

Best Practices for Your Online Portfolio

Best Practices

- ✓ Keep it simple!
- ✓ Use a framework and stick with it.
- ✓ Use ONLY your best photos.
- ✓ Organize your images into galleries and/or projects.
- ✓ Buy your domain name directly. (*"Own your name." – Bob*)
- ✓ Keep your work updated and fresh.
- ✓ Don't strive for perfection, this is a work in progress!

Avoid these Common Mistakes:

- ✓ Using "Free" services.
- ✓ Displaying one big group of images.
- ✓ Using old technology, such as Flash.
- ✓ Creating a site that isn't mobile friendly.
- ✓ Using subdomain instead of your own domain. (*Example: "johnsmith.wordpress.com"*)
- ✓ Not knowing who your target audience is.
- ✓ Focusing on what gear you use. (Seriously, nobody cares - unless your audience is other photographers.)
- ✓ Trying to make your site perfect before publishing it.

Framework (Must-have Pages)

- **Home** – This is where people land when they first click on your website. What they see here will create their first impression of your work. Choose 1-3 images to display on your home page and make sure they are some of your finest work.
- **Galleries** – Think about how you want to group your work. You may choose to create genre-based categories (i.e. Landscapes, Street Photography, Portraits or for the exclusively street photographer: Urban Landscapes, Street Portraits, Streets in Motion) or you may want to divide your work up by specific projects or locations. However you decide to organize your work, make sure you limit yourself to less than 10 categories and keep the number of photos in each category between 10 and 20 images. Less is more!
- **About** – This is where your visitors will get to know you. Instead of writing a “normal” bio (i.e. “John Smith was born in Aruba in 1970 and loves photography.”), tell your story. Writing your bio as a story will capture the attention and imagination of the visitor and create a bigger impact on them. Not a good writer? Ask a friend who writes or loves to read to help you out!
- **Contact** – At this point, some of your viewers will want to get in touch. Most web platforms allow you to include a contact form on your site, so if you have the option, take advantage. If you can’t create a webform, you may choose to create a dedicated email address to receive inquiries from those who visit your site. You can include links to your social media on this page too. Some photographers choose to combine their *About* and *Contact* information on a single web page.
- **Services** – Do you shoot weddings or other events? Do you have books or eBooks for sale? Do you sell copies of your prints? If your answer to any of these questions is yes, then you’ll need to set up a *Services* page. Let visitors know what services or products you offer and feel free to include your rates here too.
- **Publications** – Has your work been featured in a physical or online journal? Have you displayed images in a gallery? Have you won any photography awards or contests? If so, create a page where you can brag about it! Including a list of your accomplishments and links to your published work will add weight to your work as a photographer.