

The Value of a Picture

Some tips on how photos can improve your marketing



Think about what attracts you to a magazine, advertisement or website. What holds your attention and makes you want to read more or view other pages? Bright colours, stylish design, arresting images, graphics and catchy phrases can all work together to appeal to the viewer. That first impression is all-important and an amazing image can work wonders for your marketing.

And, as always, think about your message. Are you trying to attract a new intake of young dancers? Then maybe an action shot of a class in the studio will work best, conveying a sense of energy, movement and enjoyment. More relaxed photos of students taken between or after class can also be very engaging, offering an insight into the possible friends they might make and types of people who attend your studio. Or are you aiming at a more mature crowd and want them to attend a social dance class? The right photos can make a big difference in how effective your advertising or website can be.

If you've been involved in photo shoots yourself (even at events like a wedding) you will know that the photographer likes to take lots and lots of shots – many more than you might think is needed. But the more image you have available to you, the more chance there is that you will end up with a good selection of photos that show the angle you wanted, have everyone looking in the right direction and are actually in focus!

Lighting is also key. What might look good in real life does not always translate into a good image later on. So make sure that you, or your chosen photographer, provide extra lighting or position the shoot where there is sufficient light already set up. Using a tripod can help here too and allows you to produce better photos by keeping the camera absolutely still, even if the lighting is not so great.



By varying the position of your dancers and taking shots that are close-up as well as of the full group or performance, you will also end up with a richer variety of final images to choose from. If you're taking photos at an end-of-term show, think about having several cameras in place to get wider shots as well as good close-up photos of the dancers.

Think also about the atmosphere you are creating when you're conducting your photo shoot. If your aim is to get photos of happy young children taking a class, make sure your subjects are all smiling and look like they're having a good time!

Taking photos of dancers or performances can also provide photographers with fantastic material for their portfolio, so it's worth shopping around and perhaps doing a deal whereby you give them permission to use images for their own promotional purposes in return for a discounted photo session.



If you do not have the time or resources to hire a photographer to take your own photos, there are many websites that offer stock images of dance and dancers that might prove useful for your website or marketing. Of course, as they are available to anyone (who pays for their use) you might find that you see them in other places too, so if you're after original images that really represent your studio, it's always better to have your own photos.

One of your best resources for photos can, of course, be the parents who come along to a dance show or competition. Ask them to send you their pictures and you'll end up with a huge variety to choose from – just don't promise that you'll be able to put them all on your website!

Using photos effectively will allow you to tell the story you want about your dance studio – and maximise interest and engagement from current and potential students!

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