

Depending on the size and expense of the wedding you are planning, after the cost of the venue itself, photography is often the second most expensive item on the budget. Things have changed since the days of film photography and this has been wonderful for weddings. Old school wedding photography included the traditional and formal shots, along with some handfuls of candid pictures; the average total amount of pictures the couple would get, including the good and the gnarly ones, would be a hundred-and-a-half.

Digital photography allows the couple to choose *all the available options*; traditional, formal, candid, and photojournalism (the ones that everyone loves, including the fashion & glamour shots), and in the end there will be hundreds and hundreds of pictures to choose from. And here is the second biggest difference (and it is huge), the couple now has the ability to crop and colour correct, to take each picture and create B&W or sepia or mocha, and to create fabulous effects that make your pictures totally unique.

Photography has changed from being a 'history documentary of the wedding' to becoming live art; a fashion shoot, an interactive-drama between model and photographer-artist. It now has both the formal stability of traditional pictures mixed with the very fun aspects of photojournalism; and the couple gets to choose the degree of this mix. The end result being amazing pictures that you actually hang on your walls, or print for your friends, and put on your website. In this way, the photography itself is an event inside-and-throughout the wedding itself.

Now all of this amazement comes at a cost, and here is a basic breakdown:

- It will take a couple of hours for the couple and photographer to meet and discuss dates, rates, dreams and desires, locations, and all the other details.
- An 'engagement photo session' will include the time it takes to prepare for the shoot, meet at the location, take the shoots, process the photos, and finally print and

deliver the pictures of the *gorgeous couple*. This can easily take four hours.

- The day prior to the wedding the photographer must double check all the equipment, charge a couple-dozen batteries, clean the camera and all the lenses, clean the supporting equipment, and have everything ready-to-go. This will take a couple of hours.
- The morning of the wedding (for the majority of weddings that includes six or more hours) the photographer will leave early to arrive at the first shoot location. The equipment preparation, to-and-from travel times, set-up and tear-down, vehicle preparation and so forth, are not calculated in the hours of the package.
- Following the wedding, a full day is spent processing the hundreds of photos. This will include image cropping, light and colour correction (for difficult venue lighting), touch-ups, and proof-album preparation. Depending on the amount of pictures taken, this process, at a minimum, will take ten hours.
- The next day it will take some hours to add the pictures to a website for the couple to review.
- It takes anywhere from four-to-six hours to process and prepare any albums that the couple choose.
- Once the albums are complete, it will take a couple of hours for the photographer to set-up the DVD, and then deliver the albums and DVD to the couple.

This all adds up to a minimum of 35 hours. Include in the mix the photographer's *real expenses* of vehicle, gas, cell phone, camera equipment, computer, software, and hosting the website, and what you get in these *Images which Move the Soul* has cost the photographer a great deal of money and time.

None of this includes the artistic skill and creativity that the photographer has imbedded in each image. The angles and composition and beauty that were part of why you chose them in the first place.

What this ultimately shows is that the expensive cost of photography is well worth it in the end. In the old days you'd pay your five hundred dollars for 'dresser-draw history', today we get to capture a multi-media event that is art itself.