

If you're listening to this right now and you're booked out, you're respected in your industry, you are genuinely good at what you do, but you actually have started to wonder, is photography really the only way I want to make money forever? I want you to know that this episode is for you, because here's what I see happen all the time with established photographers.

The business is working, the calendar is full, and after years, the income is finally solid, and yet there is this quiet tension underneath it all. Not because of burnout or because you hate photography. But because you can feel that you're capable of more, more than trading time for money and more than making money in just one way.

But the moment that that thought pops into your head, it is quickly followed by guilt. Guilt for wanting more freedom. Guilt for wanting more income that isn't tied to your weekends and your nights, or even guilt for questioning something that from the outside looks super successful and it's the thing you've prayed and worked for for years.

So let me first just say. Wanting to diversify your income is not a sign that you're falling out of love with photography, and in most cases it is quite the opposite. It's a sign that you have mastered your craft. You have built something super valuable, and now you're starting to think like a business owner and not just a service provider.

And diversifying your revenue isn't a pivot away, but rather a total power move that protects what you've already built. And in this episode. I wanna walk you through why expanding beyond client work is often the smartest and most strategic decision an established photographer can make. And how to think about diversification without losing your whole identity or your passion or the business that you have worked so hard to build.

Let's dive in. You're listening to Call to Both the podcast for ambitious women chasing both business dreams and little ones. I'm your host, joy Michelle. I'm a wedding photographer turned business coach and founder of Photo Bos. I have helped thousands of photographers and creatives grow their business.

Here on the show, I teach about topics like visibility, marketing, mindset, productivity, and going after your dream life. So if you're a photographer or an entrepreneur, there is something here for you. This is not another business and marketing podcast telling you to do more, but rather how you can build your business and your income in less time and with greater ease.

Join me here each week for bite-sized and actionable episodes that will encourage you on your call to both. Journey.

So to start, I really wanna address a myth that I think keeps many talented photographers from going all in on diversification. And that is the unspoken belief that to be somebody that's diversifying your income, it must mean that something kind of went wrong. And so I wanna dig into that a little bit.

I think that beneath that, there's this feeling that somebody's gonna look at you and say, oh, they must have gotten bored or burnt out. Maybe they're secretly unhappy with photography or they think they're too good for it. And I do wanna share how this came up in my own journey. So I had been, at the time, a full-time photographer for a handful of years, truly loving what I was doing, raising my prices year over year, working at new venues every weekend, building relationships with other vendors, just having the same couples come back to me even after I was done photographing their wedding and getting to see their beautiful families growing when I was talking about my business with my husband.

And he said something that should have been a compliment, but it kind of rubbed me the wrong way. He said, you're bigger than weddings. And he went on to explain that he saw me doing so much more than just shooting weddings and that I needed to be open to the possibility, or I was gonna wake up in 15 years and still be doing the exact same thing.

Making money the exact same way when he had already heard me say things that I wanted to do in the future. So even him saying that brought up something in me where I thought, man, if you say I'm bigger than weddings, that's almost insulting to what I do. That's almost insulting to my couples, and that is not true.

That was just a limiting belief that I had placed on this idea that going beyond weddings and making money in new ways and putting my hand to something completely new meant something about what I had done for all those years, and it didn't. It just meant that he saw something in me. He was holding up a mirror and said, Hey, I see, and here you saying that you wanna be doing all these incredible things with your.

Business and with your life. So I want you to know you're bigger than weddings, and that was a big moment I had to journal through that. I had to think about that and process through that because the truth is diversification is rarely born out of dissatisfaction with what we originally did. It's usually born out of mastery.

You're so good at what you do. Your clients love what you do, and I think that that is true for you, just like it was true for me. When you've been in business long enough for years, you actually start to see those patterns. You understand those clients so deeply, you have solved. The same problems over and over again, and at some point you realize that your value and the things that you have, the skills you've grown along the way, just go far beyond what fits inside of a single booking or a single wedding or a single shoot, and wanting to move beyond client work really isn't at all ungrateful or meaning anything about that client work.

I think it really means that you have reached a level of mastery and that there's just more for you. So I absolutely see diversifying income as a total power move. I talk about diversification a lot here on the podcast because I am a strong believer that every service provider should be diversifying, but especially my established photographers listening.

So I really want that reframe for you to be that diversifying your income is not something that you do when things are falling apart, or you're super burnt out, or you find a point where you just can't go on any longer. It is actually something that you do when things are stable and you are looking ahead.

It's a longer term vision so that the business can have longevity. It's so that you can be the leader that you want to be, and I think it is actually one of the most stable decisions that you can make to help with the ebbs and flows that naturally happen in client work. So we know weddings are super seasonal this time of year in the United States.

The winter. And so it's the off season for most parts of America. And I think that what's so interesting is that a lot of times we have accepted as photographers like, oh, there's gonna be ups and downs. We're gonna have so much seasonality. But I really wanna ask you, what if that did not have to be true?

What if your income didn't have to dip in the winter and you could still continue to make 5,000, \$10,000 a month in diversified revenue in addition to your photography business? How would that feel for you? And that is what is so exciting and so possible about what diversification can do for photographers.

I think that the stability piece is just so important and can bring such peace to an otherwise naturally ebbing and flowing type of business model. Another reason that this is a total power move is that I think that this really changes your whole business from everything being in the terms of capacity of how many shoots

you can take, how many events can you take on before you have to decide, okay, am I going to add more dates to my calendar?

Am I going to hire on maybe an associate shooter? But really getting you out of that. And putting you into this ownership and leadership role where you actually start to ask, okay, how can the business make money without me constantly being the one executing on the thing? How can I not have to book off a whole nother day on my calendar or not have to walk away from my craft entirely and yet still bring in.

The income. And then the third piece of why I see this as such a power move is that it is about longevity and having a business that you don't want to throw away as your family grows, as life comes at you, it has the legs. To stand because your life has very likely evolved. I know I work with a lot of women that the life they had when they started their first business, the business that they learned how to run a business on was a completely different life.

They either didn't have kids or their kids were super, super young. They may not have even been married, and they have gone through this whole journey of finding a husband, getting married, having kids, and they're different. They've grown. They've grown as a, as a business owner, but their lives look different, and now the business needs to look different too.

Now, I do wanna talk about reactive versus strategic diversification because I know that a lot of times a big life event. Will take place where a baby is born or a spouse loses a job or something like that. And that is a natural time where photographers are pulling the trigger saying, yes, it is time, we are gonna diversify.

But that doesn't have to always be the case, I think. That there are so many different paths to why a photographer will end up at this point saying, it's time to diversify. It's time to go beyond just photography services, but we wanna make sure that we're building in a strategic way and not just a reactive one.

So reactive diversification happens when things really feel shaky. It comes from a scared place. When bookings are slow, when we just decide, oh, I'm just gonna jump on this trend, or pick a random offer and kind of just test it out and see it feels a little less certain and a lot of times it really doesn't align with.

Your vision for the whole business. Strategic diversification is very different. It has a completely different energy and it's gonna have completely different outcomes for you. I will just tell you that right now. So this happens when your

business is healthy, you have that clarity, you know where you're going, and you know that you are going to layer on some income in addition to what is already working.

We're not gonna start something completely different. You're not replacing. You are adding on strategic diversification is leveraging the things that you have already built. This is your experience, your reputation, your audience, your systems, so you're not doing more work that needs to be done. It's smart diversification.

It's intentional and it is layered and it is supportive of the life that you are in right now that you're building towards, and not just those income goals, but really it's keeping in mind that life so that you do have the alignment between both. So if you're listening to this right now and you're thinking about diversifying your income before it becomes a desperate need for diversification, that is a super good sign that you are a forward thinker.

You're already thinking ahead. You're kind of early to the game, and I think that being early to the game is going to give you optionality and options are huge. We love 'em. Another part about diversification that I do wanna touch on quickly is that diversification does not always mean that it's going to be a very.

Public shift to being an influencer, and a lot of my clients are not doing it this way. They are diversifying in a way that feels a little more quiet. Some of these offers are behind the scenes. They are built more intentionally, even slowly. And for some photographers, this could look like education or mentoring if you've always wanted to be a coach or mentor.

I know I'm working with a client right now who is developing a coaching offer for the first time in her business and. Already has clients on the calendar for January, which is incredible, and for others it might be a digital product. It could be partnerships, licensing, affiliate income. There are so many options and I will say that it, the goal is not to do.

Everything. The goal for you is going to be to choose the income streams that fit your skills and your audience and your seasons. This is highly custom to who you are and the business that you have already built. And in the process, your photography doesn't disappear. This is actually the foundation and everything else becomes a layer on top and it all begins to multiply.

So you do not need to wait until you are exhausted and at your wits end with your service work and your photography business in order to expand beyond it.

You don't have to fall out of love with photography if you feel pulled towards something that is just more spacious, more leveraged, more sustainable.

That's your invitation to step into this next level and that you probably have evolved and your business is now ready to evolve with you. And I think a little side note here is something I didn't even plan to say, but I feel compelled to share this, is that when we evolve as CEOs, but the business doesn't.

It is a quick path to burnout because your business is going to need to change so that you can be the CEO that you need to be. It's almost like you've gotten too big for your shell, right? Like the turtle has to leave the shell, go find something that fits better and then crawl into that shell. I don't know if turtles even leave their shells.

You know what it's like those little. Those little at the beach when you get, what are those things called? Okay. I'm thinking of hermit crabs. Guys. I had to 100% Google this. I was like, what are those little things that people buy at the boardwalk and then they get too big and then you have to get a new shell for them and they just keep growing because they're outgrowing their shell.

Okay. It's a hermit crab coming back. I promise. This is all connected. I think that. When you start feeling the pull to this, when you don't follow it, what I have seen is that the business then doesn't engage you. It's not meeting your level and your standards and where you've grown and you're expanding.

Like you're, you're not the same person you were a few years ago. We already know that. And so when the business does not evolve with you. You will get bored and you'll get burned out and you'll get resentful, and that is not what I want for you. I've seen people leave entrepreneurship entirely because the shell never grew, so this is when your shell is growing.

Okay, so if this episode is resonating with you, you're starting to see the diversification isn't really about leaving photography behind, but building on top of what has already worked super well for you. Then I would love to support you more in this. I work with established photographers who are ready to take that next step, not out of fear, but with strategy, with clarity, with intention.

And if you're curious about diversification, what this would look like specifically in your business, I wanna invite you to send me a DM on Instagram. Literally just DM me the word diversification or diversify. And from there we can have a conversation about where you are now, what you want your

business and your support to look like in this next chapter, and how coaching could help you to build an aligned revenue beyond photography.

The women I'm working with right now, you guys are making 2026, the year that they move fast and decisively towards revenue streams that support the season of the life that they're in now. Not the one where she started her business, but the one that she is in now. I am so excited to hear from you. Send me a DM on Instagram and be sure to hit subscribe.

If you are not subscribed here on the podcast. I have some juicy episodes coming up on the podcast for this year and I am pumped about it. So excited to have you listen here all the way to the end. I'll see you next Monday. Thank you so much for listening to the show. If you enjoyed this episode. Please help me get the word out about the call to both podcast by taking a screenshot of this episode right now and sharing it on your social media.

I would also appreciate it if you would subscribe and leave me a five star review. Thanks again and I'll see you in the next episode.