



Building Your First Online Course





A Little About Me





A Little About Me

- Equestrian Commercial, Editorial, and Stock Photographer
- Mentor and Educator for Equestrian Photographers
- 19 Years in Business



Why Build an Online Course?

- Share your knowledge/help others
- Create a passive or partially passive source of income
- Build authority in your industry



\$200k since 2020!



Year One: Building the Ship at Sea



2020

- The idea January 2020 - Cohort-based learning experience
- Rapid implementation - started “The Pegasus Mentorship” in February 2020
- Taught weekly on Zoom
- In-person 4 day retreat in June for hands-on learning



Lessons Learned

- It doesn't have to be fully fleshed out. Just start.
- Build the ship at sea - highly motivating!
- Teaching live was good, but I could do better.





How to Get Started - Expertise and Audience

- What can you talk about at length without notes? What's that one thing you're known for?

What do friends constantly ask your advice on? This is your area of expertise.

- Define your target audience - who is already following you and sees you as an authority?
- What problem can you solve or pain point can you relieve for these people?



How to Get Started - Build a Course

- Set objectives - what skills or knowledge should they have by the end of your course?
- Plan your structure - standalone? cohort-based? live instruction? recorded lessons?
- Outline and create your content.
- Market! Market! Market!



How to Get Started - Grow Your Following

- Get Discovered: Social Media, Publications, Giveaways, Collaborations
- Build Trust, Expertise, and Authority with VALUABLE free content:
 - Email Newsletter with tutorials and tips
 - Teaching/Tips Social Media Posts
 - YouTube Videos



A Business Mentor Enters the Picture...

- Added Pegasus Circle - ongoing paid membership for mentorship participants
- Worked on building my audience & authority in three ways:
 - Created a Free Email Course: Four Keys to Growing a Successful Equestrian Portrait Business
 - Ran a 7-day photography challenge to build my educational email list
 - Started the monthly Pegasus Journal with Educational Content





Year Two: Iterate and Improve



2021

- Split Pegasus into two mentorships:
 - Wings - Accelerator for Pegasus
 - Pegasus - More advanced topics



3 Month Online Mentorship

Weekly Video Lessons and Live Group Coaching

Covering all aspects of Equestrian Photography & Editing

Tons of resources such as eBooks, Lightroom presets and Photoshop actions

Priority registration for Pegasus

Starts in January, only runs once per year, Limited to 20 photographers



PEGASUS

EQUESTRIAN PHOTOGRAPHY MENTORSHIP

6 Month Advanced Mentorship

5-day all-inclusive Retreat in Minnesota

Bi-Weekly Video Lessons and Live Group Coaching

Monthly 1:1 Coaching Sessions

Focused on creating a business you'll love and advanced photography skills

Tons of resources like Price lists, presets, templates, actions, and more

Starts in April, only runs once per year, limited to 6 photographers



More 2021 Changes

- ⦿ Recorded videos for both Mentorships so I wouldn't have to teach live.
- ⦿ Students could learn at their own pace and refer back.
- ⦿ Format:
 - ⦿ Intro - recorded in a studio with a teleprompter.
 - ⦿ Lesson slides - recorded with Screenflow.
 - ⦿ Recorded Live video during a photoshoot to integrate into lessons.
 - ⦿ Edited with Adobe Premiere.





Sample Video Lesson





Lessons Learned

- ⦿ All this content creation was exhausting but worth it.
- ⦿ Very profitable!
- ⦿ This format was very successful and doable with my workload (initial concern with going through the summer with Pegasus)



Growing Your Program

- Get feedback from participants.
- Iterate and improve.
- Add value like downloads, links to further learning, and homework assignments.
- Focus on creating quality content that is reusable.
- Always be working to build your audience and authority! (Eye Candy Scholarship)



Year Three: Expansion



2022

- Worked with Denise at Stormlily Marketing to build an effective sales page and launch plan.
- Created 2 Standalone courses:
 - "Video for Photographers"
 - "Rapid Workflow for Photographers."
- Held an Alumni Retreat





Lessons Learned

- ⦿ Didn't fill Pegasus. I let conversations on coaching calls veer off-topic to business advice and took away the motivation to go on to Pegasus.
- ⦿ Standalone courses are a good way to get people into my ecosystem. Many mentorship participants previously purchased a standalone course.
- ⦿ Marketing is key to all of this working!



How to Expand Your Program

- Create a variety of "products" to sell at several price points.
- Focus on effective marketing:
 - Effective sales page
 - Email Newsletter
 - Social media
 - Word of mouth



Effective Sales Page Elements - Promise

The image shows a website header and hero section. The header is dark brown with white text. On the left is the logo 'SHELLEY PAULSON' with a small horse head icon and the tagline 'education & mentoring'. To the right are navigation links: MENTORSHIPS, COURSES, EQUICAPTURE, BLOG, FREE RESOURCES, ABOUT, and MY DASHBOARD. Below 'MY DASHBOARD' is a user profile icon labeled 'SHELLEY P'. The hero section features a background image of two horses, one brown and one grey, running against a blue sky. Overlaid on this image is the main headline: 'Become a More Confident & Skilled Equestrian Photographer' in large white font, and a sub-headline: 'with Wings, a Small Group Equestrian Photography Mentorship.' in smaller white font.

SHELLEY PAULSON
education & mentoring

MENTORSHIPS COURSES EQUICAPTURE BLOG FREE RESOURCES ABOUT MY DASHBOARD
SHELLEY P

Become a More Confident & Skilled Equestrian Photographer

with Wings, a Small Group Equestrian Photography Mentorship.



Effective Sales Page Elements - Pain Point

Transform your Equestrian Photography and soar to new heights!

Have you ever felt unsure or insecure about your photography and photo editing skills? Maybe you have all the equipment, but you don't know how to make the most of it to create the kind of equestrian photos you dream of.

You're in the right place. I created **Wings**, a 3-month online learning and small group mentorship experience for Equestrian Photographers like you. It's the program I wish existed when I was first starting out as a photographer.

Whether you're a professional or a passionate amateur, Wings will help you grow as a photographer with the guidance of a mentor who cares about you and your success and a community of fellow photographers cheering you on along the way.

The next Wings Mentorship starts January 2, 2023, and runs through March 27, 2023.





Effective Sales Page Elements - Social Proof



"I now feel 1000000x more confident!"

Taylor Kos, Gold Horse Media

"Prior to the mentorship, I was drowning in work and self-doubt. It would take me weeks to edit photos because I wasn't sure anyone would like my style or edits, and I had no idea how to organize my workflow. I now feel 1000000x more confident! My photos have improved incredibly, my bookings instantly increased and so did my confidence."



Effective Sales Page Elements - Who is this for?

Wings is for you if...

- ✓ You have questions about all sorts of equestrian photography-related topics and wish you had someone you could go to for the answers.
- ✓ You love taking photos of horses but aren't as confident behind the camera as you would like to be.
- ✓ You want to be able to walk into a photo session and know exactly what to do, even in less-than-ideal conditions.
- ✓ You wish you knew more about how to edit and retouch your photos to make them look consistent and bring out their true beauty.
- ✓ You are looking for education and mentoring from an experienced photographer you can trust and who cares about your success.
- ✓ You purchased online courses but never completed them or struggled to apply what you learned.
- ✓ You want personalized feedback on your images so you can create even better ones.
- ✓ You want to be part of a small community of like-minded photographers who will support you and cheer you on as you learn.
- ✓ You would like to sign up for Pegasus, but aren't sure your skills are up to speed yet.



Effective Sales Page Elements - Features

The Wings Mentorship Includes



Online Lessons

Teaching is done in an Online Lesson format, so you will have time to digest and apply what you've learned before we discuss the topic as a group during our Group Coaching Calls.



Small Group Coaching

Wings is a fully interactive cohort-based course. There are 12 online group coaching calls (Mondays at 7 CT) where we discuss course content and assignments and answer any questions you have.



Accountability

To ensure you understand the lessons, I assign homework, give individualized feedback, and am available to help if there is anything you don't fully understand. There are incentives for completing every assignment!



Community

You will have access to a private Facebook group where you can interact with and learn from other students, ask questions, and receive feedback on homework assignments.



Resources

You will have access to digital resources such as eBooks, my Lightroom presets, Photoshop actions, recommended gear, favorite podcasts, and more.

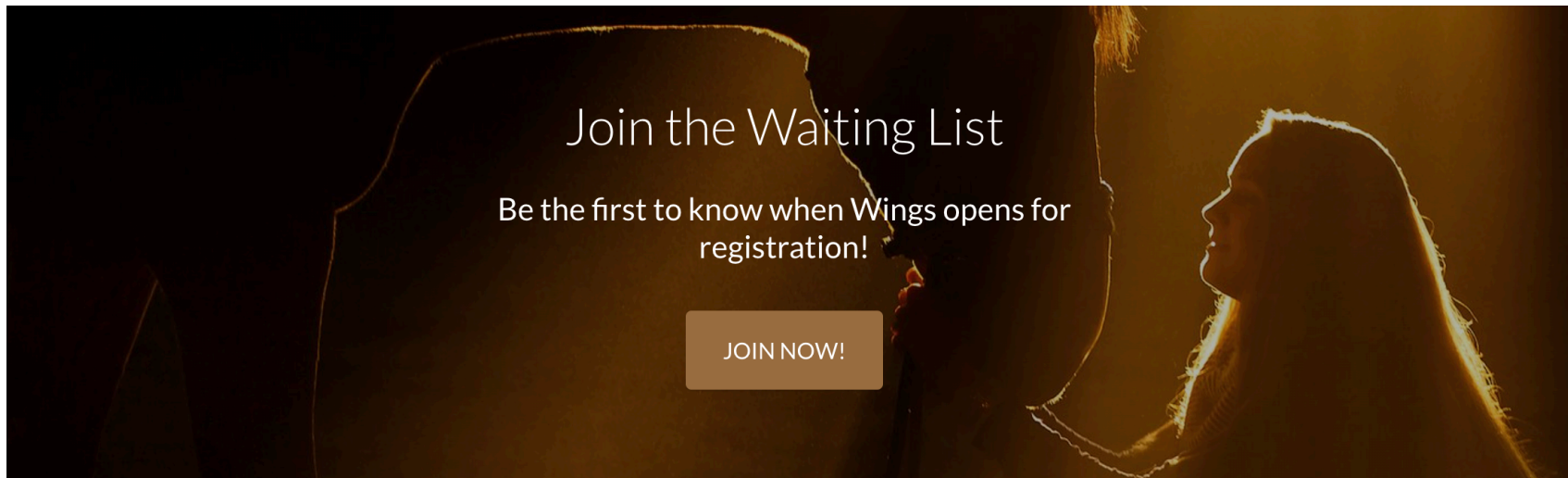


Pegasus Circle

After the mentorship, you'll have the opportunity to join Pegasus Circle, my monthly membership, where I provide ongoing coaching and the opportunity to attend in-person retreats.

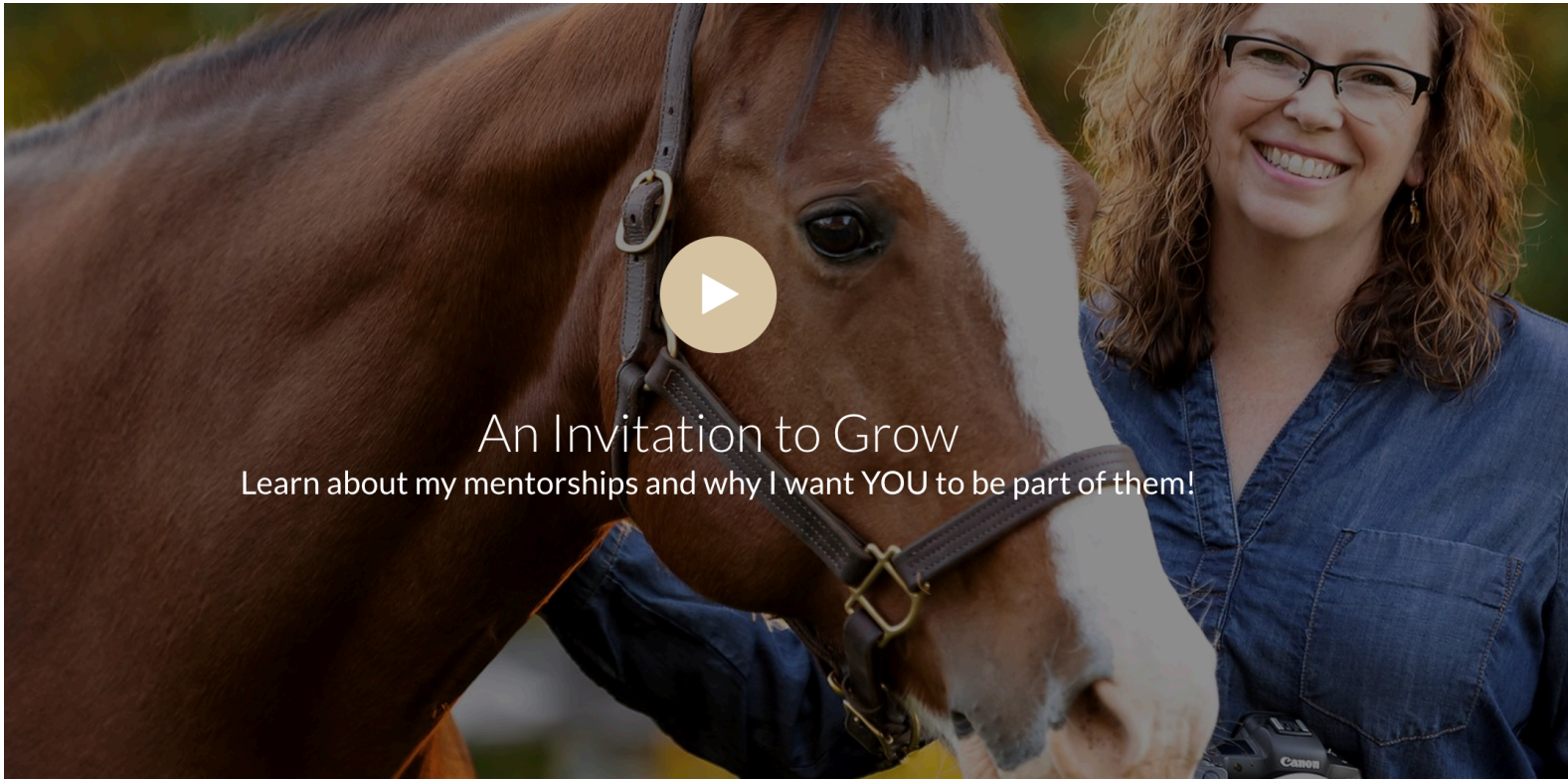


Effective Sales Page Elements - CTA





Effective Sales Page Elements - Video Invitation





Effective Sales Page Elements - Course Structure

What will you learn?

The answer is: **EVERYTHING** you need to know to create and edit consistently beautiful, high-quality equestrian photos!

- **Week One** - Horse Behavior and Safety at Sessions
- **Week Two** - Tools of the Trade and Optimal Camera Settings
- **Week Three** - Natural Posing for Horse and Rider
- **Week Four** - Finding the Light, Finding the Magic
- **Week Five** - Composition for Better Storytelling
- **Week Six** - Workflow that Saves Time and Money
- **Week Seven** - Lightroom for the Equestrian Photographer
- **Week Eight** - Perfecting Your Images with Retouching
- **Week Nine** - Black Background Fine Art
- **Week Ten** - Full Session Editing and Retouching Demo
- **Week Eleven** - Critique Week, Are you ready for Pegasus?
- **Week Twelve** - Wrap up and Final Q&A



Effective Sales Page Elements - Instructor Bio



Meet Your Mentor

Hi! I'm Shelley, and I give equestrian photographers the skills and confidence they need to take better photos and grow a successful business.

I have combined my deep love of horses with my passion for making captivating images to create a thriving full-time business working with major Equine Brands nationwide. As I've mentored photographers for over 16 years, I always aim to make sure my students learn the concepts and can successfully apply them to their photography and business. My approach is concise, positive, and encouraging. My favorite phrase to say while teaching is: "Good Job!"



Effective Sales Page Elements - Investment Breakdown

Investment

The Regular Wings Mentorship is **\$1650**
or **\$625/month** for 3 months

10 Video Lessons (reg. \$2250)

12 group coaching/teaching calls (reg \$1200)

Resource Library (reg. \$400)

Circle of support (priceless!)

Priority for the 2023 Pegasus Mentorship

OVER \$4000 Value!



Effective Sales Page Elements - FAQ

FAQ

- ✓ **How many people do you accept into the Wings Mentorship?**
- ✓ **When will group coaching Zoom calls be?**
- ✓ **Do I have to be an equestrian photographer?**
- ✓ **What gear and software should I have for this mentorship?**
- ✓ **Will you be covering business or marketing topics?**
- ✓ **Will you run this again another time during the year?**
- ✓ **Are there 1:1 calls included with Wings?**
- ✓ **Will there be retreat with Wings?**
- ✓ **I'm not from the United States, can I do Wings?**



Year Four: Enhance & Add



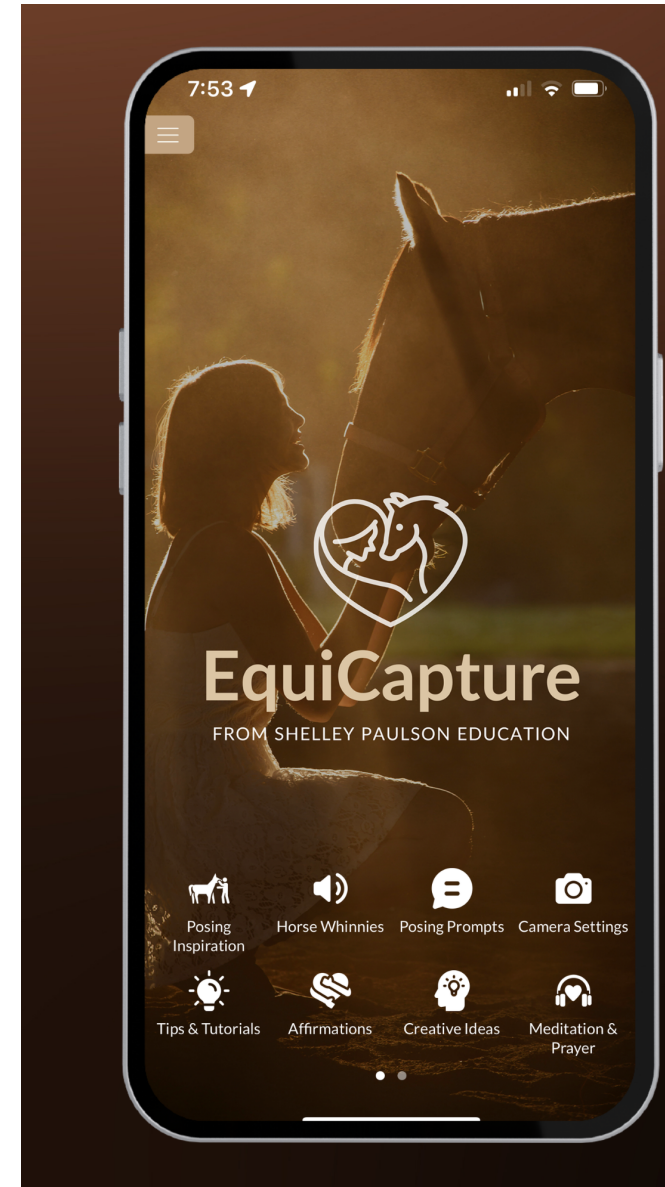
2023

- Added a VIP level for Wings that included monthly 1:1 coaching.
- Added Quizzes to test students' learning.
- Added course incentive for Wings (6 months of Pegasus Circle if they meet criteria)
- Filled Pegasus from Wings (goal!)
- Created an educational blog (SEO)
- Started #SPPMentoringMonday Carousel Posts
- Added Certification for Pegasus Mentorship



App Launch - EquiCapture

- Created an App for Equestrian Photographers.
- Lots of great tools for photographers: posing inspiration, creative ideas, tips and tutorials, whinnies to get ears up, camera settings, meditation and affirmations, and more.
- Keeps me top-of-mind.





Lessons Learned

- The more authentic you are in your marketing, the more you will attract people who resonate with you.
- High-quality, valuable free content is the key to building an audience and marketing your offerings.
- Run with ideas!



Let's Workshop This



Steps to Create and Online Course

- ① Build an audience first around your area of expertise.
- ② Choose a topic you want to teach to others.
- ③ Share valuable free content so people know what they can expect from paid content.
- ④ Create course content.
- ⑤ Market and sell the course.



Software tools I use for Online Course Creation:

- Thinkific - hosts all my course content plus my educational website
- Screenflow - recording my lessons.
- Premiere Pro - edit video lessons.
- Alternatively: Hire a video editor from Fiverr or Upwork.



Hardware tools I use for Online Course Creation:

- Tonor Microphone (at desk)
- Rode Wireless GO II (in studio)
- Teleprompter
- DSLR Camera & lens - Could be also just using a webcam



Worksheet

- Topic
- Format
- Audience Building
- Marketing



Q&A



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