

Not Your Mother's Wedding Album

Boost Your Wedding Revenue with Coffee Table Books

Back in 2002, we had a solid wedding business, balancing our wedding workload with corporate events, conventions, executive portraits, and actor headshots. After seeing a presentation of flush-mount albums by Gary Fong, my wife and partner, MJ Wilson, was inspired by the fresh approach these albums presented to the wedding industry, and brought the idea of Coffee Table Books back to me.

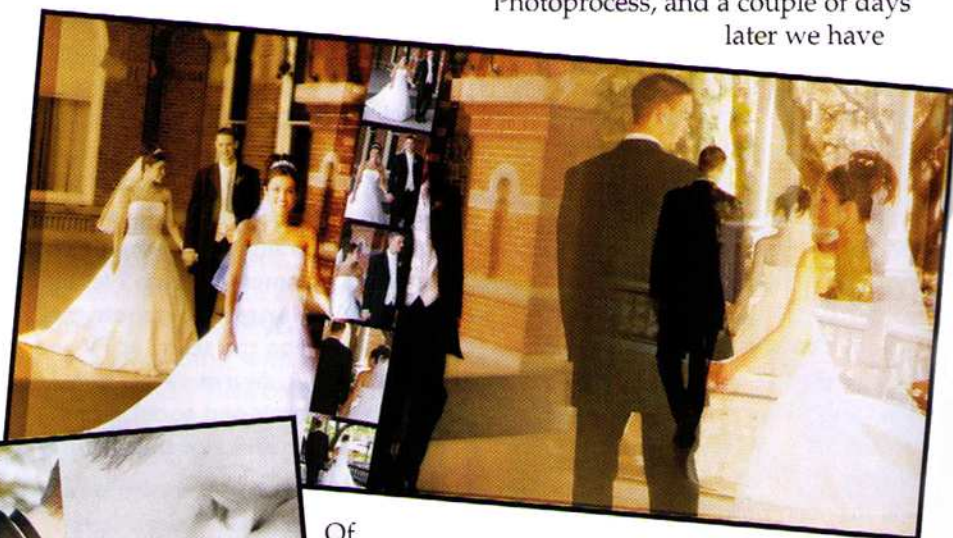
CREATING EXCITEMENT

Since my background is in design, layout, and digital post-production, we saw the flush-mount pages as a valuable alternative to the standard album with mats. We were both excited at the possibilities these books

particularly skilled in image editing, you'll find flush-mount book-binders that offer design services. So as it turns out, flush-mount albums are within the reach of most photographers willing to venture in that direction.

DIGITAL BY DESIGN

We shoot with Fujifilm FinePix S2 Pros. In January 2003 we moved to an all-digital workflow, which has given us more flexibility in designing and print processing. We FTP image files to our lab, Reedy Photoprocess, and a couple of days later we have



Of course, some brides may want to be in complete control of their album

offered. As a graphic designer, I approach page design by dividing the page into a grid with columns based on the aspect of the images. Since I tend to be a bit edgy in my design, I had to remind myself these were wedding albums, and reigned myself in a little!

Telling the story is what's important. Ultimately, if you go with your own strengths as a photographer and your knowledge of framing and spatial balance, you'll create some dramatic pages.

If you're not a graphic artist or

design. What we find works best is having brides pick several images for each thematic "spread," such as the cake-cutting or ring ceremony. Then, if necessary, we add some additional images reflecting the theme, and design a page that we feel best captures the moment.

Our brides have been very receptive to this system. They enjoy seeing their images from a new perspective when we present their layouts to them for the first time. And more often than not, they select additional spreads rather than choosing between existing ones.

10x20 prints in our hands, without leaving the studio.

Our album manufacturers—The Book Album by Renaissance (New York), Album Crafters (Florida), and Albums Unlimited (California)—are perfect partners because their albums have the smallest gaps in the center of the spread. This is key because we don't want the binding to break the flow of the design.

And these albums are dramatic! Brides are often moved to tears by the imagery. In fact, our wedding revenues increased by over 400 percent in 2003, directly attributable to the debut of our flush-mount albums.

With over 50 weddings in 2003 and 30-plus already scheduled for 2004, we're looking forward to providing a lot more tissues, while ringing up a lot more business with our Coffee Table Books. ♦

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