



# SOCIAL MEDIA FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

PhotoShelter Research  
February 2010

SPONSORED BY:

**ADRAMA**  
THE PHOTOGRAPHY PEOPLE

**PHOTOSHELTER**



<b>INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL MEDIA</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>SOCIAL MEDIA GROUND RULES</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>MEASURING YOUR RESULTS</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>TWITTER</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>FACEBOOK</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>LINKEDIN</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>BLOGGING</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>ABOUT PHOTOSHELTER</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>ABOUT ADORAMA</b>	<b>55</b>

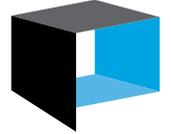
Save a tree. Think before you print.  
This PDF contains hyperlinks to resources  
on the Internet. Trees can't do *that*.

*No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning or otherwise, without the prior written consent of PhotoShelter, Inc.*

*PhotoShelter, Inc. makes no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this work and specifically disclaim all warranties, including without limitation warranties of fitness for a particular purpose. The advice and strategies contained herein may not be suitable for every situation.*

*The views expressed in this document do not represent those of Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. This document is not approved or endorsed by the aforementioned companies..*

# INTRODUCTION

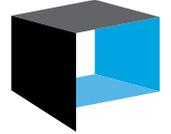


Blogging and social networking websites like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are driving fundamental shifts in the ways we connect, communicate, share news, develop relationships, influence opinion, and sell products and services. Yet often, when we speak about online marketing strategy to photographers young and old – from hobbyists to full-time pro shooters – we’re asked the same questions:

- Should I be using social media for my business?
- Should I be on Facebook or Twitter, or both?
- How do I really make these things productive?
- Why is nobody reading my blog, and should I bother with this?
- What’s the value? How will I benefit from the time and resources I invest?
- Is there a right and wrong way to do it?

It’s clear that many photographers feel the pressure to participate, but haven’t quite assembled a real plan for using social media to improve their photography business and technique. You just might be one of them. Ask yourself this: “What is my business goal for using social media, and how am I making that happen?” The reality is, we see many photographers “participating” in social media, but we see few participating in a truly productive way.

Before we shoot off in too many directions, let’s define “productive” from our point of view. PhotoShelter offers websites and tools that help photographers create their own success online. Our goal with this guide is to help you harness social networks to grow your photography business. That lets us narrow the content we’ll cover – even just a bit. This is a practical guide to wisely investing your time to get the most out



of social media, whether you're a pro with 25 years of representation or working hard to kickstart a fledgling portrait studio. Now more than ever, your time is a precious, valuable and scarce resource that must be invested wisely. Let's be clear – we're not going to cover ways to find friends who share your love of U2 lyrics, keep tabs on Paris Hilton, or find your high school sweetheart. (You'll figure that all out on your own.)

To create this guide, we've pored over insights and guidance from some of the world's (ahem, very new) authorities on using social media for business marketing and branding. We've interviewed successful photographers and industry professionals to understand who's got it right and how we can share their approach with you. We've tested different approaches for ourselves, too, and have enjoyed both victories and mistakes along the way. The end result is the first comprehensive guide to succeeding with social media, designed specifically for photographers.

#### USING THIS GUIDE

The guide is designed to benefit both social media newbies and folks who may already be using social media but could use tips for optimizing their efforts. Inside you'll find our take on getting started, choosing where to participate, the ground rules for key social media channels, smart strategies to stand out and benefit from your effort, a healthy dose of real life examples, suggestions for measuring your progress, and a list of tools we love. You certainly don't need to get through the whole kit to start implementing ideas immediately. In fact, we suggest reading piece-by-piece as it relates to you, not cover-to-cover.

Our goal is to help you harness social networks to grow your photography business.

We also invite you to continue the discussion via our [monthly free webinars](#), via our blog [A Picture's Worth](#), and of course, via twitter @ [photoshelter](#), [Facebook](#), or [LinkedIn](#). Anyone can use the strategies and tactics we discuss within – a PhotoShelter membership is not necessary. Yet from time to time, we also highlight the tools that PhotoShelter offers to help share your content via social media.

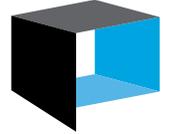
#### DEFINING SOCIAL MEDIA

From Wikipedia: "Social media is media designed to be disseminated through social interaction, created using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques. Social media uses Internet and web-based technologies to transform broadcast media monologues (one to many) into social media dialogues (many to many)."

Social media is a new, enormous and ever changing domain. We're going to slice up the social world just a bit and include only three prominent social networks – Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn – plus blogging. Notable absences include MySpace and a myriad of other social networks, the social tagging sites like Digg, StumbleUpon, Reddit, and user-generated content sites like YouTube, Flickr, etc.

At its base, social media is people coming together online to engage in dialogue.

To truly define social media, let's get beyond the specific platforms and focus on the experience. At its base, social media is people coming together online to engage in dialogue.



Going forward, *we're assuming you want to be using social media for marketing purposes* – to grow a following of people who appreciate your photography and/or unique perspective, to establish your expertise and credibility in a particular specialty, to discover potential clients and win their respect and their budget, or to interact with old and new clients and maintain their business.

### HOW PHOTOGRAPHERS ARE USING SOCIAL MEDIA

We've been observing how photographers interact in the social sphere for quite a while. Photographers are a unique breed because a) content is our product, and we're often willing to share it with anyone who will take the time to look, and b) many of us work irregular schedules, so we're afforded chunks of time to check in on social networks and blogs. In reality, when photographers come together on social networks, it looks a whole lot like your typical cocktail party. Here's a slice of what we see:

- People connecting on a personal level and building meaningful relationships.
- People aggressively networking and building valuable business contacts.
- People sniffing around for rumors and debate, prizes and deals, too.
- People lingering around the popular, intelligent, and already famous, hanging onto every word they say.
- A healthy dose of blowhards talking about themselves the whole time, to anyone who will listen.

And the vast majority are people coming and going, mingling a little bit, and leaving later on wondering why they showed up in the first place.

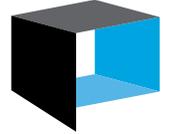
Recently, photographers Jim Goldstein and Taylor Davidson fielded a survey of 548 photographers using social media and extracted some keen insights, including:

- 45% of photographers joined Twitter for general curiosity, while 11% joined at the urging of a friend. They like what they've found, because 78% would recommend Twitter to a friend, or already have done so.
- 70% of photographers said they're using Twitter for the community, while 58% said they're using it for business, and 50% said they're using it for fun.
- However, when pressed about quality relationships, 46% say they've met fewer than 5 new contacts that have helped further their photographic endeavors.
- Finding other photographers does not seem to be a problem, with 84% citing they've found other photographers there, while less than 20% have connected with creative directors, editors, and photo buyers, and only 27% say they've used Twitter and other social media sites for developing new clients.
- While 48% report not having made money via social media in 2009, 10% of respondents claim they've made over \$5,000. Personal websites and blogs were cited as most helpful for making money, with Facebook being the leading social network for making money.

These survey results can be found by connecting with Jim and Taylor via their blogs.

**Jim Goldstein** <http://www.jmg-galleries.com/blog/>

**Taylor Davidson** <http://www.taylordavidson.com/>



### COMPLEMENTING YOUR OTHER MARKETING EFFORTS

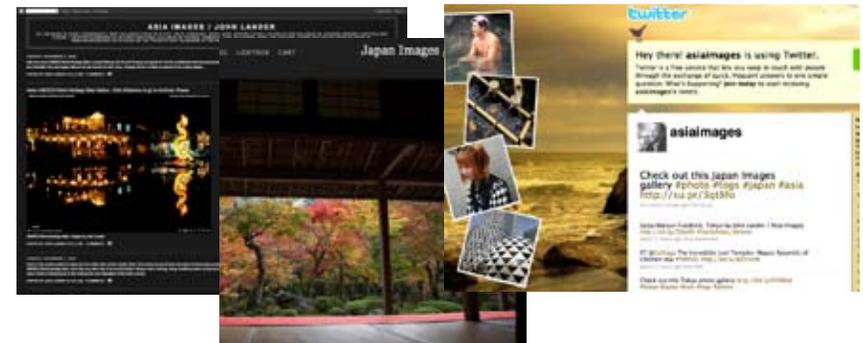
There are really two primary types of marketing – outbound and inbound. Outbound marketing tactics are the interruptive, traditional efforts that involve pushing promotional content to your prospects – like email and promo card campaigns, cold calls for portfolio visits, trade shows, paid advertising (magazines, billboards, etc.) and more. Inbound marketing tactics are exactly the opposite – they help you “get found” along the prospect’s path exactly while they’re searching for whatever you may provide. These tactics are less interruptive. Social media, search engines, and blogs are inbound tactics. With inbound tactics, the end consumer has already eliminated some of the clutter that inundates people today. Because you’re relevant to their needs in some way, they’re more likely to react favorably to your messages. So, inbound tactics are all about laying the groundwork that will make it easier for such people to find you. You want to increase your “surface area” by creating as many possible, relevant and value-added ways for these people to connect with you. As with search engine optimization (SEO), social media marketing involves optimizing your social and blog presence to best attract high quality inbound traffic.

There is no perfect recipe for successfully mixing inbound and outbound tactics – it will vary based on your budget, your audience behavior, and return on investment (the results you see proportional to the time or money you put in). Mind you, just because you’re not paying a cash fee (in most cases) to participate in social media doesn’t mean it’s free. The very real cost of social media participation is your time – opportunity costs. Investing time in social media means you’re not investing it in other productive activities. That’s why you need to make sure you’re getting the most return on that investment – just like an email campaign or promo mailer that cost several hundred dollars to run. It is up to you

to measure the results you’re seeing and determine the right mix of marketing tactics.

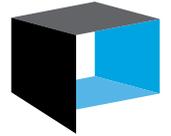
### WHY USE SOCIAL MEDIA?

There are several very obvious approaches and benefits to using social media for marketing and business growth. Any plan for participating in social media should concretely address which of these you expect to achieve. Knowing this will enable you to create goals, plan specific actions to achieve those goals, and ultimately measure their success. Let’s explore a few reasons photographers may use social media.



*John Lander maintains six blogs, a Facebook account, a LinkedIn account, and a Twitter account. He has created a significant increase in traffic to his PhotoShelter website with this multifaceted strategy and understands the dynamics of each social media piece in his overall marketing plan.*

**Brand building.** Sharing relevant content via social media (content that truly engages people) can help you become well-known within your specialty or enable you to establish credibility on a specific topic related to your photography. This can provide an essential foundation for photographers aiming to generate interest and awareness of their work.



*Example:* A sports photographer might generate regular blog entries, tweets, and facebook updates with commentary and photos associated with timely sports events in order to develop recognition for his/her body of work and thought leadership. The photographer's brand grows as that content is shared in turn by others who enjoy it.

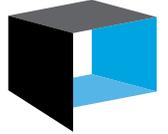
**Managing relationships.** Recognizing that many of your current clients, partners, and contemporaries are already engaging in social media (over 300 million people are on Facebook alone), you want to be where the conversation is occurring and provide multiple "touch points" – convenient ways to interact with you on their terms. Social networks like Twitter can be helpful for client support, as connecting online may provide opportunities for you to become aware of and help solve the challenges your clients are communicating via social media. More broadly, social media can provide an ideal channel for updating clients on recent shoots and creative projects, sharing details of achievements and successes, or driving more personal connections in your professional relationships by taking an interest in others' updates.

*Example:* A designer you've worked with is in a bind, looking for the perfect shot of spaghetti and meatballs to finalize a magazine ad on tight deadline. The designer tweets: "Desperately seeking a royalty-free stock photo: spaghetti and meatballs on a checkered tablecloth." Because you're following the designer on twitter, you can easily assist, maybe even supply images from your archive, or help broadcast their needs to your own network where someone may be able to help.

**Direct sales generation.** While directly offering products and services for sale seems like the most logical use of social media, this is a tactic that must be handled with, well...tact. Social media is intended to be a two way dialogue, and regularly screaming "Hire me! Buy my photos!" will turn people off fast. However, there is also a recognition and acceptance that social media is for both business and personal uses, so some level of promotion is acceptable. If you first build trust and credibility by participating and listening, adding value, stimulating conversation, and genuinely helping others, those people will appreciate some self-promotion too – especially if they have an affinity for the brand you've created. The common rule of thumb? It is acceptable for 10% of your messages to be self-promotion. That's 1 out of every 10 posts. Try it – it's a humbling exercise for an entrepreneur.



*Example:* A photo collective maintains a central blog, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn account. All accounts are ultimately promotional vehicles for the collective and its members. But instead of strictly sharing its members' work and their successes, the collective frequently shares industry news, commentary, and events while also interacting and



helping to promote other respected individuals – all valuable information that its followers look forward to receiving. This approach fosters a following that's more receptive to a periodic "Anniversary Special Print Sale" or other promotional notice.

**Search engine rankings.** There are many ways that social media can help improve your search rankings. A blog is an essential tool for SEO, and we'll cover this more comprehensively later on. But, if SEO is your goal, you should think of your blog in two ways: First as a tool to launch new content and get it indexed by search engines almost instantly. The beauty of a blog is that you control the content, so every post can be richly populated with the keywords your clients are most likely to be searching for via Google, thereby creating more ways for people to find you. Second, you should think of your blog as your best opportunity for generating regular inbound links, which the search engines view as the single most powerful support for the authority of your blog. What gets lots of backlinks? Compelling content that people want to share.

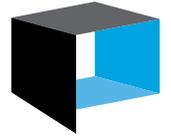
Because social networks foster a culture of sharing, your followers are likely on the lookout for relevant links to share with their own community. This social sharing increases the likelihood that more people will see, share, and potentially link to your compelling content. (Note that while networks like LinkedIn and Facebook actually do let search engines follow the links on your profile pages and fan pages, the links shared within social network discussions are not nearly as powerful for SEO as

The common rule of thumb? It is acceptable for 10% of your messages to be self-promotion.

direct links placed on blogs and websites. And today, it is much harder to compel someone to blog about you vs. tweet about you.)

Finally, social networks afford a way to momentarily arrive on the first page of search results. Because the major search engines like Google and Bing now index tweets and display them within the first page of search results – your tweets containing (carefully selected) keywords can get top billing, albeit for a brief moment in time. And because search engines will also index and display your social network profile in results, social networks provide a great defensive measure to ensure you're "controlling the conversation". When people search for you by name, they'll often see your website, your blog, and any other community profiles you have created, thereby pushing down any content you may not want featured prominently – like a lawsuit from years gone by or off-the-cuff embarrassing comments you once made to a reporter.

*Example:* A glamour photographer might blog frequently about recent photo shoots, specific business issues facing his/her specialty, and frequently highlight models, studios, retouchers, and other partners. The keywords throughout each post, plus backlinks generated by enthusiastic followers (and likely those mentioned in each article), help support strong SEO. The photographer generates additional traffic by sharing the blog posts via Facebook and Twitter, maybe even under the moniker "@glamourphotog," and each post momentarily appears on the first page of Google's social search. Strong SEO rankings drive traffic to his/her blog when new potential clients are searching for terms associated with "glamour photos".



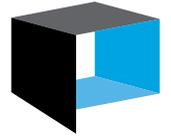
**Inspiration & feedback.** When you start building a strong network of peers and other thought leaders, you'll be amazed at what you can pick up, even without asking for it. Whether you choose to interact via Twitter, Facebook, a selection of key blogs, or a healthy mix of each, you'll suddenly have access to new ideas for pushing your own creativity. You'll be influenced by the work of others. You'll have rich conversations about improving technique. You can even solicit opinion and support on the full spectrum of issues – from pricing your photography to negotiating sticky client issues to creating a rapport with a new model, etc. You connect with your favorite established and emerging photographers across multiple social venues and pay attention to their posts to see how they're evolving both their business and technique. If you feel comfortable engaging in a dialogue about these issues, share your opinion and ask for theirs.

*Example:* An emerging photographer might follow @ScottBourne on twitter or read his [PhotoFocus](#) blog for a wealth of insights on equipment, managing a photo business, and the search for the perfect shot. Or, another photographer might follow @strobist on twitter and read the Strobist blog for basic and advanced lighting tips.



Former newspaper staff photographer, David Hobby, started the Strobist blog as a, er, hobby, and found a huge latent audience for his brand of high quality lit images using inexpensive strobes. He has whole-heartedly embraced social media to extend his brand.

# SOCIAL MEDIA GROUND RULES

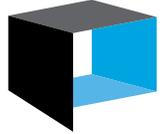


Don't be "that guy." People out there really are watching and listening. Sure, it's a new form of connecting, and sure, we all have avatars and screen names to hide behind, but first impressions still count. Here are a few key suggestions that should govern your approach to marketing your photography via social media.

**Set goals.** You must know what you want to get out of the time you spend on social media, so you can understand what success (or failure) looks like and how you'll compare the time and resources invested here vs. other things you could be doing. Put a metric around it. Do you want to double your assignment jobs this year? Do you want to increase traffic to your blog by 50%? Do you want to generate 200 new signups for your newsletter? We'll discuss specific metrics later on.

**Mind the 5 C's.** Social media marketing guru Michael Fruchter <http://www.michaelfruchter.com/blog> lists 5 C's that underlie the foundation of all social media: Conversation, community, commenting, collaboration, and contribution. If you take nothing else away from this guide, write these 5 words on a Post-it note and tape it to your monitor. Let these 5 principles govern your approach to participating in social media. Support them with anything you post, and don't violate them with bad behavior.

**Quality over quantity\*.** Let's split this into two notions: 1) building followers, and 2) sharing content. Resist the temptation to accumulate any and all followers, and likewise, resist the temptation to be blasting out information at every moment. The shotgun approach to social media rarely benefits anyone. You're best served by thinking carefully



about the relationships you'd like to cultivate, the content you'd like to share, and the brand messages you want to convey. Quality content informs, engages people, and is generally stuff that people in your community would want to share with others. If you spend time generating and sharing thought-provoking, intelligent and creative content, you'll end up building a tighter community that engages in meaningful communication exchange.

About that asterisk: We think there's nothing wrong with focusing on quality AND quantity. It would certainly be wonderful to amass a large following of highly interested, highly relevant peers and prospects. Likewise, if you're a high volume communicator (via blogs and social networks), nobody will get upset about that volume if 90% of the time you're sharing valuable information.

**Listen up, then help others.** Karma is huge in the social world. "Social" means two-way dialogue, not one-way broadcasting. So, you'll only start to build meaningful relationships when you start listening. Understand how the people in your community interact with each other. What are their norms? What is a hot button issue, and what might be off limits? Uncover people's needs and seek to help them. Go out of your way to promote others. Once you've built a credible brand, you can start promoting yourself on a very limited basis, like one in every 10 posts.

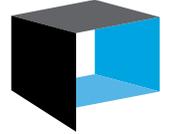
**Make your brand a deliberate decision.** Brands are a lot like houseplants – if you neglect them, they'll turn into something unsightly and die. Long before you start posting, do some thinking about your brand. What would you like to be known for, and how will you get there? For instance, do you want to be the expert in a specialty? What type of information will you share? What tone will you take? Who will you engage with?



Photographer Jack Hollingsworth balances self-promotion with helpful information and has amassed over 12,000 followers on Twitter.

Set boundaries. Determine where you're going to participate and where you're not. Try to figure out where your customers and peers are already engaged. What are they talking about? How are they engaging? If they have not yet coalesced, this is an opportunity to create community. Determine how much time you'd like to spend on social media. It is easy to get sucked in, so if you don't want it to dominate your life, it's a good idea to have the discipline to set up discreet check-ins.

**Measure!** Dozens of tools can help you determine your success with social media. We highlight some important ones later on. Measurement is critical so you can determine your progress against your goals, and optimize from there. Tools like Google Analytics and bit.ly help you analyze how specific posts generate unique new traffic and determine the popularity of specific posts. (You'll want to do more of the popular stuff, especially if it increases conversion as well.)



**Show your soul.** Let your true personality show. Don't be a robot that simply regurgitates links all day. Add your human perspective when you share information. Customize your profiles as best as possible, and include a photograph. This suggestion holds even if you're participating on behalf of your company – you're not simply "@MagicalWeddingPhotos" – you're Tom, the Director of Photography, so make sure your followers know who's doing the talking.

Unify your brand. Unless you are using different platforms to serve different goals, try to maintain brand consistency wherever possible. You can also use a specific platform to cross-promote your activity that may be occurring on a different platform. Social media, and all inbound marketing, is all about creating more "surface area" – more opportunities in more places for people find you when they're specifically looking for what you've got to offer.



### HOW JOHN LANDER USES BLOGS & SOCIAL MEDIA FOR SEO

John Lander is a freelance writer and photographer based in Japan, specializing in editorial and stock images of Asia. He integrates marketing across many social platforms to serve his goal -- getting every image gallery on his website to reach the top of page 1 of Google results.

At the core of his efforts is his archive website <http://www.asiaimages.net>, where he frequently adds new galleries from every shoot. All of his photos can be licensed for commercial or personal use, and purchased as prints or products. When a new gallery goes live, he uses PhotoShelter's embeddable slideshow, or links to the gallery in multiple locations:

- His main blog: <http://asiaimages.blogspot.com>
- One of his many other topic specific blogs (e.g. Japanese Garden Images, Kyoto Images, Tokyo Images, Vietnam Images, Cambodia Images)
- Twitter (@asiaimages)
- Facebook personal profile
- Facebook Fan Page
- LinkedIn

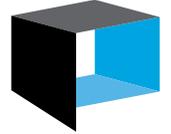
He will also use Flickr and YouTube to post content as well, as well as StumbleUpon. This strategy of creating multiple areas linking back to his work, coupled with highly relevant keyword text in every location, has helped propel John's SEO for topics he cares most about. (Google Japanese Garden Images – John appears on page 1.)

John adds Google Analytics code to his posts on every platform so he can track their performance. He studies his analytics frequently, and pays attention to bounce rates – noticing that the quality of traffic from LinkedIn is stronger, with only 30% bounce rates compared to 50% from other platforms. He attributes this performance, plus assignments that came through LinkedIn, to the more professional nature of the network. (Note: although LinkedIn is a less visual oriented platform, John uses the LinkedIn SlideShare slideshow app to display photos on his profile.)

Because John is networked with his regular editor clients on both Facebook and LinkedIn, his status updates have replaced the mass emails he would send in prior years. They can now read his posts, visit his blog, or click links to John's recent shoots without a fuss. He's been booked for assignments on multiple occasions following his image updates on both Facebook and LinkedIn.

John checks Google Analytics occasionally to see who is linking to his sites and monitor traffic trends. He encourages photographers to blog frequently, demonstrate their own special viewpoint, and edit tightly. While tweeting frequently helps drive traffic to his galleries, he advises photographers to not forget about LinkedIn, as that's where the editors are.

# MEASURING YOUR RESULTS



## SETTING GOALS & MEASURING YOUR RESULTS

Back in grade school, how'd you know if you did well in any class? The grade on your report card told you. You could immediately assess how you were doing individually, relative to other classes, and through gossip, relative to other kids. The real world operates the same way, but we need to have the discipline to create our own report cards.

As we recommend for every marketing initiative, you need to give yourself a goal and a metric to help objectively assess if you performed well. Plus, you need a benchmark – data that will give you a before/after comparison. So once you decide the important items to track, take a snapshot now and then again at a pre-determined check-in date. You must give any social media effort two to three months to build before making any decisions on its success. Ultimately, comparing the results vs. your goals and other marketing initiatives can also inform how you invest your resources going forward.

## KNOW YOUR GOAL

What are you ultimately trying to achieve? This is a personal question that you absolutely must answer before you spend another drop of that extremely scarce resource – your time. Hypothetically, your goal could be:

- Book more assignments or commissions from existing clients
- Brand yourself as the most respected wedding photographer in your region
- Sell more stock photography from your archive
- Kick start sales for your own line of accessories or instructional videos
- Develop a following of Yellowstone Park enthusiasts who buy your fine art prints
- Generate referral business for your portrait studio

- Obtain critique or professional guidance from a wider network of your peers

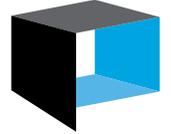
Having a sense of where you want to go can help clarify the time/effort you put into your social networking presence. In addition, it can give you a sense of the metrics you need to reach to be successful. Do you need more than 20,000 followers, or will 500 high quality followers serve your needs? That will depend on what you want to achieve.

## ANALYZING YOUR PROGRESS

We'll explore specific stats and metrics in our guidebook for each specific social platform. You'll want to determine which of the below areas are important to monitor and optimize in pursuit of your goal.

**Website traffic.** Which social media platforms provide you with the most traffic? How about the highest quality traffic? What types of dialogue prompt visitors who convert into buyers (or complete another goal) at your website? You can use Google Analytics and the Google URL Builder to drill down into the traffic that comes from each of your social media efforts – literally every individual post.

**Conversation.** What types of conversations are you engaging in? How often are you sharing newsworthy links, debating industry issues, commenting on others' shared photos, simple chatter, or supporting your clients? Who are you most often communicating with (e.g. clients, prospects, peers, buddies)? How have your conversations grown (meaning, who else is participating, and are people spreading your dialogue via re-tweets? Who is your intended audience and who is your actual audience?



**Participation & Engagement.** Do your Twitter posts spark conversation? Do your blog posts prompt people to leave comments? The lack of either can sometimes suggest “nobody cares” – while vibrant, visible discussion suggests that you’re influential and people find value in your commentary. This requires you to determine what type of interaction you are seeking to result from your posts, set goals, and think about how you’ll encourage that level of interaction.



*Sports photographer Brad Mangin blogs about baseball news even during the off-season and includes images which backlink to his PhotoShelter archive. Every time he creates a new entry, he posts it to his Facebook wall, which creates user interaction and drives traffic. An entry about Mark McGwire after his steroids admission drove a massive spike in traffic to his blog with a corresponding increase in archive traffic.*

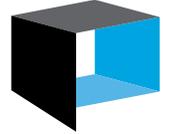
**Leads.** Leads can be people who have inquired about your rates, signed up for your newsletter, requested your portfolio, and more. Essentially, it’s anyone you encounter that may become a future client (and with whom you’ve interacted on some level). Unless you have a mechanism to capture leads via your website, you will need to ask people directly.

**Sales & Profits.** Don’t be bashful about asking new clients how they heard about you! As stated above, you can track conversion via Google Analytics if you are selling photography directly online. You should marry this data with offline sales as well. Comparing profits is smart too – as you may find that the size of projects or sales may vary across marketing efforts (i.e. one-off image sales vs. large commissioned projects).

**Recurring business.** If you’re using social media to engage and interact with existing clients, is that dialogue helping you retain key businesses? Knowing that you’re accessible and listening to their needs via multiple platforms, are your clients likely to send more business your way? Have you created a deeper relationship that compels them to avoid approaching your competitors?

**Search engine results.** You can objectively track where you appear in search results for your most coveted terms and use Google Analytics to tell you if traffic from each key term is increasing. Google Alerts can tell you if Google is indexing your tweets in real time search as well.

In the following sections, we explore specific metrics you can use to chart your progress on each platform.



### **ROSH SILLARS - SHARING INSIGHTS & MAKING CONNECTIONS**

Rosh is a commercial photographer with over 20 years of experience in media and marketing. He was a new media early adopter, embracing podcasting in 1999 as a way to share and teach photography. He has become an expert in advising photographers (and other organizations) in online marketing through new media. The brand that he has built around his advisory work has also

raised his profile as a photographer and extended his network – enabling him to sustain and grow his photography business as well. Rosh’s blog, <http://www.newmediaphotographer.com/> is at the center of his social media efforts, where he posts weekly podcasts.

Social media has been powerful in helping Rosh connect with new clients and cultivate relationships with old clients as well. New clients mostly come to Rosh via search engines, and he uses social media to support his SEO. The reputation he has built through social media has fostered strong links to his blog and website (which helps improve SEO). His connections with old clients are his best source of income – mostly because they drive referrals. Located in Detroit, Michigan, Rosh has also gained referral business from other photographers he’s connected with via social media, when those contacts can’t cover a job in Detroit.

Rosh believes Twitter is the most powerful media stream to drive new traffic to a photographer’s website. He makes writing for his blog and tweeting part of his regular workflow. Unlike other photographers, Rosh automates nothing – he checks in regularly to maintain the “social” in social media.

Rosh has found Facebook to be a productive source of referral business for retail-type photography work. When clients share his images with their friends, the instant a photo is posted, the immediate question is usually: “Who shot that?” So, Rosh ensures that his clients have a way to share his work and make his content a part of their conversation.

Rosh advises using available data to optimize how photographers spend your time in social media. Rosh uses the Insights from his Facebook Fan Page, his Wordpress blog stats, and Google Analytics. And after you read the stats? “Do what works.”

# TWITTER



## WHAT'S TWITTER ALL ABOUT?

Twitter is undeniably hot. At its core, Twitter is a “micro-blogging” platform. It lets you express yourself in short, 140-character “tweets.” Tweets are seen by your “followers” – think of these as the people using Twitter who have subscribed to see the information updates that you’re disseminating (unless you’re “protecting” your tweets). Anyone can register to follow you, and you can follow anyone else on Twitter. Tweets from the people you’re following flow in a timeline-based stream of updates on your Twitter homepage.



Twitter’s extreme growth has occurred because it’s an extremely powerful way to connect with your online community and quickly share information. For marketing purposes, it is a perfect platform for establishing new relationships, and generating awareness and interest in your products and services. Twitter is really easy to use, and you can visually track the viral spread of information as it is created and shared among Twitter users.

As thousands of key influencers have adopted Twitter for sharing information, the masses have followed. Dozens of third party tools and applications are now available that make it even more exciting.

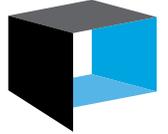
## WHY USE TWITTER?

We’ve seen dozens of ways that photographers are using Twitter productively. In terms of gathering information, Twitter can help you stay aware of what’s happening among industry peers, your competitors, the

equipment vendors you love, people you respect, and topics you care about. In terms of sharing information, you can promote quality content to your followers by broadcasting a link to it in your messages. As we’ve said earlier, while Twitter is an outstanding tool for self-promotion, you need to approach marketing your own business with tact. If you first establish yourself as a valuable member of the community by being helpful to others, a great information resource, and contributor to conversation and debate, then it is perfectly acceptable to use Twitter for self-promotion as well. In addition, karma goes a long way on Twitter, so the more you help promote others, the more likely they are to help promote you.

When you start testing out tactics for self-promotion, you’ll find plenty of ways to derive value from participating in Twitter, including:

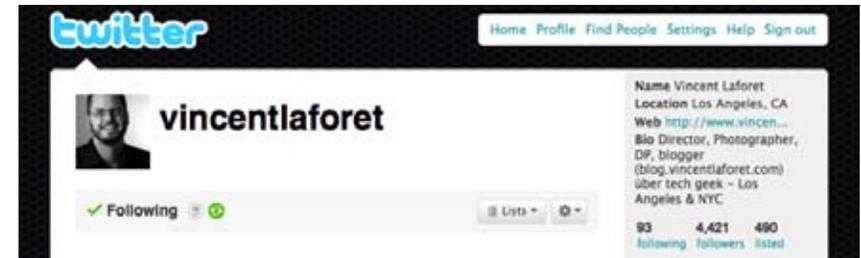
- Driving new, quality traffic to your website or blog
- Driving signups for your newsletter
- Building relationships with potential clients
- Announcing news, achievements, special promotions, and events
- Generating awareness and interest in your services, which plants the seed so you’re considered the next time there’s a need for your type of photography
- Discussing professional issues with your peers
- Connecting with local vendors and complementary service providers for business referrals and partnerships
- Obtaining feedback on your images
- Performing trend research via Twitter search



## GETTING STARTED WITH TWITTER

Setting up a Twitter account is easy. You can be online and sharing information in minutes.

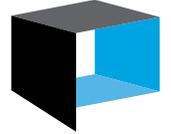
1. Go to <http://twitter.com> and click "sign up now".
2. Select a username & password. This is how you will be identified whenever people refer to you and the information you share, so there are some considerations:
  - Make it descriptive – people generally choose their name but if you have a photography specialty or regional business, you might consider something that relates to your business (e.g. TexasStockPhotos or WildlifePics). This is also how you'll be identified in your followers' stream of tweets – so it couldn't hurt to have something that stands out.
  - Keep it short so it doesn't eat into the 140 characters when people retweet.
3. Enter your profile information via the "Settings" link. Be sure to:
  - Enter a URL to your website or blog
  - Complete the brief bio information, upload a photo, and customize the background of your Twitter homepage. This will help personalize your profile and may compel people to decide to follow you. Even if you're using Twitter on behalf of your company, showing that a person is behind the account helps forge real relationships and credibility among followers.
4. Determine how you'll interact with Twitter
  - You have several options for viewing and posting tweets. Often,



Vincent Laforet personalized his Twitter profile with a photo, background image, location, website URL and brief bio. He's gained a cult following for his pioneering video work with D-SLRs.

people begin with the standard browser-based Twitter display and later adopt a 3rd party tool (covered later on). Mobile SMS text messaging is also an option, and you can obtain instructions for that from within your Twitter account.

- Find people you want to follow. Twitter offers several ways to link up with people, including a way to check if your existing contacts using major email services are already participating. Using the "Find People" link is the most common way to locate individuals and businesses.
- Some ideas for starting out: friends & relatives, photographers you respect, business partners, publications and media outlets, people in the public eye.
- Once you've started selecting some people to follow, you can also view the people they're following for ideas. People tend to use Twitter lists to create categories of users to follow – explore these.
- Use the Twitter search box to learn who is discussing topics of value to you. When you're interested, go ahead and follow those people too. Hashtags (the "#" sign) are also used for



identifying trending topics.

5. Start tweeting! There are a few ways to communicate with others on Twitter.
  - Post a message to all of your followers by typing it into the big box at the top of your twitter page.
  - To post a message publicly directed at a specific Twitter user by including "@" ahead of their username. (e.g. "@photoshelter, thanks for this great social media kit!") This will enable anyone who sees the message to click through to that user's Twitter page.
  - You can hover your mouse over individual tweets to either "reply" or "retweet" (RT). You can reply to messages (even those not directed at you) by including the user's Twitter name in your tweet. (e.g. "@chrisowyoung – thanks for sharing your photos from the No Doubt tour!) Retweeting messages shares any given tweet with your followers. This is how information on Twitter tends to spread rapidly. You can do this automatically by hitting the retweet link, or post a message including RT@"username" (e.g. RT@photoshelter Next webinar on social media for photographers is today! Sign up here...)
  - You can send private Direct Messages – but only to people who you follow and in turn follow you. This keeps the Twitter spam to a minimum.

#### BEFORE YOUR FIRST TWITTER POST

Be sure to read our section on *SOCIAL MEDIA GROUND RULES*, as well as our section on *MEASURING YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA RESULTS*. These will help you adopt best practices for participation, support your brand, and make sure you set up goals and metrics for using the platform most productively.

#### DEVELOPING A FOLLOWING

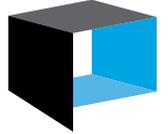
Let's be clear about this. While quality is certainly better than quantity, if your ultimate goal is to market your photography, you'll certainly benefit from a large following vs. a small following. Here are some tips for pushing the growth of followers on Twitter:



**samuelhodgson** very powerful. please have a look RT  
**@robertcaplin**: Q&A with NY Times Photographer Damon  
 Winter shooting in #Haiti: <http://bit.ly/5CMQH8>

4 days ago from TweetDeck

- **Provide useful information.** If people find your tweets relevant to their lives, they'll want to see more from you.
- **Tweet regularly.** If your followers are viewing tweets in a timeline, whatever you tweeted two hours ago is likely buried. If you increase followers' chances of seeing your tweet, they're more likely to retweet it. That's how they help introduce you to more potential followers.
- **Retweet regularly.** Going back to Twitter karma – the more you invest in promoting others, the more likely they are to reciprocate by promoting you. On the other hand, it will be difficult for you to build your own "voice" if your only activity is retweeting.
- **Suggest your followers elsewhere follow you on Twitter.** Use your website, blog, newsletter, facebook profile, business card, etc. You can easily access widgets to display "Follow me on Twitter" on your blog, or even display a stream of your recent tweets. See our TOOLS section for specific widgets we recommend.
- **Start and contribute to conversations.** As the conversation unfolds, your commentary is exposed to your followers' followers. Anyone watching can contribute and may follow you too.



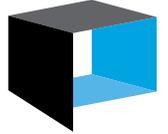
- **Attribute everything.** Give the original idea originator credit to help build their following.
- **Engage with the big guys.** This is the same as contributing to conversations with regular folks, yet if an influential member of your community mentions you, you get the amplified effect of more people watching.
- **Watch your timing and consistency.** Generally, we've found the peak time to tweet is during the US workday, after 12 PM EST. This ensures the largest possible audience for your tweets. If you can, add some consistency to your tweets with a target number initiated per day. People will come to expect to see your regular tweets, and share them with their own followers.
- **Use strategic keywords.** Think about the likely keywords your desired followers would be using for Twitter search. What terms do they care about most? What issues do they need to stay on top of? Use these keywords frequently in your tweets. The added bonus for this tactic is that you'll increase your chances of appearing in relevant Google searches too.
- **Practice reciprocity.** There's some debate here, but frequently, people will follow you if you follow them. So, following people within your target community will likely produce more followers, as long as you keep your content helpful and interesting.

### TWITTER ALL-STARS OF THE PHOTO WORLD

Several sources document and rank influential photographers who are highly engaged in Twitter. For example, wefollow.com provides a full list of the most influential (and most followed) Twitter users associated with a specific term. Here are a few we like from the wefollow.com lists for "photographer," "photography," and "photojournalist". You'll pick up some very valuable information by following them and observing how

they approach Twitter too.

[@ScottBourne](#) – Host, Photofocus Podcast & Publisher, Photofocus.com  
[@chasejarvis](#) – Maniac Photographer Director  
[@strobist](#) – Professional Flasher  
[@petapixel](#) – A photography blog for the Web 2.0 generation by Michael Zhang  
[@scottkelby](#) – Editor and Publisher of Photoshop User Magazine  
[@photojack](#) – World, Travel, Lifestyle, Stock Photographer, Social Media Coach  
[@aphotoeditor](#) – A Photo Editor (Rob Haggart)  
[@thomashawk](#) – Quiet Observer of Modern Nihilism with Box that Captures Light  
[@thebecker](#) – Wedding Photographer, Educator, Entrepreneur, Wannabe Pro Poker Player  
[@stevesimon](#) – Obsessed With Documentary Photography and all Things Photographic  
[@blackstar](#) – NYC Photographic Agency  
[@vincentlaforet](#) – Director, Photographer, DP, Blogger, über Tech Geek  
[@imgoldstein](#) – Web Strategist / Photographer: Capturing the World's Beauty One Photo at a Time  
[@newmediaphoto](#) – A photographer Who Publishes to the Web. Blogger, Podcaster, Speaker, Consultant, University Instructor  
[@abbyharenberg](#) – Weddings/ Portraits/ Events/ Lifestyle Photographer. Love to Photograph People.



### **ANALYTICS AND TWITTER**

So, you've built a huge following. You tweet at breakfast, lunch, dinner, bedtime, and probably once or twice through the night. You've made lots of powerful connections. How do you know if it's helping with your online marketing? The answer lies with Google Analytics. Google Analytics is Google's free tool for monitoring your website traffic and the behavior of visitors to your site. You can very easily unite Google Analytics with links you post on Twitter to understand the traffic and behavior of visitors you are driving from Twitter.

To do this, you need to use another great free Google tool, the Google URL Builder. [http://bit.ly/URL\\_builder](http://bit.ly/URL_builder)

The Google URL Builder allows you to append information to a standard URL that will enable Google Analytics to track all traffic that clicks the link. Google Analytics can then provide you with reporting on those visitors. You'll get stats like total traffic, time spent on your site, total conversions (i.e. sales, newsletter signups, etc.), bounce rate (i.e. people who leave your site without clicking other content), and more. With this information, you can do two important things:

- Assess the total impact of your participation on Twitter
- Assess the individual impact of specific content you've shared on Twitter

If you produce a URL through the Google URL builder, you can then shorten the URL using a service like bit.ly (so the long URL doesn't eat up your 140 character limit on tweets). You can then view the traffic data in Google Analytics using the "Campaigns" tab, and viewing by campaign, medium, and source.

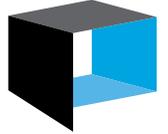
Once you have a sense of your Twitter-driven website traffic, you can optimize your self-promotion to focus more on what works. If you tie the Google URLs to all campaigns, you can also compare the total effect of your Twitter participation against other marketing efforts and start making smart decisions about how you spend your time and money.

How to install and interpret Google Analytics is a separate topic – fortunately already covered in our free report from August 2009 "Google Analytics for Photographers" – available here <http://www.photoshelter.com/mkt/research/>. We also offer a monthly webinar that explains Google Analytics fundamentals. Simply put, if you don't have analytics installed on your website, you're making blind marketing and content decisions that are probably costing you business opportunities.

### **TWITTER & SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION**

Twitter can be helpful for your SEO in several ways. Most notably, now that Google performs real-time search, your tweets and profile are indexed and can potentially appear in relevant search results. As experts are just now digging into this new feature, the ways to optimize your tweets are not fully apparent. However, early suggestions include:

- **User quality.** We assume that the same ways you become influential on Twitter are seen by Google – this would include large followership, frequent posts, messages commonly retweeted, deep conversation (multiple @replies). We believe appearance on multiple Twitter lists could be a powerful user quality factor as well.
- **Reputation.** When an influential website links to another, in Google's view that first website is lending some of its authority to the second website, thereby improving rankings. The same is true on social networks – when an influential user follows you, they convey some of



their authority to you.

- **Keywords.** Keywords in your tweet are the key criteria for indexing by Google – so it makes sense to strategically use keywords relevant to the people you want finding you via Google. Keywords in your Twitter user name may help as well – so you may want to stake your claim to a keyword rich Twitter name.

Beyond SEO for your individual tweets, Twitter can be used to indirectly benefit your website or blog's SEO. First, let's dispel a myth to ensure you understand how Twitter can't help – direct linkbuilding. In the past, we've talked about linkbuilding being a key ingredient to your SEO. When other websites link to yours, Google views that as a vote of confidence that improves the authority of your site, thereby helping you move higher in search results. Links posted on Twitter, however, are not followed by Google. This "no follow" link does not hold the same power as a link to your content via someone's website or their blog. So, if you want your tweets to help with linkbuilding, you'll need to post content that your followers find so compelling (or worth more than 140 characters of commentary) that they're willing to blog about it.

## HOW PHOTOSHELTER CAN HELP

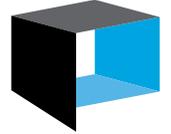
PhotoShelter offers a host of social sharing tools that help you promote your work via multiple platforms, including Twitter. Specifically, you can link Twitter and your PhotoShelter website in two ways:

- **Help your website visitors to post your work on**

**Twitter.** You can easily add a "Share This" widget to your PhotoShelter website. This provides simple buttons on your image galleries and single images so your website visitors can instantly share links to your images via their favorite social networks. You need to make it as easy as possible for other people to promote your photography. So, we help out you by providing a very obvious link for people to share your work.

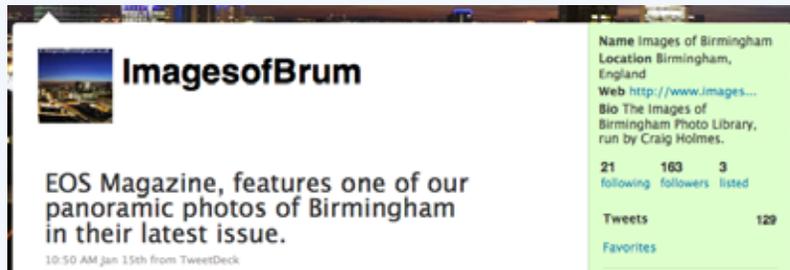


- **Post galleries to Twitter.** If you have a PhotoShelter account with our website features, you can open any image gallery inside your account and click "Tweet This!" to share your gallery directly with your Twitter followers. The link posted to Twitter will take your followers to your PhotoShelter website. This is great for announcing when new galleries go live.



### CRAIG HOLMES' MANY FACES ON TWITTER

Based in Birmingham, UK, Craig runs multiple photography businesses that benefit from using Twitter. Craig has three lines of business:



1. Craig Holmes Photography – on location commissioned photography
2. Images of Birmingham Photo Library – a stock photo business
3. Crowded Gallery – black and white art prints

Craig has taken a very unique approach to marketing his work online. Because the lines of business differ significantly, he maintains a separate website and Twitter account for each business and uses different goals and strategies for each.

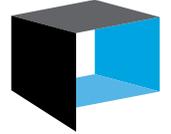
His initial Twitter profile, [@ImagesofBrum](#), is for the stock. Because the work has a distinct regional niche, he's been able to focus on using this Twitter account to connect with a regional audience (or at least, people with an interest or affinity for Birmingham). His followers are generally designers at local agencies. He attributes multiple monthly stock photo sales to the tactics he's using on Twitter (generally one-off image deals). One of his highly productive tactics is an "Image of the Day" post where he features one image from his stock archive daily. This photo

serves a clear marketing function, namely, to generate awareness for Craig's niche specialty and create an interest among potential clients. He does not expect to sell that specific image, and he's not screaming "buy now!" But ultimately when his followers do have a need for an image to represent Birmingham, they are more likely to think of him because of the connection he's forged with them online.

His second Twitter profile [@craig\\_photog](#) is for his commission photography business. With this account, he's not interested in building a massive following. Instead, he uses it to connect with his existing clients, stay engaged with them on a personal level, discuss ongoing projects, and keep them aware of projects he's working on. His business goal is to retain his big clients, so the additional contact via Twitter gives his clients a convenient way to stay in touch with him, because they're already using Twitter for other interests.

Finally, his third profile [@crowdedgallery](#), is newly launched at the end of 2009. The intention here is to build a different following of consumers who can appreciate his art prints. He intends for the Twitter conversation to still serve the purpose of generating awareness and interest, but he may also run promotions from time to time that stimulate people to make direct purchases.

Craig has found that for the type of work he's marketing to businesses, Twitter (instead of Facebook) is more productive in generating new sales. He notes that photography businesses targeting consumers might likely fare better on Facebook. In addition, he emphasizes that while Twitter is a marketing channel to drive clients to his websites – the websites (and the photography featured within) must then close the deal for him. "You need to understand who you're bringing to the website, what they want to see, and ensure that they're met with photos that will sell, and that your website provides a professional way for them to buy from you."



**TWITTER SUCCESS METRICS**

Metric	Where do I find it?	Notes
Number of followers	On the right column when viewing your Twitter page	Experts emphasize quality over quantity, but the quantity of engaged followers directly improves how well your messages and content will spread.
Number of lists	On the right column when viewing your Twitter page	This indicates your followers have grouped you into "watch" lists according to specific categories they care about.
URL clicks	URL shortening tools like bit.ly will let you track click activity	Google Analytics will also tell you traffic via specific links you share on Twitter.
Clicks-to-sales ratio	Marry the data from bit.ly (clicks) with your own e-commerce stats.	This is effectively your conversion rate. With this, you can understand how many clicks you need to drive to reach your goals.
Tweet-to-retweet ratio	URL shortening tools like bit.ly will provide retweet data	This can show you which types of messages your followers find compelling enough to spread, which times of day are best to share content, and who in your network is most engaged.
Website/blog traffic from Twitter	In Google Analytics under "Traffic Sources"	You'll need a free Google Analytics account installed on your website to track this metric.
Website/blog traffic from specific tweets	In Google Analytics under "Campaigns"	You'll need to use Google URL builder to properly set up the URLs that you share on Twitter for tracking.

**TWITTER FAQ**

***How often should I tweet?***

It pays to tweet multiple times throughout the day (if you have something engaging to say). Because Twitter presents information in a timeline, chances are your tweets will easily get buried in your followers' timelines unless they are specifically looking for your tweets.

***Should I mix personal updates with business content? (e.g. "I broke my foot" and "Image of the day")***

Showing you're human and have a personality is OK. However, if you share too much information or consistently update with details that are not thought provoking, you'll start losing followers.

***Should I auto-follow everyone who follows me?***

We don't recommend it. Automating who you follow destroys the integrity of "social" media. Spend a minute to determine if you're truly interested in that person's updates.

***Should I re-tweet my own tweets?***

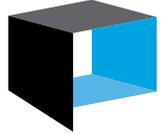
In moderation. However, you're better off engaging in real conversation and letting your shared content spread outward from there.

***What is the best time of day to tweet?***

We have seen the best retweeting activity between 12 pm and 5 pm EST, when all of the US is awake and active. This has been validated by several international Twitter users as well.

***Can I jump in on conversations relevant to me, yet between total strangers?***

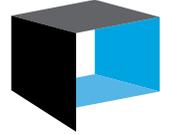
Absolutely. That's the beauty of Twitter.



## TWITTER TOOLS

- **Bit.ly** - <http://bit.ly/>  
Bit.ly lets you shorten URLs to cut down on characters for your tweets. It provides tracking so you can monitor the activity associated with every post – both number of clicks and shares.
- **FriendFeed** - <http://friendfeed.com/>  
FriendFeed lets you aggregate updates and participate in multiple social networks in one application.
- **Google URL Builder** - [http://bit.ly/URL\\_builder](http://bit.ly/URL_builder)  
The URL builder lets you generate URLs that can be individually tracked by Google Analytics, to give you insights on how campaigns/posts featuring that specific URL performed. The URL Builder makes a long messy URL, which can be shortened by Bit.ly for posting on social networks.
- **Listorious** - <http://listorious.com/>  
A directory of Twitter lists.
- **Seesmic** - <http://seesmic.com/>  
Potentially the most robust social networking dashboard available – ties together all of your communities and lets you interact with them from one single place – your desktop, mobile device, or the web.
- **TweetDeck** - <http://www.tweetdeck.com/>  
TweetDeck helps organize and filter activity on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace and more. You can filter and group tweets based on search term mentions, time frame, and more, in a simple dashboard structure so you can view everything at once.
- **TweetPhoto** - <http://tweetphoto.com/>  
Share your photos via twitter.
- **TweetReach** - <http://tweetreach.com/>  
Enter a unique term you've tweeted, or a specific hashtag (“#”) and this tool will analyze how many Twitter users were exposed to that tweet, and the types of resulting sharing that occurred.
- **Twhirl** - <http://www.twhirl.org/>  
Similar to TweetDeck, Twhirl is a desktop application that gives you more control of how you view and search messages, aggregates and lets you cross-post to multiple social networks.
- **Twitelator** - <http://www.stone.com/iPhone/Twitelator/>  
Twitelator is an iPhone app for participating on Twitter.
- **TwitPic** - <http://twitpic.com/>  
Share your photos via twitter.
- **Twitterfeed** - <http://twitterfeed.com/>  
Twitterfeed links to any content that serves an RSS feed, and automatically posts updates to your Twitter, Facebook, and other social network accounts. Often used for sharing blog updates, it can also be used by PhotoShelter members to automatically broadcast gallery, website, and search result updates to followers. It even lets you append Google Analytics tracking information.
- **TwitterGrader** - <http://twitter.grader.com/>  
By the internet marketing geniuses at Hubspot, Twitter Grader analyzes your participation and assess a grade on how influential you are. Provides additional analysis of your followers and who you're following. Identifies areas of concern too.
- **WeFollow** - <http://wefollow.com/>  
Ranks Twitter users in terms of influence and greatest following.
- **Xefer** - <http://xefer.com>  
Analyzes a specific Twitter user's posting patterns to show the times of day that user is most active, most replies occur, and who is doing the most replying.
- **YFrog** - <http://www.yfrog.com/>  
Share your photos and videos on twitter.

# FACEBOOK



## WHAT'S THE BUZZ ABOUT FACEBOOK?

Facebook started in 2004 as a way for college kids to express themselves, link up and get to know each other better. It has exploded into the second largest destination on the internet and a utility that millions of people rely on as central to their daily lives. Today, 350 million people are currently registered for Facebook to connect with friends and professional contacts online. Individuals use Facebook to stay in touch and broadcast details about their lives to their community, manage photos and events, and keep tabs on just about everything – people in the spotlight, companies and brands, nonprofits, sources of entertainment, and much more. Companies are now taking advantage of Facebook as a massive (yet highly targetable) gathering place – where they can forge deeper bonds with their consumers, disseminate information, and even sell products and services.



facebook®

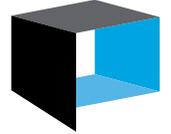
Some astounding stats from Facebook (as of January 17, 2010):

- More than 3.5 billion pieces of content (web links, news stories, blog posts, notes, photo albums, etc.) shared each week
- More than 2.5 billion photos uploaded to the site each month – the largest repository of consumer photos on the Internet
- Average user has 130 friends
- Average user spends more than 55 minutes per day on Facebook
- Average user writes 25 comments on Facebook each month
- Average user becomes a fan of 2 pages each month
- Average user is a member of 12 groups

Big businesses have already proven that Facebook provides an outstanding marketing venue, whether your goal is to raise awareness or interest in a product, drive new traffic to your website, or simply maintain a direct channel of communication with people who love your product. Photographers are starting to use Facebook as a marketing tool, and they're reporting similar success across select specialties.

Why might you use Facebook for your photography business?

- **Build a community around your business.** Facebook gives you a central "page" and the tools you need to empower a community to form and interact – with you at the center. Creating an active community that is willing to engage with you online eliminates many of the trust and credibility barriers that limit the effectiveness of traditional marketing tactics. Facebook's tools let you share information and content with this community as regularly as you please.
- **Promote your content.** Facebook gives you the ideal platform for sharing your photography, blog posts, and any other creative output. By becoming your connection or a "fan" of your business – people are stating that they want to engage with you, see your updates, and potentially share your content with their personal network. Simply put, people can opt in or out of your community, so you can assume if they've stuck around, they have some interest in hearing from you.
- **Deepen relationships.** Facebook enables you to share more information with your connections, learn more about their lives, and communicate about their needs. As a result, active participation enables you to engage with current and potential customers both on a personal and professional level. Direct contact, as well as



Facebook stats, let you develop awareness of who some of your best, most engaged customers are.

- **Referral business.** Today, everyone is inundated by email, pervasive marketing messages, and contending with busy schedules, so the effectiveness of traditional interruptive marketing tactics are waning. Thanks to social networks, individuals and businesses now have more tools than ever to seek recommendations from their networks when they have a pressing need for a product or service. Facebook gives you the ability to become part of that conversation (or connect with someone who is a part of it) and gain referrals.
- **Get yourself found online.** Facebook provides yet another destination for your inbound marketing efforts. At all times, people are online and searching for products and services like yours. Facebook provides a powerful platform to get found by these people during their search. You can optimize Facebook to help people find you (on Facebook and through SEO).

### IS FACEBOOK RIGHT FOR YOU?

Specifically, we've seen the following characteristics are helpful for growing photography businesses via Facebook.

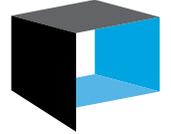
- **You have a regional focus.** Facebook can serve as a platform for your clients to share your work within their local networks. This can become a powerful source of referrals as your work is exposed to more potential local clients. We've seen event and portrait photographers, junior sports, photojournalists, music photographers, and location-specific travel photographers build strong followings on Facebook. Even advertising and stock photographers with a regional focus are reporting success in creating communities of fans using Facebook and sharing their content into these groups.

- **Large affinity groups exist for your typical subjects.** If there's already an established fan base that you can plug into and generate buzz for your work, it is easy to find them on Facebook and become part of the conversation. Examples include music, sports & celebrity, travel and nature photographers. If a group doesn't exist, you can create one.
- **Your content is timely or socially powerful.** Photojournalists who are capturing critical events taking place in the news no longer must rely on an editor or major publication – they can now self-publish their work into the Facebook community and tap into Facebook's culture of sharing to spread their work and grow their reputation.



*Eric Hegwer set up a Facebook fan page and has access to highly detailed statistics on who visits his page.*

The above categories are by no means exclusive. One key factor to success on Facebook is to understand the community you're targeting and understand the reason they might have for connecting with you. When you understand what motivates these people to engage online, you can look for ways to become a part of their conversation and build awareness for your work.



## GETTING STARTED WITH FACEBOOK

**Have a plan.** Be very clear about what your goal will be and what metrics you'll use to assess if you're reaching that goal.

**Create a full personal profile.** If you don't already have one, you'll want to create a personal profile. This is separate and distinct from your Facebook "page" for your business. Include a basic description of yourself in "About Me," and add more information that presents a complete picture of who you are. Include your hometown and relationship status, interests and activities, contact information, education and work experience.

**Control your privacy settings.** Facebook lets you manage your privacy settings to control who sees what portions of your profile and status updates. If you're concerned about mixing personal and professional contacts, this is one way to manage that.

**Join networks and connect with friends.** When you join networks, the affiliation gives Facebook important data on other recommendations to serve for you – ie. networks you might enjoy and people you might know. You can connect with friends by searching Facebook manually, importing contacts, or using Facebook's "People You May Know" recommendation tool.

**Share information.** Facebook asks "What's on your mind?" That's an open invitation to share with your contacts. Any content you share will get posted to the "Wall" tab of your profile, and will also go out to the News Feeds of your friends. In your News Feed, you will see a constant stream of updates from your friends.

**Access applications.** Thousands of applications exist for fun and entertainment, news, and even business purposes. Facebook photo sharing is considered an application. You can explore these at <http://facebook.com/applications>.

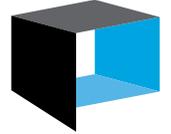
**Join groups and fan pages.** Look for affinity groups to join that will connect you with people who share your interests. As you join these groups and post comments, your friends will see the announcement in their News Feed. In essence, every connection you make is also a statement about who you are and what you're interested in – broadcast to your entire Facebook community. Groups tend to be interest based, while fan pages were recently set up for Facebook members to interact with companies and brands.

**Interact.** Interact with other Facebook members by writing on their wall, commenting on pictures, and asking questions (directly and broadly).

**Maintain a fresh profile.** If you want to stay consistently engaged, keep your profile up to date so people can get to know you.

## BUILDING A FACEBOOK PAGE FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Facebook allows businesses to create a fan page for free. For independent photographers, this is a fantastic alternative to linking with professional contacts via a personal profile – the place where you may choose to also share more personal updates. On your business' Facebook page, you'll have significant flexibility to customize the experience for your fans and post regular content to engage with them – including photos, videos, audio, discussions, and more. The "page" is an ideal platform for building a community around your business, and interacting with them. You can engage in rich discussion, offer your



fans exclusive discounts and content, keep them up to date on studio promotions, your travels and achievements, and more.

The key difference between a personal profile and a page is that anyone using Facebook can become a “fan” of your page. There is no permission or confirmation necessary.

Your page becomes extremely powerful when you recognize how it taps into Facebook’s social mesh to market your work. When people become a fan of your business and/or interact on your page – all of their friends see this in their News Feed. Inevitably, seeing this “news” prompts people to explore what their friend may be interested in. It’s like an immediate endorsement that’s broadcast to others on your behalf.

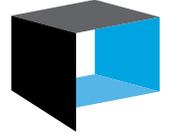
Beyond the obvious benefits of growing a community of fans that you can interact with directly on Facebook, creating a business page also benefits your SEO as well. We’ll cover that a bit later on.

### HOW TO CREATE YOUR BUSINESS FAN PAGE

To get started, visit [www.facebook.com/pages/create.php](http://www.facebook.com/pages/create.php) where you can choose a category and page name. Be mindful that the page name is the equivalent of a web page title, which is a significant SEO factor. As such, a page name containing relevant keywords can help you get found online. Using your business name makes the most sense, but you should determine if there’s a human-readable way to sparingly include relevant keywords as well (i.e. “Leah Fasten, Boston Commercial Photographer”) Don’t go overboard with the keywords or you’ll likely turn people off. Facebook provides space for 75 characters. Note: you cannot change the page name once it is created, so you want to be sure you’re happy with it before you publish!



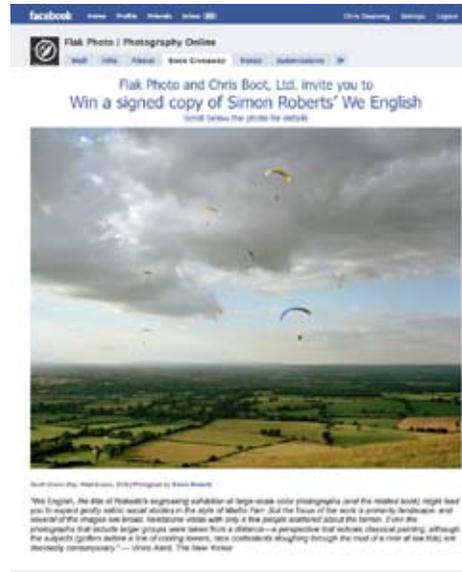
To make your page a more appealing platform for your community, you should utilize all of the basic tools that Facebook provides. Be certain to add descriptive information about your photography business and fill out the “Info” tab completely. You can then add additional tabs including a discussion board, events page, YouTube videos, a Notes page to feature RSS feeds of your blog posts, and more.



## TIPS TO MAXIMIZE YOUR FACEBOOK PAGE:

**Engage with your fans. Post updates frequently.** When you share content, ask follow up questions that provoke conversation. Use your page to share more than just your own content – even use it to promote others. Respond in a timely fashion when people post messages. Join in the conversation your fans are having on your wall – you’ll actually start forging personal connections with the people you interact with, and soon you’ll be able to identify some of your biggest supporters. Don’t hesitate to ask people to share your most compelling content.

**Feed your blog directly into your page via RSS.** You can actually feed any RSS directly into your page including your blog, Twitter, and even PhotoShelter gallery updates. This makes your content immediately accessible to your fans that prefer to engage with you directly on Facebook. This is easily added using the Facebook Notes application. Networked Blogs lets you stream in your own blog and create a blogroll of other blogs you like.

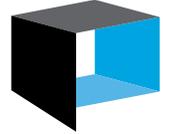


*Flak photo uses HTML to customize their fan page giving a much more visual experience to visitors.*

**Customize your Page with rich HTML tabs.** Facebook allows you to customize additional tabs on your fan page using HTML, giving you the opportunity to create the feel of a uniquely designed web page while still inside of Facebook. This is a more advanced tactic only for the HTML-savvy user. To learn how to do this, visit Facebook Help and search for “HTML Fan Page”. A customized fan page tab will help you stand out and provide a more unique visual experience for your visitors. It is a way to better integrate the same brand look and feel as your portfolio website or blog. The customized tab can be set as the default tab that visitors see when they arrive at your page. It’s also a great way to share recent tearsheets.

**Use the page avatar (profile photo) to showcase your photography.** Unlike Twitter, you can’t customize the background of your page, so it makes sense to include one of your best photos to draw visitors in. Or, you should feel free to include a photo of yourself, to personalize the business page. The maximum size photo you can upload for the main page wall is 200x600 pixels.

**Optimize your page for SEO.** In addition to an SEO friendly page name (discussed above) several features can be used to support your SEO. Because the search engines can see your full page, you should place keyword rich copy on the page. The “About” box is the topmost place on the page to add custom text, so you should make sure to include words and phrases that you want to be optimized for in the description you place here. On the “Info” tab, you should take every opportunity to include complete address information, company (or product) details, and direct links to your websites and blogs. You also have the opportunity to add more tabs filled with text, images, videos, and links. Frequently linking out to other relevant pages in your status updates is

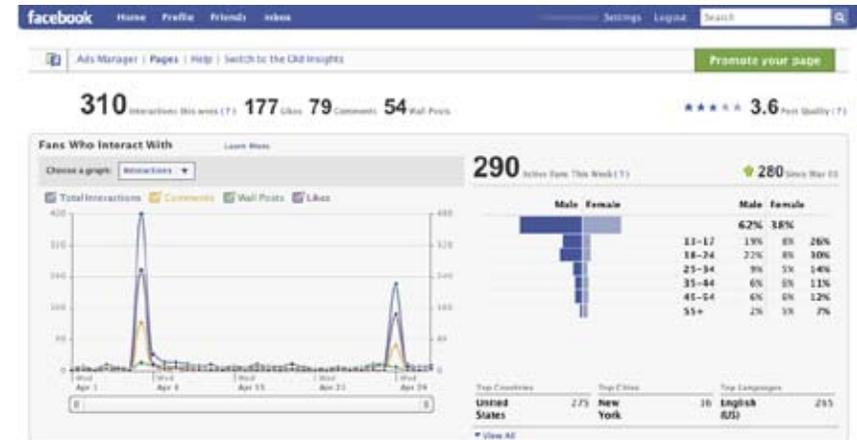


also helpful for SEO of the page itself. (Apparently, including a raw URL in the text of the update is better for your own SEO than using the “attach link” feature.) Finally, because all content on the Page can be indexed by search engines, ensure your keywords are present when you add photos with captions, events with descriptions, and spark conversation in your discussion forum.

**Work hard to grow your fans.** Just putting the page up won’t send masses of loyal followers your way. Create lively interaction and post content that people will want to share (thereby luring others to your page). You need to market the fan page and invite people to join – so mention it everywhere possible (e.g. your blog and other social platforms). People need a reason to join – unless they’re already a friend or had a great experience working with you, there must be some reward for joining. Think about what will compel total strangers to become your fan – keeping your content fresh, thought-provoking or entertaining will certainly help.

Advertising via Facebook is an option to attract fans, but it makes sense to kick start your efforts by exploring the free tactics first, without laying out cash for ads. You can always consider ads down the road when your growth has hit a plateau. Frequency and consistency of updates is key to any marketing initiative, and Facebook is no different.

**Consider creating a resource page to attract new fans.** Dell Computer is frequently cited as a company that employed this smart tactic. Dell created a “social media for small business” resource page, where social media tactics ruled, not selling computers. This created a new community with affinity for Dell’s brand, and sparked vibrant discussion and engagement. Dell was able to attract different than those “fans”

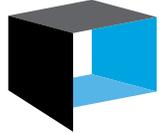


Facebook fanpage feature an “insights” page that give highly detailed demographic information of visitors.

who would have commonly normally sought out Dell’s page. Think about how you could apply this concept within your specialty.

### Use Facebook’s stats and Google Analytics to optimize your page.

Facebook provides rich demographic and behavioral information about your fans. Specifically, you can learn who is interacting with you and how they are doing so (i.e. wall posts, discussion comments, “Likes” tags of your content). You can easily monitor fan growth according to specific dates, which can show you how specific efforts are helping you grow your fans. Analyzing this data will help you generate content that is most compelling for your fans to share/engage with. You can track views of photos, video, and audio that you upload to facebook. This can tell you what’s resonating best with your fans and what to provide more of. You can also use Google Analytics to track the behavior of fans



originating at Facebook who click links to your blog, portfolio website, or image archive. You can develop a sense of how individual links compel fans to visit, and even convert (i.e. buy something) via your website. You can then compare this data across other social networks to rationalize your time investment, ensuring you're focusing on the greatest return.

**Use "Updates" sparingly.** The Updates function is just like an email blast – these notes are sent to the Facebook Inbox and appear in the "Requests" area of an individual's homepage. Use these to share only the most compelling and relevant information with your fans. Don't overdo it – spam is spam and it can be easy to turn people off. Make the communication less formal and more personal. And, if you are going to send a message, include a "call to action" with a tracking link (either a Bit.ly shortened URL or use Google URL builder) so you can track behavior of who is clicking through your messages.

**Attract a broad audience.** When targeting an audience on Facebook, we encourage you to think broadly, rather than a isolating a discreet target customer that may be hard to find and connect with blindly. For example, rather than trying to locate nature/wildlife photo editors specifically, you might start with nature photography enthusiasts, or fans of a specific location that you've shot. As your work becomes part of the conversation within these larger groups, the more specific target customers will take notice (if they're looking).

### CREATING FACEBOOK GROUPS

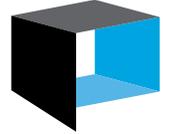
Facebook also provides the opportunity to connect with people via groups. The key difference is that Pages are intended for products and brands, while groups are more for people with shared interests. Groups may have varying permission levels (e.g. "open" or closed – admin approval needed). Groups have administrators that manage the group, approve applicants or invite others to join. Administrators can also appoint "officers" to share the role. Unlike pages, groups have more limited access to applications.

Groups are a powerful way to build and engage in a community that isn't solely focused on your own brand. Think of groups that would enjoy having a photographer like you involved in the conversation. If the group does not exist, it is easy to create one. To set up a group, go to <http://www.facebook.com/groups.php>. Just like creating any other profile, be sure to fill out the basic group information, including name, network (best to choose "Global" to make your group available to all Facebook users, and group type (such as Business, Geography, Just for Fun). The more content you add, the more engaging the group will appear.

### INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY & YOUR PHOTOS ON FACEBOOK

It is important that photographers remain aware of Facebook's policy on image rights and copyright ownership. The Professional Photographers of America recently helped to clarify Facebook's current policy:

"As content-sharers on Facebook, users have given the site a license to distribute and display their work. When any user (including a professional artist) posts an image to the site, he hasn't given away rights to that image, but allowed Facebook to show and share it. Facebook does not assume ownership of the work posted..."



"...Whenever someone views your images on your Web pages or a communal site, or when an image you created is queued up in a search, it qualifies as a reproduction of your work. Facebook is bound to ensure that you, as a site user, agree to the display and distribution of your images within its online community."

"Content-sharing website owners will also use their terms of service statement to help content creators manage their copyrights. Facebook, for example, requires users to affirm that they've obtained permission to use any information or creative works they post to the site. Further, Facebook provides information on its adherence to the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, and the procedures copyright owners can easily follow to get infringed works quickly removed from the site."

Read the full statement here:

<http://www.ppmag.com/web-exclusives/2009/03/ppa-sheds-light-on-facebook-li.html>

Facebook does strip metadata when displaying images online – this means that the EXIF and IPTC copyright data stored within the image are no longer accessible should the image be misused by a facebook member. In the end, it is hard to control the behavior of 350 million people. One thing photographers can do to fight image theft on social networks like Facebook – upload images already containing a watermark.

## FACEBOOK ETIQUETTE & YOUR CLIENTS

You'll be able to figure out some of the basic norms about engaging via Facebook – what's acceptable and what's not. We'll share a few of our favorites to help you avoid early mistakes:

1. As a business, it is important to show your human side.
2. Avoid boring status updates that engage nobody.
3. Don't spend all of your time promoting yourself.
4. Respect how individuals are using Facebook – especially if they use Facebook for personal rather than business reasons. Some may not want your solicitation or even friendship now. You need to be OK with that.
5. Listen!



**Leah Fasten Photography** Check out the amazing photography in this month's Yankee Magazine. I'm honored to be included! We photographed Fitchburg Mayor, Lisa Wong around downtown Fitchburg. Check out the photos and outtakes here:

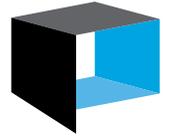


December 2, 2009 at 12:42pm via PhotoShelter · [View Gallery](#)

Isa Leshko likes this.



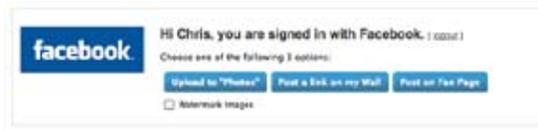
**Leah Fasten Photography** Thanks Isa!  
December 7, 2009 at 9:50pm · [Report](#)



## HOW PHOTOSHELTER CAN HELP

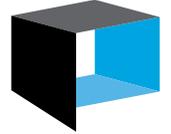
PhotoShelter offers a host of social sharing tools that help you promote your work via multiple platforms, including Facebook.

- Post images and links directly from PhotoShelter to Facebook.** You can upload images to Facebook directly from PhotoShelter, or you may post a link on your Facebook wall that includes a URL and thumbnail previews for the first few images in your PhotoShelter gallery. The first option is a matter of convenience – no need to upload to PhotoShelter and Facebook separately when sharing photos, and you can choose to send watermarked or unwatermarked files. The second option works best if you want to drive traffic directly to your PhotoShelter site where visitors can purchase your photography. You can post images directly to Facebook fan pages using these tools too.



*PhotoShelter allows you to export images directly to Facebook, or post a link on your personal or fan page wall which links back to a specific gallery.*

- Enable social sharing features on your website, to let your website visitors post links to your work for sharing on Facebook.** You can easily add a “Share This” widget to your PhotoShelter website. This provides simple buttons on your image galleries and single images so your website visitors can instantly share links to your images via their favorite social networks. You need to make it as easy as possible for other people to promote your photography. So, we help out you by providing a very obvious link for people to share your work.



**FEATURE: HOW LUCEO IMAGES USES FACEBOOK & TWITTER**

LUCEO Images is a photographic cooperative comprised of 7 commercial and editorial photographers. LUCEO uses Twitter and Facebook to keep photographers, editors, friends and family up to date on what everyone in LUCEO is up to, including their latest projects, awards, assignments and daily photos. The cooperative supports one group blog, as well as blogs for the seven photographers, which are all updated weekly, if not daily.

LUCEO has a page on Facebook with 1,704 fans, while their Twitter account has 1,869 followers. Despite some initial skepticism, LUCEO is pleased with both networks as a traffic source. Whenever there is a new post on any of the individual LUCEO photographer blogs, Kendrick Brinson or Tim Lytvinenko will post a link with something funny or intriguing to both Facebook and Twitter. The power of the cooperative helps as the Luceo team always has someone helping to retweet and share each others' posts. Three LUCEO members have individual Twitter accounts, plus the main Luceo account, and each retweet comments.

One strategy that LUCEO uses is staggering message timing across different platforms. If Kendrick posts to Facebook at one time and then Twitter hours later, that drives up traffic because the message hits different followers at different times.

The Facebook Fan page has also been valuable for organizing events and distributing invitations. For a gallery show in NYC, LUCEO invited fans by

creating a Facebook event and generated immediate response.

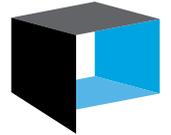
Twitter is valuable for leaving impressions with clients that you may not already have a connection with. They see your name cycle throughout the day and they can potentially interact with you in a simple, unimposing manner. Potential clients have seen posts on Facebook and reacted, providing instant feedback that Facebook and the content is relevant to the right audience.



Kendrick believes the key to Facebook and Twitter is to constantly produce new content so you have something to draw people back to your site regularly. She started the [You Guess It](#) blogpost with Tim that runs every weekday. They take iPhone photos of through the week of a secret topic, post them on the blog, and tweet and Facebook about it every day encouraging people to guess the theme. She also promotes LUCEO's archive by featuring one photo and interviewing that photographer for the backstory. The Facebook and Twitter updates help remind editors that Luceo's archive is loaded with content

and easy to access and search. On slow days (and there aren't many), Kendrick likes to tweet and update Facebook about photo industry news – new projects by photographers we respect, contest information, grant information, etc. The Luceo website also has Facebook and Twitter icons so it's easy to follow/fan them.

“A lot of what we photograph are stories, people and places that we are passionate about and want others to see through our eyes, so it's great to have platforms that lend more eyes to our art.”



**FACEBOOK SUCCESS METRICS**

Metric	Where do I find it?	Notes
Number of friends	In the left column on your personal profile	
Fan Page stats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fans</li> <li>• New Fans</li> <li>• Page views</li> <li>• Unique views</li> <li>• Wall posts</li> <li>• Discussion topics</li> <li>• Reviews</li> <li>• Photo views</li> </ul>	Facebook Page Manager	Use "Insights" function to study your fans' behavior according to demographics.
Facebook Post Quality	Facebook Page Manager	Post Quality is an important indicator for how fans gauge your posts. This score is calculated with an algorithm that takes into account your number of posts, total fan interactions received, number of fans, as well as other factors.
Website/ blog traffic from Facebook	In Google Analytics under "Traffic Sources"	You'll need a free Google Analytics account installed on your website to track this metric.
Website/ blog traffic from links posted on Facebook	In Google Analytics under "Traffic Sources"	You'll need a free Google Analytics account installed on your website to track this metric.
Independent sharing of your content on Facebook		You'll only really know this if you are tagged when the content is shared

**FACEBOOK FAQ**

***Are there rules I need to observe on Facebook?***

Absolutely. It is a good idea to read through the FAQs for Facebook pages, here: [http://bit.ly/FB\\_page\\_FAQ](http://bit.ly/FB_page_FAQ)

***How many followers do I need to be successful?***

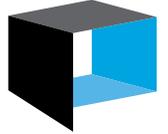
There is no precise number that will equate to guaranteed success. However, the more followers you can amass and engage regularly with your content and conversation, the more successful you'll be with social media overall.

***Should I connect with my clients and prospects using my personal Facebook profile?***

Many photographers have found that connecting with their clients on a personal level helps forge a closer bond – which ultimately leads to more work. However, linking via Facebook means that you both must be comfortable sharing everything – not just what each are posting via their professional persona (i.e. baby pictures, party pictures, dating news, general thoughts, etc.) Some people prefer to restrict personal profiles to true friends and family – so it is important to respect this. Meaning, if you don't already have a connection or friendly working relationship, maybe becoming "friends" on Facebook isn't the first step to getting to know each other better.

***Is it OK to send friend requests to potential clients without an introduction?***

Image buyers and photo editors, for example, have mixed guidance here. We have been told by some photo editors that photographers literally drove them off of Facebook, with incessant friend requests and intrusive messaging. Others, who are actively using Facebook to find



new photographers, welcome the connection. So, we encourage you to use discretion. If you are going to send a friend request to a potential client – make sure you include a message about why connecting makes sense to that person. Don't aggressively stalk people or spam them with repeat requests. And an introduction from someone else is always better.

#### ***How do I protect my copyright with photos on Facebook?***

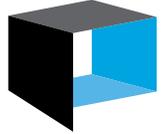
In the past, Facebook has been accused of vague terms of service with regard to photography copyright and reserves the right to alter their terms at any time. While they have made attempts to clarify their intentions, photographers should be mindful about their rights and how to keep themselves protected.

Facebook does not have a right to sell your photos. However, they recently started using profile photos in Facebook ads posted to friends in your network. You can opt out of this practice if you do not want your photos appearing in ads on Facebook. You can also control who has access to see your photos, with varying levels of permission from friends only, to everyone. (There's a fine line here, because to market your photos, you want as many people as possible to see them.)

When you upload photos to Facebook, they process the photos and strip out the embedded metadata that contains your copyright information. This is a dangerous practice. We recommend that you upload photos containing a subtle watermark that includes your name, copyright, and contact information to eliminate any ambiguity about copyright, but also to give people a way to contact you no matter how far your work is shared.

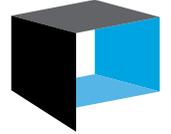
#### ***What's the difference between a Facebook group and Facebook page?***

Facebook groups existed prior to Facebook pages, and were intended to be a way for people with similar interests to get together online. Facebook pages were introduced when Facebook realized groups were forming around companies and brands. As such, Facebook intends for businesses to use the pages feature. (That shouldn't prevent you from setting up unique interest groups around topics related to your photography.) Facebook pages have different messaging capabilities and analytical tools than groups as well.



## FACEBOOK TOOLS

- **Blog RSS Feed Reader** - [http://bit.ly/FB\\_blog\\_RS](http://bit.ly/FB_blog_RS)  
Blog RSS Feed Reader allows you to add a personal blog, corporate blog RSS Feed or any other RSS feed to your Facebook profile for your friends to read. It's a great way to drive traffic to your blog or website.
- **Facebook Notes** - <http://www.facebook.com/notes.php>  
App on Facebook you can add to your Page. Notes can be a tab on your Page, and pulls in the RSS feed from your blog or other content source. It will automatically bring everything into Facebook and display in all of your fans' feeds.
- **FriendFeed** - <http://friendfeed.com/>  
FriendFeed lets you aggregate updates and participate in multiple social networks in one application.
- **Google Analytics** - <http://www.google.com/analytics/>  
Google Analytics is the free web analytics solution that gives you rich insights into your website traffic and marketing effectiveness. We stress (many times) that you need to measure your activity so you can make smart decisions about how you invest your time and money and structure your website.
- **Google URL Builder** - [http://bit.ly/URL\\_builder](http://bit.ly/URL_builder)  
The URL builder lets you generate URLs that can be individually tracked by Google Analytics, to give you insights on how campaigns/posts featuring that specific URL performed. The URL Builder makes a long messy URL, which can be shortened by Bit.ly for posting on social networks.
- **Seesmic** - <http://seesmic.com/>  
Potentially the most robust social networking dashboard available – ties together all of your communities and lets you interact with them from one single place – your desktop, mobile device, or the web.
- **TweetDeck** - <http://www.tweetdeck.com/>  
TweetDeck helps organize and filter activity on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace and more. You can filter and group tweets based on search term mentions, time frame, and more, in a simple dashboard structure so you can view everything at once.
- **Twitter App** - [http://bit.ly/FB\\_twitter\\_app](http://bit.ly/FB_twitter_app)  
Automatically pulls your tweets into your Facebook status.
- **Static FBML** - [http://bit.ly/FBML\\_static](http://bit.ly/FBML_static)  
Allows you to add advanced functionality to a page by placing a customizable box in which you can render HTML or FBML (Facebook Markup Language). Lets you create a much more engaging, designed "website" within facebook.
- **Flash Player** - [http://bit.ly/FB\\_flash](http://bit.ly/FB_flash)  
Adds a box to your Page in which you can upload your own Flash files to play any kind of Flash video, widget or game.



### HOW A PHOTO RESEARCHER USES SOCIAL MEDIA

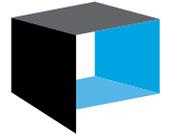
Mary Risher is a freelance photo editor, researcher, and shoot producer for high end travel and lifestyle magazines. Today, 80% of her business is sourcing stock imagery for clients, while 20% is producing shoots. Her goal – find fresh, current imagery that hasn't been used in prior issues (or by competitors). At times, agencies satisfy Mary's needs, but she prefers to deal with individual photographers who likely have archives full of unused imagery.

Generally, photographers in Mary's immediate network are often hard to reach. When she has an image request, she's lucky if she catches a photographer in the studio amid editing projects. Otherwise, she finds that too many photographers don't have their archives organized, easily searchable, or ready to be licensed. Dealing with photographers' reps directly is rarely productive, because reps tend to have less interest in one-off image licensing deals, so her request does not often get immediate attention. So, Mary will often have to be resourceful about finding new photographers. She uses established resources like Wonderful Machine, Lightstalkers, and PhotoShelter, and relies on good old-fashioned research (i.e. sifting through magazines and developing target lists of photographers that catch her eye.)

Mary's social networks – LinkedIn and Facebook – are a huge help. She prefers Facebook, because the atmosphere is more approachable and fun. She often uses the social networks to connect with photographers she identifies through magazines. Mary maintains a "watch list" of the photographers she's interested in, and uses the networks to connect and follow what different photographers are doing. She states that 80% of the time she contacts photographers on the social networks, she'll get a response. When she still cannot find a match, she'll send a mass email to her photographer contacts via Facebook and LinkedIn, asking for referrals. Usually photographers are happy to share connections online.

In addition to suggesting photographers get their archives in shape to be licensed, she encourages photographers "not to overdo it with persistent updates."

# LINKEDIN



## WHAT'S LINKEDIN ALL ABOUT?

LinkedIn got off to a hot start in 2003 by differentiating itself as the social networking site for professionals. If Facebook and Friendster were for connecting with your buddies, LinkedIn was a more professional venue for networking with colleagues and professional contacts,



references, and recruiting/job search. Now the lines have blurred significantly across social networks, with ways to create business and personal value on each platform. LinkedIn has evolved by adding a diversity of applications, giving you the ability to join professional groups, post content and status updates, and even create a company page like a Facebook fan page. However, the core positioning remains the same – LinkedIn is a social platform for business. (In truth, it derives much of its revenue through recruiters who pay to access names and titles of working professionals.)

Given that its heritage lies in professional networking – people using LinkedIn are interested in growing their networks and meeting new business contacts – we feel that LinkedIn provides some great opportunities for you to expand your potential client base and market your photography. For example, searching LinkedIn for the term “photo editor” returns 23,000 individuals, “art buyer” yields 12,398, “graphic designer” yields 273,969, and “art director” yields 329,263! Would you like to connect with these people? (There are also only 136,395 photographers currently using LinkedIn.)

The key difference between LinkedIn and Twitter is that on LinkedIn, the connections are permission-based. With Twitter, your followers can

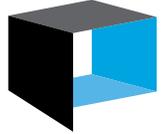
proactively opt in to “subscribe” to see your tweets as a user, you can follow anyone you want unless they have blocked you. LinkedIn is based on invitations to connect. You must accept my invitation to connect (or I must accept yours) in order to become a part of my network, see my updates, message with me, comment on my profile, and get introductions to my contacts. This permission-based approach mirrors Facebook. Also like Facebook, LinkedIn users can view your status when you add updates, as well as view a feed of your recent activity on LinkedIn – when you make new connections, contribute to groups, etc.

## GETTING STARTED WITH LINKEDIN

Like all social platforms, it is relatively easy to establish a LinkedIn account.

**Register and create a profile.** You’ll benefit significantly by making the extra effort to build a very detailed profile that best represents you. The details you provide – like company, job title, industry, and location, will help LinkedIn recommend relevant groups to join and individuals you may want to connect with. In addition, the details you provide are all keywords that potential clients may be using to find you (e.g. wedding photographer, photojournalist, concert photographer). We suggest that you also upload a photo to personalize the profile. Inside the “Settings” area, you may also control the ability for contacts to view your status or activity feeds, and tell LinkedIn about the type of networking you’re looking to do (e.g. sell services, find a job, investigate deals with other companies).

**Build your contacts.** You can instantly search LinkedIn for your existing contacts that reside within your email address books (i.e. Gmail, Yahoo!, Hotmail & AOL contacts). Or, you can simply manually enter people’s



names and search for them. If people are already using LinkedIn, you can send them an invitation to connect with a message. (A custom message is helpful to introduce yourself if you've never worked together before.) Once you have created a foundation of contacts, you can begin exploring your immediate contacts' networks, and where appropriate, ask for direct introductions.

**Build your credibility with recommendations.** You can receive recommendations from contacts and make recommendations for your contacts. According to LinkedIn, users with recommendations are three times as likely to get inquiries through LinkedIn searches. Sometimes the best way to receive recommendations is to give recommendations. You can also request recommendations from key contacts. (Like other platforms, there's a huge karma factor on LinkedIn.)

**Participate in the community through LinkedIn groups and LinkedIn Answers.** LinkedIn groups help bring people together who share a specific interest or affinity. Groups allow you to create or contribute to topical discussions, post articles, and post jobs. Several groups exist for photographers, including Photography Industry Professionals (11,895 members), Women In Photography (10,970 members), Professional Photography (6,157 members), Adobe Photoshop Users (13,691 members). You can also start your own group – maybe for a specific photography specialty or geographic region (e.g. London wedding and event professionals). Participating in these networks brings you closer to potential clients and business partners. LinkedIn Answers enables individual users to post questions for the broader community. Like Twitter, participating in these conversations helps build your credibility and gives you exposure to people who can help build your network.

**Use LinkedIn applications to enrich your profile.** LinkedIn applications enable you to differentiate your profile, share more content, and collaborate with your network. Applications are added to your homepage and profile enabling you to control who gets access to what information. Currently, 13 applications are available including:

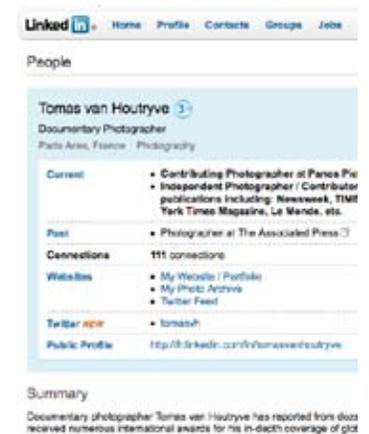
- WordPress – sync your WordPress blog posts with your LinkedIn profile
- Tweets – a Twitter client you can use directly within LinkedIn
- SlideShare – share presentations right within your profile. We've seen photographers using this to weave their photography to their profiles.

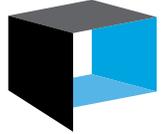
#### Create a LinkedIn company page.

LinkedIn enables you to create a separate company page and get listed in their company directory. Enter detailed information to describe your services. At the moment, these pages appear to offer limited customization capabilities.

#### Use InMail (with discretion) to email your network.

Although you can email up to 50 contacts at one time through LinkedIn, do not spam potential clients using LinkedIn, or you'll surely lose them instantly. But you can appropriately approach contacts using the email feature to engage people in relevant dialogue. Our advice is to make this a custom outreach – be clear that you're contacting that one person specifically, and tailor the message to that specific contact. Anything that appears to be a mass email will likely be ignored.





## HOW LINKEDIN CAN HELP YOUR SEO

There are two key areas to consider regarding LinkedIn and SEO. First, you can optimize your LinkedIn profile to get found by Google when potential clients are using relevant keywords to search for your photography services. As a result, your LinkedIn profile provides yet one more touch point that may attract potential clients, and in turn they can use LinkedIn as a pathway to connect with you (if what they find there is appealing). Second, you can use LinkedIn's powerful Google authority to drive SEO for your website or blog. We'll briefly discuss tactics for both.

### TIPS TO OPTIMIZE YOUR PROFILE FOR SEO:

**Complete your profile and use relevant keywords.** Detailed profile entries provide rich, searchable content. Use keywords that you believe would help potential clients find you. Because LinkedIn pushes your job title into your profile's website page title (another very strong SEO factor) – you want to use descriptive keywords here too. "Photographer" won't help differentiate you in searches. Go with something more descriptive like "Los Angeles Wedding & Event Photographer".

**Make your profile "public".** Any information you block from public view will not be viewed by LinkedIn search engines, or external search engines like Google. At minimum, you want your own name, company name, and most relevant keywords to be visible.

**Edit your LinkedIn vanity URL.** You can edit your profile URL ([www.linkedin.com/in/YOURNAME](http://www.linkedin.com/in/YOURNAME)) to optimize for search. If you want to optimize your name, make sure to use it here. Otherwise, you can use your company name, or emphasize your specialty. (Example: [www.linkedin.com/in/fashion\\_photographer](http://www.linkedin.com/in/fashion_photographer))

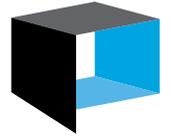
**Recommendations help.** Recommendations enhance the searchable content on your profile page and also enhance your credibility once a visitor arrives there.

**Participate in Answers (answer people's questions).** In addition to helping grow your network and your credibility, having a presence in Answers will grow internal links on LinkedIn that point back to your profile, which also enhances your SEO.

**Drive SEO for your website or blog.** Include hyperlinks in your profile with descriptive anchor text. LinkedIn enables you to add up to three website hyperlinks on your profile. Unlike most social platforms, these are "dofollow" links – meaning LinkedIn has told Google to crawl these, and they can be used to help your SEO. You have full control of the anchor text that's displayed over the hyperlink, up to 30 characters. Descriptive anchor text helps Google best understand what you're linking to. The default is "My Website" – and this anchor text is not descriptive enough to help you with SEO. You're better off changing it to include top keywords, like "My Sports Photography Website". Link to your portfolio, image archive, blog or any other site you'd like to have better SEO.

### SYNCING LINKEDIN AND TWITTER

In 2009, Twitter and LinkedIn announced a partnership to sync status updates across networks. Inside LinkedIn, you can link your accounts through your profile settings, and choose whether your Twitter account appears on your profile. You can also opt to push out your LinkedIn status updates via Twitter. Within Twitter (settings), you can choose to push all of your tweets to LinkedIn, or just selected tweets using either of two hashtags (#li or #in). We anticipate greater integration of these two platforms in the future.



### HOW LEAH FASTEN GETS CONNECTED WITH LINKEDIN

Leah Fasten is a Boston-based commercial photographer. She frequently uses Twitter, Facebook, and a blog for her business. Yet she has found LinkedIn to be the most productive use of her time. Over the past year, she's noticed that more people are using LinkedIn to

connect and do business together.

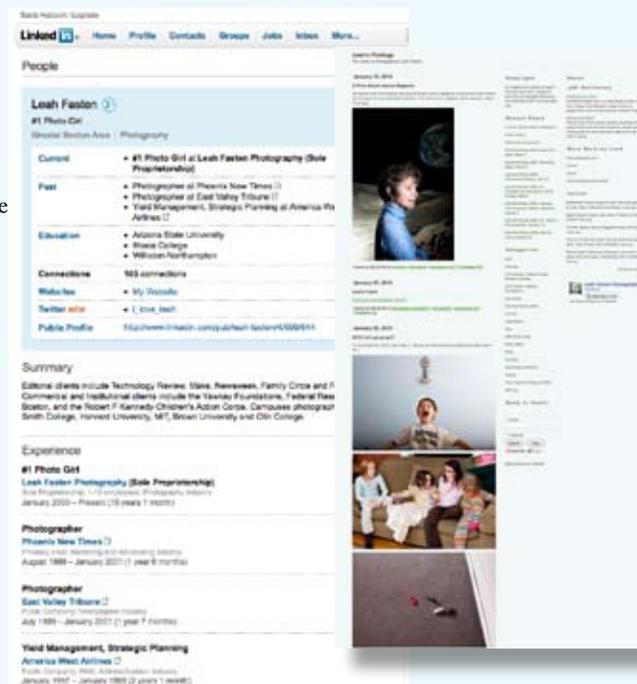
Leah uses LinkedIn to stay in touch with art buyers and graphic designers that she's worked with. She doesn't have a rep, so her primary goal is to keep her network alive, fresh, and consistently aware that she is available for work. She relies primarily on referrals from past clients – so it is critical to stay top of mind with her network. However, agency jobs tend to turn over frequently, so when a contact moves to a new agency and updates their status on LinkedIn, Leah sees the change and uses the opportunity to check in with them.

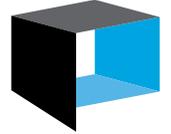
For Leah, the regular status updates – “putting my work out there” – combined with targeted periodic check-in emails has ultimately yielded a growth in new projects. She finds that sending contacts a link to her portfolio gives them a low commitment way to interact with her (and prospects appreciate that) vs. the old way of trying to wrangle a portfolio visit.

She also uses LinkedIn to pre-qualify potential clients. By getting to know a contact's interests and experiences, Leah can determine if they might be a good fit to work together.

The challenge with LinkedIn, according to Leah, is that the platform is not visual at all. To compensate, Leah feeds her blogposts and Twitter updates into her LinkedIn status, and these include regular updates about her work.

Leah invests 15 minutes per day and no marketing dollars – making LinkedIn a very efficient marketing channel for her. She measures both network growth (in terms of quantity of contacts), as well as direct business growth, to inform if her efforts are succeeding.





## LINKEDIN SUCCESS METRICS

Metric	Where do I find it?	Notes
Number of contacts	Your LinkedIn Contacts page, and Profile page	LinkedIn should be about amassing a large quantity of QUALITY contacts, not random contacts.
Website traffic from LinkedIn	In Google Analytics under "Traffic Sources"	You'll need a free Google Analytics account installed on your website to track this metric.
Website traffic from specific status & profile links	In Google Analytics under "Campaigns"	Use Google URL builder to create URLs that can be tracked by Google Analytics. Post these on social networks to track individual link performance and optimize based on results.
Clicks-to-Sales ratio	Marry the data from bit.ly (clicks) with your own e-commerce stats.	This is effectively your conversion rate. With this, you can understand how many clicks you need to drive to reach your goals.

## LINKED IN FAQ

### *Is it OK to be aggressive in adding contacts?*

Adding contacts requires discretion. You should aggressively add contacts who you've worked with or already have a relationship with. When you meet new contacts, by all means you should aggressively add them. You should ask for introductions to people two degrees of separation away – within your direct contacts' personal networks. Be sure you ask your connection prior, so that they know why and will be more inclined to accept your request. (Especially because sometimes "connections" are less solid and introductions might be awkward.)

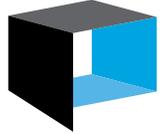
As for aggressively connecting with strangers – use good judgment here. Make sure its relevant, especially to their current position.

### *Should I list all of my client work in my profile?*

Absolutely – unless your client would not be pleased that you're broadcasting this information. The more details you can use to complete your profile, the more credibility you'll have when people find you.

### *Should I feed my Twitter and Facebook status into LinkedIn?*

This should depend on how much you want to share with your LinkedIn network. Given that the norms across social networks vary, seeing your frequent tweets and Facebook updates may actually turn off some people. Likewise, the type of information may be irrelevant to your LinkedIn contacts. If you have the same goals and a consistent persona across each network, it should be OK. But if you're sharing constant personal information via the other networks, consider whether your professional contacts need to see them via LinkedIn, too.



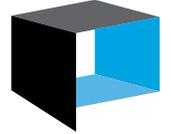
***Can I ask my contacts for recommendations, or should this be spontaneous on their part?***

If you want anything in this world, the best way to get it is to ask. Busy people are not likely to add recommendations to your LinkedIn profile unless you prompt them to do so. And getting recommended helps! It adds credibility to your profile, others in your network are notified when you receive them, and the additional content on your page is good for SEO.

**LINKEDIN TOOLS**

LinkedIn is the least advanced social network for adding complementary apps. That said, the small selection offers many powerful ways to make your profile more engaging.

- **LinkedIn Applications** - [http://bit.ly/LinkedIn\\_Apps](http://bit.ly/LinkedIn_Apps)
  - **Huddle Workspaces:** Private, secure online workspaces with project, collaboration and sharing tools for working with your connections.
  - **Reading List by Amazon:** Share the books you're reading with other LinkedIn members.
  - **Box.net Files** Lets you share content on your profile, and collaborate with friends and colleagues.
  - **SlideShare Presentations:** Upload & display your own presentations, check out presentations from your colleagues, and find experts within your network.
  - **Events:** Find professional events, from conferences to local meet-ups, and discover what events your connections are attending.
  - **Google Presentation:** Upload a Powerpoint or use Google's online application to embed a presentation on your profile.
  - **WordPress:** Sync your WordPress blog posts with your LinkedIn profile.
  - **Tweets:** A Twitter client you can use right on LinkedIn.
  - **My Travel:** See where your LinkedIn network is traveling and when you will be in the same city as your colleagues.
  - **Company Buzz:** View tweets, trends and top keywords associated with your business. Customize your topics and share with your coworkers.
  - **Polls:** Market research tool that allows you to collect data from your connections.

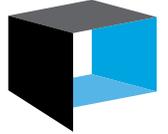


- **Blog Link:** Connect your blog to your LinkedIn profile.

In addition, we strongly (and repeatedly) recommend you use the following free tools by Google to generate more insights and optimize your LinkedIn presence.

- **Google Analytics** - <http://www.google.com/analytics>  
Google Analytics is the free web analytics solution that gives you rich insights into your website traffic and marketing effectiveness. We stress that you need to measure your activity so you can make smart decisions about how you invest your time and money and structure your website.
- **Google URL Builder** - [http://bit.ly/URL\\_builder](http://bit.ly/URL_builder)  
The URL builder lets you generate URLs that can be individually tracked by Google Analytics, to give you insights on how campaigns/posts featuring that specific URL performed. The URL Builder makes a long messy URL, which can be shortened by Bit.ly for posting on social networks.

# BLOGGING



## WHY BLOG?

We're often asked by photographers, "Do I need to be blogging to market my photography?" And our answer is the same for every marketing activity: you need to have a goal and understand how blogging helps you reach that goal relative to other activities you can be doing with your time and money instead. One thing we're certain of – blogs sure can help.

Too often, we see photographers using their blog as an online journal to discuss mundane updates from their lives: "I got in a fight with my boss at my day job" or "I'm in a really bad creative rut." These types of updates indicate either your audience consists only your mother and 2 college buddies and you're not trying to attract anyone else, or you're simply without a goal and plan for attacking that goal. Your blog is not a journal. It should be a marketing tool.

Your goals will be very individual – maybe you want more potential clients to find you online and book you for assignment/shoots. Maybe you want to drive consumers or photo buyers to purchase your images online. Maybe you want to keep your community informed of your recent activity, or establish a name for yourself as the best up-and-coming photographer in your specialty, or simply get more feedback on your work from contemporaries. Regardless of whether your primary website is a portfolio, brochure, or storefront for your photography, it tends to remain fairly static outside of new image updates. As such, your primary website provides limited opportunity for frequent content updates, sharing your voice with customers and engaging in dialogue. Your blog can be that platform.

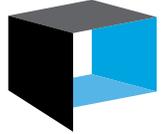
We see several primary reasons to explore blogging:

## Promote your photography.

This one's the clearly the most obvious, but it we're surprised how often photographers neglect to include their own visuals in blog posts. Remember, with inbound marketing, you want to create multiple ways for people to find you and connect with you. You never know which destination people will arrive at first – your portfolio website, your blog, your archive, LinkedIn page, etc. So, wouldn't you rather a new visitor arrive to see a slideshow of your latest shoot with details around how you planned it out vs. a lengthy discussion of your breakfast choices? Showcasing your latest shoots, recalling shoots from your archive, sharing your experiments – these are all ways to demonstrate your passion and expertise and link to more of your work. You'll draw people in better, and some will take a deeper interest in your work and consider working with you in the future. A photography blog with appealing content that's updated



*Award-winning photojournalist Ami Vitale replaced her portfolio website with a blog and integrated her PhotoShelter archive to provide e-commerce and high resolution file delivery.*



regularly will encourage people to come back for more, link to you, make you part of their dialogue elsewhere online, and ultimately build your following.

**SEO - Helping search engines find you.** If you care about using search engines like Google to attract new visitors to your website, you must have a blog. Search engines love freshness, so the ability to frequently update a blog is a huge benefit, enabling your content to be crawled and indexed by the search engines as regularly as you desire. Plus, you control all of the copy, enabling you to focus on using the critical keywords that will help your desired audience find you via search engines. Finally, you also control the links on your blog – and for search engines, links are the single most powerful “vote” for a website’s authority. So links from your blog can be used to help improve others’ SEO, and enable you to link to your own content with keyword-relevant anchor text (essentially pointing the search engines to your photography and defining for them what they’ll find there). Example: View my recently updated gallery of Asian food photography.

**Demonstrate that you’re a thought leader.** Your blog can be your mouthpiece. You can use it to disseminate thought-provoking commentary on the industry, your specialty, equipment, other photographers, and more. This is a powerful way to stimulate conversation and links back to your site – especially when your ideas are controversial.

**Demonstrate how you work.** While your website is primarily just a showcase of your images, your blog lets you present the story behind the images. With plenty of choices among high quality photographers, a potential client will likely appreciate the chance to peer into how you

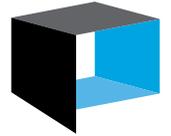
perform professionally – how you approach their type of work. Even your tone, sense of humor, and writing style may be subtle indicators to a potential client of whether or not you’ll get along. Hence, posting details of shoots and other projects can be a powerful differentiator for your work by giving potential clients a sense of how you operate.

**Create and maintain a dialogue with your audience.** When you’ve decided on your goal, you should have a clear sense of your desired target audience and the images or commentary they care most about. Your blog provides a platform to engage that audience in two-way dialogue. It’s a great way to stay on the radar of former clients and prospects.

### GETTING STARTED - HOSTING DECISIONS

You’ll first have to choose a blog platform and determine if you want a hosted or non-hosted blog platform. A hosted platform is one that is housed on the platform’s server (like Blogger, TypePad, Squarespace), while a non-hosted platform (like WordPress, Movable Type) is housed on your own server or that of a 3rd party.

You might be inclined to gloss over this and simply do what’s easiest – that would likely be the hosted option. But if at all possible, we strongly recommend hosting your blog via the same domain host as your current website. One of the main areas for improving SEO is building up the authority and legitimacy of a domain with a long history of use and inbound links. Hosting your blog elsewhere may actually diffuse your SEO efforts – some people will link to the website and some to the blog. Hosting both in the same place lets you focus your efforts on strengthening one single domain. You also have less control of HTML and CSS with hosted solutions.



Our recommendation: we love the flexibility that [WordPress](#) provides in terms of customization, SEO, and social sharing tools. We're also really impressed with [Squarespace](#).

**GETTING STARTED - DESIGN DECISIONS**

Wherever possible, you want to maintain brand consistency across your web destinations. So, if you have the ability and your various platforms offer the flexibility, try to custom match the design of your blog and website. In addition, you want to keep your blog's design as simple as possible. A cluttered blog that's packed with widgets and slow to load will likely turn off visitors. Many simple themes are available. PhotoShelter has partnered with Graph Paper Press, a company that designs photographer-oriented WordPress themes, to release designs that let photographers match their WordPress blog with their PhotoShelter website.

**BLOGGING SUCCESS TIPS**

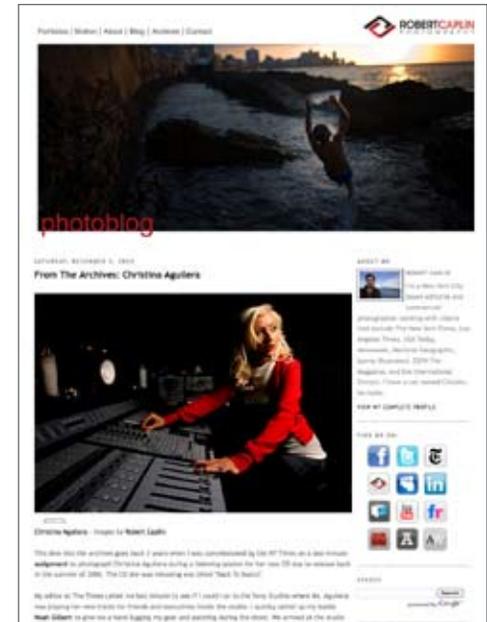
**Have a plan.** Don't waste a single post without determining your goal, your intended target audience, how your posts will support reaching that audience, and achieving your goals. You may find it helpful to devise a calendar and plan your larger "feature" posts ahead of time. You should also decide upfront the time investment you intend to make in blogging. Recognizing that frequency is beneficial for SEO purposes, you nonetheless must weigh the benefits of blogging against other ways you could be spending your time. You should anticipate that it will take at least three months to see traction against your plan.

**Know your theme.** People tend to sort their favorite blogs into discrete categories based on the featured content, how often they return, and their expectations for what they'll get every time. Having a theme will

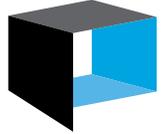
help your audience fit you into one of those mental categories. Plus, it will enable you to hammer away at building focused, relevant content that's compelling to your audience. You want people to find your blog useful and worthy of sharing.

**Let people access your content on their terms.** It's worthwhile to use RSS to syndicate your posts out to the various aggregator sites that people use to streamline their web surfing (e.g. Google Reader, MyYahoo!). You can also install FeedBurner to let people subscribe to receive email updates when your blog is updated. Finally, twitterfeed enables you to link your blog's RSS with Twitter to automatically tweet blog updates to your followers. You can do the same for Facebook and LinkedIn as well.

**Use metrics like Google Analytics to gauge progress and make decisions.** Start with Google Analytics installed from Day 1. If you already are blogging without analytics, install Google Analytics now and get an understanding of your baseline activity. Analytics can show you the



*Robert Caplin blogs about his various shoots, and goes to his archives when he doesn't have new material to write about.*



content your visitors are finding most appealing, and which produces visitors that convert into clients – so you can adjust your blog strategy accordingly. Marrying the metrics with your goals and analyzing them periodically will help you determine if your blog is providing the results you want to see.

**Make your personality clear.** You chose photography because it is your passion – let that show through your blog. Establishing your voice is critical to differentiate yourself from thousands of other blogging photographers. Plus, seeing your personality is a way for potential clients to assess how you'll get along. (i.e. Will you be easy to work with? Are you a "planner" that will thoroughly tend to every detail for a shoot? Are you full of creative surprises?) And even though blogs are considered to be more informal, it's still a reflection of your brand. Make sure you spell and grammar check your content.

**Make it a two-way, engaging experience.** Recognize that your blog is "social media" – designed to be a dialogue rather than you blasting commentary out in one direction. Encourage people to add comments by asking questions and responding to comments. Ask people how they would have handled a situation or for their opinion on your approach (or even equipment and workflow). Rich commenting will drive people back to your blog. Reward people publicly (share links or positive comments) or privately (send a thank you) when they comment on your blog. Leave comments on other blogs as well.

**Optimize every post for search engines.** Because you're blogging, we're assuming you want the blog found. This means SEO must be a top priority. We'll avoid rehashing all the factors that improve SEO now – because you can download our 2009 free report "SEO for

Photography Websites" here: <http://www.photoshelter.com/mkt/seo-kit-for-photographers>

Quick tips:

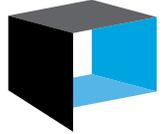
- Have a keyword hitlist of desired terms your audience likely uses with search engines
- Infuse keywords within body copy, keyword tags, image tags, page titles, and URLs.
- Change your blog link structure – you can cut out all the question marks and do something like [www.motorsportsp photography.com/editing-race-car-stock-photos](http://www.motorsportsp photography.com/editing-race-car-stock-photos).
- Create links from every post into your image archive where more images lie.

Have a clear bio page & contact info. Remember, you don't know how people are finding you and arriving at your blog or what they know about you in advance. A bio page tells them what to expect from your blog and gives you a chance to showcase your credentials, experiences, and more.

### LINK BUILDING & YOUR BLOG

Links to your blog (aka "backlinks") are the single most powerful way to improve your SEO. But visitors won't just link back to you unless you make your content compelling and easy to share. Give them a reason to link back to your photos and spread the word about your work. We've compiled some tips for growing the links into your blog:

**Think "linkbait"** – content that will "bait" people into linking to it. Plan posts that people will want to link to. These come in all shapes and sizes, but a few strategies work particularly well.



Here are some suggestions:

- Top 10 lists – (e.g., top 10 inspiring nature photographers, 10 most powerful brands in photography, 10 ways to piss off a photo editor)
- Dispute the popular opinion about anything – use facts or data for support
- Blog about the influential people in your specialty
- Intelligent tips, based on your experiences or gathered from an industry icon
- Divulge the secrets of your success, or ask your followers to do the same, and link to it
- Post reviews of popular products and ask for debate
- Perform polls that gauge sentiment or usage of a popular product/phenomenon
- Publish a resource list aggregating the best online articles on a given subject
- Outline your social media strategy

**Ask for links.** There's some debate here, but we feel strongly that if you can propose a good reason someone else should link to you, you shouldn't be bashful about asking. Start with respected photographers and clients in your existing network, complementary vendors in your region, and build from there.

**Practice reciprocity.** When people are kind to you, or help promote your work online – blog about them. Have a blogroll and link out to people who inspire you. Stay aware of what they're writing about, comment on their blogs, email them, and occasionally blog about them.

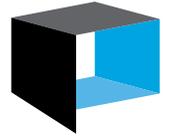
**Avoid link farms.** Paid link farms (groups of website that link to one another purely for SEO) may provide a momentary SEO bump, but Google does not view these links positively. They won't help you as much as naturally acquired, organic links. In a worst case scenario, Google could penalize you for these.

#### HOW PHOTOSHELTER CAN HELP

We feel strongly that a blog can be a vital resource for helping photographers attract new website visitors, engaging them, and potentially converting them to paying customers. As such, we've created a series of tools and features that help you get more from your blogging activity.

**Embeddable slideshows and single images.** When you're reading a blog post and see an incredible image – how often do you click the image, only to be taken to a static white page wherever the image is being hosted? When bloggers upload photos to their blog host, visitors' clicks are useless. So, we created a widget that lets you embed both single images and gallery slideshows into your blog. The best part is, anytime those images are clicked, the visitors are taken to that specific image within your PhotoShelter website, where they can purchase the image however you've set it up for sales. You can also enable a sharing feature that lets other people grab your images and slideshows and embed them virtually anywhere else online, just like a YouTube video.

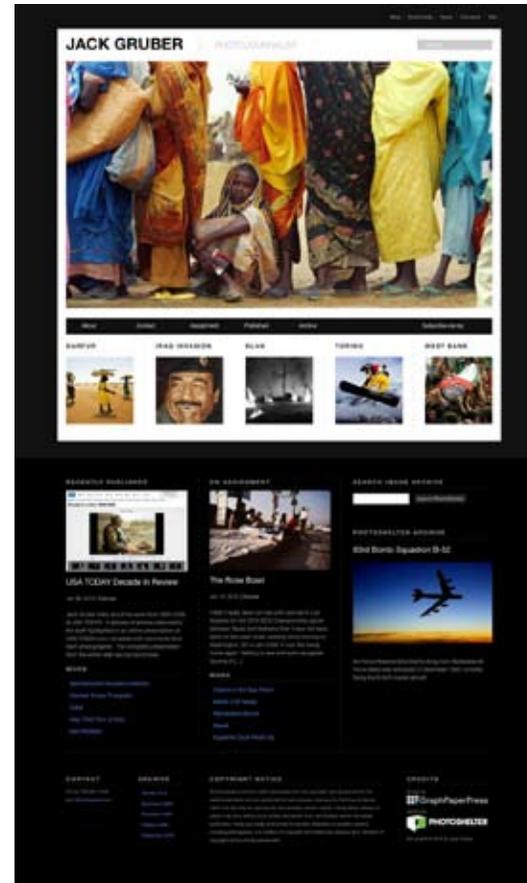
**PhotoShelter seamless customization to integrate your blog.** We firmly believe in the importance of a consistent brand presence. Too often, photographers have varying designs across their blog, archive, portfolio, etc. PhotoShelter seamless customization lets you "re-skin" your PhotoShelter site to integrate the design with your blog or portfolio



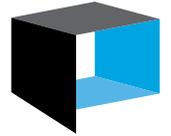
website. That way, you deliver a seamless brand experience to your customers as they navigate back and forth between your images and your blog.

**Graph Paper Press WordPress customization & plugin.** We've partnered with Graph Paper Press – a leading provider of elegant WordPress blog themes for photographers – to easily integrate PhotoShelter and GPP themes. This partnership provides:

- Identical look & feel across PhotoShelter sites with Graph Paper Press' most popular themes: Modularity, On Assignment, f8, and f8 Remixed with
- A WordPress plug-in that lets photographers embed PhotoShelter images and galleries into the blog without leaving WordPress
- An image archive search box within the GPP site



*Jack Gruber uses a Graph Paper Press-themed blog integrated into his PhotoShelter account to provide archive searchability, file delivery and e-commerce capability.*



### HOW JIM GOLDSTEIN MAKES BLOGGING A CONVERSATION

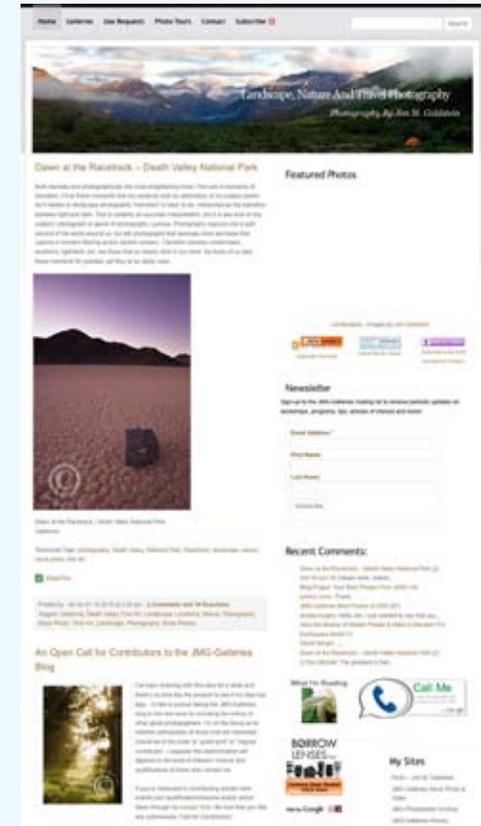
Jim Goldstein specializes in landscape, nature and travel imagery for editorial clients, as well as stock licensing. Jim blogs regularly and shares his content via Twitter and his personal Facebook profile. He does an incredible amount of planning to ensure his social media participation is time well spent toward meeting his goals. Plus, he has some unique views on

how to make the most of social media.

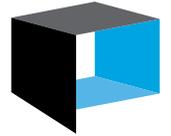
“Think of social media as one big forest, and you need to leave breadcrumbs across the forest so people can follow you.” In this case, the bread crumbs are your content. “You want to put it out there in a way that people who want it have an easy time finding it. Once the right people find your content, you want to become a part of their conversations. The end goal is to create a constant state of visibility for your content, and social media allows us to do that cost effectively.”

So how do you make your content conversation-worthy? Jim encourages photographers to focus on your deepest passion. Show people how you derive extreme personal enjoyment from your photography. People see that passion and want to be a part of it by following you and sharing your work with others. If you constantly focus on what you’re most passionate about and put it out in ways that it can spread, people will gravitate toward you while others who are less interested will fall aside. Ultimately, being out there and part of the conversation gives you access to new opportunities.

Jim has a very sensible strategy for blogging – for him, a blog is far more than an online journal. Jim asks himself, “How do I take a standard, solitary thought and turn it into a conversation?” For example, Jim previously wrapped up every year with a blog post about his best photos of the year. Recently, Jim widened the conversation by inviting other photographers to do the same on their blogs, and then Jim rounded up their links to post on his own blog. Ultimately, 124 photographers participated and shared links to their blogposts. In turn, these photographers linked back to the post on Jim’s site, and many shared the main post on Facebook and Twitter. The result – over 10,000 page views for the Best Images post. Very impressive results – all from thinking about how to evolve his posts into a conversation.



# HOW CAN WE HELP?



PhotoShelter is the leader in websites and tools for serious photographers.

With PhotoShelter, you also get powerful features and resources to market your photos, like SEO, and social sharing capabilities. Visit [photoshelter.com/tour](http://photoshelter.com/tour)

Let PhotoShelter power your business online!

## SPECIAL OFFER: SAVE \$30!

Join PhotoShelter by Feb 1, 2010 and get \$30 off our regular pricing with an Annual Standard Account. Get seen & sell your work with access to all of PhotoShelter's pro-strength features. Only \$299/year!

Visit [photoshelter.com/signup](http://photoshelter.com/signup) and enter coupon code SOCIAL2010

**Start writing your photography success story today.**

Offer valid only for new paid PhotoShelter users.

**PHOTOSHELTER**

**ADORAMA**  
THE PHOTOGRAPHY PEOPLE

# ADORAMA

THE PHOTOGRAPHY PEOPLE

**www.adorama.com • 800-223-2500**



Adorama is dedicated to helping you take your photography - and your photography business - to the next level. That's why we're sponsoring this important guide. We provide a total interactive educational resource at the ALC - [Adorama Learning Center](#) - filled with extensive free articles, photo tips, the latest camera reports, plus today's industry news on our [NewsDesk](#). And on [TechTock](#), our editorial online journal, our experts share their personal opinions, comment on the current state of photography and discuss technology, gear and gadgets. Listen to the TechTock podcasts, where working photographers share real world tips, tricks, and great advice. At the [Workshops@Adorama](#) we present a comprehensive live educational program in The Adorama Building, our New York City headquarters. And for photographers interested in online interactive classes, Adorama has partnered with PPSOP, [The Perfect Picture School of Photography](#).

For all your photographic needs and latest specials please contact:

**JEFFREY SNYDER**

Pro Market Sales  
Adorama Camera  
email: [jsnyder@adorama.com](mailto:jsnyder@adorama.com)  
800-223-2500 ext 2435

**RAY GARCIA**

Pro Market Sales  
Adorama Camera  
email: [rayg@adorama.com](mailto:rayg@adorama.com)  
800-223-2500 ext 2245

**ADORAMA ON TWITTER:**

<http://twitter.com/adoramalearn>  
<http://twitter.com/AdoramaPix>  
<http://twitter.com/adoramaused>  
<http://twitter.com/HelenOster>

**ADORAMA ON FACEBOOK:**

[Main account](#)  
[Joel Meisels](#)  
[AdoramaPix](#)

**PHOTOSHELTER**

**ADORAMA**  
THE PHOTOGRAPHY PEOPLE