produce that 10 by eight and that's with time, for the photographer and which includes shooting and post production. And mean so if your cost of goods cost \$22.75 are you saying I'll multiply that by five and make it, you know, \$110, and are you gonna be happy? No. If you sell one of those to every client you get, no. You've got to be smarter than that, You've got to create a price list and a price structure that gives you the best chance of maximizing your sale with every customer.

Because that's all you've set out to do. Maximize your sale. I never cared in my business whether I had a small order or a big order, the question I ask myself was, did I maximize the sale and what is maximizing the sale, it's when the customer spends more money than they really wanted to but they're happy that they did. That's maximizing the sale.

Chamira - Gotta have a happy client.

Bernie- And the customers whose, Yeah, the customers who spend the most money are always the happiest, you know that.

Chamira - Yeah, yeah, that's what I, you know, it's interesting. That's what I've seen with my business too. Yep, yep. Far more satisfied.

Bernie- Make them happy.

Chamira - I have to add in, I love the fact that when you started very briefly you went into the pricing script, I guess. As if you were talking to a client. You did this a few minutes ago, and you slid right into it. You were so comfortable and calming and soothing and I just wanted to mention that because a lot of us get stiff and awkward. And I know for me it was a real struggle to talk pricing with clients, and I think we need to rehearse and practice. - Yeah, you're exactly right.

Bernie- And just to add in, yeah there's nothing wrong with practicing, rehearsing with family, friends, because you want to, you know, your clients will reflect what you are project and emoting. And if you're confident and calm they'll feel that, and it'll put them at ease. - And don't forget you're also reflecting your position.

Chamira - Yeah, yes. Because if you're confident, you're experienced, you come across in the way you talk about price. I love, I think you're exactly right, and I do that with my clients. We do a lot of role-playing and it's amazing to watch the progress, where they start and they bungle around and we get a script as well. And, after doing it four or five times with them they're different people, it's amazing. They don't, because the way we can lead people is that we know what objections we're going to get. You know, it's like, what if someone says to you, gee you're expensive. You know, you have to know how to answer that. - Hmm yep.

You can't say, oh well yeah but, it's a lot of work and I, er, use a very expensive camera and er, I spend hours just taking that one, you start to go into that, justifying yourself. - Right, defensive, yeah.

Bernie - So that you get defensive, that's right. You know, someone said to me in my business, gee you're expensive, I'd say yeah, I actually am. I'm probably one of the top five most expensive photographers in Australia at present. There are some, I know, that are more expensive than I am, so what size were you looking for?

Chamira - I like it, I like it.

Bernie - You don't have to justify it because you can't.

Bernie - Oh man, yeah. - You just can't. There's, some other, you know, sales pitches that I don't like, like the retort to that question gee you're expensive, the retort is.... compared to what?

Bernie - Oh, I've heard that one. - I mean I don't, I don't like I don't like that, that's not me. I like to talk price, happily and fun. Price is fun. Making money's fun. Getting money out from people is fun. That's what it's about, isn't it, that's the most enjoyable part, the happiest part, is when you take the credit card and put it through the machine, and thank-you, that's great. - It creates a sustainable business. It really does. Ah, that's so much joy in that thought. That was the best part for me was taking money.

Chamira - So, can you give us just a quick recap as we wrap this up of the three different pricing structures that we chatted about.

Bernie - Yeah, so when you go into your pricing when you revisit it. If photographers are listing they want to go and revisit. Revisit, keeping in mind those other four things that you need to get right. Positioning your products, your photography, and the way you market, your promotion, where do you sit in the marketplace, but this is the key, this is all I needed to say in the first place is where you set your prices are at your cringe point. So, when you write those numbers down, write the numbers down where you go, ah that's a bit expensive, I don't think I can charge that but I'm going to write it down anyway. There it is, there's my prices list thank goodness I've done it. And then, let that be your price list and work from there. So because a price list evolves, stick with it, for at least five sales, 10 sales. See how it goes. What you will find, or should find, is people will start buying a particular product, called a core product, you put that price up, nothing else, just that price, maybe tweak the other prices up a little bit. And that's the way you keep moving forward. I did this in my business. It was amazing. I credit the product. It was on acrylic paper, on 20 mil art mount, and it, I didn't always charge for it. It got a large image in the middle, and it got 10 images on the outside, and I didn't know what to price it. And I thought, ah, I don't know, \$750, no I'm going to make it \$850 dammit. Put it on the wall. Did a sale, someone bought one. Oh, wow, that's good. I'll put it up to \$950. So I did. Two other people bought them, right. I kept going until I made it \$1,450. Over about two months. And then I put it to 1,550. People stopped buying it. I put it back to \$1,450, people started buying it again. So there is a price rejection point. But that way you're taking it to the market place. You're taking your prices to the market place. And that's why you start with your price list, and then you tweak it up, tweak it up, tweak it up, and your market will tell you. I mean I was fortunate because in a business where you're doing a lot of turnover, you know, if you're doing 10 sessions a week or more, you can do a lot of sales so you can accelerate your progress of moving your prices. But I learned so much from that, that, the funny thing is each photographer I have given that product to, who have got a sample and put it on acrylic or had it framed that has become their core product. And a good example is to say, is Marcus in North Carolina, that is, they just buy that product. And that product, if it's \$1,500 it's a good product to be your core product, if that's something most people are buying. And the way you talk about wall art and people's wants, I think we have to get a bit smarter with products, and I think we have to create products that people will actually buy. And this product was one of those products because of the perceived value. 'Because you're getting it, 11 images you're getting right.

Chamira - And yeah, I'm taking notes here and I need to write that down then. So, you said there was the one big product in the middle.

Bernie- Yeah, and 10 around it. - and then 10 around it. And the overall size was round about 32 by 32 inches. Why I loved that being my core product is the print cost me \$40 and the mounting cost me \$40. So it's costing me, cost of product \$80. - That's it. - And I'm selling it for \$1,450.

Chamira - My goodness, interesting.

Bernie- Yeah. Not taking time into consideration but, the collage itself was templated so I could just drag other people's images into it and make slight adjustments. And every photographer I've given that product, it just worked. I mean, it's just that exciting. So, when we think about wall products, let's think a little bit of why we're not selling them. Maybe we're not selling the right wall products. So, that's another discussion. It's pricing, getting it right, taking it to the market place, the right clients, and just, and as you know Chamira, what we have to do to progress is get outside of our comfort zone. We have to feel uncomfortable. We have to. Because that's so exciting when you come through that uncomfortableness with a confidence and it's another little step and that confidence just grows. And the quicker we can grow that confidence and belief, the quicker we can grow our business.

Chamira - Absolutely. See, this is why I've had you on the show multiple times. Because you give some solid, some great information. This is fascinating.

Bernie- The difference is, Chamira, see, because I coach a lot of photographers from around the world, it means I've tested measure can be very quickly. And it's not one size fits all

Chamira - Right, right.

Bernie - And, that's the beauty of what I do. We find out what suits best. And there are so many alternatives. But there are certain things that do work, right. Always have words that are proven to work. So, that's a great thing. I, I'm not like a working photographer that says I do it this way so this is the way you should do it. 'Because, it may not be. Just because it works for me, it really doesn't mean it'll work for others. It may not. But there are alternatives if you know them that will work for you.

Chamira - So, as we wrap this up, are there any other final thoughts on pricing that you wanted to mention before we close?

Bernie- Yeah, just probably two or three things. One is, as we spoke about just put a price list together, and put it to your cringe point and just live with it a while, getting comfortable. You know, getting comfortable with people saying gee you're expensive. Get comfortable with that.

Chamira - Love that term, cringe point.

Bernie - Be proud. They think you're expensive, you know, because they may be in the wrong shop. They may be, you know, shopping at the low end when you're a little bit higher than where they should be. And the other thing is, always always, just keep trying to improve your photography. Look, you can't expect people to pay high prices for something ordinary. No one does. You've got to get creative, you've got to separate yourself. You've got to become something different than everyone else. And in my case, one of the things I did, I just became black and white. I specialized in black and white wall portraits. That's what I used to tell people. That says everything, doesn't it. I specialize in black and white wall portraits. And I've had photographers go from colour to black and white. Just flip it. Just do black and white. How many photographers specialize in black and white. Very few. I've got a couple of photographers I've got doing a little bit of sepia in it, like a warmer tone, not cold black and white, just a little bit warmer. Specializing, show people we do this. Then let them come to you for that because you specialize in that. It's a little thing. And you can charge more because you specialize. You're a specialty person so, so photography is a key. Always work on it, work hard on it, do a lot of test shots for yourself, get some models, get some people, and do a lot of free stuff, shoot like crazy, get creative. And stylize, become different, and just go nuts. It's crazy, do silly things, make mistakes, grow. That's the fun part, you know. That's the fun part. Just let it go. Just go nuts. Don't worry

about what people think, you're nuts or something. Just let the creative bit take flow and do unusual things. - Just go nuts, just go crazy. I can think of no better way to end this episode. Than with that advice

Chamira - Yeah well. You've gotta enjoy it.

Bernie- You've got to enjoy it. Don't let it drag you down. It's not worth it. It's not worth it. If it's dragging you down, get rid of it. It's not worth it, and it can be fun. And financially very beneficial.

Chamira - Ah, Bernie, I want to thank-you so much, for taking the time to come back on the show, and just breakdown pricing. I mean it so painful for many photographers but like you said it doesn't have to be. And we can even be proud of our pricing. Imagine if we got proud of our pricing. I just, thank-you so much for just chilling and chatting with us.

Bernie- Yeah, that's fine. It's great to be on the show again and to those listening, if you haven't checked out the blogs that Chamira's got on her work site, go have a look, there's some great information there, that I was looking at this morning.

Chamira - Well thank-you. There's some great blog posts, really good information. - I almost forgot to ask, even though we're going to have this on the show notes, where can folks find you online, especially if they want coaching?

Bernie- Pretty straight forward, just my website, berniegriffiths.com. I won't confuse people and give them any other details, but berniegriffiths.com. Or there's a bit of information in my book about pricing and other things if they want to go to Amazon and just search Bernie Griffiths, and the Success Secrets of a Professional Photographer. There's a lot of information. I actually use it as a reference myself, a reference book and there's quite a lot on pricing there.

Chamira - Excellent.

Bernie- So, that's another good, a good resource that can help with your pricing..

Chamira - Excellent, well thank-you again,

Bernie - Okay, pleasure. And I'm pumped and I'm excited. All you photographers out there, get excited, have a great journey. It's a great, great industry to be in. So have fun.

Bernie Griffiths was announced a Winner of the World's Ten Outstanding Photography Professional Awards for photography business coaching which recognised his contribution to the photography industry, as a photographer and as a worldwide photography business coach

The judge's comments were...

"Bernie's approach to the Business of Photography is a powerful concept that offers photographers good marketing and sales skills. He is doing a phenomenal job of coaching photographers to think "business" which is often neglected. Bernie guides photographers with practical and relevant skills that are necessary to run a successful photography business."

For more information on how to grow your photography business.....

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