

## Virtual Photography

Claudine Land:

Hello, everyone, and welcome to the Virtual Ingenuity Business Podcast. I'd like to introduce our guest today. Linda Kazares is a leading virtual and on-location photographer who provides corporate headshots and branding photography solutions. She is a personal branding, business, and family photographer for over 15 years.

Claudine Land:

In 2020, Linda created a safe, effective remote alternative to capturing images virtually that mirrors an in-person studio photo shoot. Virtual photography has created a new normal for many business functions, and Linda's creativity provides the photography solution for this new normal. Linda, welcome. It's great to have you here.

Linda Kazares:

Claudine, I'm so excited that you asked me to do this. This is interesting information.

Claudine Land:

Fantastic. Well, we can't wait to hear what you have to say about virtual photography. We know that photography is important to a company's brand, whether it's personal or corporate branding. And many organizations now have embraced the concept of working remotely. Organizing company and staff headshots has always been a hassle for managers, CEOs, and business owners.

Claudine Land:

And organizing company-wide team member headshots, it's just, Linda, virtually impossible if everyone is working remotely. It's challenging to get everyone together to get a team headshot or a staff headshot together, or something of that nature. So now, new technology in photography offers a unique solution. Tell us, Linda, about virtual photography and how it works.

Linda Kazares:

Okay, great. Let's just say, what it isn't is a screenshot. People go, "Oh, right, virtual photography. I can do my own screenshot." It's actually not that at all. What it is it's a live photo shoot as if the client was in a studio. I work with them to pose. I help them pick wardrobe. I give them tips on how to prepare for a virtual photo shoot.

Linda Kazares:

Now this all starts with, a client has an iPhone or Android. All they need on top of that is a tripod and some sort of light. Then I give them a link to an app that they then put on their iPhone, and we communicate that way. Now, very similar to a studio shoot, their camera is facing them. And then I can see them, we can communicate two ways, and I literally snap their shutter. I know it's a little hard until you've seen it happen to understand or to appreciate how simple that is.

Linda Kazares:

People go, "Oh my God. Oh, I don't like having my picture taken to begin with, and now I've got to do this." Well, the truth is, is that my clients have so much fun when we do this because it's creative for

them, a little different than what they're used to. It challenges them a little bit if they're not as familiar with software or with that. But they get into it right away. It's not a problem.

Linda Kazares:

So that's how it works. It's have an iPhone or Android and a tripod, and the rest is up to the both of us. I help them pose. I help them with their lighting to position themselves at the right place in their house. I could keep going on, but it's really that simple. And if I talk anymore, it's going to sound complicated.

Claudine Land:

And I can attest that it is indeed fun. And it is so effortless on my part, on the person that is having the photography done. You are a master at virtual photography, and it's always, always a fun time working with you.

Claudine Land:

And just to reiterate, Linda is in Arizona. And it doesn't matter what location you are, the person that wants to have the picture made, who wants to have the photography done, you can be anywhere in the world. In fact, Linda, you've worked with people in other countries, is that right?

Linda Kazares:

That's correct. I worked with Argentina, Canada, and domestically, Alabama, New Mexico, Los Angeles, New York. So, like you said, it makes no difference where the client is located. They do need the ability to make a phone call or an internet connection. Other than that, they're in good shape.

Linda Kazares:

And this works so well for companies that have multi-locations also, in addition to a solopreneur, but people have multi-locations. I have a couple clients that have set up corporate accounts so that when they get new employees like for onboarding or to start with to have all their employees shot. I even have one client who has me shoot all their clients even though the clients come to the office. Which is not necessarily what I started this out for, but it helps. I mean, there's such a wide range of the type of companies that this can help that I get really excited.

Claudine Land:

And then some of the companies, Linda, you have some of your clients that include a yoga instructor that I've seen firsthand. You've gotten fabulous pictures from her, and she's located where?

Linda Kazares:

She's in Austin, Texas.

Claudine Land:

She's in Texas and you have them pose so creatively. Just wonderful poses. And then you have the true professional where you have someone in a suit and tie that you take a wonderful profile picture for, right?

Linda Kazares:

Correct. Yeah.

Claudine Land:

Okay. So, let's talk about then the type of images that are recommended for marketing materials, corporate or personal branding, brochures or portfolios. Or even, Linda, for social media accounts, such as LinkedIn, Facebook. Can we talk a little bit about that, about what poses are recommended, what advice you have to give for individuals that are wanting marketing materials done?

Linda Kazares:

Well, the thing that's great about that is that a single headshot can be used for all of those purposes. Now, to expand from that is when we move into personal branding where it's more than just a headshot. But when you're talking about headshots, it's just to keep a clean, clean image. It's, what is your image? That's how you should present yourself in a headshot.

Linda Kazares:

If you work for a more casual company, you might wear a polo. If you're more formal, like in a finance role, it might be a little more formal with a jacket or a different type of dress. It's, how do you want to present yourself based on what business you're in and how you want to project yourself?

Claudine Land:

And Linda, you provide, you get all of that information from your clients firsthand, what type of photograph they want to take, right? Whether it's personal branding or whether it's corporate branding. And then you actually give advice on what they should wear.

Linda Kazares:

That's correct.

Claudine Land:

And what's going to look better in the photo.

Linda Kazares:

Yeah. In fact, what's really interesting with virtual is, even though I have a plan with the client, once you get it on screen and you can see what it's going to look like in a final image, I have actually, quote unquote, walked into a closet with a client for them to find something else to wear, because what they picked out, which often we've reviewed before. But because it might not work on screen, we can pick out anything because they're in their home. They have access to that. That's another beauty to all of this, in addition to the fact they don't have to travel anywhere. So, it's really cost effective in that way.

Claudine Land:

So you are, Linda, not just a virtual photographer, you are also a wardrobe stylist. You advise clients on what's going to look great for their brand.

Linda Kazares:

Yeah, absolutely.

Claudine Land:  
That's awesome.

Linda Kazares:

The suggestions I make to clients is to keep it simple. Things like stripes and big patterns don't work. Women sometimes will show up with long, dangly earrings. Well, my suggestion is always, don't wear anything or have anything around you that takes away from your face. Because that first for a headshot is the most important thing in the photo is the face. And I will test the client also to test see, do they like to smile or not smile? Should they be looking left, right, or looking at the camera?

Linda Kazares:

You had asked earlier, "What makes the best kind of headshot?" A lot of it depends on what's a client's best side. Where do you part your hair? Is that the part you want to face the camera or do you want something else? So, all of that is so important in the final outcome of the photo shoot.

Linda Kazares:

Plus, during a photo shoot, the client will see, some of the photos, I'll pick out some of the good ones and I'll let them see them so that they can make their decision. And until they're 100% happy, I don't finish the shoot with them.

Claudine Land:

And you do wonderful editing too. So, not to worry if you have a client where a collar is out of place or something else is out of place on their clothing, or if hair is out of place, you do wonderful editing as well. And then also, Linda, before the initial photo shoot with your client, you do a test prior to that, don't you?

Linda Kazares:

Yes, I do. Typically, that is to test or look at where the light is best in the house. So, what I do is have the client walk around with their phone and we'll find a wall or we'll find a light. Usually, natural light coming in from a window is the best. And often for just a headshot, a blank wall is the best.

Linda Kazares:

Now sometimes, most of the time in fact, I can drop in a new background. And I don't mean the kind of background you get on Zoom where your ears disappear when you move around. I mean, I can literally drop something in in the background, either a blank, or there are some, let's say, outdoor scenes that I can drop in, which really helps out with clients.

Claudine Land:

Right. And I've seen firsthand that you do that, as well. Virtual photography we know is definitely more cost effective than having an in-house photographer. And Linda, I've seen people on their social media pages...they have a business page. But on their social media page, they use a cell phone to take images. What is wrong with doing that? When is it necessary to bring in the experts, to bring you in for virtual photography?

Linda Kazares:

Okay. Let me first start about, a client needs to understand that a selfie is not a professional headshot. I don't care what a lot of people think. They've got an iPhone, they've been using it. It's good quality. But they don't understand the angles, the posing and whatnot.

Linda Kazares:

So that's when they should bring in a professional. And definitely not only virtual, but depends on what people are comfortable with. On-location photography is excellent. Virtual photography I'm really excited about for a whole bunch of reasons.

Linda Kazares:

I can do a photo shoot with a client in 30 minutes or less. And I can turn around a final photo in about an hour. Now, when you think about an hour, as opposed to what it used to take, three hours to do a photo shoot by the time a client had to drive in, drive out. Anyway, virtual just for headshots has worked out to be such a great option for clients.

Claudine Land:

I agree. Why do you think clients are responding so positively?

Linda Kazares:

Well, because of all of the benefits we just talked about. They save time and productivity by not having to travel around. They also, a lot of clients like I mentioned earlier are uncomfortable having their picture taken. Well, one of the things that I found out is when they're in their own environment where they have control of their environment, they're a lot more comfortable that way.

Linda Kazares:

When they go into a studio, sometimes it can be kind of intimidating with all the lights, and chairs, and sit and stand, and all of that. So the virtual really lends itself toward that. And then of course I mentioned the changing wardrobe. And for multi-employee companies, they even are using this now for onboarding new employees. Because again, it increases their productivity because their employee can be in the same place where they work from without having to travel anywhere.

Claudine Land:

Fantastic. I love it. It certainly has helped me using you, Linda, over the years. And so, I certainly appreciate all that you do. And like I said, you make it so easy. Within an hour, we're completely finished. You do a test prep prior to the initial shoot. The shoot then takes an hour. And really, within a couple of hours, you have everything ready to send to me, my proofs. It's amazing what you do.

Claudine Land:

Virtual photography is definitely more cost effective than traditional photography. It is a convenient way to shoot and to capture your staff pictures, individual headshots, as well, for personal branding, and for business branding. And again, especially when you have employees or staff working in different locations, it's just an easy and effective way to get those team or group photos. And it's a great, great branding tool, Linda.

Claudine Land:

And virtual headshots and branding photo shoots are viable options that reduce travel. And yet they still offer the same quality as studio shoots for many business needs. Linda, I know that as times change, virtual will continue to be a solution for multi-location companies with remote workers worldwide. And you've already started. You've been doing this for years, taking images of people worldwide. And the process is easy with you, it's fun, and it has caught fire with executives and corporations alike. So, Linda, where can individuals get in touch with you?

Linda Kazares:

They can get in touch with me either on my website, which might be a good place for them to start because there are videos there that show the ease of process. So that would be Linda Kazares, K-A-Z-A-R-E-S dot com. Surely, they can give me a call at (480) 353-9415. I'm in Scottsdale.

Linda Kazares:

But remember, it really doesn't matter where you are, but let me sleep in in the morning, okay? So if we have a time difference, think about that. Or they can send me an email at [linda@lindakazares.com](mailto:linda@lindakazares.com). On my website, there's also a calendar if they just want to book an appointment to talk, or book the appointment just to set the shoot up, that would be perfect.

Claudine Land:

And Linda, you're also on LinkedIn too. You have a lot of really great blog posts and you give great advice on how to shoot, how to get a great headshot. So, we do appreciate you as well putting that information on LinkedIn. Be sure to follow Linda Kazares on LinkedIn as well, guys. Thank you again, Linda. Thank you all for listening. Visit Virtual Ingenuity, LLC.

Linda Kazares:

Claudine

Claudine Land:

Yes.

Linda Kazares:

It's been a pleasure.

Claudine Land:

Thank you, Linda. I always enjoy talking with you.

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Let's impact together!