

What we've learned so far



Behind the Scenes at our Photoshoot

Blog - August 2023



Ever wondered whether to splash out on a model shoot?



It can be a bit daunting considering investing in a model shoot and so we thought we'd share some things we've learned along the way. There are probably many ways to do this but this is our experience.

Why did we do it ?

At the time of our first photoshoot we were developing our new website and wanted to offer quality images to make it attractive and appealing for our customers and for there to be a wow factor, despite being B to B. We wanted to give retailers the chance to see what the products would look like when worn. We were also on a quest to create adverts which would give us a distinctive, clear and consistent look that would be associated with us as a 'brand'

Is it worth it?

We have now done six and one for our Children's range and really feel it's worth it despite the fact that it takes lots of preparation. It's fulfilled the aims we set out with and we've had lots of positive feedback about the imagery, really enjoy the process and have met some lovely people along the way.



Picking the Products



We start by picking the products. As we tend not to have a traditional 'range per season' we aim to feature both new items and some of our existing popular products. This time we selected new amber, colour, pearl and sparkle for the coming party season.



[H5793/S]



[H5831/S]



[H5636-19]

Our Process



We aim to have a shoot every six months which gives us enough material for the website, adverts and social media whilst knowing that the pieces are still current. (More of an issues with us as we have such a vast range). We also try to target some photos at specific events coming up such as Valentines or Christmas
We pick a date that suits the photographer, models, hair and makeup.

Tracey, from our creative team, is in charge of creating the mood boards and planning each jewellery set and shot. She researches model photos and shoots to decide the look she likes and which complement the pieces. It's one of her favourite jobs. For instance, for the launch of our Goddess range she wanted the look and props to depict each element. She discusses her plans with the photographer and they decide together which backgrounds will work best.

We circulate our ideas to hair and makeup ahead of time to ensure that they know what we are thinking. For instance the hairstyle for the third shot here required the hairdresser to wire Leah's hair!

We set out the jewellery by trying out different looks on busts to find the best combinations. We've found that taking the jewellery ready set up on the busts is the most efficient way of preparing for each shot on the day.



We decided to work with a photographer experienced with jewellery. Jewellery is notoriously difficult to photograph because of the reflections.

We struck gold working with Stu Williamson - not only has he vast experience but he and his wonderful partner Corenna helped us to find models for some shoots, and recommended make-up and hair artists and generally nursed us through our first shoots. Now, after seven shoots, we work with the same team and professional hair and make-up which makes all the difference. Stu shoots so that we can have full shots featuring all of the products but also zoom in for individual products whilst still maintaining the focus which make the photographs multi-purpose and cost effective.

We've used both professional and amateur models, some recommended and some from an agency. Both have been great. The amateur models have been enthusiastic, hard working and generally fabulous so it's not necessary to go for professionals but make sure you negotiate a model release form.

Don't forget to check if they have ear piercings if you want them to model earrings and are prepared with manicured nails if you are hoping to feature rings.

Professional hair and makeup bring the photos to life. They know what works for the photographer and can change the looks throughout the day. It can also reduce the amount of post shoot editing saving time and money





There are a few things we've learned about clothing for shoots along the way

Keep to simple, plain designs especially where the jewellery is delicate. Necklines need to allow for space for the jewellery. Models will often bring some of their own clothes and shoes, so don't be afraid to ask.

Borrowed clothes, charity shops and inexpensive website buys give you control over the look that you're trying to create and don't cost a fortune. For instance the white outfit below was a designer charity shop buy accessorised with an inexpensive hat (the whole outfit cost us less than £10). We borrowed the vintage flapper dress.

We learned that having too much skin on show can be an issue if you intend to use social media as some algorithms will reject strapless tops. You'll see we've moved away from this by adding simple straps. For most of our shots we only need to worry about a top for the model as full length shots are not usually necessary

Props such as sunglasses and hats are simple and effective.

Remember the model may need an outfit on before any elaborate hairdo if it has to go over over the head!

Have a kit bag with you, we find body tape, scissors, small clamps for clothes can all come in handy,



What happens on the day?



It can be a bit tense at first until we all get going!

Hair and makeup spring into action whilst Stu puts the finishing touches to his lighting, etc and consults with us about the set-up. We set out all the jewellery making sure we have a separate tray of extender chains, ear cuffs and rings to add in as extras if we feel we need it.

Our running order helps the hair and makeup to decide how to change the looks, backgrounds and with the most minimal changes between sets of jewellery in terms of make-up, background, hair and clothes etc.

This shoot time we tried a different approach with two models to make better use of the time and to give us a chance to take some social media shorts in between professional shots, Keeping the hair, makeup and jewellery just right needs constant vigilance. Pendants twist and chains can stick to damp skin so a bit of adjustment is always necessary!

It may look glamorous but behind the scenes the magic is being helped along!



Other things we've learned

Be prepared, be flexible- don't worry too much if you have to alter things at the last minute

Wear flat shoes and comfortable clothes.

Ankle chains are very, very tricky to get right. Many models are sensitive about their feet and the angles can be very difficult to get right. We think a model wearing shoes is the best option. Oh, and you need to be able to do yoga to hold a pose like the one below!

Try to leave a gap between earring changes so that the models ears don't get sore. We often put different ear combinations in each ear and just ask the model to turn her head to the alternate side.

Enjoy - we love these days and although its exhausting its a lot of fun!

After the shoot

Stu sends through the complete set of shots. It is exciting but its like being in a sweet shop with just too much chocolate. But choices have to be made! We discuss the shots we like - usually going for the ones that capture the product best.

Once we've chosen our favorites these will be edited by Stu to make the final version



The Team for Shoot 7

Over our 7 shoots we have been lucky enough to build a team and we all work well together. We have had some fabulous models and Tilda and Chohee were no exception. It was our first time using two models together and this worked well giving us more time between shots for some informal social media shots, getting doubles and having fun!



Your Stu Williamson photographer extraordinaire
www.stuwilliamson.com



Chohee is a great model and an amazingly talented pet photographer www.choheecourtoise.co.uk



Katie our hairdresser- never phased and always on hand to tweek www.louisefayehair.com



Tilda, so photogenic- never takes a bad shot and a lovely person to work with! [@tildavivien](https://www.instagram.com/tildavivien)



Lucy our talented make-up artist
www.lucymacdonaldmakeup.com



That's me and my marvelous colleague Tracey and out of shot James our in-house photographer(we are all camera shy!)





These full length glamour shots are for a different sort of ad that we are experimenting with - keep your eyes peeled for later in the year!

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