



The 4EVER Group

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Not Everyone is a City Slicker!

Philip Hinkle, [Frogman Productions](#) Madison WI

1. Introduction
2. Beginning the Business
 - a) Engagement Announcements in newspaper

Lots of work for not much success.

- Announcements here are usually released just prior to the wedding after all vendors are secured.
- Our one success story (\$500 video) has returned 3 additional weddings on referrals averaging around \$1700 each.

- b) Making a demo

Do a free wedding if you have to and build a demo.

- We were lucky and got paid \$750 for the first one
- Had great sound from a sound feed....we got lucky

Show off that demo as much as you can!

- c) Differentiate your work from the competition

Find something in your demo or your style that you think is different or better than the competition and dedicate yourself to doing it well.

Talk up that ability up to customers as a selling point. We used our good audio and our desire to get the best with the equipment we had.

d) Bridal shows

They can be costly but will get your name in the hands of lots of prospects.

You can see some of your competition and network with them and see what they are producing.

3. Finding a Brand Identity

a) What's in a name?

- **Does the name matter?**
- **Should it be industry related?**

We tried changing the name but a marketing person helped us with a logo and brand identity that gave us a distinctive look that would be familiar for years to come.

b) What's in a logo?

What should your logo say or look like.

4. Putting that identity to work

a) Your branding should influence all you do!

You should be conscious of your brand identity whenever you do anything business related.

- **It should appear on your cards, videos, website or anywhere you think it would look good and be beneficial**

b) Your branding should reflect in your logo, materials and portions of your video.

The brand identity should be reflected in your website look and layout, your materials for customers, your short video intro splash screens etc. It should be the center of everything you do.

- **Explain how our logo colors and shapes appear in many aspects of what we do.**
 - **Web site colors**
 - **Business Card design**
 - **Ad colors**
 - **Splash screen**
 - **Ending screen for reception presentation**
 - **DVD menus**
 - **This presentation**

5. The website and it's content

a) Build your own - Pros and Cons

Our first site was done in Frontpage and looked really bad. I was a programmer by trade but not a web developer or graphic artist. It would not attract high end customers.

If you are good with Internet tools you can create your own but it takes time to do it well. Make sure it presents a professional and polished image.

There are template sites out there that look good and will get you up and running quickly and easily.

- Moorecast sites
- Pixel Pops

Both are geared toward videographers

b) Show online demos!!!!!!

We are a video industry. None of us should have a site without demos. Would a photographer (even a budget photographer) have a site with no demo images on it? NO!

- One friend was worried about approaching a customer and asking to put her video on his site.
- Most bride are honored when asked to display there wedding on your site. That means you did a good job on it....better than the rest.
- Get permission for marketing display included in your contract wording.

Online Demos satisfy customers need for instant gratification. I aim to have an entire wedding demo available online very soon. That means an entire wedding package for viewing online. Imagine not having to send out demo DVDs all the time.

Online demos work. I sign about 1/3 of my customers based on the demos on my site. These customers never see a DVD demo.

c) Package Information - Include Prices?

Arguments against including them.

- Gets more customers to call you so you can sell them.
- If they see your work and like it they will often sign even if you are out of their budget because they realize they have to have it.

Arguments for including them.

- You get fewer budget tire kickers calling you and wasting your time.
- You know when they call they have seen your prices and because they called they are basically pre-qualified.

What do we do?

We include them.

We have a large number of brides call from The Knot and it helps us weed out the bottom dwellers price wise. We kept getting calls that choked when they heard the prices after talking for an hour or so. That was an hour of my time I could have been editing.

Now when they call I know they are interested. I don't get as many calls or requests but my close rate is much higher.

6. Getting more people to see your site

a) Driving traffic via Client Login

b) Web Access information for guests at the reception following an SDE.

- Have them available after SDEs so guests can view the SDE in a Client gallery by Monday afternoon.
- Have DJ announce availability a few times during the night.
- Give them to the Bride and Groom when you leave.
- Watch your bandwidth spike for a week.

7. Things we did to be different from our competition

a) Started using 4-6 mics per ceremony

Ahhh.....the wonder of mini-discs and then iRivers. Next are Zoom and/or Edirol.

b) Moved from 2 - 3 cameras per ceremony and 2 at receptions.

Most videographers sell:

A single camera package

A two camera one operator package

A two camera two operator package

I figured if we are bringing 3 cams to a ceremony with one being a backup why not just use all 3 anyway. If one goes down they still get 2 cams.

When we bought a 4th cam we started advertising all ceremonies as being 3 cams.

We both work every wedding so we can tell all our customers every wedding is 3 cams and every reception is 2 cams (one for reactions during toasts)

Most customers are surprised and pleased when we tell them we will be running 2 cams at the reception. It just isn't standard in our market.

c) Improved DVD menus to include custom animation.

Our DVD menus tie into our color scheme and logo feel with big circles and green all over. They use the same look and feel we use for title screens for our photo montages. It is a uniform presentation to the customer.

The splash screen was developed by my website developer. They were created as AE templates and I just need to tweak them each time.

I can set up the animations for montages and DVD menus in about 15 minutes total so it doesn't add much to the workflow but adds lots of professional presentation value.

d) Photo Montages with After Effects thrown in.

Started adding a few small AE effects to montages to grab the guests attention and draw a crowd reaction. You probably saw a few 3D effects on the SDE montage portion just a moment ago.

Thanks Josh Fozzard.

Some link blinking eyes and snow are very simple and take only about 5 minutes to create.

Everyone else in my market just does standard show the image go to the next. Most don't even to pan/zoom effects on them.

e) Started doing SDEs and showing them all night on LCD TV near gift table.

Started doing SDEs about 3 seasons ago and this past year did 11 of them out of 27 weddings. We priced them in a way that customers think they can afford them but we are still compensated.

You will notice the short title screen introducing the couple in this SDE demo. This is the same look as the DVD screen used for our demo today. This is what our DVD menus look like.

LCD TV with DVD player is located near gift table or card table for viewing during reception. The online information business cards are placed next to the TV. There always seems to be someone watching.

Here is a link to our SDE.

[KohlmeierSDE](#)

f) Mock Movie trailers available by Tuesday

I got the idea one day of creating short trailers for all the non-SDE customers. We tried a few, got a work flow settled and started doing them.

They only take about 1 - 1.5 hours to edit.

I don't charge for them now but may make them a very small cost add-on soon. They are simple to do so I will keep the cost low so everyone will order one. For now my work flow says I can do them complimentary.

Sherry upload while I keep working. She knows what footage we want.

Keep them simple...almost cookie cutter

Have about 4 or 5 songs to pick from

Upload to a private gallery and have it waiting for them after the honeymoon. (or sometimes while on the honeymoon if they find an internet cafe')

You beat the photographer to the need for instant gratification.

They share the client login with everyone in the wedding party, family and friends. This drives them through your main page and showcases the power of wedding video.

Here is a sample Movie Trailer

[Movie Trailer](#)

g) Steadycam/Glidecam type device

We have a Steadytracker Extreme. A poorman's glidecam.

It adds a different "hollywood" like dimension to your work when used sparingly and appropriately.

No gimbal ... works on ballast and allows flowing dutch angles.

No one, to my knowledge, in my direct market is using one for weddings so our videos definitely stand out from others.

8. Get famous....at least attempt to

a) The Knot (it's *knot* as bad as you think).

In our market the Knot chat rooms are weird. There are the bottom dweller, bargain shoppers, lots of potty talk but lots of girls looking for the best vendors in many categories.

b) Local Bride magazines

Mixed success. No response to ads.

Talk about contest and award

Customer calls because of the award

c) Attempt to get local journalistic coverage of some sort.

If you do win an award your local newspaper will often run a short article for free showcasing you and the award.

Send a brief description of the award and a photo.

Listen to how many people all of a sudden mention something to you in the grocery store.

d) Make presentations about videography

Merissa the wedding planner connection.

Presentation to kids at a school

- They love technology
- Teachers will watch and listen.

Create your own opportunities.

- Talk to bridal salons about small get togethers they host
- Make your own get together with other industry pros
"Wedding Preservation?"

Here is our Original Demo

[Old Demo](#)

Here are our current Highlights

[Current Highlights](#)

9. Educate, Educate, Educate yourself.

a) 4Evergroup Convention and Summits

You are here....good job

Summit in Chicago

b) Training DVDS

If you learn this way get some.

- **VonLankens - smooth moves**
- **Josh Fozzard**

c) Videographers Associations

Find one and join it.

The networking with your peers will pay off.

If there isn't one, start one.

d) Online Education - Videouniversity.com

Has been key to my success and it is FREE!