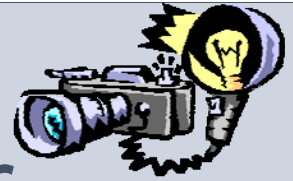




Flash! Newsletter



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Marketing Tip of the Month

Marketing News

Here's the good news!

As a small business owner, you have the ability to be different! You should constantly be looking for your competitive advantage – something that you're doing that your competition is unwilling or unable to do for themselves that's meaningful to the customer.

For a lot of us, it could be as simple as customer service. Customer service is part of their demonstrated core values and they have stories and stories about how their staff will go out of their way to make it right if there's a problem. Some business even give incentives to their employees for setting a standard of Excellence in customer service.

What details can you over deliver on?

What do people typically hate about photography? Is there a stereotype of inefficiency?

Ever heard, "The plumber will be there sometime today!!" .. meanwhile you have a huge drainage problem.

Whatever the little things are that your competitors typically get wrong because they don't care or can't be bothered with...that's where you can step things up and really stand out. And the beautiful thing about



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developing a competitive advantage is that you are no longer competing on price. You will succeed at a premium price with people that appreciate the importance of presentation, everything in its place, everything working the way it's supposed to (or being handled if it's not).

What are some things you could start doing in your business today that would upgrade the experience you deliver?

Shannon Holmberg

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Fitzy's Tools & Tips:



As most people know Photoshop CS5 has been released. I thought I would give you a few of the new features that have been added to this new version.

The first feature is Content-Aware Fill. It makes zapping unwanted content from photos quick and easy. It compares your selection or brush stroke to nearby pixels and then fills the selected area so it blends seamlessly with the background.

Second is the Refine Edge dialog box. It makes selecting difficult stuff like hair and fur easy. For example, The new smart radius option detects the difference between soft and hard edges. The new decontaminate Colors option all but eliminates any leftover pixels from the original background.

Third is the new puppet warp tool. Have you ever needed to move a subject's arms, legs, or tail into a better position? You begin by dropping markers (called pins) onto the item you want to move, and Photoshop then generates anchor points, handles, and a grid-like

mesh that you use to move and distort the item. It works with pixel-based layers and smart objects.

This is just a few of the new features that CS5 has to offer. More new features next month.

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Business First – Aletha Speakar, Cr. Photog., ABI, CBM, API

What do you do on vacation? What should you do?

Read three books?
Eat food that's not part of your diet?
Play golf?
Just play?
PARTY!
Lie by the pool and read?
Get a tan? Relax? Just veg out?
Sometimes people party so hard on vacation, that when they get home, they need another vacation.

One common thread among the people on vacation: Everyone seems to be happy. Unless you bring your kids. Then the happiness factor reduces some. Kids wanna have total fun, parents want to restrict fun.

Why do people look forward to a vacation, besides the things I named above? Because it gives them a reprieve from their day-to-day responsibility.

What people fail to realize is that when they relax, and let go, ideas have a chance to "pop" into their heads. Same with you. And those ideas must be captured if you seek to take advantage of them.

Think-write-relax-think - somehow, relaxing brings the next thought. Like magic.

You go away to refresh and rejuvenate your mind and body, and there are a thousand places you can pick. Problem is you spend too much time selecting. JUST GO!

It doesn't have to be a resort, or grand location, just get away. You say your budget won't allow a vacation, then pack a lunch go to the park; spend the day just enjoying the great outdoors. Great ideas will come to you. Give it a try.

Personal News –

Congrats to Rose Rademacher who became the bride of Eric Rottinghaus on June 4 in Cedar Falls. Rose is the owner of Infinite Image Design in Cedar Falls. Our best wishes to the three of you. Pictured is Rose, step-son Hunter, and Eric



Please let me know your news of the month. Are you having a grand opening, a child, and grandchild or are you getting married? Celebrating a big birthday or anniversary? Have you completed your certification? Let me know so we can share the news with all the PPI members. We are a family. We celebrate together and we mourn together, that's what makes Iowa PPA the best organization to belong to.

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Chris's Corner



Here we are into the 10th day of June. The days are going by quickly and I need to get out there and enjoy them before the snow. I hope you can all take some time to enjoy your family, and friends, and the great weather.

Michelle Wilbur, our new PPI President, has Fall Event 2010 all buttoned up. As I mentioned last month, **Drake Busath**, will share with us how to improve our Family Photography just in time for all of those family Christmas sessions. Check out the May issue of the PPA Magazine for an article on Drake. The fold-out cover is his and the article on him can be found on page 92. Check it out!!! Drake is sponsored in part by WHCC. **Law Everling** will show us how to bring together various forms of social networking tools for a stronger web presence in today's super highway of information. And **the Deyo's** will show you how to ROCK those senior portraits into another world. Law and the Deyo's are sponsored by ACI. Mark your calendars for Sunday, October 31 and Monday, November 1, 2010.

Michelle is still working on Winter Convention 2011, but has this talent ready for you: **Jon Allyn** – lighting; **Julie Hughes; Blair Phillips; Dave Humphrey** – seniors; **Art Suwansang** – lightroom; **Joel Grimes** - check out the June issue of the PPA Magazine. Joel's image is on the front cover and an article starting on page 88; **Travis Gugelman** – marketing and business; **Bob Clements** – E-Myth book; Much, much more to come. Watch the website and your email. Michelle is planning on changing some things up this year at the winter convention. Mark your calendars for February 4 – 8, 2011. And as always, our events will be held at the Airport Holiday Inn in Des Moines.

It is NOT too early to be thinking about print competitions. This weekend in Atlanta is the judging for the PPA International Print Competition. Our own Bob Hawkins is one of the judges. Here are some of the new rules, etc. for 2011. The below article is from "Tips and Clips" a newsletter I get from the PPA each month.

The Power of Competition **Angela Wijesinghe, PPA Marketing Specialist**

Happy New Year (new competition year that is)!

PPA's International Photographic Competition is the gold standard for photography competitions and features the best of the best photographers from around the world every year. Having an image "go loan"—chosen for

inclusion in the world's most prestigious photo exhibit—is an achievement pro photographers cherish.

The 2010 competition is wrapping up this month, so while the calendar says the year is only half over, it's time to start fresh with a whole new view on how competition can help you grow your photographic skills and your business.

New Rules and Procedures

The Photographic Exhibition Committee (PEC) is the governing body of PPA photographic competitions. In conjunction with PPA's board of directors, PEC manages the rules and procedures to ensure they are the best they can be, while protecting the integrity of PPA competitions. In 2009, PPA's board of directors also appointed a task force to consider important competition changes, based on a PPA membership survey.

“The goal with these modifications is to provide what PPA members want in their photographic competition while keeping it as strong and viable as ever,” notes PEC Chairman Dennis Craft, M.Photog., Cr., Hon.M.Photog., CPP, API, F-ASP.

While we're waiting for the 2010 results, peek ahead to see some exciting competition changes coming your way.

Districts, Not Regions

Five competition districts replace the twelve regional competitions, starting this fall.

“We hope that this change makes the affiliate competitions less burdensome on each association group,” says Craft.

The only effect this change has on photographers is in where you submit your district competition entries. “We all should be taking advantage of competing at the district level,” Craft adds. It's a great way to test-run your images before the International Photographic Competition.

What's your district? Every PPA member is assigned to a district based on where they live (or the address in their PPA member record), and a map is available here: www.PPA.com/community/affiliates.php. Contact your affiliate association or Jim Dingwell (jdingwell@ppa.com), PEC Administrator, if you have questions.

(Our district is the North Central District, which includes ND, SD, NE., MN, WI, IL, KS, MO, IA and the Upper Peninsula of MI. These states have volunteered to host the affiliated judging: Kansas in 2011; Illinois in 2012, Iowa (YEA!!!) in 2013, and IN in 2014.)

Size (Almost) Doesn't Matter

Starting with the Southwest District competition in the fall of 2010, all photographers will be able to submit different sizes of print images in all PPA photographic competitions—they won't be restricted to a 16x20 presentation.

Keep in mind, though, that while your images' shapes and sizes have more flexibility in the 2011 competition, there will still be some requirements. The presentation must be a minimum of 80 square inches to a maximum of 480 square inches, with the largest dimension no longer than 24 inches.

The Category You've Been Waiting For

In the 2011 International Photographic Competition, the Photographic Open category will be split in two: Photographic Open and Illustrative.

Due to popular demand, this category split will allow for images of similar subject types to be judged together. "This is something that many photographers have asked for, and PEC listened," Craft says.

The new Photographic Open category will accept wedding images, portraits, etc. The new Illustrative category is for landscapes, flowers, nature images, creative digital composites and that sort of imagery.

Digital Submission Makes Its Debut

In the 2011 International Photographic Competition, people can enter digitally in every category.

Digital submission was introduced in the 2010 competition, with a handful of categories allowing digital or print entries. In 2011, every category will have that choice. Why? Well, 70 percent of PPA members said they would be more likely to enter photographic competitions if they could submit digital files.

"No longer will PPA tell you what format you must submit," says Craft. "Print or digital...you decide what's best for your image."

Just remember that how you submit is how the image will be displayed at Imaging USA (if you earn a spot in the exhibit). Prints will be displayed as they've always been in the traditional International Photographic Exhibit. If you enter a digital file that qualifies for the exhibit, your image will be rotated on large monitors with other award-winning digital entries.

Digital Judging Details

In fact, that is how the digital images will be viewed by the jurors. Two 30-inch NEC monitors will be set up in a room

of six jurors, and the image will come up on both screens. “PPA will own all this digital judging equipment for the International Photographic Competition and will ship it to the different district competitions, which will really help those affiliates,” explains Craft.

Jurors are already being trained on this new entry option. Those trained jurors will then help other jurors in district competitions, and PEC will hold refresher courses to keep everyone up to speed.

“If you think about it, we actually started the transition into digital judging years ago with Adobe® Photoshop® software,” Craft comments. At that time, PEC had to train jurors to look for errors like banding, cloning tracks and chromatic aberration. “In the past, we had to train jurors to see these flaws in prints. This time, we had to make sure they are comfortable viewing an image and catching those flaws with light coming from behind the image (via the monitor), rather than reflected off it (when viewing a print).”

Thinking of Entering Digital?

If the digital entry option captures your interest, remember these important points:

- Use the Technical Excellence and Print Presentation elements. As Craft points out, “Those elements are still part of an image, whether you’re viewing it as a print or on a monitor.” So don’t forget the key lines, borders or any of the presentation touches.
- Read and follow the parameters set by PEC for entering the correctly sized files. You don’t want your image to be pixilated or stretched-out on the judging monitors. (These details will be in the competition rules.)

So just how good are you? Make this the year to find out.

What’s Next?

- *Right Now:* Start prepping your entries for district competition—it’s a great place to start! In the process, you might find colleagues who are willing to critique and offer suggestions for making your images even better. Don’t forget to join in the competition conversation on the OurPPA Forum as well.
- *This Month:* Watch for the announcement of the 2010 results from the International Photographic Competition (June 13-16 in Atlanta, Ga.). Want to learn more about how images are judged? Start by reviewing the “12 Elements of a Merit Image”

for a foundation (found on www.ppa.com).

- This Year: Look for upcoming articles in the magazine and online newsletters about PPA competitions, merits and degrees and some real-life inspiration from PPA members who see competition as an effective way to improve skills.

Our newest board members are Al Lieferman, who has a studio in Clinton, A.L. Lieferman Photography and Mindy Decker who co-owns Ovation Photography in Oxford, Iowa. Make sure you welcome them as new board members.

Thank you goes out to Toni Harryman. Thank you for all of your years of service, your leadership, your guidance and your knowledge. We know that you will still be involved in wherever you can – Print Competitions – for sure. We will miss you at our board meetings.

Speaking of the board, we are having our annual June board meeting this weekend in Des Moines. As always, this is YOUR organization and we would like to hear from you. You can always email or call myself or one of the board members with any ideas, concerns, questions, photography problems (we will try and help in any way we can), or your suggestions.

Till next month, Chris B.

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