

This book contains 16 articles written by me - discussing various aspects of photography and photo marketing. Enjoy - there's some really good stuff in here! - Dan Eitreim (PhotoManDan)

EXTRA ADDED BONUS! 2 non-photo related articles are included. (Once you are a successful photographer, your thoughts will naturally go to estate planning and asset protection!)

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Let's get started...

This Must Happen FIRST To Create A Stunning Photo!

by Dan Eitreim

<http://www.PartTimePhotography.com>

<http://www.FreelancePromo.com>

We all want to create stunning photographs. It doesn't matter if we're professionals, amateurs or something in between.

We haunt the camera shops, learning about and experimenting with all the latest cameras, lenses and filters.

We buy photo books and magazines and read and study until until - bleary eyed - we drop off to sleep at night. Only to dream about - you guessed it - photography.

We spend all our disposable money on new photo supplies, gadgets and gear, yet still we don't quite capture the stunning photos promised in all the technique books.

Why?

Surprisingly, we seldom actually know what it is we are trying to capture!

For example...

We see a placid lake with some ducks floating along. What do we do? We grab our gear and start firing away. If we're using film, a few days or weeks later we get back our prints and - heart thumping with anxiety, we open the envelope and...disappointment.

If we're using a digital camera, the results are the same, just a little faster.

Before shooting - always (this is important, so let's say it again - ALWAYS) take a moment to pre-visualize what the final photograph will look like!

Too often we just fire away, hoping to capture something great. But it rarely works out that way.

Have you ever wondered why the great photographers are able to consistently get great shots, and you can't? Even shooting the same subjects?

They create the shot in their mind FIRST. They get a clear vision of what the final print will look like - then they decide on what camera, ISO, lenses, filters, lighting and etc. they will need to fulfill their vision.

Don't slough this off. It's more important than you think. And, almost no one does it.

Can you imagine Renoir creating a masterpiece painting by putting a bunch of paint on the canvas and waiting to see what emerged? I think not.

I believe it was Michelangelo who, when asked how he created his stunning sculptures, said that he studied the marble until he saw the form trapped inside. Then he chipped away all the excess marble.

Approach every photograph you take with that attitude. Decide what the final version will look like and eliminate anything that doesn't fit that vision.

Yes, I know there are times when the action is fast and furious and you don't have any time. Or do you?

Let's think about those situations...You are at a football game. Before the game even starts - decide what your dream shot would look like and preplan by gearing up and positioning yourself where the most exciting action is likely to take place. Then when it does - shazaam! You are not only ready but just as importantly, you will recognize the shot when you see it in your viewfinder.

Auto races? Same thing. Baseball, surfing, skiing, bungee jumping? Ditto.

A few seconds of thought before you start out can and will take your photography to a new level almost overnight! Still shots and posed portraits are even easier to pre-visualize.

Getting stunning shots will soon become the norm rather than a lucky occurrence. A simple shift in our thinking will do the trick. And it's free! No new equipment to buy.

Dan Eitreim has been a professional photographer in southern California for over 16 years. His data base exceeds 6000 past clients, and he says that selling YOUR photography is easy if you only know a couple tried and true marketing strategies. He's created a multimedia presentation that can teach ANYONE how to sell their own photography and generate freelance income in as little as two weeks. To learn more and enroll in a FREE photo marketing course, go to: <http://www.PartTimePhotography.com> or <http://www.FreelancePromo.com>

Photography Backdrops And How To Select The Best One For You!

by Dan Eitreim

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You've studied all the various camera settings and by now you've learned all about the difference between shutter speed and f-stop. Thanks to your studies of lighting patterns, the difference between butterfly and split lighting is an obvious

no brainer... Now, it's time to consider the backdrop.

In my experience, having over 6000 professional sessions under my belt, MOST people prefer to have a natural setting rather than a formal backdrop.

For example...

If you're shooting Indoors - possibilities may include posing your subjects on the floor around the fireplace, (always have a fire burning or it appears as nothing but a black hole in the final print), or they could be posed on and around their furniture in the living room, etc.

Outside portraits could be in their back yard, at the beach, a local park, etc. Anyplace that has meaning for THEM!

Mostly people just want a beautiful portrait that singles them out as individuals - rather than just another group posed in front of the same old pull down screen that everyone else uses.

Whenever possible, ALWAYS try for a location that has meaning for THEM...

However, if you must use a formal backdrop, here are a few suggestions...

First - buy a commercially available background stand to hold your backdrops. They don't cost much and for ease of use, stability, transportability etc. it's better than making your own.

For this discussion, I'm assuming you DO NOT own a professional portrait studio and are doing your sessions in your home (or your customer's home).

There are several types of backdrop materials:

Paper- Large rolls of paper come in most any color you can imagine. They can be purchased at many local camera stores and are relatively inexpensive.

Pros - They are readily available - are fairly inexpensive - come in most any color you can imagine. They can be used in a "sweep" so the model(s) can sit or stand on the paper and have it seamlessly sweep up behind them. Paper rolls come in two basic widths (around 4 feet and around 9 feet as I recall, I don't often use them).

Cons - The smaller size isn't wide enough for much more than a head shot while the wider size is very heavy - difficult to transport - and most homes don't have enough "empty" space to sweep it without moving around the furniture. (People

really don't like you redecorating for them!) The paper gets dirty, gets creased, tears and has to be constantly replaced. If there are animals in the session, the papery feel and crinkly sounds freak them out.

Painted Canvas - These can provide some truly stunning portraits. Many backdrop suppliers create them and they can be ordered over the internet if you don't happen to be near a supplier.

Pros - Depending on the creator, they can be stunningly beautiful. There are thousands of colors and patterns available and if you have something unique in mind, you can have one created just for you, to match your exact specifications. They are very durable and will last years. They come in many sizes and can be used in a seamless sweep.

Cons - They are EXPENSIVE!EXPENSIVE!EXPENSIVE! Again, like paper, the wider ones are heavy, difficult work with and to transport. Like paper, size vs. living room furniture is a challenge.

Seamless paper and canvas backgrounds tend to be the province of professional studios - where they can be mounted on the walls and just pulled down when needed.

They are really difficult to work with in the field.

I recommend that you go to the fabric store and get strips of material. As wide as is available and about 12 feet long. Getting some sort of material that either doesn't easily wrinkle, or where wrinkles won't matter is best.

Pros - Choose the type and colors you like, you can get any color, style and texture that suits your fancy. It can be hung bunched up (like theater curtains) behind the subject, or stretched flat if only one piece is needed. One piece can also be used as a seamless sweep.

You can use one piece or thirty - no matter how wide your backdrop needs are, you can easily accommodate them.

It's easy to store and transport (just fold up the strips and put them in a box in the back seat of your car!) Material is very inexpensive compared to a painted canvas (which can run into the thousands of dollars) It's reusable so it works out to be cheaper than paper in the long run.

Use another piece of two for the flooring and since it's flexible, it can be flowed around furniture. Animals have no problem walking on it. (It's washable too!).

Cons - If you want several strips (and you do!), you may have difficulty finding enough of the same material. If you live near the garment district in a large city, they may have it. Otherwise you may have to have your local fabric store special order it for you.

These are the major backdrop considerations and you should have no trouble finding the perfect backdrops for YOUR creative vision!

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How To Photograph The Female Face!

by Dan Eitrem

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Whether it's a wife, girlfriend, daughter or even a complete stranger - when you photograph a female's face, she expects you to make her look terrific.

Within reason.

I'm not saying you should use heavy diffusion and cake on the make-up so that she becomes unrecognizable, or do a lot of extensive retouching to make her look like a movie star. That's not what she wants (even though a lot of women will jokingly ask you to do those very things).

What she wants, is to look like herself on the best day she ever had!

And you can do that - with the proper selection of clothing, lenses filters and lighting!

Here's how...

Ask your model to get plenty of rest the night before her portrait. Bags and bloodshot eyes don't photograph too well. Keep a small bottle of Visine, Murine

or some such product in your camera bag for red eye emergencies. Believe it or not, a small dab of Preparation H under (not in) the eyes will work wonders on the bags.

Photographic lights tend to wash out our faces - even if it's only an on camera flash - and a touch extra make-up will help. Let her handle her own make-up but ask her to apply it just a little heavy. Not too much, we don't want her looking like a lady of the night.

Unless she has scars or an incredibly long neck - one that you want to minimize - stay away from turtle necks. V-necks tend to visually lengthen the neckline and upper torso and are slimming.

On clothing, stay away from prints and loud patterns. They tend to draw the eye away from the face and we want HER to be the star, not her clothing!

Shadows define shape - so darker colors that minimize the appearance of shadows are more slimming.

When posing, have her seated on a stool or chair - preferably with no back - where she can have both feet flat on the floor and so that she cannot lean back and/or lounge. Have her sit up straight. (Like mother always used to say!)

Have her turn about 45 degrees to the side so that she is not straight on to the camera. The ONLY time you want a subject's shoulders straight on to the camera is if they are a football player in full uniform.

Wide faces can be narrowed by turning her head to a three quarter view. Thinner faces can be widened by having her turn more toward the camera.

In our current cultural view of beauty, high cheekbones are considered beautiful. So...positioning your light a little higher will make the light hit the cheekbones and cast shadow underneath. This will visually give her high cheekbones!

Shadows tend to recede in a photograph and brightly lit areas come forward - so whether you light the side of the face toward the camera (and have shadow on the other side), or whether you light the further side can make the face look thinner or wider as desired.

Above all, be sure there is a catch light in the eyes! The eyes are the windows to the soul and without a catch light, they appear flat and dead looking.

No matter how long you study photography, there is always some new thing to learn and add to your repertoire, but if you keep these pointers in mind, your

female portraits will generate a fantastic reputation for you.

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How To Create Stunning Portraits Of Your Dog!

by Dan Eitrem

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Photographing your dog can be a terrific way to not only get amazing photos of a beloved family member - it's also good practice and will sharpen your over all photography skills!

Like any other portrait session, the first step is to mentally pre- visualize what you want the end result to be. Please don't skip this step. Hit or miss, shooting tons of pictures, hoping one will "turn out good" just doesn't cut it. It is SO much easier to get a good portrait if you have a clearly defined idea of what you want.

What type of dog is it? Is it a large "working dog" type? Or a frilly lap dog? These questions will help determine the best backdrop. An Irish Setter, posed at sunset in a field of wild grasses would be stunning. Stick your Chihuahua in there and you may never find it again! Conversely, a Chihuahua sitting on the brim of a large Mexican hat, would be adorable. The Irish Setter sitting there, would be ludicrous. (And crush the hat!)

Will your dog stay on command? It can be frustrating to get your dog positioned just right, and then every time you back up to take the shot - the dog (lovingly) follows you. If you're alone, you may have to take the dog back and reposition him several times before the idea sinks in. Don't get mad, they don't really understand what's going on. Yelling at your dog won't help, it will just make them feel bad and the hurt expression will ruin any shots you finally DO get.

By the way, don't give the dog treats as a way to make them stay in place. They will be looking down at, and chewing on, the food and you won't be able to get a

good shot. Then, as soon as the treat is gone, they'll come over to you, hoping for more.

If you can, get someone to help pose the dog. That way, you are in position and ready to snap the shutter the instant you see a good shot. Use a long lens so the field of view is very narrow. This will allow your helper to stay near the dog - and they can grab it every time it starts to move. Sooner or later, the dog will get the idea and just sit there posing for you.

Speaking of long lenses, not only do they allow your posing helper to stay near the dog, but they allow you to fill the frame with your subject!

This is VITAL!

The number one thing that ruins pet portraits is making your pet too small in the frame. We see this beautiful scene, shoot it and when we look at the final print, our dog is nothing but a tiny blob, somewhere down in the corner. Fill the frame! If you end up totally eliminating the background - that's better than not being able to see your subject. (Same with people.)

Shoot at the dog's level. Unless you are VERY short and your dog is VERY tall, I can't imagine a session where you aren't down on one knee, or both, or prone on the ground.

Focus on the eyes! Sharp eyes are vital and can save many otherwise not so hot photos. Get back far enough so that the eyes can be sharp without blurring or distorting the nose. Be sure to get a catch light in the eyes. You may as well just toss any shots that don't have catch lights, they aren't worth keeping.

The dog has to look alert and attentive. This is accomplished by making sure the ears are UP. Here's how...without the dog knowing, have a squeaking dog toy. When the dog is positioned properly, squeak it. The dog will whip it's head around to you, it's ears will be at attention and it will have a fantastic, attentive expression.

Be ready and focused.

The instant the dog looks, snap the shot! Auto focus is best so the shutter button is already halfway depressed. You have to be fast! Reading the last sentence, (You have to be fast!) takes longer than the photo should take. A lot longer!

Take bunches of shots of each pose. It's amazing how fast a dog can lap it's tongue over it's nose.

Poses - You'll want to get at least one shot of them lying down at a 45 degree angle to the camera (both from the right side and from the left) and one straight on to the camera. Sitting, the same sequence. Then zoom in and get a full frame head shot, then back off a little for a head and shoulders view or if lying down get head and front paws - like the Sphinx. Have your posing helper get the dog's attention by gently talking to it while you get a few 3/4 and full profiles.

Try these ideas. I think you will be amazed. I KNOW the people viewing your photos will be amazed.

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ESP Will Improve Your Photographs - And Could Sell TONS Of YOUR Photography

by Dan Eitreim

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"ESP" is an important mnemonic for photographers to remember.

When conducting a photo session, keeping these three little letters in the forefront of your thoughts can and WILL make a big difference in your work - and whether or not someone actually wants to buy it!

"What?" You might ask, "Am I now expected to have extra sensory perception before I can sell my portraits?"

No. Let's put your mind at ease before we go any further. In this case, "ESP" is a mnemonic referring to -Expressions Sell Photographs!

Keep that in mind and you will get shots that you might never have considered, but that your customers want - big time.

I'm a professional photographer and have been making my living with a camera

for over 16 years. In that time, I have created award winning photos that I couldn't GIVE away. I have also had photos that I debated even showing my clients - but I did - and they bought, HUGE!

Why?

As photographers (it doesn't matter if you are pro or a first day beginner) we want all our photos to be stunners! We want the sunlight just kissing the pretty girl's hair. We want exactly 3/4 inches of shirt cuff showing on our groom, and the cuff should cover exactly half of the face on his watch. We want the necklaces and wedding rings on the ladies fingers to be straight. The ratio of light to shadow should be exactly x amount, and so on...

As photographers we quickly learn to be very nit picky. But, the photo of the baby with the spaghetti bowl upended on his or her head, sauce smeared everywhere, and the startled facial expression that clearly shows the baby is about to let out a blood curdling scream - that's the one people will buy.

Just last week, I sold a photo of a dog, lovingly licking it's owner's face. She had on no make-up, old clothes, her hair was windblown and she was sitting on an old torn up lawn chair.

The photo session was designed to get pictures of the dog - not her. The dog wasn't feeling well and to say the session wasn't going so hot would be an understatement.

Finally, I got down to my last shot (I use film) and could NOT get the dog to do anything worth photographing. Finally, it ran over to her and licked her face. I took the shot - just to use the last frame of film and get out of there!

Between the photo session and the proof showing, the dog died. (Remember, I mentioned it wasn't feeling well.)

To make a long story short, that shot of her interacting with the dog, her long time friend, is the one she wants on her wall. Not the beautiful head shots and other really nice photos I got that day.

The expression of love between the two of them is what she wants to remember.

When people have a disaster and lose everything, the first thing they always lament is losing their family photos. Let me ask, are they concerned that they will never again see their stunning sunset photos? Or are they thinking of the faces, smiling or not, of their family.

We all want our photos to be beautiful and perfectly posed, but look out for those special moments. The moments that show a unique, individual, or loving unposed expression - good or bad.

Those are the ones you need to take out of the reject stack and present to the customer. And watch your sales skyrocket! After all, it's "ESP" that sells.

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Here's One Of The Easiest Ways To Totally RUIN A Good Photograph!

by Dan Eitreim

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Ok, we haunt the camera shops, try out and buy all the latest gadgetry, read all the photo magazines and books. Finally, we load some film into our camera, (or insert a new memory stick) find a suitable subject and start firing away!

We anxiously run down to the photo lab to get our film developed, (or spend a few hours trying to remember how to download our photos into the computer-who can see anything on that tiny screen anyway?). Finally, we see the results.

Our gorgeous model has a tree growing out of her head - on every shot in the ENTIRE session! Or, we never noticed that garbage can off to the side. You know, the one ruining the best shots. Did you notice the cars driving by in the background? How about the bunch of kids walking by?

Yeah, we fell into the trap of focusing all our attention on the model and not looking around at the other elements in the scene. It's easy to do. And I don't care who they are, every photographer out there has done the same thing!

There's so much to think about when constructing a good portrait. Is she (or he)

smiling, is the angle of her head appealing, is everything in focus, did we focus on the eyes - and now we have to worry about trees, garbage cans, cars and kids?

Yup. Add one more challenge to the list. It's not too hard to get in the habit of checking all the way around the edges of the frame - if you make it a habit!

Do whatever it takes to FORCE yourself to consciously slow down and take a second to let your eye scan all the way around the edges of the viewfinder. But that's not all. Consider those trees or light poles way off in the background, are they going to be blurred out or will they be sharp enough to be a factor in the final print. Can you move and shoot from a different angle?

Is there a street in the backdrop? Take a second to check and see if there is any traffic coming - either auto or pedestrian traffic. If so, can you change the scene to eliminate the problem? Or will you have to wait for a break in the traffic?

I know, it seems obvious, but I wouldn't have written this article if it weren't an everyday problem. Take just a few seconds to consider the background and then scan your eye around the frame before snapping the shutter. You will save a lot of money on prints that would have been thrown out.

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What Being In A Straight-Jacket Taught Me About My Photography Business.

by Dan Eitreim

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Have you ever been strapped into a straight - jacket? Felt the claustrophobic squeeze as the straps are pulled tighter and tighter? Felt your breath being forced out of your lungs, your shoulders stretched to their very limits, sweat running into your eyes? I have, and it taught me a couple valuable lessons that I

apply to my photography business every day!

No, I'm not crazy.

Well...maybe I am, but that's not why I was in the straight- jacket! While I was in high school, I became enamored of the magical arts and became an amateur magician. (Yes, I was a nerd and no I didn't have a date for the prom.) One branch of magic is doing escapes, ala Houdini. Back then, Houdini had only been dead about 30 years and was more of a household name than he is now. - Escapes were big!

Anyway...I learned how to get out of ropes and chains, then learned to pick the locks on handcuffs and it was only a matter of time before I went down to the local magic shop - and bought a straight-jacket.

All through high school, I practiced with that thing and got pretty good at getting out of it. I wouldn't want to try it underwater or hanging suspended by a burning rope, or any of the other death defying stunts the current batch of escapists are doing. But, for an onstage finale to my magic act, I did ok.

Then Vietnam got pretty hot so when I graduated, I joined the military. After a couple years, I eventually got stationed in Hawaii and did magic shows in my spare time.

I managed to get booked for a pretty big show and thought an escape would make a nice finale. Of course my straight - jacket was at home, stateside. So I went to the base infirmary and asked to borrow one! (By the way, when you go to a medical center and ask to borrow a straight- jacket be careful. They may lock you in a padded cell right then and there!)

Long story short, I finally convinced them to loan me one and on the night of the performance, my act was going real well and time for the big finale came!

You've probably guessed - right there, in front of hundreds of people - I couldn't get out!

Turns out, the Marine Corps actually does add a lot of muscle to your upper torso. Enough so, that it's harder to get out of a straight - jacket! A lot harder!

If I'd practiced beforehand, I'd have known that, but since I'd done the escape thousands of times, it never occurred to me to test the new jacket! That night taught me two valuable lessons that I apply to my photography every day.

Bet you thought I could never find a way to transition from straight- jackets to

photography!

Lesson 1. Never do an important photo session with new or untested equipment! Even if you've been shooting for 10 or 20 years!

I can't tell you how often I've heard stories of people buying a new camera for their African safari and getting back, only to discover they were doing something wrong - and got no photos!

Or left the lens cap on at their daughters wedding.

Or got on location only to discover the new filters were the wrong size and wouldn't go on the lens.

Always test equipment before you put yourself in a situation where you need to rely on it! Sooner or later, you will save yourself from a bad situation.

Lesson 2. Some days you're the dog, some days you're the hydrant. No matter how bad you screw up - life goes on.

Don't let your insecurities stop you from going for it. I teach people easy and simple ways to market their photography and get started in their own photography business but, I find the biggest thing holding them back is their self-confidence. People are afraid they'll screw up a session and look silly. So, they never try.

Trust me, you will NEVER look as bad as a magician - in a straight-jacket - smiling sheepishly as the curtain goes down!

Know what? It's been 40 years since that night and never once have I run across anyone that was there that night. If you screw up - so what! You'll probably never see them again anyway. Learn your lesson and go to the next session.

You can make it - I know you can.

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Get Started Selling YOUR Photography - This Sunday - It's Easy!

by Dan Eitrein

<http://www.PartTimePhotography.com>
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Want to have some fun, meet new people, practice your photography and make some extra money - all at the same time?

You can. It's really pretty easy.

Here's how...

Put on some business attire, go to the fanciest restaurant in town, and make them an offer they can't refuse...

EVERY business wants to do more for their customers, especially if it doesn't cost anything. Since most higher end restaurants have a Sunday brunch, here is an idea for you.

Offer to set up and do FREE portraits of the families that attend their Sunday brunch!

You don't have to be Ansel Adams, you just have to be competent - and they will jump at the chance! This is good for everyone all the way around.

First - the restaurant gets to add value to their brunch. They get to offer a better experience for their customers, thereby generating a TON of goodwill. And it doesn't cost them anything! Basically, a no brainer.

Next - the customer gets a free family portrait sitting. You'd be amazed at how many families really want a portrait, but never get around to having one done. And SHAZAAM! - there you are! Camera in hand and their whole family is dressed up in their Sunday best.

No trip to the studio, no arguing over what to wear, and so on...

Plus it's FREE!

Here's what they will be thinking.

"What's the worst that can happen? Well...the worst thing is we won't like the picture and end up tossing it. But maybe, just maybe, (they reason) it will be the best portrait EVER."

After all, what have they got to lose? Nothing. Again a no brainer.

Lastly - for you, you get access to a whole bunch of people that are willing to use your photographic services!

What a way to get started as a part time professional photographer!

Yeah, I know, Sunday is the day you spend lounging in front of the television set. But, wouldn't it be more fun to earn an extra \$300-\$400- \$1000? And still be home by 2 o'clock?

You can.

If this sounds at all interesting, sign up for my free photo marketing newsletter. You'll like it.

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Why A Customer Will Pick YOU Over Another Photographer!

by Dan Eitreim

<http://www.PartTimePhotography.com>
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Recently, one of my consulting clients asked me why a potential customer will select one photographer over another.

"Is it price?" they wondered?

Well - yes and no.

Selecting a photographer is like selecting any other professional service...

Money is clearly a factor to be considered in almost everything we do in life - to pretend otherwise would be totally irrational and downright delusional. But, in the hierarchy of the decision making process, it is way down on the list.

First, why do they need a photographer? Whether we're talking portraiture, wedding, product, magazines, the person doing the selecting is doing so for one reason...to get some photos created.

So the first thing that goes into the decision process is; quality of work. After all, it would be silly to set out trying to find a photographer that will provide BAD work. So, in their quest to find a good photographer, they consider;

1. Who have they worked with before? Have they previously worked with a photographer they liked? And that did a good job for them? Generally, we select someone we've worked with before if at all possible. This is why you should keep in constant contact with your client base. They are the easiest to sell. If they strike out on step one - they go to...

2. Who do they know? In their circle of friends, family and acquaintances - have any of them worked with a photographer they liked and will feel comfortable referring? A huge part of your business will come as a result of referrals. Ask EVERYONE for referrals, repeatedly. Give them a reason to want to refer to you. You should also belong to networking organizations like the Chamber of Commerce or Business Networking International - BNI. If they still can't get the name of a good photographer they go to...

3. Ads. If all else fails, they will go to the phone book, internet, newspapers or watch for mailers to hit the mailbox. Although these are all valid promotion avenues, they're last on the list and should be treated accordingly. Unfortunately, most photographers spend all their time efforts and money here instead of in the two areas above. Go to my website if you want to launch - or further - your photo career with virtually no ad budget - it's easy.

Finally, using one or a combination of the methods above, we have a name or two. We meet with them and look at their work. By the way, when they call, the first question will be how much is an 8 x 10? They don't really care at this point - but they don't know any other question to open the discussion with.

If both the photographers are approximately equal in quality, they will generally select the one they like and feel most comfortable with. Now is when price

comes into the picture. Generally, they will stick with their prior selection - if the prices are within logical reason, and sometime even if they are not!

So, I've tried to outline the steps a person would take to find professional services in any field, not just photography. Price is a factor but if they are legitimate customers, price is the absolute last consideration.

If you find yourself dealing with customers on a price only basis, your business is in trouble. There is ALWAYS someone that will come along and undercut you. Get away from prices and promote your business in the order listed above.

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How Watching A TV Movie Can Help You Sell Photography - Or Anything Else!

by Dan Eitreim

<http://www.PartTimePhotography.com>
<http://www.FreelancePromo.com>

A week or so ago, I happened to watch a cable television movie starring Claire Forlani (not a great movie but she's so good looking, it doesn't matter)- and it reminded me of something I'd noticed about her before, but had forgotten. Once you understand what it is, you can use it to DRAMATICALLY increase your photography sales. (Or sales of anything, for that matter.)

If she were in direct sales, she'd be an amazing success! Here's why...

By the way, sales doesn't have to mean a product (photographs). You could be selling an idea at work, you could be selling a potential suitor, you could be selling your kids on the idea of doing what they're told - doesn't matter, it's all sales.

If you've studied the process of selling at all, you soon learned that if you ask for the order right off the bat, you are in trouble. It's too abrupt. You have to lead

up to it - and the most effective way of getting the one major yes, is to get a whole bunch of minor yeses along the way. That's sales 101.

How do you get a lot of minor yeses? Well...first off you have to ask a lot of questions. They don't have to be major, earthshaking questions, just questions you can ask to get a yes response.

ie. - I really like the way she's smiling in this one, don't you?

How can someone honestly say they don't like a persons smile? They really can't - if it's a legitimate question and the - she - in question really does have a nice smile.

It's a simple matter to design yes questions, and before long it will become a habit. Don't overdo it though, throw in some open ended ones too. You don't want to dominate the conversation.

Sales 102 involves getting people to like you and feel comfortable around you. People buy from those they like and trust!

How do you get someone you hardly know to quickly like and trust you? One technique is called mirroring. Again, this trait will become a habit if we consciously practice it for a while.

Mirroring means we mirror our prospects - posture, facial expressions, style of dress, vocabulary usage, speech patterns, etc. When we do this, subtly so it's not apparent, the prospect subconsciously starts to think we are just like THEM! And we tend to like people that are like us. Look around at your friends, they are probably about the same age, income level, use the same vocabulary, dress like you and so on.

Once we are mirroring THEM, that means, by default, they're mirroring US too! It creates a stronger bond than you may think.

If we start throwing in a few subtle little shifts - they will follow along! We can direct their thoughts and opinions more than you may realize. It can get scary. Pay attention to how YOU are being led as well! Please use this in a responsible, ethical manner.

"Ok..." You dubiously say. "So what?"

You want to lead them to a sale. How? You've started mirroring your potential customer and now when you ask a question, you don't just toss it out and wait for a response, you nod your head!

Subconsciously, they will be affected and nod their heads too!

When we agree with something, we nod our heads, not just say yes! It's really hard to answer a question with a no, if you are nodding your head. The opposite is true as well. It's hard to answer a question with a yes if you are shaking your head.

Try it, people are almost FORCED to agree with you!

Remember, we started this conversation with - get enough minor yeses and agreements along the way and the major yes, the sale, is a no brainer.

Back to the movie. Rent a movie or watch a television show with Clair Forlani, I think you'll immediately see what I've been discussing. It's an ingrained habit - she is constantly nodding her head! (As well as using other mirroring techniques.) And, her co-stars end up nodding right along! Just like your customers will.

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How A Strategy By Burger King Will Help You With Selling Your Photography!

by Dan Eitreim

<http://www.PartTimePhotography.com>
<http://www.FreelancePromo.com>

Quite a while back I read about a marketing strategy employed by Burger King that I think is pretty smart - and it would be worthwhile for all of us to follow suit.

It seems that they have this competitor - McDonalds - who is larger and has far more resources. In business, this is important. The more you have to work with,

the better you are able to withstand temporary setbacks, swings in the economy, etc. PLUS you have more to spend in product research, finding prime locations and all that sort of thing.

"So what? " you ask. I'm a photographer, not a fast food maven.

Hang in there, it's coming.

BK, thinking that sooner or later the superior resources would do them in, started thinking of ways to get around the problem. One brilliant solution to a huge problem, uses their opponents strength against them!

A VERY important factor in the success or failure of a fast food restaurant, is location. (It's the same in most other retail businesses as well.) McDonalds has the resources to spend tens of thousands of dollars - maybe hundreds of thousands - hiring location scouts, realtors working solely for them, traffic studies, zoning studies and on and on.

I'm sure there are a million different factors in the selection of a great location.

Burger King either didn't have - or didn't want to spend - the money needed to find locations as good as the ones found by McDonalds.

What to do?

They let McDonalds find them!

After McDonalds spends all this money, the odds of it being a great location are about 100%, so Burger King adopted a strategy of watching McDonalds - and then opening a location within a block or so of them!

Don't believe it? The next time you see a Burger King, look around, there's a McDonalds just down the street! Guaranteed! Did the strategy work? You bet!

So, what has this got to do with marketing your photography?

The point is, why reinvent the wheel? As a small business person, you need every advantage you can get. Why stumble around in the dark? If you want to market your photography, find a successful photographer and do the same thing they are doing.

They paid a lot of money in trial and error tests to get where they are today, there's no point in you tossing your money down the same hole. Not everything will work the same way for everyone, but at least it's a start and will get you

pointed in the right direction.

If you want some ideas...tried and tested...that work, go to my website listed below and sign up for the free marketing course. You'll be glad you did.

Publishers, you may freely publish and distribute this article as long as it is kept intact - including my links and bio - and is left unchanged.

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The Most Gut Wrenching Decision You Will Ever Make In Your Photography

by Dan Eitreim

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As "artists" most of us have problems with self doubt.

Does my work measure up? Could I have done better? Did I use the right combination of shutter speed/f-stop? Will anyone like these shots? Was that the best pose? Angle? Is this ART or just a grab shot?

We constantly compare ourselves to the best in the field and - in our minds - we frequently fall sort. This low self esteem state of mind causes us to endlessly agonize over the biggest decision we will ever need to make in our careers...

To sell our photography or simply remain a frustrated amateur.

Photography as a hobby is incredibly expensive. We have to buy cameras, tripods, lenses, film or -if digital - computers, printers and software. Lights, stands, backdrops and etc., are all just the tip of the iceberg.

At some point, pretty much ALL intermediate and advanced amateurs wonder if they could sell their work.

If nothing else, it would help pay for the equipment.

Then, the self doubt starts to creep in. We start looking through our books and magazines and comparing our work to those we see. We check out websites and study contest winners.

The lump in the pit of our stomach starts getting larger and larger.

But on the other hand, all our friends and relatives say our work is gorgeous. Everyone says we could become photographers but, that doesn't do much to relieve the cold sweats in the middle of the night. Does it?

What to do...?

First, stop comparing yourself to the magazine photographers. Odds are, several thousand dollars in retouching fees were expended to get that perfect cover "look". Same with contest winners and the window display at the local photo studio. (Not to mention that those are the best photos they have available. Why display a bad one?)

Then you need to stop comparing yourself to all the other photographers you see published. Even if they are all tremendous shooters, it doesn't matter! If you start selling your work, you aren't trying to please them! You are trying to please your customers.

Every photographer has an individual way of seeing things and YOUR customers may like what YOU do BETTER!

That's all that matters. Is the customer happy?

Here is a well kept secret that all professional portrait photographers know - the average person doesn't judge photo contests. They don't know what makes one portrait a contest winner and another one a loser.

AND they don't care!

All they want is a good, competent job, showing an attractive pose and nice expression.

There IS a way to be sure you never have an unhappy customer - don't charge a session fee. Work on speculation. That way, they are only obligated to buy the photos they want!

The bottom line is, you don't have to be brilliant, just treat your customers well and take care to do the best job you can on every session. You'll be surprised.

I hope this will help you with one of the hardest decisions we are forced to make. Make the choice to start selling your portraits, and don't look back - you'll be glad you did.

If you are interested in getting started in a part time photo business (don't start off full time) check out the website listed in my bio. It's the easiest, least expensive and fastest way I know to get started!

Publishers - Feel free to publish this article at will, as long as the entire article is left intact - including the bio and links.

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There Are Only Three Ways to Increase Photo Sales Income!

by Dan Eitreim

<http://www.PartTimePhotography.com>
<http://www.FreelancePromo.com>

Quick, off the top of your head, do you know the three ways to increase your business' sales income?

There are only three.

No, really - try to answer the question. I'll wait a couple minutes.

By the way, cutting costs is not one of them. True, cutting costs will improve your bottom line by helping you keep more of what you take in, but it doesn't help bring in MORE.

Did you get three? As a marketer - of anything, not just photography, you need to know them.

I was first exposed to the concept many years ago by a marketing guru named Jay Abraham. He knows his stuff. His typical seminars ALWAYS sell out at \$25,000 per person. That's his typical seminars, he has expensive ones too!

Even a tape set of an old seminar will set you back \$5000 or more.

So why do we care?

I tell you this for two reasons;

One - I want you to pay attention because this guy knows what he's talking about. If he says it's important - it really is! People actually jump at the chance to throw money at him - because they know it will come back tenfold if they follow his advice.

Two - I wanted to fill up a few lines so that the answer to my opening question wouldn't be so obviously staring you in the face. Did it work?

Did you come up with the three ways to increase your business' income on your own? If not...I can't stall any longer, here they are:

1. Increase the number of new customers.
2. Increase the average order size.
3. Increase the average number of orders.

Seems pretty simple. But most businesses only concern themselves with the first one! Increasing the number of new customers.

Most companies (particularly small and home based businesses) put all their efforts into finding new and better trained salespeople, finding new ways of advertising - newspapers, magazines, TV, building websites - improving the effectiveness of their ads - hiring top copywriters, and so on.

All in an attempt to increase the number of new customers.

But, if you are able to stay in business, there comes a time when you reach a saturation point. That's when most businesses first start to look to the other two methods.

By then, it's too late. Huge amounts of cash have been left on the table.

All three methods are equally important and should be considered on a daily basis.

First you need to start tracking your numbers...Yeah, it's boring - I know.

What is your average sale? Do you know? If not, how will you know if you are successfully increasing it? Maybe it's going down! Maybe, you are paying more (to get a one time customer), than you are making from them.

How many times does the average customer buy from you? Any idea? Just once? Once a week? Once a year?

Start keeping track of these things. They are not only important, but can be the difference between becoming a respected photographer, or staying in your rut as a (fill in the name of your current occupation here).

I talk more about these concepts in my newsletter. To learn how to become a professional photographer - starting part time - and learn a bunch of good low and no cost marketing strategies, go to my website listed below.

Publishers, you may feel free to publish this article at will as long as the entire article - including the resource block listed below - is left intact.

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Shadows - The Forgotten Element That Can Make (Or Break) A Photograph!

by Dan Eitreim

<http://www.PartTimePhotography.com>

<http://www.FreelancePromo.com>

As photographers, we obsess over light. How much of it, the direction it's coming from, the color and so on...

Isn't the very WORD - photograph - ancient Greek for writing with light? (Photo = light, graph = to write) Maybe it's Latin, I'm doing this from memory.

In our obsession, we buy studio lights so we can get more of it, at the right color and direction. We use multiple lights to eliminate unwanted shadows! And to add highlights. We buy reflectors to fill in the shadows and we bounce our - on camera - flash off the ceiling to avoid shadows on the walls.

A quick search in any library or bookstore will show dozens (if not hundreds) of books and magazines devoted to controlling light.

So far...I've never run across a book devoted to capturing shadows!

But, isn't it the shadows that define mood?

Picture in your mind, a photograph of a smoky New Orleans, jazz club. Was your mental photo in color or black and white? Probably black and white, but even if it was in color, was the room well lit - OR STEEPED IN SHADOW?

When your subject is a little - shall we say, hefty - how do you tell them to dress for their portraits? In white? Or in black?

In case you're new to photography, and know absolutely nothing about fashion, I'll tell you - it's black.

Why?

Because shadows define shape! If they are wearing white, all the shadows cast by their excess weight are clearly visible. Wearing black, the shadows aren't that visible and thereby a person look thinner.

When you study the various lighting patterns, you'll see they are almost all defined by the shadows - not the light! Rembrandt, broad light, narrow light, split light, butterfly and so on...it's the way the shadows appear that determine the pattern. Without shadows, all lighting patterns would be the same!

Wrinkles are defined by the shadows. That's why lights are always positioned directly in front of models - to eliminate any wrinkles. The same for blemishes.

We mostly notice pock marks because of the shadows.

So, when you are doing a portrait session, consider the shadows. What kind of mood are you after? Do they have wrinkles or blemishes that need to be filled in? Do they have a wide face that can be narrowed by shadowing one side?

Photographs are on paper and are two dimensional, so the best photographers look for ways to include shadow. Can YOU add shadow to give the portrait depth and dimension?

When you start to think about shadows as intensely as you do about the light, that's when your photography will move to the next level.

It's the shadows that create the illusion of depth and shape and it's the consideration of shadows that can turn a snapshot into ART. People will know they are looking at something special but they won't know why, because shadows truly are the forgotten element.

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Learning Portrait Photography Lighting The Easy Way!

by Dan Eitreim

<http://www.PartTimePhotography.com>
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Whether you're a photography newbie or you've been around the block a few times, it doesn't take long to learn that properly lighting a portrait subject can make a huge difference in the quality of the finished portrait.

Thus begins the never ending torment.

First, we wonder what kind of lighting patterns there are.

We go to our local camera store and discover a book that discusses Rembrandt light. Then another guru says that narrow light is the way to go. But for each

narrow light application, there's another time when broad light will do the trick. They talk about split light, backlight, hair light, fill, ambient.

They use terms like main light, key light, fill, diffused, hot, continuous, strobe and so on...

It's no wonder so many people throw up their hands in frustration. Then they light every subject the same tired old way.

So then, we start to question - why bother?

What difference does it make?

We soon learn that wide faces can be visually narrowed, narrow faces can be visually widened, noses can be shortened, cheekbones can be raised. Not to mention - blemishes can be minimized, wrinkles softened and weight reduced.

Then it finally hits. Lighting is important. We start to realize that being a photographer entails more than buying the latest digital gadget and spending countless hours in Photoshop.

By now we are in information overload. Which way to turn? How many hundreds of dollars do we need to spend - buying all the latest magazines and photo books?

There is an easier way.

It's true that photo equipment is being improved all the time. Trying to keep up with all the most recent improvements in technology is impossibly difficult - but - peoples faces are pretty much the same now as they were 10 years ago, 50 years, 100.

The best lighting patterns haven't changed. Rembrandt light is called that because Rembrandt used that lighting pattern! In the early 1600's!

The point is, to learn the basic lighting patterns, old photo books work just as well as the new ones. You don't have to spend a fortune at the local camera store, book store or on line. Go to the library. It's free.

Find a book that shows a lighting pattern you want to learn, check it out and go home.

Now comes the expensive part.

You need some flashlights. I mean the kind you hold in your hand. The kind you keep in the kitchen junk drawer. (Yes, the one that always has dead batteries when you need it.) You will also need a notebook.

Now, for the fun part. Grab one of your kids, boyfriend, girlfriend, next door neighbor, next door neighbor's kids...somebody! Bribe them. Tell them if they'll help you learn about lighting, you'll do a nice portrait of them!

Have them sit on a chair in a darkened room. (Leave your camera in the bag. We don't need it.) Take out your flashlights and starting with one (add more as needed)- light up their face. Move it in and out, raise it, lower it, go to the sides and so on.

Watch what is happening! Learn how to exaggerate and minimize noses, bumps, acne, wrinkles. Learn where the light needs to be positioned to get the patterns in the book.

What happens when you put some tracing paper over the light? Bounce it off a nearby wall?

Then for each new discovery you make, write it down in your notebook. Use plenty of diagrams.

In a couple hours, you'll know more about photographic lighting than 75% of all the photographers out there. Plus, you can have a great time!

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The Hidden Dangers of Going Digital

by Dan Eitreim

<http://www.PartTimePhotography.com>
<http://www.FreelancePromo.com>

Film or digital? Digital or film? The debate rages on.

Unfortunately, due to the film manufacturers phasing out of film, the debate is about to be decided in favor of the "Digital" crowd. And photography is going downhill in a hurry!

Now, before all you digital fanatics order a hit man to pay a visit to my house, let me explain that I have no problem with digital. In fact, it is the indisputable future of my profession. I believe it can help us learn to be better photographers, and in the long run, it may save money too!

But, those very points are also our potential downfall.

The first thing everyone tries to pound into our heads is that by "going digital" we save money on film and developing. Rather than drop \$6 or \$7 dollars for a roll of film, we can shoot as many shots as we want and just erase the bad ones. Rather than paying \$15 for developing and printing, we just print them ourselves with our computer and printer.

Ok, let's talk cost.

If you don't mind seeing your gorgeous sunsets, kids portraits, holidays and special occasions as a two inch thumbnail, digital is for YOU!

A cell phone with photo capacity, or a cheap - low end camera will work admirably.

But, if you actually want to SEE your photos and try to enlarge them, you're going to end up inventing a whole bunch of brand new curse words. (As photographers, we can be very creative!)

It won't take you long to dump that camera and go back to the camera store.

Enter the high end camera...

I have several high end film cameras. (Nikon F4's and F5's.) To go digital as a professional, I need a high end camera. Actually, I need two of them so I have a spare body in case one breaks down during an important assignment. The photo capacity of my cell phone just won't do.

When comparing prices, I found the best digital cameras run about TWICE what I paid for my film cameras. I imagine the cost ratio is about the same when comparing medium level film and digital cameras.

The good news is, the high end digital photos ARE as good, but they aren't any BETTER than film. It appears that I'd be spending a ton of money to get - what

I've already got!

We won't even get into the fact that you need a good computer, a high end printer and \$700 worth of Photoshop. (Have you priced printer ink and photo quality paper? - WOW!)

I'd have to shoot a LOT of pictures before the savings will pay for a camera. But to be fair, sooner or later the film savings would offset the costs and start saving me money. If nothing changes!

What I mean is...

I shot my first professional photos over 16 years ago with my trusty F4. Just last week, I used it again! The SAME camera! It's in my camera bag right now! Question - if I bought a top of the line digital camera today, do YOU think the technology will still hold up in 16 years? How about 16 months? How about 6 months?

Sorry, saving money is NOT the reason to go digital.

The next benefit to going digital is the ability to see the photo immediately. If you don't like it, simply hit delete and try again. After all, you don't even have to consider cost.

We're developing a whole generation of photographers who will shoot thousands of pictures just to get a handful of good ones. How does that old saying go? "Even a blind duck finds a kernel of corn sometimes!"

They aren't learning photography. They are learning - save or delete.

The problem is, eventually they get a few dozen decent shots. They forget about all the deleted ones and start to think they're pretty darn good! So they go pro.

Big mistake!

Weddings are the first target of almost everyone turning pro. Let me ask - would YOU want a "blind duck" photographer shooting YOUR wedding? Or someone who learned the hard way - paying actual money for every mistake.

Weddings are the worst way to start out a photo career. Fortunately, ANYONE can make money selling their photography AND, with just a little experience they'll eventually get good enough for weddings - if they only know a couple tried and true marketing strategies - see the resource box below.

Being able to immediately see your photos is truly the BIGGEST and perhaps ONLY reason to go digital.

The immediate feedback will take your photography to levels you would have never dreamed. If you only drop the shotgun approach, slow down and look at each picture with the question in mind - "How can I make this better?" If you approach every session thinking it will cost you a dollar each time you press the shutter button in no time you will be better than 75% of all the photographers out there.

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Your Estate Planning Attorney Is Ripping You Off – By Doing His Job!

by Dan Eitreim

<http://www.TheProSays.com/trusts>

If you've done any estate planning AT ALL, you know that you need a "Living Trust" - but before you can create one, there are a few concerns...

Do you really understand what a trust is all about? Your family's future depends on your answer to that question!

If you schedule an appointment with your attorney and ask, he (or she) will be happy to explain everything to you. After all, giving legal advice is what they do – and charge for.

They know trusts inside out, but unless you ask the questions – the right questions – they have no way of knowing what needs to be explained and what you already understand!

The end result is, they spend a lot of BILLABLE time explaining things you already know - or worse, they assume you know something and don't explain it at all! You end up with an estate plan you don't really understand.

Personally, when it comes to my family's welfare, I want to know EVERYTHING!

If you ask, your attorney will explain how a living trust can help your estate avoid probate. So what, you say? Why should I care?

Well, probate can cost tens of thousands of dollars - dollars that you wanted to leave to your heirs – not to the attorneys and the court system.

Bypassing probate will also speed up the process - so your heirs can have almost immediate access to the money, vs. waiting several years while your probate slowly winds it's way through the system. Could your family survive 2 years without any income? Did you know they might have to?

Is privacy a concern for you? If you ask, your attorney will fully explain that wills are open to the public and ANYONE can read yours! Would you want your enemies reading your will?

Do you need a "spillover" will? Probably, and if you ask, they'll explain all that for you. Do you know what a spillover will is? Do you need one? Why?

Your attorney will explain what types of property should be included in a "Living Trust" and what types should not! How to move property in and out, what the tax ramifications are and so on...if you ask.

Did you know a "Living Trust" can help you with your estate management - while you're still alive?

My point is, there are a lot of issues that your attorney needs to cover - at \$200...\$300...\$400 per hour!

Wouldn't it make sense to understand the difference between "revocable" and "irrevocable" trusts, spillover wills, what happens when you sell, refinance, add, and subtract property, durable power of attorney, and many other issues before you get to the attorney's office? With just a little pre-planning and research you can save a ton of money and feel more secure that you really understand your estate plan.

Your attorney doesn't mean to rip you off, they're just doing their job - and their advice is valuable. But...do you really think they're going to recommend that you do a little research ahead of time - or will they just cheerfully charge \$200 - \$300 an hour to explain it all to you?

Dan Eitrem runs a web site devoted to interviewing experts in various areas that affect YOU! Go to: <http://www.TheProSays.com> for a listing of current and

planned interviews. He asks all the questions (even the dumb ones) so you don't have to. For a comprehensive interview that answers every question you could ever ask about "Living Trusts" go to: <http://www.TheProSays.com/trusts>

Would You Want EVERYONE To Be Able To Read Your Will?

by Dan Eitheim

<http://www.TheProSays.com/trusts>

Jacquelyn Kennedy Onassis was a very private person. Surprising when you consider the public life she led - but true. She was famous for keeping her private life private.

Why am I telling you this?

The other day, my CPA was telling me that the office he previously worked in - had a copy of her will! They kept it on hand to prove to their clients how vulnerable our most private wishes can be, when we leave everything in a will.

Can you imagine how horrified she would be if she knew the - entire world - had access to her private financial data? Her private wishes as to who would get what - and in what amounts?

That can happen to you, too!

How do YOU feel, knowing that EVERYONE has access to your will? Is there anyone that you might consider - shall we say an "undeserving" relative? Do you want them reading your will? How about your enemies? Business rivals?

How would it affect your family?

So, what can we do? After all, wills are a matter of public record and public records are...public.

First thought that comes to mind is...don't leave a will!

BAD IDEA! So bad in fact, I won't even bother to list any reasons. Just don't do it.

The way to avoid letting the world know about everything you own, is to NOT own anything!

No, I don't advocate giving away everything you own and leaving your family

penniless.

The way to solve the problem is to put all your possessions into a "Living Trust". Then, title to all your property is in the name of the trust. Not in your name. Therefore, when you die, it doesn't affect the ownership of your possessions at all! The trust owns them! Whomever you named as the executor of the trust simply steps in and takes over the trust's management.

Privacy is important to all of us - but that's only one small benefit to owning a "Living Trust". To find out more...you can spend \$200 or \$300 to consult with a good estate planning attorney - or - you can go to the website listed in the resource box below.

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