



Case Study: Naomi House Photography

Naomi House has been a professional photographer since leaving college in 1995 but has recently returned to work after having a family. She asked Longtown MTI for support on rebuilding her business with a fresh emphasis on wedding photography that "captures weddings creatively".

"I had kept the business ticking over while my daughters were young but, now that they are a bit older, I needed to market my work more actively and also upgrade my equipment. Today's wedding couples have high expectations – quite rightly – and I need to be able to be flexible and offer exactly the service that people want."

Naomi House

Longtown Market Town Initiative involvement

Naomi met Bev Bamford, Business Adviser with the MTI, and found that her photography business qualified for both a business expansion grant and support on marketing.

"The business expansion grants have been very popular and most of the money has now been allocated. There are still funds available to help on marketing whether that be leaflet production, signage or practical advice on press and media relations."

Bev Bamford, Longtown MTI

In Naomi's case, the marketing grant enabled her to have a small brochure professionally designed and printed and she was also able to update her website, subsidise her attendance at a couple of key weddings events and have one-to-one advice and PR support from local consultant, Sally Seed of Stoneleigh Communications.

"I needed a new leaflet in a modern style to give to potential clients and to take to wedding events to demonstrate my approach. The leaflet had to be of a high quality but it would have been hard, as a small business, to find not only the money to attend events but also to produce a professional leaflet from the beginning. The marketing grant meant that I could make the most of the opportunities."

Naomi House

Achievements

Naomi attended the Cumberland News Wedding Fair at Carlisle Racecourse in September 2007, one of the first with her new marketing package in place,

and she was delighted with the results.

“There were 100s of people at the Fair and it was good to have something professional to give out. It seems to have worked too as I took eight bookings for weddings at the Fair and have had several follow up calls since then too.”
Naomi House

Challenges

Although the number of weddings in Cumbria is growing, with lots of people visiting the county for their marriage as well as local events, Naomi is very conscious of the number of photographers competing for the available work.

My work comes mainly from local referrals from other satisfied clients who tell their friends. However, for couples who plan to marry in the Lake District but live elsewhere in the UK, having the website and publicity material just right is essential. For every new enquiry I hope that, once I have talked to a bride and groom and explored what they really want, I can win the job on the basis of reputation and by being on their wavelength from the start.”
Naomi House

Future plans

At the moment, Naomi’s plans include taking plenty of bookings for 2008 (and beyond) but she is also working on an idea with a contact in the Cayman Islands to see if she can work with her on luxury weddings there for a brief period and then bring trans-Atlantic ideas back to Cumbria.

“I have been able to kick start my return to business with practical support from Longtown MTI. The grants have been really useful and the advice and support have been invaluable too.”
Naomi House

If you are planning a wedding or if you are another local business targeting the weddings market and you think that there might be opportunities to work with Naomi House Photography then please get in touch.

And if you are a small business in or around Longtown in need of marketing support, please contact Bev Bamford at the MTI.

Nature of business: Wedding photographer
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