A vintage camera with a lens and a smartphone are placed on a rustic wooden surface. The camera is positioned in the upper left corner, and the smartphone is partially visible in the lower left corner. The text is centered over the wooden background.

HOW to MAKE \$100,000 a year as a PHOTOGRAPHER

By the Pros at Photography Jobs Online

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INTRODUCTION



You don't take a photograph, you make it.

Ansel Adams, photographer and environmentalist

The number of people who live in a household in the United States that own at least one traditional digital camera is on the decline. From a peak in 2010 of 152 million cameras, there are now only 111 million in 2017. The reason is clear: the general population no longer needs a traditional, digital SLR (single-lens reflex) camera because they rely on their smart devices to take pictures.



Everyone with a smart phone has a camera, and because nearly everyone has a smart phone, photographers have become a dime a dozen. Now, most people can take a point-and-shoot photo, and then publish it somewhere on the Internet in an instant.

Consider that in October 2014, for the first time, the number of gadgets, which includes smart phones, tablets, and other mobile electronics, officially outnumbered the number of people on the planet. The number of devices was 7.22 billion, and the number of world citizens was 7.2 billion.

In the same year, people uploaded 1.8 billion images each day, which amounts to 657 billion photographs per year. Every two minutes, our populace uploads more pictures than there were photos in existence 150 years ago.

With the invasion of images into every aspect of our lives, in particular, our social media feeds that bombard us with endless photos, the value of the photographic image has diminished in the eyes of many.

Before the Internet, work was required to see photographs. In fact, whether it was sitting down in front of a photo album at home or visiting an art gallery, looking at photographs before the World Wide Web was somewhat of an event.

Today, if you are a photographer, a serious one, a professional who is moved by capturing a perfectly orchestrated and framed photographic image, how do you stand out among the crowd of amateurs who water down people's appetite for purchasing photographs?

If everyone is a photographer, how do you make a career of it, one that is capable of making you a decent living? How do you breach \$100,000 a year by selling your photographic wares? We know how, and we will show you.



Photography-Jobs.net (Photography Jobs Online) offers a complete systematic, moneymaking blueprint to selling your photographs online, and this guidebook is another offering from us to help you get to the next level in your photography career.

Stay positive.

We believe in you, and remember that while the saturation of photos can be off-putting at times to serious photographers, there are also wonderful things about our incessant picture-taking society: the fast-moving technological advances work to everyone's favor.



Professional photographers can share their work on a world stage and create a large following of devotees. Moreover, the technology to take the photographs and put them together in an online art gallery is growing less expensive, opening the door to a democracy in the field.

This democracy assists the marginalized among us to be a real player in the photography game, and the flow of photos from all walks of life creates an abundance of creative angles and competition, which improves the quality of everyone's work. If you are good, truly good,

and you work hard, you will rise above the rest, regardless of your background, income, or cultural demographic, and when you do, you know your success is legit.

Regardless of the factors that brought you here, you are already the cream of the crop, and you have it in you to rise above the rest, or you would not be reading these pages in an effort to get better and make a significant career out of your passion for photography.

AN EDUCATION IN PHOTOGRAPHY



Beauty can be seen in all things, seeing and composing the beauty is what separates the snapshot from the photograph.

Matt Hardy, professional photographer

Being a professional photographer requires talent, and you cannot purchase skill. Professionals must be able to frame an image in a way that speaks to an audience. They have to understand the effects of lighting, shadows, and angles. These instinctive elements come naturally or from experience that is gained through hours of taking pictures and editing them, and appreciating what worked, and what did not, and heading back out into the field with new insight everyday to improve and to continue the route to discovered learning, and that learning is never done when you are a photographer.

Since quality photographers are born out of instinct and grit, there are varying views on whether higher education can help a photographer get better. There are two schools of thought on the matter, and we will dive into both of them.

Reasons to Get a Photography Degree

Courses in photography will not teach you passion and artistry, but if you are in tune with those things, a few classes or even a photography degree can jumpstart your career.

As we have discussed already, a photography degree could never make you into "a photographer", but



college courses will teach you about photography equipment and how to use it to your full benefit. In addition, you will learn about lighting, effects, digital editing techniques, and alternative forms of photography. These offerings might enlighten you, or lead you towards a brand new strategy in the way you do things as you discover new photographic methods that could engage you on a higher level.

Moreover, photography courses will guide you through the history of photography, and you will learn about the photographic pioneers and their practices, routines, and styles, which might provide a bridge to your own evolving technique.



As a photography student, you will sit through critiques of your own work and your classmates, where productive criticism is abundant. You will learn to accept both good and bad assessments of your work in a closed environment, so that you are prepared for the first time someone has harsh criticism of your work in a public forum. The engagement with your peers in a classroom can be invigorating, and the bouncing about of ideas on artistry can assist you with your own creative flow.

Beyond the art critiques, universities provide the chance to engage with the curator of the university art gallery and local galleries as well, which often provide you with the opportunity to showcase your photographs, for they are always looking for new photography stars. In college, you can connect, network with professionals, and start making a name for yourself.

Many people will say that a college degree is useless, but the statistics make it clear that getting one is beneficial. Research shows that people with a bachelor's degree make \$1 million more during their lifetime than those with only a high school diploma. In other words, those without a college degree earn 77 percent less income in the course of their life.



In addition, your studies in college will go beyond photography classes. You will take courses on world literature, philosophy, sociology, and others that will help you connect in a more impactful way within the world around you when you pull out your camera and deal with the elements of society.

The social experience of a university is enlightening as you engage with people across varying demographics; and as you advance into higher caliber, upperclassman

classes, the competency of the students in them rises as well. You will be in the midst of the brightest minds on the planet, and while some of them will turn out to be real jerks, and sometimes those jerks are your professors, their knowledge is useful.

We will discuss "networking" in detail later in the book, but if you are a strong picture-taker, yet an introvert who does not come equipped with an aggressive networking soul, a university lines up the network for you.

Reasons to NOT Get a Photography Degree

There are also reasons to NOT go to college. If you are a photographic savant, who has been shooting photos since birth, then college might not be for you. If photography consumes your life, and there is nothing more to learn, then college might not be for you. If your photography network is strong, and growing stronger with each day, then college might not be for you. If you have already made photography your profession, and you are hustling your way up that ladder to photo-god status, college might not be for you.

College costs a lot of money, and most people leave college with massive student loan debt. If you could use the money that it takes to go to college and invest it in photography equipment and developing a business model, it might offer a better choice. Then, instead of hanging out on a campus, collecting debt, and consuming your days with math and science

requirements for four years, you could take the time you would spend on earning a degree, and use it to practice your photography and build a business, on your way to \$100,000 a year.

Choosing to go to college or choosing to begin your career now without a higher education depends on your knowledge and experience as a photographer, and your personality and lifestyle. It also depends on your availability to funds. You can get a loan to go to college from most institutions, but the same cannot be said for borrowing a similar amount of money to start a photography business while you hone your skills. In other words, if you don't go to college, you are going to have to get a job that might be outside of the field of photography to pay the bills instead of going to classes and living off grants and loans for four years, learning about the craft of photography, and snapping pictures in your spare time. It is a huge decision that requires a lot of thought.

Photography Workshops, Courses, and Groups

If going to college is not a possibility, then attend workshops, work your way through free online courses, and join photography social groups in which group members meet to discuss their latest adventures in photography, and review each other's work for better future results.

Workshops can be a key player in your educational growth as a photographer. Take for example the workshop offered by Photo Native each year in Provo, Utah. They make their three-day program sound like the event of the century, a place and community where you can be yourself while learning from inspiring and experienced people in the field of photography. At the same time, you will "party with your fellow photo-nerds" as you spend a long weekend "full of learning, growth, and dance party fun times."



Photography workshops typically have important keynote speakers who illustrate artistry and professionalism, and classes that cover all aspects of photography, along with hands-on workshops, and social events. Workshops are usually a mix of creativity, technical skills, and business and marketing tips. You can also participate in photo shoots that teach methodology while assisting you with creating great photographs to pad your portfolio.

Education is important, and there are numerous ways to attack your learning and growth. Find an educational approach that suits you best, but never stop learning and growing as a photographer, because the art of photography never stops evolving, and you have to keep up with the evolution in order to stay on top.

FINDING EARLY OPPORTUNITIES



You've got to push yourself harder. You've got to start looking for pictures nobody else could take. You've got to take the tools you have and probe deeper.

William Albert Allard, documentary photographer

No one decides to "love" photography in order to become "rich" with "money", but becoming rich with money helps you have more freedom and allows you to do the thing you love to do everyday, that being photography. In other words, the passion for photography comes first, the money comes next, and the freedom is the result of your passion and wealth, and that combination makes for a "rich" and rewarding "life".

There are numerous types of thriving photography businesses and ways in which to monetize your skills and love for photography. The median annual photography salary in the United States is \$61,427 in 2017, with the high-end average being around \$69,548 a year, according to salary.com. The upper echelon of photographers can get into the six figures, which means that if you follow our steps to the next level, you can make \$100,000 or more each year.

In order to get to that mark, you will want to choose a photographic career path that pays well, while selling your photographs to a larger world market on the Internet as a side business. We will show you how to begin and succeed as a self-employed or business-owning local photographer, while selling your everyday photographic results to the world.

Be a Wedding Photographer

There is no fast track to becoming a wedding photographer, but with nearly 6,200 wedding each day in the United States, you will never run out of job opportunities in this particular arena. In 2014, the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated that there were 124,900 full-time and part-time professional photographers, who either work for an employer or are self-employed, in the United States, and those photographers do a range of different work, not just weddings, so photographers are definitely needed in the wedding field.

The average wedding photographer averages 21 wedding shoots each year, though it is certainly possible to shoot more, and the average cost to hire a wedding photographer is \$2,500 to \$10,000. The very best make at least \$4,000 per wedding.

The steps to shooting weddings and having your own business begin with assisting a wedding photographer. As a beginning wedding photographer who is working for a master picture taker, you will be assigned as a "second" or even "third" shooter for big weddings, and that is how you gain the experience you will need to eventually start your own business.



You might already be a great photographer, but a wedding is a different animal, unlike any other type of photography, and you will need a mentor and wedding practice. Search for wedding photographers in your area, and be ready to provide them with a portfolio of your photography, which should illustrate your understanding of lighting and angles. If your portfolio isn't strong yet, then offer to carry bags and set up lighting, or assist in any way possible. The objective is to have "a wedding" under your belt and on your resume.



Send out sincere emails to wedding photographers whose work you genuinely appreciate, and tell them you love their work, and you would like to assist them or be their apprentice, and obviously at this early stage, don't expect to be paid very much. You need them, and presumably, they don't necessarily need you, or at least, they don't know that they need you yet.

While at these weddings, be courteous, take mental notes of how the process works, and ask questions of the photographer. Be useful, be respectful, and make solid connections. Also, you will want to assess the type of equipment that the other wedding photographers use, but at the very least, before you begin shooting weddings on your own terms, you will want to have the following gear: two camera bodies, a 24-70mm zoom lens, a 70-200mm lens, and a flash.

Once you have a cache of pictures together after working as an assistant on several weddings, you will need an online portfolio. *Later, we will discuss how to create a successful website.* In your portfolio, show pictures that represent your unique personality and style, so there is no clash of cultures once you arrive on the wedding day.

Once a potential client contacts you, you are probably already in their "Top 3" choices, and you have to turn on the charm while maintaining your professionalism to become their "only" choice. You will need to meet the client in person, and you can choose a coffee shop, a meeting room at your local library, or any other space that provides for a truly professional experience.

At that point, you will become a "perfect match" for your bride and groom based on a "feeling" the couple has about you. They may want you to share your philosophy and they may share their expectations of you, but more than anything, and that includes the final cost, they want to feel comfortable that you will deliver their wedding story in a beautiful and unique, yet unobtrusive, way.



When you land your first wedding photography gig, you will feel overwhelmed, which is natural. You have an important job on your hands, and you understand the challenge before you, but you also understand that photography is your passion and your calling, and you will make it work. This might sound crazy, but shoot for yourself, not the person who hired you, and if you do, you will probably do a great job and have a long, successful career ahead of you.

Be a Family Portrait Photographer

Being a self-employed family portrait photographer can be a lucrative business. Family portrait packages cost between \$200 to \$400 for an hour of camera time followed by the editing of the photos, after which you will provide either a CD or DVD of the photos or an online gallery of the photos where the client has the permission to make prints or use the photos in any way they please.

The photo shoot can be outside or in a studio, and you can do several client sessions in one weekend, and spend a few days during the week editing the photos you take during those shoots to make them into a perfect package.

You will want to begin your family portraiture career in



much the same way that a wedding photographer begins his or her career. In other words, you will want to work as an assistant or an apprentice for a while.

Also, since there are not the same pressures involved in family portraits as there are in wedding photography, you can practice portraiture photography on your own family members and friends, especially children, and put together an online portfolio using those images. However, nothing beats working with a skilled photographer in the field in order to learn the art of working with people and making them comfortable with your camera in their face.

Before the family portrait session takes place, mothers will want to know what they should wear for the photographs. The clothes don't need to match, but there should be harmony in the colors that are chosen, and that harmony extends beyond how the family looks together. The subjects must also be harmonious with the backgrounds in the photo, so go over the location with the parents to ensure that the colors come together perfectly in the final results.



The mother should choose her outfit first, and once she is happy, she can match and compliment the outfits of

the rest of the family to her attire. The family's outfits should be simple, but tasteful accessories can be added to the ensemble.

Shooting individuals or groups requires patience, and a relaxed, encouraging, and enthusiastic approach. The attitude that you provide during the session will be returned back to you by the family that is your subject.

In terms of position, you will want all of the eyes in the photo on the same focal plane, and think of a triangle when positioning the heads of the subjects. Look for candid moments, which might happen when an intermission from the main shooting occurs. The family might take a break for a few minutes, but you are always working your camera, looking for great photographs.

Working with children can be a challenge. They are rebellious and cooperating is not on their list of favorite things to do, so having patience is key, and while showing understanding, capture that raw quality that kids express in everything they do.

As soon as you meet the child or children for the first time, get down on their level. In other words, kneel, squat, or sit, so that you are looking at



them eye-to-eye. Introduce yourself, ask the child some questions about themselves, and make them comfortable with you. After the initial meeting, show them some photographic examples of what you are looking to do with them. Consider that they have been taking pictures all of their lives, and they might not fully understand the level of photography you are trying to achieve, until you show them. They only know that their mother and father have taken a million pictures of them, and it is "boring". Help them understand that you are creating "magic", and they are the "hero" in the story you are telling with your photographs.

Also, let them play, and captures those moments. Not every photo has to be them staring into a lens. Shoot candid and animated moments. Shoot at six frames per second to capture their action, keep things simple, and choose shoot locations that you have had success with in the past, so that there are no surprises.

If they are anxious, tell them to close their eyes, relax, and think of something that makes them happy, and on the count of three, have them open their eyes and look at you, and at that point, you might actually catch that magic you are looking to find, and poof, there is your hero. In addition, it is important to keep parents at a distance, so they are not directing the photo shoot and do not drive the attention of the child away from you.

Be a Press Photographer

A press photographer, or one who works for a media outlet like a newspaper or magazine, can tell a story with one photo, and sometimes in a more compelling way than the writer can accomplish in the accompanying news story with a thousand words. These photojournalists provide the images that make people aware of what is happening in the world, and oftentimes, they can even invoke change in the world.

Honestly, photojournalist salaries are bleak. Most starting press photographers start below \$30,000 a year, which is a long way from \$100,000. However, top salaried photojournalists make \$60,000 with some extending to \$110,000 according to the Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA).



Typically, a college degree in journalism or photography is required to get your start in the field, and it helps to get a summer internship with a news organization between college semesters. Practical experience is the most important thing, and college classes, a campus newspaper, and an internship are a significant boost to a career as a press photographer. These things will provide you with experience and knowledge, and

enough photos to put together a strong portfolio, which you will need to get a photojournalism job.

Once you have secured a job, you will need to work your way up the ranks in both "responsibility" and pay, using the following measures:

- Be aware of your surroundings and look for emotion in the faces of the people at the event you are covering. Get close-ups of attendees to provide the mood of the moment whether it is joy, anger, or sadness, as well as wide shots to provide a context for those feelings.
- Use natural light as much as possible when taking photographs. You do not want to be a distraction at an event by using a flash. For the most part, you will want to go unnoticed.
- Be prepared before you arrive on the scene. Understand your assignment beforehand, and start to develop ideas in your mind for what pictures would accurately represent the story that you need to tell.

- The most important thing as a journalist, with or without a camera, is to be objective. No bias should ever enter your picture's frame. As a photojournalist, you are required to accurately and honestly record the details that are around you with no hidden agenda.

Other Careers in Photography

The photography professions that have been discussed are only the beginning of the full-time possibilities as a photographer in the commercial and editorial arena. The world is driven by visual media, and that obsession will not die anytime soon. Here are some other careers in photography, along with their salaries, to consider:

- Fashion photographer: \$59,000
- Fine art photographer: \$69,000
- Medical photographer: \$59,000
- Product photographer: \$50,000

Sell Your Photographs Online

It would be a great loss if your photographs were not in an online library being observed by the world. First, people need to see your photos, and second, extra income can be made by doing it. You can actually make a career selling your photographs online, but it works better as a supplement to your daily photography gig, if you are looking to get to \$100,000 a year.

In the Internet age, there are numerous approaches and venues to monetize the collection of photographic images you have taken over the years, and it can be done quite efficiently.

Photography Jobs Online is one of those ways. By going to photography-jobs.net, and becoming a member, you not only have access to a photography employment database that is updated daily with thousands of work-at-home photography jobs and access to stock photo companies and online agencies, you can also upload your photographs, and when they are downloaded by a paying customer, you earn money. In addition, you will receive "The Basics of Photography" eBook, digital camera tutorial videos, premiere photo editing software, unlimited private coaching, and numerous other benefits.



There are many avenues to selling your photos online whether you are a professional or an amateur, and the possibilities for monetizing your photos are endless, but you must stay organized and go about it in a pragmatic way in order to stay on top of things and maintain a successful product and income.

First, it is important to understand your rights as a photographer. Making your photographs available online can lead to your images being downloaded illegally and used without your approval. Also, there are basic laws you must follow when uploading pictures to the Internet, or you might find yourself in a legal battle over the use of a photograph that includes subjects within the frame. The following is only a starting point to your rights as a photographer, and the rights of your subjects. Always check with a lawyer when you need legal questions answered about licensing and rights.

You own the rights to every photography you take, and through a contract, you can license certain rights to a client who chooses to use your photographs, and they cannot use your photo beyond the scope of the agreed upon terms.

You can license your photography in one of two ways, through a stock photography library, which provides a distribution database of images from thousands of photographers to the

public, or on an independent basis in which you deal photographs directly to clients from your website or through a service you provide.

If you use a stock photography library to store and sell your photographs, they will manage the licenses you choose for each image. If your photograph is purchased through a stock photography agency, the purchaser agrees to the licensing terms.

Rights Managed (RM) photographs use the following criteria when establishing price and license type, so you will have to use these parameters when determining how you want your photographs used:

- Image size and resolution
- Geographical area where the client will use the image
- Medium in which the client will use the image
- Length of time the client will use the image
- Volume or reach of image distribution
- Purpose in which the client will use the image
- Exclusive or non-exclusive use of the image

Exclusive rights means that only one client can use the photograph, and the client pays more for that privilege, while non-exclusive means there are no limits to the number of people who can use the image.

The overall process of assigning rights to your images might seem complicated because there is a lot to consider when deciding upon how you want your images used, but once you do make the decision on rights, you can apply the license to every photograph in your collection.



Royalty free (RF) licenses give anyone the right to use your images without having to pay a license fee. If you plan to make money from your photographs, you will not want to use this type of license.

Sometimes, you will need to acquire certain permissions to publish and sell the photographs you take of people. There is a legal notion called "reasonable expectation of

privacy", which means that people can sue you if you take their picture and publish it when they are on private property, and that private property could be their home, hospital, or other place where discretion is implied, and that includes "public" bathrooms.

In addition, model licenses are required when a person is in a photo that is used for commercial purposes. A model release is a signed agreement by the subjects in your photograph that their likeness can be used in all forms.

People in public places are not afforded the same rights, so photographs taken on the streets are typically fine to publish and sell, but if their image shows up on billboard somewhere, you could be sued if an agreement was not signed between you and the subject.

Stock photography websites include the following major players:

- **Getty Images** provides high-end photography used by companies and publishers looking for exclusive, exceptional-quality photographs. The standards are higher for uploading your work, the selling price is higher, and the royalties vary, but are typically around 20 percent.
- **iStock** is a brand of Getty Images with lower standards, and includes non-exclusive images, lower-priced photographs, and pays a commission that ranges from 15 to 40 percent.

- **Shutterstock** also has less inexpensive, non-exclusive images and provides you with a commission up to 30 percent of your sales price.

To be a phenomenon in the stock photography industry, it is essential that you find your niche. Successful photographers have a style that is unique to them. Basically, an agreement is made between you and the followers and devotees of your photographic work, and that contract implies that your specific theme will shine through in every image you put into the world. Find your focus, whether it is people, fashion, travel, landscapes of cities or nature, food, etc. Stay consistent. Then, build your audience, *which we will discuss in detail later*.

BUILD AND MARKET YOUR BRAND



Nothing happens when you sit at home. I always make it a point to carry a camera with me at all times. I just shoot at what interests me at the moment.

Elliot Erwitt, advertising and documentary photographer

Becoming an expert in the photography field will get you places. Leverage what you have learned through educational courses and workshops, and work experience to gain authority and notoriety in your field. Once you establish yourself as an expert—a photography professional of the highest caliber—high-level recognition will follow and your career will hit the highest gears.

Network Your Brand

Networking involves making genuine connections with people in your field. The professional photography network is relatively small, and while the people within the network are often competing *entities* in the field, you should never consider them to be competing *enemies*. Cultivate every photography relationship that you come across.

Consider the following items in order to increase your professional network size and become recognized in photography circles:



- Find a **photography mentor** that can introduce you to people in the field and offer critical advice when you are stumped by an industry-specific topic or need someone to review your photography work before you submit it.
- **Business cards** are still important because they are an effective direct marketing tool. It is important to always have some business cards available to make instant connections wherever you travel. Business cards are a quick and satisfactory way to make a good first impression, build your credibility, and provide the many ways that your new connections can contact you and find you on social networks. While you are out shooting photographs, there will be numerous opportunities to share your business card with people who are interested in what you are doing and want to work with you in some facet.
- Find a photography event calendar and **begin attending conferences**. Try to find at least one event each month that is local or within driving distance, and any other national conferences that fit into your budget. There are hundreds of photography conferences each year with broad topics or



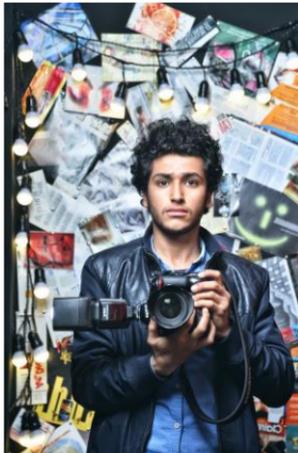
niche subjects that can help elevate your career by introducing you to the latest trends in the photography sector and by increasing your professional network.

- **Join professional photography organizations.** Some professional organizations are free and some require a yearly membership fee. Do some research on various organizations and attempt to find ones that offer networking events, workshops, and monthly or quarterly photography trade magazines that keep you updated on photography trends and topics in the field. Join and participate in at least one photography association. Some organizations to consider are the Professional Photographers of America (PPA) and American Photographic Artists (APA), as well as niche photography associations like Wedding and Portrait Photographers International (WPPI) and American Society of Media Professionals (ASMP).

Build an Online Presence to Market Your Brand

There are now 3.89 billion Internet users in the world in 2017. That is a market that has no rival. Internet users spent \$2.1 trillion on the World Wide Web in 2016. In addition, 95 percent of Americans shop online and those shoppers spend an average of five hours each week looking for products and services on the Internet.

Mobile traffic is responsible for 52 percent of Internet usage today, and sales orders made on smart phones average \$115.52 while the average order on tablets is \$106.98. These statistics calls for an online photography business presence, and that presences needs to look sharp, be user friendly, and have solid and quick tools to guide people to your photos and your photography services.



Creating a web landing page and a social platform for your photography business, followed by an advertising campaign to get people to those places is crucial, but it is only the first process to launching your photographs to a world market. Scaling your business is important as well, and strategy and target marketing is key. Also, your website must be managed and monitored so that you can establish your target audience and be strategic in your marketing plan. Then, once a customer is established, you must follow-up with them in a way that is helpful and non-intrusive in order to create a lifelong patron of your photography goods and services, which is the key to a sustainable business.

In other words, you cannot nonchalantly drop your website into the virtual market to see how it does, and hope for the best. There is more to it, which involves research, statistics, and a plan of action. If you already have an online presence, and you are puzzled by its lack

of results because you have magnificent photographs, surely your business model is suffering. Most likely, you need to revamp your strategy and your website to keep up with the changing Internet marketplace.

Build the Perfect Website

Whether you are creating a photography business today or you are an established photographer who gained credibility long ago, your future success is contingent on your photography's place within a virtual context. It is critical to showcase your photography on the Internet, not only to broaden your scope to a huge audience, but in order for your photography future to survive.

Not only is the Internet the new storefront critical to success, but the cost to build an online store to peddle your products or sell your service is vastly less expensive than conducting a business in a physical, brick-and-mortar location. The returns on your investment are massive because the overhead to conduct an online business is minimal. Typically, the



overhead costs consist of web hosting and professional website design and development if it is required. However, keep in mind that there are many user-friendly tools available for creating your own website.

Free and popular website builders include WIX, WebsiteBuilder, IM Creator, SiteBuilder, Sitey, Weebly, Jimdo, ucraft, SITE123, WebStarts, WebNode, and Webs. These sites will offer you the basic tools needed to put together a web identity, but some of the applications that you will need to make a slick presentation and sell your products might come with a monthly service fee. Also, these website builders offer a free web domain, but it will not be unique. You need to purchase a domain name that clearly identifies your photography brand and is not connected to the website builder you are using to create your Internet home, which would be appear as an amateur move.

No doubt, you are a brilliant photographer and your photographs sell themselves, but your photography business needs to change as the technology changes. That change starts with building a home on the Internet, and then, over time, you need to take your website's technology to higher levels, in order to achieve more, stay relevant, and propel you past your competitors.

Your website should look professional and be filled with information, including an epic biography and engaging first-person blog posts about your experiences in the field of

photography. Write your blog articles so they are optimized for search engines. In other words, use keywords within the copy, and design the composition in a way that ensures that when people search for any topic that your blog articles discuss, Internet surfers find a link to your blog, and then find you and your photography. This tactic, which is more like a science, is called SEO or "Search Engine Optimization", and Internet search engines need to find your business, and optimally, your website needs to be located at the very top of search engine results.



When people find your website, make sure that it is easy to navigate, and designed in a professional way in order to adequately display *your brand*. Also, use your social media platforms to support your identity as a photographer and link people to your website. *We will talk more about social media later.*

Finally, once customers land on your page, you need to have a presentation that immediately sells your photographs and photography services, and a way to keep those customers coming back **for more**.

Build the Perfect Blog

Each singular blog article that you write should provide one piece to the bigger puzzle that comprises your "blog", or the entity that is the entire collection of all your posts. A visitor who "accidentally" finds your website because they were looking for information inside of one of your articles, should then be compelled to continue reading other blogs, which will eventually prompt them to check out the photography service or photography commodity that you offer.

There should be a real and deep connection between all of your singular blog articles, and the connection should answer a question about your overall website.

Nothing should stray from the your central focus, and every post should help your website's visitors solve a problem—not create one—and subtly encourage them to stay around awhile and peruse your photography and the photo services that you provide. You are not selling conflict; you are selling good feelings, so they carry over into discovering more about you. Make your blogs light and informative, but without fluff. In other words, make every word count and try to put something together a composition that is between 1,000 and 2,000 words.



"Top Ten Lists" are interesting to some readers, but there should be solid content behind the list. Do not ever allow yourself to take an easy approach to blogging. The information should contain personal anecdotes and essential information about the craft of photography or about the areas that your photography services cover. If they don't, you visitors will not return *ever again*.

The layout of your words and images on the page does matter. The blog post needs to look tidy, clean, and be easy to read. Use a big font that people can see and add quality images that are fast loading and not too big. Paragraphs should be two to five sentences in length since long blocks of text lose readers on a webpage. Bold text and bullet points add life to your page, but don't overuse those elements. Narrow the text to a 650-700 pixel column on the screen. These design elements will keep the reader focused on your content.

When writing a blog, solve a narrow problem, not a broad, sweeping issue. If you offer wedding photography services, don't write a blog about "creating a great wedding", write a blog about "how to choose the perfect wedding MC or DJ", or "how to find inexpensive wedding cakes". Stay narrow because the reader likes it that way; they want something that they can really dig into, something specific and with teeth, and that provides them with solid answers to their questions. Also, narrowing the topics will provide you with endless subject matter and give your readers superior value.

Here are the steps to putting words together to make the perfect blog:

- Turn your brain into an idea-generating machine to come up with a topic that falls squarely into your market. See what other articles already exist in the topic area because you will need those articles to help you with research, but more importantly, you will need to write a blog that has more value than the ones that already exist or it is pointless to write another one.
- When you create your headline, it should contain an SEO key phrase and address a problem. Keywords are words, and key phrases are short phrases, that help search engines locate your article. You should attempt to fine-tune a key phrase beyond a generic concept to its narrowest conclusions. For example, the short phrase "creating compelling street photography images" is better than the phrase "street photography" because there are so many articles with "street photography" in them that it would be hard for you article to break into the top pages on a search engine (but not impossible if constructed perfectly).
- Your introduction paragraph should reiterate the key words in your headline in the first sentence. Then, direct your readers to the main points you will be addressing in the blog, and what the reader will learn upon completion of the article.

- Write a post that is somewhere around 1,500 words, which should cover all key aspects of the topic with proper detail and without any fluff. Keywords should be planted throughout, but they should not be overused or shoehorned into the copy. The blog needs to read naturally and keyword planting should not be jarring and distract from the content.
- Add additional material, including links to both internal and external content, which adds credibility to your article for both the readers and search engines. Also, add images with a main photo near the top, and infographs if you have them.
- Allowing comments is also important, and interacting with the people who comment, in a positive way, helps as well. Therefore, you will want to include a place for visitors to reflect their thoughts, and pose a question at the end of your article to provide an easy point or prompt in which upon readers can remark.

Build the Perfect Social Media Platform

Social media interaction is just as important as a professional website to your overall photography business success. It should become, if it isn't already, an additional platform for advertising your photography wares. Currently, there are 2.79 billion active social media

users on our planet, which is an increase of 21 percent from 2016. Here is where your future photography prospects congregate:

- Facebook has 2 billion active users each month
- Instagram has 700 million active users each month
- Twitter has 328 million active users each month
- LinkedIn has 112.5 million active users each month

Their active use is your call to action!

Social media dominates marketing. Whether you are marketing yourself by posting pictures of your last vacation and your points of view across a variety of topics, or you are marketing your photography business and the value of your photographs and your photography services, social media offers a FREE platform to do those things. The most visited websites in the world from Facebook and Twitter to Instagram and Pinterest are free marketing avenues for you to engage in a meaningful way directly to an audience of eager consumers.

The issue, however, is that engaging your audience is a science, and it is neither a quick or an easy process to figure out. Managing your social network marketing strategy is time-

consuming and requires knowledge and experience to find out what works and what fails, but it is massively important that you engage with your audience.



Construct your social media outlets early and get right to creating an audience and communicating with it. Do not wait until your photography website launches or your photography business platform becomes a permanent reality. You can build excitement by planting your presence in the minds of future customers. Become a resource of information while offering tidbits about the process of building your photography enterprise. Let your social media followers know all the details, and

make each new progression in your evolution an exciting event. Get people invested by telling your story as it develops from the pitfalls to the successes, so that your followers learn to trust you and your business.

Also, share content from professionals in the field and provide commentary on it. Since you are up to speed on the photography industry and are reading



articles on a daily basis that pertain to photography, share them with your audience. Look for credible and objective journalists and bloggers who know the photography field and don't slant their stories in an overly aggressive marketing way. Never post an article or blog that you haven't thoroughly researched for fairness and truth because you don't want to post anything on your social networking pages that turns out to be false. An additional advantage to commenting on the stories of other people and sharing their work is that they might do the same for you as you provide original content yourself.



Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are the social platforms that are the most receptive to businesses, but every platform should be considered. The most important thing is to adapt your content to the network. This does not mean that you compromise your culture because that is a dangerous move that will only confuse your audience. However, each platform speaks a certain language and it is important to relate to it in some way.

For example, IBM, the stodgy, old school technology company, remains relevant in the social stratosphere by using Tumblr. Tumblr is a microblogging social network site that is an afterthought to many businesses because Facebook and Twitter make all of the headlines, but old humble Big Blue, which originated in 1911 when Orville and Wilbur Wright were

still trying to figure out airplanes, locked arms with the social networking upstart and found massive success. One thing is for certain, IMB will not show up late to a technology party, and that is what Tumblr provides them.

While Tumblr can make rock stars out of people in the fashion and culture industry, IMB doesn't appear at first glance to be a good fit for the ultra-cool atmosphere, but that notion is false. IBM Research features interviews, anecdotes from real folks at IBM, fancy product descriptions, predictions regarding innovative technology, and an obligatory GIF every once in a while. It is an interesting concept idea for IBM to be on any social media outlet because IBM does not have products lining the shelves of Best Buy or the virtual compartments of Amazon. However, their innovations are a part of our everyday life in one way or another and they want you to know about it. Moreover, they don't just tell you about it, they show you *about it* by putting complicated topics into real world perspective, so that anyone can understand them, and in the process, IBM is showing the world their inventive prowess while showcasing their company culture and employee pride.

What does this mean? You can do it as well. Find the proper platform and become a star on it. You have it in you. The important thing is that you are PART of the photography community, that you really KNOW the photography community, and you are not blitzing your audience with endless promotions. You have to mix up the content and make it

relative, be subliminal, offer interesting deals, all of which promotes your photography business and builds a bond with your audience.

Build the Perfect Marketing Funnel

You need a map, and that map is more like a funnel that takes your photography customers from the wide mouth through the conical body and out its narrow stem. A customer partakes in a journey when it enters your photography website and you must hold their hand and guide them from being a stranger to becoming a paying patron.



Awareness is the first stage. For whatever reason, someone visits your website or your home on social media. Initially, the visitor is a stranger to you and your business, but your objective is to pull them deeper into the funnel by making a compelling case that they need your photographs or photography service.

Since the visitor is presumably just shopping around, it is essential to offer them something for free in order to gather information about them, so they move from stranger-status to "lead". In business jargon,

this is called a "lead magnet" and that lead magnet is a "call-to-action" that sends visitors to a landing page with a click, prompting them to subscribe to something of value that is offered to them for free. The free offering could be a discount on your photographic products, free shipping on a first order, a list of tips in your area of expertise, or an eBook. Ikea, for example, harvests lead information by offering their catalog and "Inspirational emails and updates".

When you get your visitor interested in your free offering, you should not only collect information that can be used to contact them, but you will also want them to supply basic information by answering a few short questions regarding the reason why they visited your landing page and what they need from you. The answers to these questions will help you in the next phase of the funnel.

Once the stranger becomes a lead by showing interest in your photography, you need to make a personal connection with them. Do not rely on generic information that is copied-and-pasted from one email to another. Take the time to send a genuine message to them with the objective to legitimately fine-tune their specific needs.

Consider the following when moving them through the funnel to the purchase of an image or service. The bottom-line cost of any commodity determines where 87 percent of Americans do business. Shipping cost and delivery speed determines where 80 percent of

American shoppers do business. Availability of discount offers determine where 71 percent of Americans do business.

Also, website shopping carts are abandoned 97 percent of the time on mobile devices and 74 percent on desktop computers. Many factors contribute to the high abandonment rate, but the conclusion is that most of them leave the cart because of the reasons in the paragraph above: they see high shipping fees that they are not willing to pay or lengthy deliver times, which prompt them to see what other companies might provide. These points should be a topic of discussion with your leads. Make them feel that you are on their side, and it helps that it is the truth, and then work them through pricing, shipping costs, and delivery time.



These statistics show that it is a difficult process to get your stranger from being a visitor to becoming a lead conversion. It takes work, so do not get discouraged. Did you know that for every \$92 that a company spends on generating traffic and getting prospects, they only spend \$1 on converting them to customers? In other words, spend money, more than the average, on conversions or the entire funnel is pointless.

Build the Perfect Follow-up with Customers and Create Brand Loyalty

It is imperative for your photography business to have a strong follow-up campaign, and you can accomplish this through the use of email. Once a purchase of an image or photography service has been made, send a personalized email to the customer thanking them for their purchase and inform the person how they can retrieve the product or how they will obtain the service.



Ask them about their experience through a customer satisfaction survey. The idea behind the follow-up is to build loyalty by allowing them to share their experience, helping them quickly with any issues they might have after the purchase of your product or service, and showing genuine goodwill towards them, so they pass on their good experience to others and return to buy more products or services from you.

A strong follow-up campaign, also known as a "drip campaign" and a "back-end" campaign will help with additional sales down the line. Research shows that SEVEN follow-up interactions are needed on average before a sale or upsell occurs, so don't give up hope.

Here are some ideas on what your drip campaign strategy should look like from message to message:

- Say something important and relevant. The topic should only be about the photographic product or service in which they showed interest. Ask about their experience and offer assistance.
- Send out answers to your most frequently asked questions (FAQ). Included should be those questions that your customer or prospect might not have thought about. In other words, you are selling your photography product or service by appearing helpful to their needs.
- Then, begin sending your weekly blog or monthly newsletter inside of an email. Tease them with part of the blog or newsletter with a link to your site to retrieve the remaining information.

BECOME A PHOTOGRAPHY GURU



A tear contains an ocean. A photographer is aware of the tiny moments in a person's life that reveal greater truth.

Anonymous

Do you want to be at the top of the photography field? Do you want to make six figures? You will have to be a photo-guru, and if you make it to guru status, you will double \$100,000, and keep running up the numbers.

The future of photography is "now".

The birth of photography occurred 180 years ago when Louis Daguerre created the first "daguerreotype", an image on a highly polished, silver-plated sheet of copper. His "camera obscura" consisted of a wood box with a lens at one end that cast an image onto a frosted plate of glass at the other end, and using a toxic mix of iodine vapors to sensitize the sheet of copper and mercury fumes to develop the image, he made history.

Since then, photography has continued to be a beautiful arrangement of science and art.

Today, the science is moving faster than the art, or so it seems. Up until 20 years ago, the photographic process remained virtually unchanged. Photographs were manipulated by lenses, exposures times, and chemicals in a laboratory. Now, the chemicals are gone, exposure is calculated nearly flawlessly by high-end technology, and those lenses have been exchanged for "filters" that are found inside the camera, not outside of it.

The computational photography that we use today as photographers in the digital realm uses algorithms from large collection of visual data to create an image. That image could never be captured with conventional photographic film or even digital cameras from a decade ago. The result is a High Dynamic Range (HDR) photo that reads light and shade in a highly technological way, producing rich pictures with intense crispness.

The concept is being pushed further every single day by engineers in technology research labs in Silicon Valley and around the world. Soon, photographers will have 3D object capture and augmented reality that will evolve photography to places beyond current comprehension.

You must be ready for every technological advancement if you wish to advance as a photographer. This should excite you because there will be so much to explore and share with your devotees. Along with keeping up with the age, there are other ways to take your photography profession to the top.

Write and Publish a Book

Once you have a year of blogs under your belt, it is time to write a book. Free publishing tools and platforms are available on many bookselling websites like Amazon. You can sell

your book for a reasonable rate to make additional income or sell "yourself" by offering the book for free on your social media outlets and website.



Spend 10-20 percent of your time writing the book on the side of your more important obligations. Do not get so caught up in the writing process, which is easy to do when you feel that flow, that you neglect the platform you have already built through a website, social media, and business. Block out a one to two hour section each day to work on your book, and spend the rest of the day keeping up with those things that put you on top.

Make sure that an expert editor reviews your book before you publish it. Having a book that is burdened by grammatical errors, misinformation, or material that is not properly sourced, which is considered plagiarism, is a surefire way to destroy your credibility.

While you will want to offer your book to your followers for free in order to market your photography and photography services, that does not mean you have to limit your audience to just those folks who are devoted to your work. You can sell your book to a world audience, which will bring you additional income and bring more people to you.

The following are the most popular places where you can publish your book, and the basic services to get your book into virtual bookstores are usually free:

- **Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing** is a platform that makes your eBook available for purchase on Amazon.com, so that readers can download your book on all Kindle devices and through a Kindle app for Apple and Android devices. Amazon pays 70 percent royalties.
- **Nook Press** provides a platform to sell your eBook on the Barnes and Noble website, so that your eBook can be downloaded to Nook e-readers. Royalties vary, depending on the price you set for the book.
- iBook Author
- Google Play
- Lulu
- CreateSpace
- Smashwords
- Kobo Writing Life
- Scribd
- Shopify

Do Interviews, Write Articles, and Start a Podcast

Once your book is properly edited and published, it will provide you with immense credibility that can propel you to new places in your photography career. As a credible, published professional photographer, you can set up interviews with radio talk shows, and local and national television news programs. Additionally, you can contribute articles to print and online publications outside of your professional website.

You should also consider a weekly Podcast where you discuss photography topics, and interview photographers and photography experts. The Podcast only needs to be 20 or 30 minutes long, and you can put the show together with minimal equipment and software, upload it quickly to the iTunes library, and feature it on your social media platforms and website. A Youtube platform is also something you should consider.

Speak at Conferences and Teach Workshops

Next, perfect your public speaking skills, and give away or sell your book at speaking engagements during conferences and workshops. When you arrive to this level, these things could lead to participation on a Board of Directors for a photography association or leadership on a photography committee, signaling your arrival to the top echelon of photography professionals.

The professionals at Photography Jobs Online wish you well on your way to the top. Good luck with your adventures, and visit our website if you need our assistance in any way.

PHOTO CREDITS



If the photographer is interested in the people in front of his lens, and if he is compassionate, it's already a lot. The instrument is not the camera but the photographer.

Eve Arnold, photojournalist

The photos in this book are licensed under the Creative Commons Zero (CC0) license, meaning that the pictures are completely free to be used for any legal purpose, including personal and commercial use.

While attribution is not required, and that includes links to the photos themselves, we do feel obligated to point you to the original source of the photograph, since we are professionals in the photography realm, and feel it is important to credit the original photographer.

The links to the photographs are in the order in which they appear in the book:

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