

Flaunt Your Site

Photographers Web Marketing E-Book

Web Marketing For Photographers

By William Bay
Flaunt Your Site

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Welcome to the World Wide Web

Or should I say... the Wild Wild West? As a photographer making the jump to the realm of Internet Marketing and website ownership, you face a huge, dizzying array of things to know about websites, email, social media, etc. You may feel like you've stepped into some lawless, unordered world without a map to get to where you want to go.

This guide is your map. It will help photographers with varied levels of experience navigate blogs, email campaigns, SEO, Facebook and Twitter. You'll stop being overwhelmed, and see them as the powerful tools they are. This book is about creating a successful online marketing strategy.

That's right I said "marketing." There's no need to freak out. Understand that when you put a website up on the internet, you are hanging your shingle. You are marketing your business by announcing its presence.

Marketing is simply the process of bringing a product or service to "market."

Every year there are more photographers swarming into the industry, which means you must compete more for clients. How can you do this? I don't advocate lowering prices. That creates unsustainable businesses and forces the industry into a downward spiral of photographers undercutting each other. What I do advocate is using both conventional and newer forms of marketing and promoting to gain an advantage over other photographers.

How to Use This Guide

Feel free to read any section in any order you like. It was organized with the simplest or most basic ideas and concepts towards the beginning, but there are no pre-requisites to read first.

[Links! You can click here and go where you're supposed to.](#)

If you are reading the PDF version on your computer, you can click on the chapters in the table of content to jump to a section. To make things easy website references are also links.

Netiquette

Let's start with the P's and Q's of the internet.

The internet is very public. Lots of people, lots of interactions along with lots of opinions, can sometimes equal a recipe for disagreements, arguments, and the occasional verbal war. Luckily there is the principal of Netiquette to keep some decorum present. Below are the core tenets of Netiquette.

- Remember the Golden Rule
- Adhere to the same standards of behavior online that you follow in real life
- Respect other people's time
- Make yourself look good online
- Share expert knowledge
- Help keep flame wars under control
- Respect other people's privacy
- Don't abuse your power
- Be forgiving of other people's mistakes

I must stress the fact that whatever you post on the internet is publicly viewable. If you are upset with your clients and post something to that effect, there is always a chance that they can see it or find out about it. Even in so called private forums, you never know when some disgruntled forum member may go against the sanctity of the group's policies and report what you are saying to your clients.

Here are a few additional rules to live by when publically posting your thoughts, feelings, etc.:

- Don't post angry. If you are upset find a confidant to speak to first.
- Anonymity rules. Forums are great places for professionals to discuss issues they have with clients, when you are getting advice, leave out names and details that would identify the person(s) with which you are having an issue(s).
- If you wouldn't say it to your Grandmother or her friends, then don't say it online.

For the majority of photographers with a public image, your clientele will be moms and brides. So if you have the slightest sense that your target market would be offended, hold off on pressing that "Post" button.

Spam

Spam is any unsolicited attempt to sell a product or gain something from another internet user via email, social media, website contact forms, blog comments, etc. The best practice is to respect other people's email addresses and websites.

Your Photos on the Internet

On the topic of Netiquette comes the topic of safety of your images online. The nature of the World Wide Web is one of open source information. As photographers, who get paid to create images, it becomes a challenge to safeguard your intellectual property rights when posting digital images online.

Protecting Your Photos

- [Copyright your photographs](#)
- Decide whether you want to watermark your images with your logo
 - Some people think this detracts from the image and turns people off.
 - Some think it's a safeguard to prevent theft.
 - An added benefit is that your business identity is always tied to that photo no matter where it is online.
- Right click disable
 - There are plugins available to disable the right click ability on your website preventing someone from downloading your photo.

If you are the paranoid type, the last resort is to just not upload photos at all. It's not hard for a moderately savvy internet user to circumvent the above steps in order to get a photo. But I would caution against paranoia. Take your preventative measures, and confidently show off your work. The benefits far outweigh the very rare theft or unrequested usage (often times it's just a mistake made out of ignorance).

Optimizing Your Images for the Internet

Internet speeds have grown exponentially since I began using it in 1994. We're now streaming full movies across the internet, but that doesn't mean you should post full RAW files to your blog.

Here are some guidelines to use when saving for the web.

- Use the JPEG file format for your photos. It compresses the files.
 - JPEGs lose quality the more you compress them so aim for a balance between size and quality 70-80 (or 7-8 if using Photoshop).
- Size your images
 - If your blog is 900 pixels wide, your photos only need to be 900 pixels wide. Make sure you resize the images using Photoshop, Lightroom, or whatever image software you use.
- Save in **sRGB** color space as opposed to Adobe RGB
 - This is gets a little technical, but it has to do with the difference of what color the monitor and internet browser will display.
Use Youtube as a resource to learn how to save in sRGB. There are different steps in Photoshop, Lightroom, Aperture, etc.

Domains

A domain name is the address you type in when you want to get to a website. For example: www.flauntyoursite.com. However, your domain name is way more than just the address to your site. It is also the foundation of your brand and identity online. A hastily chosen domain name could mean having to select a better one down the line and deal with the technical aspects of doing so.

Here are some tips in choosing one:

- If you have a business name, your domain name should match it.
- Shorter names are best.
- Get help and opinions.
- Always attempt to get a “.com” over anything else.
- Keywords in the domain often help Search Engine Optimization (SEO) (i.e. www.janesmithweddingphotography.com will give a *slight* advantage in Google searches for “wedding photography” – but remember shorter names are best).

Where to Get a Domain

- Flaunt Your Site www.flauntyoursite.com
- Omnis www.omnis.com
- Blue Host www.bluehost.com
- Site 5 www.site5.com
- Name Cat www.namecat.com

Hosting Companies

In order to get your own website up on the internet, you'll need to have a hosting account, where you can place your website on an internet server. The server is nothing more than a sophisticated computer that serves up your website to people that type in your domain name. Still following? Good.

When you get a hosting account, most sites will have a guide for figuring out how to get things setup. And there is always Youtube for video tutorials to watch and learn.

Here are a couple things you'll need to know about, or learn how to use:

- cPanel: This is the control panel to your hosting account. Most settings having to do with your website can be modified in this area.
- FTP: The easiest method in getting your files on and off your server. There are quite a few programs out there, but FileZilla is free and many people like using it.

Places to Buy Hosting:

Feel free to click any of the links below for hosting.

- Flaunt Your Site www.flauntyoursite.com
- Omnis www.omnis.com
- Blue Host www.bluehost.com
- Site 5 www.site5.com

Email

Email is how the majority of business is transacted these days. It's important to use it, and use it effectively.

Branding Your Email Address

This is the second component to your online branding. Time to graduate from that high school email address of janesmith@gmail.com, or janegirl19@hotmail.com.

Here are a few good examples of what you might want to use for a professional appearance:

- jane@janesmith.com
- info@janesmith.com
- jane@janesmithphotography.com
- contact@onefinedaystudios.com

If you have your domain name already, you can set up your new email account in one of two ways:

1. You can use Google Apps which is Google's excellent Gmail service, but with the ability to use your own domain. There are a number of great reasons to use this service;
 - a. You can easily access Gmail from anywhere in the world.
 - b. Spam control is top notch.
 - c. Amazing amounts of storage.
 - d. You can set it up as an IMAP server which allows you to have your computer's mail program and your iPhone to sync up perfectly with the email that you have on Gmail.
 - e. It's FREE.
2. Through your hosting company you can set up an email account. However, most hosting companies don't offer IMAP, which means you'll be left with a POP account. The difference is that you'll have to download your emails onto your computer (only one), and will not be able to access it from the internet if you need to later.



Obviously it makes more sense to use Google Apps service. But you may have a specific reason to use your own hosts email server. You will need to sign up at www.google.com/a and follow the instructions. You may need to configure some

settings in your cPanel called MX Records. If you follow the directions given by Google Apps, you will be able to make the changes no problem.

Using Email

Now that you are set up with your very own branded email, it's time to let everyone know that you've changed email addresses, and begin using it during all your correspondence.

On Professionalism and Writing Well.

It's important to your business and entire brand that you use your email in the most professional manner possible. In addition to the rules of [Netiquette](#) discussed earlier, poor spelling and grammar, while insignificant to some, can leave a lasting impression on potential clients.

[Here are some books, in the resources section, to read for improving your writing skills.](#)

One of the books I recommend, *Elements of Style*, I read about eighteen years ago and it still sits next to my Thesaurus right next to my computer. It's a very quick read and it will point out many of the common misuses of English that many people tend not to catch such as "there, they're and their." It also points out the many grammatical errors that make the difference between being taken as an intellectual, or ...the opposite of that. The other books can take your skill of writing to levels that you would never have imagined. A great deal of our business is centered on writing: emails, invoices, proposals, blog posts, bios, website content, marketing pieces, etc. If you can become proficient in solid writing skills you will have a tremendous advantage over those that resist.

What Is Email Great For?

Email is great for having a written record of information, scheduling, first contacts, keeping people up to date with new information (see [Email Newsletters](#) later in this chapter).

What Is Email Not Great For?

Email is not the best for making a connection with a potential client, or working out an issue or complaint with client. In these instances I like to have the personal touch of a phone conversation or a sit-down meeting with the person.

Email Signatures

Make sure that you provided a well-written signature for your emails. Most email programs will give you the ability to save the signature and have it automatically display for every email you create.

Here is an example of a simple and effective signature:

John Doe

John Doe Photography

123.456.7891

www.johndoephotography.com

Email Lists and Newsletters

Email lists can become an invaluable source of targeted people to which to market. In fact, you can start gathering subscribers even before you have your website up and running. What good is having a website if you have no one to send to it anyway? The quickest way to get your name out there is through your friends and family. Think of building your empire from the communities that you are already apart of.

A popular company, and one that I use, is Mail Chimp. You can build an email list up to 2,000 for free. You will have to pay a monthly plan once you exceed that amount. Other companies are AWeber, iContact and Constant Contact. If you do a search for "email list management" you will be able to find other competing companies.

Opting In

In accordance with the CAN-SPAM Act, your subscribers *must* first opt in to receiving emails from you. You want to treat your prospects with the same respect that you would expect. We all don't like it when we get emails that we didn't ask for.

I highly encourage reading [Permission Marketing by Seth Godin](#). You will learn great methods for keeping your subscribers interested in what you have to say, and maximizing the potential for sales.

Figure 1: Mail Chimp



Avoid Purchasing Email Addresses!

So, how do you get your friends and family to opt in? Well, you can send them a personal email asking them if they would like to subscribe to your newsletter. Here's an example:

Hi All,

As some of you know, I am in the process of building my photography business, and I'm getting the word out there right now. I'd love it if you joined my email newsletter so I can keep you up to date with how things are progressing. I'll be offering photography tips that you can use in your personal photography as well.

Here's the link to subscribe www.your-link-to-opt-in.com

Thanks,

The Greatest Photographer Ever

Not everyone will join, but that's okay. Think of marketing as a slow but benefitting process. Have patience, focus on it, and you'll start to get more and more subscribers.

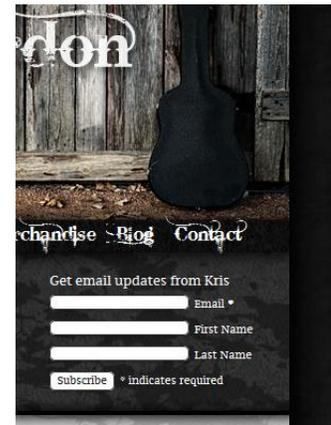
Obtain Subscribers from Your Website Once It's Up

Your next step will be to put a form on your website that allows people to subscribe directly from your website. Most email list management websites have code snippets that you can put on your websites

Make it easy for the visitors to your website to subscribe while they are viewing your site. Your subscription form should be one of your "Calls To Actions" and placed prominently on every page, and if you can at the end of your blog posts so people can see it every time they read one of your posts.

Writing Your Email Newsletters

Your emails are about marketing and promoting yourself, but you want to do it in a way in which people *want* to receive the information you send out. So what you write in your emails should be compelling and provide value, while avoiding having "sales pitch" written all over them.



E-Mail Newsletter Tips

Do:

- Send on a regular schedule. If you have a lot to say and share send monthly, if not think quarterly.
- Provide valuable information for your subscribers:
 - Photo tips.
 - Consumer level camera reviews.
 - Downloadable photos for screensavers/desktops.
 - Some idea of your own that has you stand out from the competition.
- Be personable and share personal things.
- Have specials that you are offering really be special and relevant to the people that are subscribed.

Don't:

- Don't write emails just to sell something (think about building relationships instead).
- Don't rush an email to "just get something out." Everyone makes typos and grammatical errors, so have someone proofread it first.

Monitoring Your Subscriber Statistics

After you send your emails, you'll want to keep an eye on your statistics. Your statistics can tell you a lot about how well your emails are doing. Things to note for each are:

- Opened Emails
- Ignored Emails
- Clicks to a link in your email (Maybe to your own website or something you shared).
- Number of people that unsubscribed

From these statistics you can determine whether or not you are doing a good job engaging your subscribers. If you start to get a number of people unsubscribing or not reading your emails, you may not be writing and sharing compelling emails, and as such should look at the ways you could improve. On the flip side if you see people sharing your emails and more subscribers joining, you did something well, and you should continue along those lines.

Your First Website

Well, before that, a word about Facebook Pages

Your first website doesn't actually have to be a website...

There is a free, and very effective way display your photos, engage your audience and to start garnering business without a website. And that is through the use of a [Facebook Business Page](#). This could be a viable alternative until you're ready to take on the expense and time requirements of a full website.

OK, Now For Your First Real, Real Website

So you have your domain. Check!

You have your hosting account. Check!

And you have some photos to share. Check!

Alright it's time to work on getting your website up and going. I recommend using WordPress to "run" your website.

What Is Wordpress, and Why Should You Use It?

WordPress is what's called a Content Management System, (or CMS). Don't let that trip you up, I'll explain. Everything you put on your website is a piece of content, whether it is a picture, the text that makes up your about page or blog posts, etc. Before WordPress and other CMS's you would have had to know how to edit HTML files, make sure they all linked to your other pages, and make sure you weren't missing photos, text, or graphics.

WordPress lets you focus on what's important—your photos, pages and blog posts.

Not just a Blog

WordPress is often thought of as "just a blog," but it can actually be quite a robust website.

Here is a screen shot of the main page of my personal website built entirely with WordPress at <http://williambay.com>. As you can see my blog is merely another page in the menu.

[weddings](#) [portraits](#) [fine art](#) [blog](#) [rates](#) [workshops](#) [about](#) [connect](#)



william bay photographic arts

san diego wedding photography, family photojournalism and fine art portraiture.



about william bay

william bay is one of san diego's most unique and creative wedding photographers. since age 14, fine art photography has been a lifelong passion and love.

categories

- [adventure & travel](#)
- [bridal photography](#)
- [engagement photography](#)
- [family photography](#)
- [fine art photography](#)
- [for photographers](#)

archives

- [2011 \(9\)](#)
- [may \(2\)](#)
- [april \(3\)](#)
- [march \(1\)](#)
- [january \(3\)](#)
- [2010 \(15\)](#)

recent posts

- [20 years ago](#)
- [tamara's fine art portraits](#)
- [gloria and her music box](#)
- [tamara's beach portrait session at torrey pines](#)
- [not your typical sunset](#)

Here is my blog. (Note the branding elements and overall feel is the same as the homepage, shown previously. We'll discuss consistency and user experiences later).

weddings portraits fine art blog rates workshops about connect



william bay photographic arts
san diego wedding photography, family photojournalism and fine art portraiture.

may 25, 2011
20 years ago

with both my favorite bands every [pearl jam](#) and [dave matthews band](#) celebrating their twenty year anniversaries, it recently dawned on my thick skull that i too am experiencing a twenty year mark of my own, two actually.

no... nothing as noble as sobriety, i happily drink like a fish. nor abstaining from red meat, i do love carne asada burritos.

no, none of that. this year, i celebrate 20 years of both photography and surfing.

i love surfing. i try to paddle out every day. but i'll focus on the photography here today.

it's fitting that in my 20th year [i make the move back to the medium of film](#), the same substrate that filled me with such wonder and desire for adventure back in my gremmie days as a freshman in high school.

as part of the process of moving back to film, i came across my old box of negs from back then which include a lot of images from friends at mar vista high school in



The WordPress You Want

There are two "versions" of WordPress, and you'll need to understand the difference before starting out.

WordPress.com

Is **not** the one you want. It is a free, hosted account, which will leave you with a <http://yourname.wordpress.com> address. This will negatively affect the SEO strength of your website. (They have an option of using your own domain, however it only masks the yourname.wordpress.com address and is still not optimal).

WordPress.org

Is the one you want. It's free too. But you have to download and install it on your own hosting server. With an FTP program, a little know-how and some following of instructions you can install it on your server in about five minutes.

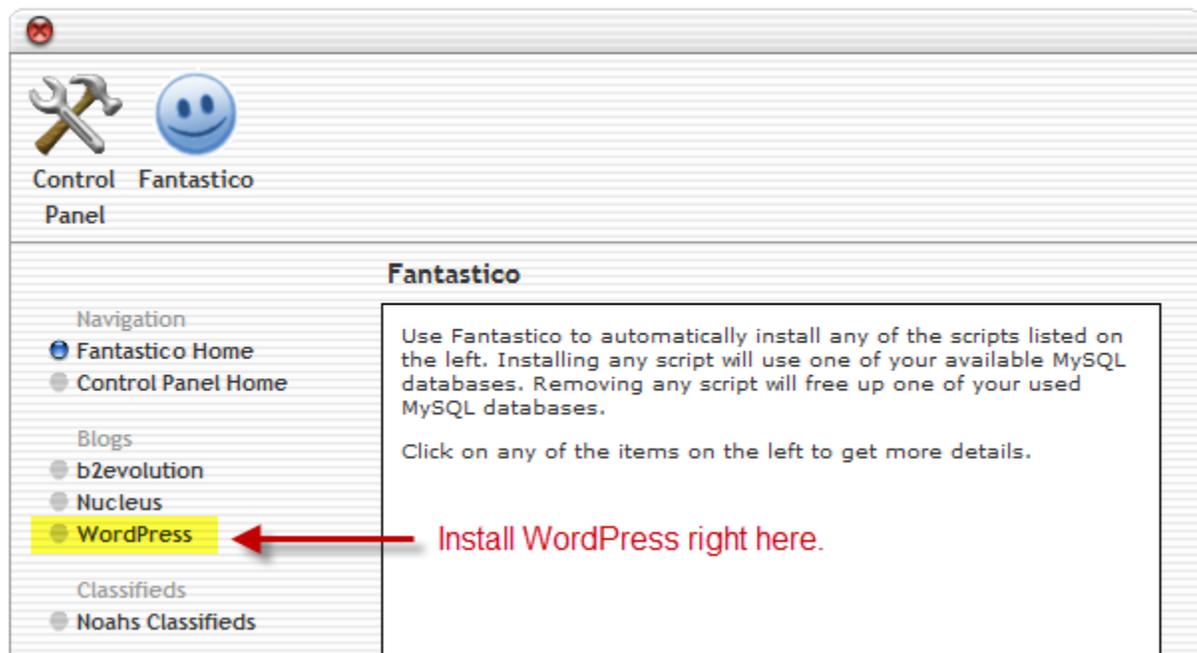
But wait...

You don't even have to download it... You can install it easily from your cPanel that you have access to from your hosting account, with just a couple clicks **in less than one minute**.

In your cPanel, look for the Software/Services area and find either WordPress or Fantastico (or Softaculous with some host companies).

Fantastico is an easy interface to install WordPress (and other services). All you have to do is click on Fantastico and it will run you through an installation of WordPress.

Here is what the interface looks like:



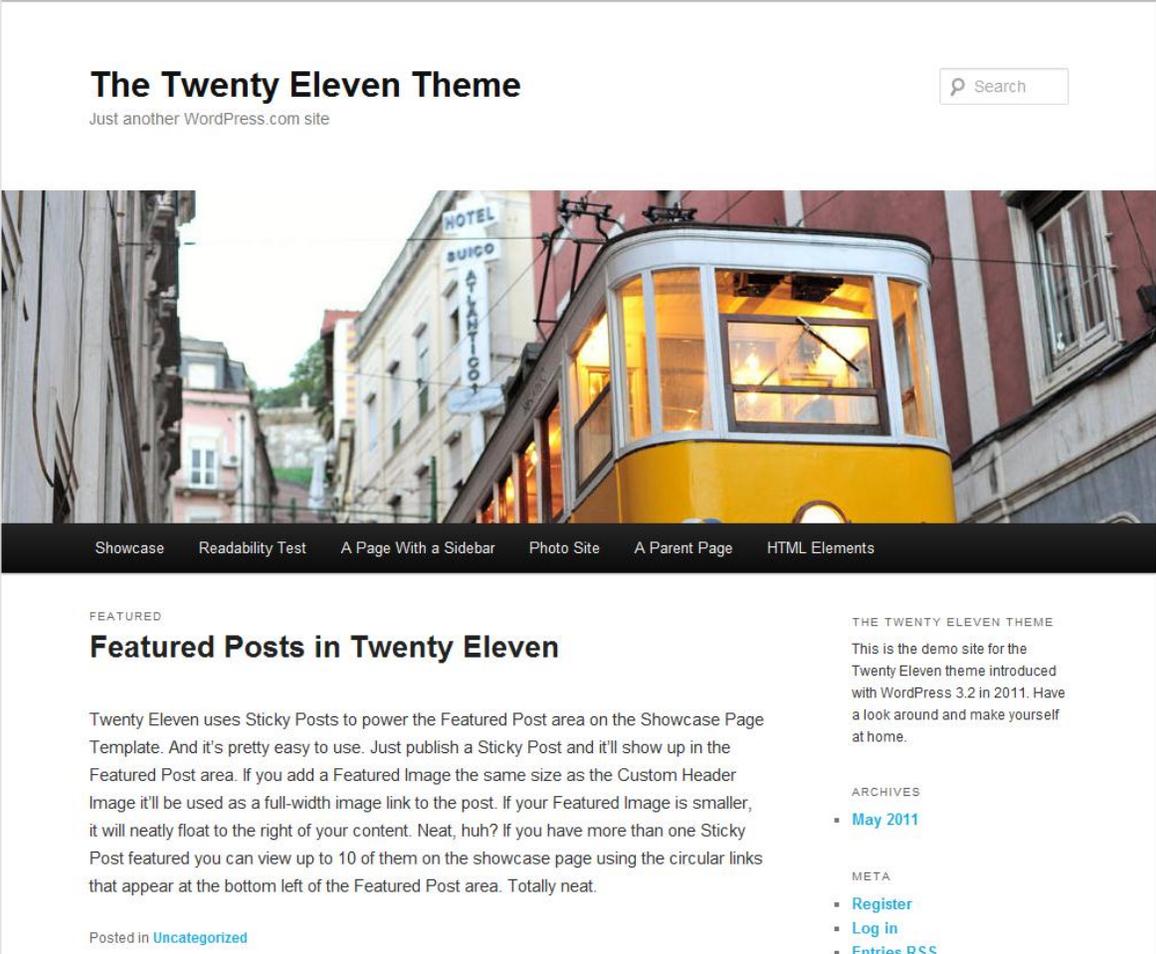
Follow the directions and you will be up and running with a website in about 59 seconds.

Design in WordPress

One of the comments I often hear is that you can't design anything on WordPress. And that is true. WordPress is meant to manage your content, while it does have some appearance options, it doesn't have a robust ability to "design" a site. That is where "Themes" come in.

WordPress Themes

Themes are what control the look and feel of your site or blog. They are made up of PHP (Fancy HTML) and CSS files. Some Themes have options to change certain design features however.



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Twenty Eleven WordPress theme. At the top, the title "The Twenty Eleven Theme" is displayed in a large, bold, black font. Below the title is the subtitle "Just another WordPress.com site". To the right of the title is a search box with a magnifying glass icon and the text "Search". Below the title and subtitle is a large, high-quality photograph of a yellow tram on a city street. Below the photograph is a dark navigation bar with white text links: "Showcase", "Readability Test", "A Page With a Sidebar", "Photo Site", "A Parent Page", and "HTML Elements". Below the navigation bar is a "FEATURED" section with the title "Featured Posts in Twenty Eleven". The text in this section describes how the theme uses Sticky Posts for featured content. To the right of the featured section is a sidebar with three sections: "THE TWENTY ELEVEN THEME" (a short description of the theme), "ARCHIVES" (a link to "May 2011"), and "META" (links for "Register", "Log in", and "Entries RSS").

Where To Get Themes

It's not the best idea to use Google to search for themes. The themes that you find there *may* not be coming from a reputable source and have been known to contain scripts that leave your site vulnerable to hacking. If you are looking for a free theme, you can look in the WordPress Theme Repository.

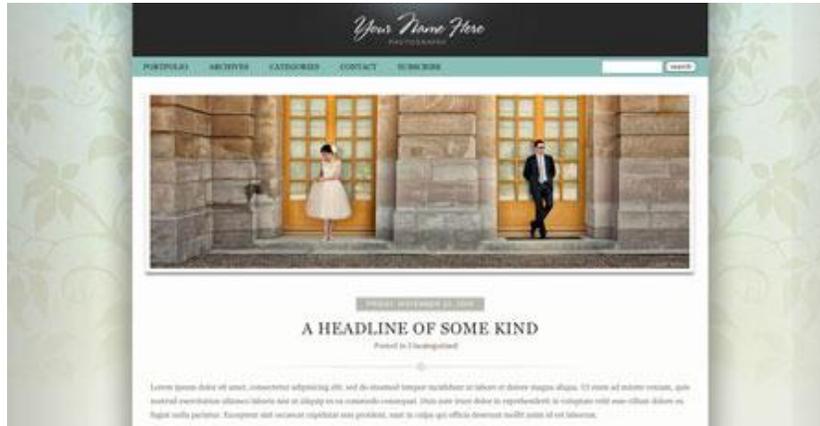
Premium Themes

There are reputable companies that sell themes. They offer more options to extend the power of WordPress making it easier for the average user, who is not familiar with HTML and CSS, to make design changes to their site.

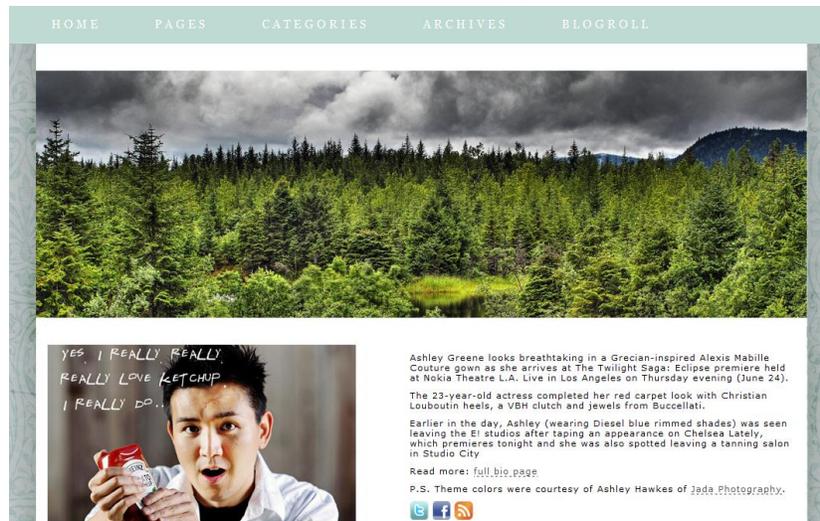
Premium themes can be anywhere from \$20-200 and sometimes more.

See a great review of the themes below by The Modern Tog of [What Professional Blog Theme is Best](#).

[ProPhoto](#) \$200



[Tofurious Theme](#) \$50



Customizing Your Themes

Sometimes your theme may not have everything in terms of customization, and it will require some HTML and CSS modifications to your theme. If you are comfortable with HTML and CSS, or you want to give it a try, you can access your theme files in the appearance section in WordPress. Always work with backup files. You never know when you might break something.

Files You Will Encounter

HTML: HyperText Markup Language is the structure and content for a website. It's what tells the browser to display things like the header, footer, body, sidebar, etc.. It's also where your content is located. Things like the words and pictures of your blog posts take residence here.

CSS: Cascading Style Sheets is where the design elements are styled. Design graphics (created in Photoshop, Illustrator or Firefox) are positioned where you want them, and the headers, footers, sidebars, are sized and placed, and typographic elements are controlled.

PHP: Hypertext Preprocessor is essentially a "bossy HTML." It is very similar to HTML, but has sends instructions to a database. WordPress theme files are composed of PHP files.

Learning the Language of Web Design

HTML, CSS and PHP are languages, and like any language they require a bit of practice to understand and become adept at. Here are some resources to learn:

- <http://lynda.com> (Paid resource where you can watch videos on different programs, and coding languages).
- <http://www.w3schools.com/> (Free resource for learning the ins and outs of HTML and CSS. More of a reference than tutorial site.)
- <http://cssgarden.com> (A site devoted to showing the power of CSS. You can see how the same HTML page is affected using different CSS files.)

Thoughts on Design

When designing a site, I often have clients whose photographic style is completely unique from the previous client. However, as a bride or a mom is looking through many websites and photos, at some point it becomes hard to remember based on photos alone. So your website and branding should be memorable.

When designing a website, I ask myself and my clients the following:

Purpose: What is the website's purpose? What do you want people to do when they get there? Will you have clearly defined "call to actions" for your visitors to contact you, book you, friend you on Facebook? Where will they be placed? How important are the call to actions?

Usability and Experience: Is your website easy to navigate? Can your visitors get to the page they need within a couple clicks? Are they often forced to use the search function on your site to find something? Are the fonts easy to read?

Along with usability comes User Experience. What is the experience a user has? Does the site take too long to load? Is it in Flash (the antithesis of usability)? When you click to view your portfolio does it pop open in another annoying window?

Branding: How will visitors to your website know that they're on your website? Will your logo set you apart from all the other sites that potential customers are reviewing?

Visual Design: How will you make use of visual concepts like composition, balance, color, typography, etc.? Do you want a delicate feel that would appeal to a new mother? Or does your style of photography lend itself to a bolder palate? Do you want the site to compliment your photography? You may want the design to completely disappear and have a minimalist approach, focusing more attention on your photos.

Design Philosophy

The order of what I wrote above is part of my own personal design philosophy. My opinions are similar to what Louis Sullivan, a famous, early American Architect, used to say: "Form Follows Function." The visual design comes as a result of the purpose of the site. This of course is my own view. You will have to come up with your own philosophy,

Using WordPress

Time to log-in to the WordPress Admin area, or “back-end.” It’s called the “back-end” because it’s behind the scenes and controls the “front-end” which is what your visitors see when they come to your website.

By default your login url will be something like www.your-domain.com/wp-admin. You will be presented with a page similar to this (obviously you won’t see Flaunt Your Site’s logo).

The image shows a login form for a WordPress site named "Flaunt Your Site". The logo is a yellow sunburst with the text "Flaunt Your Site" in a stylized font. Below the logo is a white box containing the login fields: a "Username" input field, a "Password" input field, a "Remember Me" checkbox, and a blue "Log In" button.

Fill in your Username and Password, that you created while setting WordPress up in Fantastico and you’ll be taken into the Admin area, which looks something like this:

The image shows the WordPress Admin Dashboard for "Flaunt Your Site". The dashboard is divided into several sections:

- Left Sidebar:** Contains navigation links for Home, Updates (1), Akismet Stats, Woopra Analytics, Posts, Media, Links, Pages (All Pages, Add New), Comments, Questions, Mini-Features, Slides, Portfolio, and Feedback.
- Top Bar:** Shows the site name "Flaunt Your Site" and the user name "Howdy, William Bay".
- Dashboard Header:** Includes "Screen Options" and "Help" buttons.
- Right Now:** A summary table showing 8 Posts, 19 Pages, 3 Categories, 4 Tags, 8 Comments, 5 Approved, 0 Pending, and 3 Spam.
- QuickPress:** A form for creating a new post, including fields for Title, Content, and Tags, with "Save Draft", "Reset", and "Publish" buttons.
- WordPress Blog:** A section for the latest WordPress news, featuring a post about "Software Freedom Day + Hackathon" from September 15, 2011.
- Recent Comments:** A section showing a recent comment from "bahia0019" on a post titled "Pin It On Pinterest" by "CyberMaster".

The majority of the time you will be only using Posts and Pages. Since this is not meant to be an exhaustive tutorial we will focus on just creating and editing a post. The methods of editing are the same for pages as well.

First, the Difference Between Posts and Pages

Pages are static pages that don't change too often. These would be things like About, Pricing, FAQ, Products, etc.

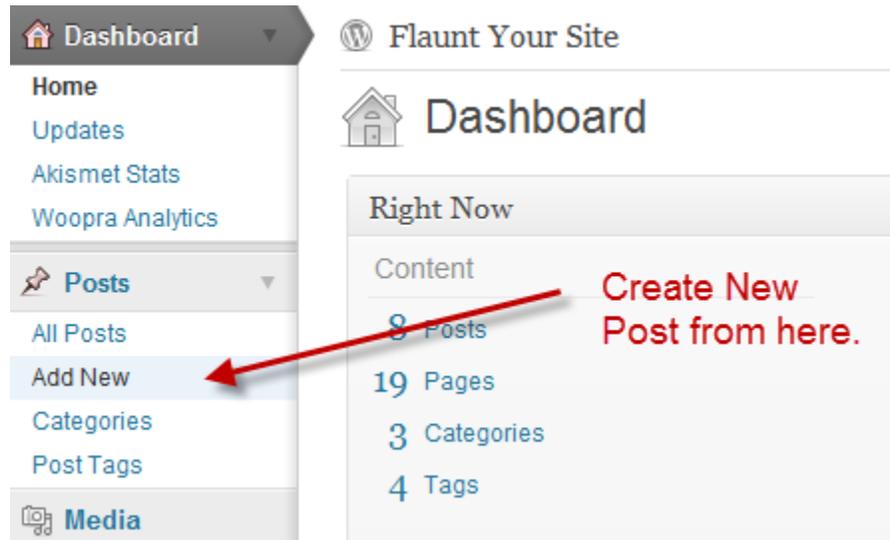
Posts on the other hand are dated and "fall in reverse" chronological order. These are what make up a blog, where the last post you wrote is on top, and the one before is underneath that. Posts can have Categories, and Tags assigned to them allowing classification, and navigation.

- Categories would classify types of photography (i.e. Wedding Photography, Engagement Photography, Family Photography).
- Tags would classify things about the photography or photography session (i.e. beach photo session, Hyatt reception hall, etc).

Categories and Tags will help your SEO by providing content for search engines like Google to crawl through.

Create a New Post

In the Admin Dashboard, find Posts in the menu on the left. Click Add New.



Create a New Blog post:

The screenshot shows the WordPress 'Add New Post' interface. On the left is a sidebar menu with categories like Dashboard, Posts, Media, Links, Pages, Comments, Questions, Mini-Features, Slides, Portfolio, Feedback, Swatch, Tweet&Get it!, Appearance, Plugins, Users, Tools, Settings, Contact, Testimonials, Header Images, WP Link Directory, and SEO. The main content area is titled 'Add New Post' and includes a title field (1), a rich text editor with a toolbar (2), a path field, and a word count (0). On the right, there are several panels: 'Publish' with 'Save Draft', 'Preview', 'Status: Draft Edit', 'Visibility: Public Edit', 'Publish immediately Edit', 'Tweet Button options', 'Move to Trash', and a 'Publish' button (6); 'Categories' with 'All Categories' and 'Most Used' tabs, a list of categories (3), and a '+ Add New Category' link; 'Post Tags' with an 'Add' button (4), 'Separate tags with commas', and a 'Choose from the most used tags' link; and 'Featured Image' with a 'Set featured image' button (5).

1. This is where your Post Title (or Page Title) will be input.
2. Write your blog post here. You also put your photos in here as well.
3. Categories allow you to group a number of posts together in archives that make it easy for your readers to read only the posts they want to read.
4. Tags, are similar to categories, but on a finer scale. Think of them as keywords.
5. Featured Image is one photo you select that represents your entire post. On some themes the Featured Image displays a thumbnail image in Category and Date-based Archives, etc.
6. Publish. This is the button that you press when you're all done and want to commit your changes.

There is obviously quite more to WordPress than just publishing blog posts, but you'll get the hang of things the more you use it.

Blogging

Blogging is merely a way to publish news, events, or other forms of information in an easy format to share and read. It has become popular because it's a free method of publishing, available to a huge audience, and fosters a sense of community with readers and people who leave comments.

What Are Blogs Good For?

- Publishing informative or unique content. (Your photos are unique content.)
- Creating a community, or following, of people interested in your photography
- Showing your work over time.
- While portfolios often show your absolute best work, blogs allow clients to see how full weddings or sessions look. This allows them to more closely experience what you will deliver to them.

Example Photographer Bloggers:

I suggest having a look at these blogs and see how the photographers present their photos, connect with their readers, and how often they post. By reading, you'll develop a sense for what is working for others and form your own blogging strategy.

Weddings:

- Ryan Brenizer <http://ryanbrenizer.com>
- Jasmine Star <http://jasmine-star.com/>

Kids and Babies:

- Rachel Devine <http://www.racheldevine.com/blog/>
- Baby Bean <http://www.babybeanportraits.com/blog/>

Seniors:

- Michelle Moore <http://www.michellemooreblog.com/>
- Jonathan Betz <http://jonathanbetz.com/blog/>

Family:

- Tara Whitney <http://tarawhitney.com/justbeblogged/>
- Jenny J <http://www.photojj.com/blog>

Subscribing to Blogs

Not only are blogs a very easy platform to publish from, but they're also an easy medium in which to keep track of in form of subscribing. Each blog publishes what is called an RSS (Real Simple Syndication) feed. When you see an that orange icon on the site it means you can click it to subscribe using something like Google Reader (<http://www.google.com/reader>).

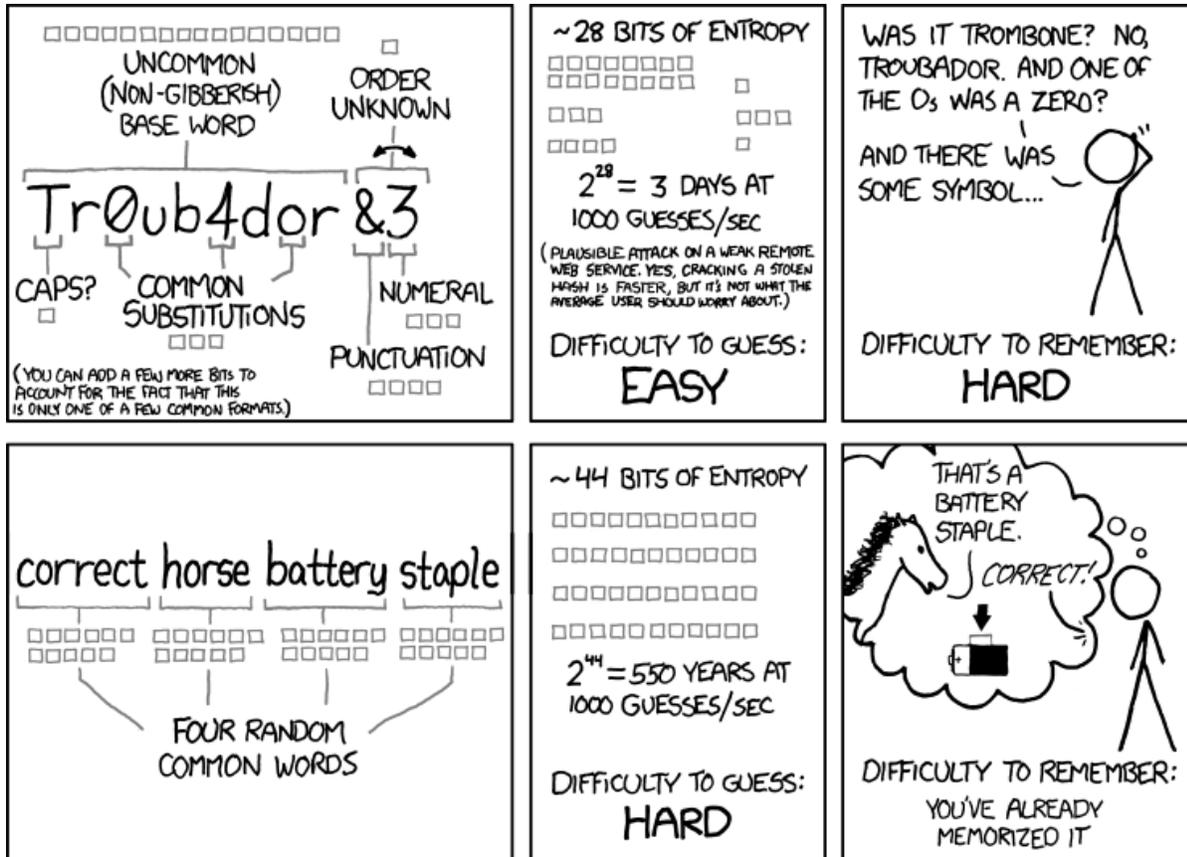


Protecting Your Site

Hack attacks and data loss, while rare, do happen. It's important to protect yourself from these types of dangers.

The best strategy, of course, is prevention. Using strong passwords is the key to preventing unwanted hacking on your site. The comic below from <http://xkcd.com> demonstrates a great method for creating your passwords.

Passwords



THROUGH 20 YEARS OF EFFORT, WE'VE SUCCESSFULLY TRAINED EVERYONE TO USE PASSWORDS THAT ARE HARD FOR HUMANS TO REMEMBER, BUT EASY FOR COMPUTERS TO GUESS.

Managing Your Passwords

Soon enough, you'll start to collect multiple accounts or points of login on the internet and to maintain the most security, it's best to have one password for each site or account. That can add up to a lot of passwords, so there are two great password managers out there:

1. Keychain for Macintosh (comes free with OS-X)
2. Password Keychain for Windows (free at <http://download.com>)

Backups

Just as you should be backing up your photos on your computer for safe storage, you will also want to make sure that you have backups in the unlikely event that a meteor falls on your hosting company's server farm.

There are two things you'll need to backup.

1. Files (which consist of all your uploads like photos, CSS and PHP files.)
2. Database (which controls all the content you write and publish, as well as the settings for your website).

You can easily do an occasional manual backup of your files using FTP, but the it will require getting comfortable with the database area in your cPanel, or using a plugin called WP-DB-Backup. Once configured, this plugin will email you your database on whatever schedule you like. I have mine set up for once a week.

Backup Buddy

Backup Buddy is an easy solution to back up both your files and database, and is easy to restore in the event of a crash, or even migrate from one host to another. It is a paid plugin, but the one time purchase of \$75 is well worth the peace of mind for the simplicity and the assurance it provides. [Click here to find out more and purchase.](#)

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

There are two forms of online marketing that are often confused with one another and it's important to know the difference.

S.E.O. (Search Engine Optimization) is the process of improving certain items on your website to better perform in Google's organic search results.

P.P.C. (Pay Per Click) Also known as S.E.M. or Search Engine Marketing. This area focuses on using Google AdWords advertising service in which you pay a certain amount for each time.

Below you can see how the different results are formatted when performing a search.

Adwords

- [Wedding Photographer - All inclusive. No hidden charges](#)
www.taliastudio.com
Engagements \$300 Weddings \$1700
- [Jennifer Dery Weddings - San Diego Wedding Photography](#)
www.jenniferdery.com
Contemporary Wedding Photographer
- [Unveiled Wedding Photo | unveiledwedding.com](#)
www.unveiledwedding.com
Unparalleled Imagery, Unparalleled value for 10 yrs. See for yourself.

Local

Places for [wedding photographers near San Diego, CA](#)

- [A Beautiful Light Photography - San Diego wedding photographer](#)
www.abeautifullightphotography.com - 525 B Street, Suite 1500, San Diego - (858) 780-2889
- [San Diego Wedding Photography](#) - Place page
melissakoehlerphotography.com - 1542 Bridgeview Drive, San Diego - (619) 694-8319
- [STUDIO castillero: San Diego Wedding Photographers](#) - ★★★★★ 5 Google reviews
blog.studiocastillero.com - 2230 Albatross Street, San Diego - (760) 710-1596
- [RHS Photo Inc.](#) - 2 Google reviews
www.richardsantini.com - 1322 Dale Street, San Diego - (619) 252-2553
- [San Diego Wedding Photographers](#) - 4 Google reviews
www.bestsandiegowedding.com - 110 A Street, San Diego, CA - (805) 440-7212
- [Alan Smith Photography](#) - 2 Google reviews
www.alansphoto.net - 4107 Mississippi Street, San Diego - (619) 249-8140
- [Elope San Diego](#) - 3 Google reviews
www.elopesandiego.com - 1965 2nd Avenue, San Diego - (858) 945-8341

Organic

- [San Diego Wedding Photographers](#)
www.ellegphotography.com/ - Cached
We are one of the top San Diego wedding photographers, based near La Jolla, CA. If you are planning a wedding and looking for a professional photographer in ...
- [San Diego Wedding Photography | Top Wedding Photographers...](#)
www.jenniferdery.com/ - Cached
Best Southern California Wedding Photographer Jennifer Dery based in San Diego. Her work is simply elegant. Considered one of the nation's top Destination ...

Adwords

Wedding Photography
\$995
www.thepros.com/SanDiego
1 (855) 282 2458
The Knot "Best of Weddings" Pick.
Full Day, You Keep the Negatives.

Meurer Image Photography
www.meurenimage.com
Artistic, Candid, Timeless
Wedding Photography San Diego, SCal

Wedding Photography
www.studiocarre.com
artistic + fresh photography
in San Diego and beyond. . .
 S. Cedros Ave., Solana Beach
(619) 670-6183

Map

The Pros and Cons of SEO and PPC

SEO Pros

- Builds equity in your website (Your efforts are long lasting, and your website builds strength.)
- Cost decreases over time. (If you pay for SEO services, the cost will go down significantly after your initial investment.)
- Results show up in the Organic search area (Organic search receives approximately 75% of Google traffic compared to the 25% of PPC traffic.)

SEO Cons

- SEO is infinitely more complex with somewhere between 200-300 ranking factors, each with varying degrees of significance.
- Takes time to become established (can take six months to a year to see first page results).

PPC Pros

- Immediate, targeted traffic to your website.
- Adaptability (Campaigns can shift focus on a dime).
- Ability to experiment (Fine tuning of keywords, and landing pages are easier to test, resulting ultimately in better designed pages).

PPC Cons

- Once your campaign ends , so does the traffic.
- Costs tend to rise slightly as competition drives the cost per click upwards.

The Final Word SEO vs PPC

Sometimes the two are looked at as that one is better than the other. However, I think a combined effort with both SEO and PPC is a valuable combination. Use PPC as a means to obtain immediate traffic and potential business as well as the opportunity to fine tune how your website pages should capture customers. Slowly build your SEO from the start to build equity for the future. Instead of thinking of them as one or the other, think about using both for what they're great at.

Basics of SEO

While we won't get into the nitty gritty, I feel it's important to know a little bit about DIY SEO. There are two key components to SEO they are On-Site, and Off-Site.

On-Site Factors

- Having an easily crawl-able website using HTML as opposed to Flash.
- Utilizing keywords naturally in the text on your site.
- Using keywords in your Title Tag
- Creating a very easy to navigate site. This will help the Google Bot, and other search engine "spiders" to crawl through your site and index the pages you have.
- Producing good content that people will want to read and look at.

Off-Site Factors

- Obtaining links back to your website. (Links are valuable because it's one of the best signals to Google that a site is popular and worthy of turning up in search results).
 - Links from popular websites are more powerful.
 - More links are usually better.

- Having some keywords in the links can be make a good link great.
- Sharing your website and blog posts on Facebook, Twitter and Google+ can have a viral effect if it is shared by all your friends, and their friend's friends.
- Off-site factors also apply to Off-Internet sources. Your business cards, and other traditional sources of marketing, direct mailing, radio, TV, magazines, etc.

Local Search

Photographers, for the most part, offer their services to clients in their general area, and as you can see on the illustration above, the Local Search results often show up above the normal Organic Results.

Due to these influences, it has become important to focus on optimizing your Local Search profiles on Google, Yahoo and Bing. Some factors for optimizing Local Search are pretty easy, such as claiming your Places Profile on Google, and making sure that all the information is accurate and complete.

Google Analytics & Webmaster Tools

Analytics

www.google.com/analytics

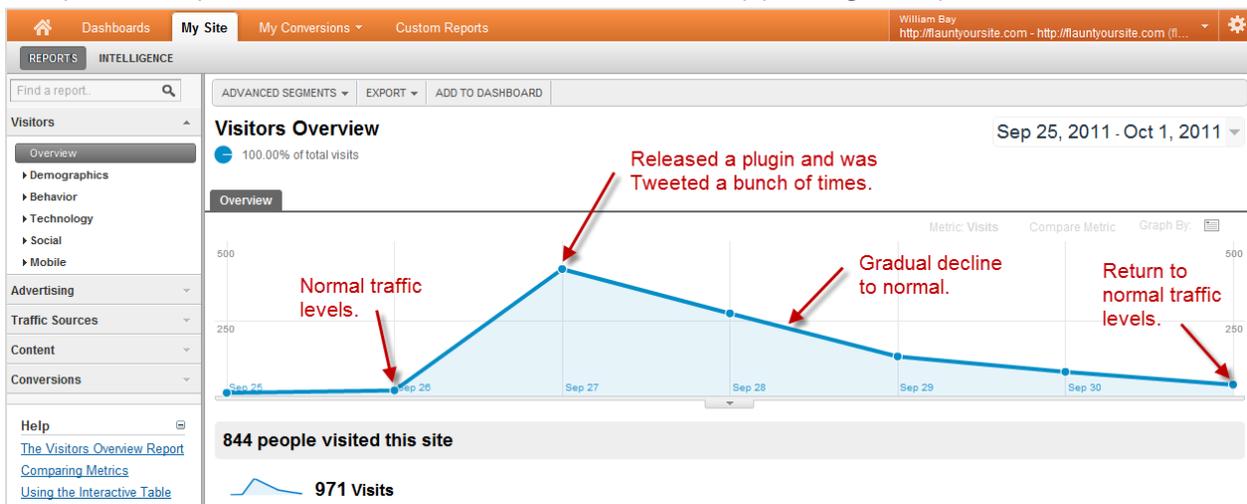
Part of the ownership of a website is knowing how effective it is in your overall marketing strategy. Using Google Analytics, you can track certain metrics to let you know just how effective your website is.

Metrics you'll want to keep an eye out for:

- Amount of visitors
 - If you receive no visitors at all, you will need to work on finding sources of traffic.
 - If you receive a lot of traffic but no inquiries, you might need to work on your Call to Actions.
- Traffic Sources
 - Where does your best traffic come from?
- Location
 - Do you have a large number of people who are visiting from outside the area you serve? You might need to focus on generating more local traffic.
- Content
 - What is the most popular content on your site?
 - Can you leverage those pages to get you more clients?

You can use Google Analytics to see trends like this, which depicts a traffic spike due to a plugin I released on Flaunt Your Site. Traffic spikes often drop back somewhere close to pre-spike level. The goal is always to convert that traffic into new clients.

Use your Analytics to see what kinds of trends are happening with your site.



Google Webmaster Tools

www.google.com/webmasters

Webmaster Tools is your way to communicate with Google about the “health” of your website. The tools available will tell you things like:

- How many pages from your website are indexed.
- Crawl errors.
- What keywords are being registered.
- What the most common search queries are for your site.
- What sites are linking to yours.
- Any suggestions Google has to improve your rankings.
- You can also submit SiteMaps here, which helps expedite the indexation process.

The dashboard for Google Webmaster Tools.

The screenshot shows the Google Webmaster Tools dashboard for the website williambayphotography.com. The dashboard is divided into several sections:

- Search queries:** A table showing the top search queries for the site. The data is as follows:

Query	Impressions	Clicks
paul caponigro	900	12
professional photographers	900	<10
professional photography	700	<10
william bay	200	12
fine art photography	200	<10
art portraits	200	<10
rembrandt lighting	200	<10
caponigro	150	<10
fine art portrait photography	150	<10
bridal photography	110	<10
- Crawl errors:** A list of errors found during the crawl. The data is as follows:

Error type	Count
In Sitemaps	7
Not found	135
Restricted by robots.txt	178
- Keywords:** A list of keywords that the site ranks for. The data is as follows:

Keyword	Significance
photography (9 variants)	High
wedding (2 variants)	Medium
art (2 variants)	Medium
william (2 variants)	Medium
portrait (3 variants)	Medium

You can sign up for both of these services with the Google Apps account you created earlier.

Social Marketing (Facebook, Twitter, Google +)

There seems to be a lot of hype and confusion as to what Social Marketing is. Social Marketing is simply marketing to your social networks. And social networks are just websites that allow you to connect with other users across the internet in a relatively easy way. Social sites have existed for a while. Some examples are:

- Yahoo Groups (community of communities)
- Yahoo Answers (community Q&A)
- Delicious (community bookmarking)
- Flickr (community photo sharing)
- Forums would also be early examples of social media.

We're going to focus on the three that will provide you with the potential for the greatest return on your time investment.

Facebook

Well, if you aren't on Facebook, you may be living under a rock. Here are some statistics about Facebook.

- Facebook has more than 750 million active users.
- 50% of all users log on to Facebook on any given day.
- Average user has 130 friends.
- People spend over 700 billion minutes per month on Facebook.



The power of Facebook comes not only from the sheer number of people on the site, but also the magnification of relationships that are available. Once you connect to another person, you find that you are connected to much more than that person.

As a photographer people will be able to share your photography with their friends. In turn, those friends can contact you when they are looking for a photographer.

A whole new possibility emerges as you post photos of your friends or clients and "tag" those people ("Tagging" is when you identify the people in the photograph, and it's connected directly to their profile). When they are tagged, their friends get notified of the new photo of them, and can look at it and comment on it. It creates an instant synergistic occurrence that you are the center of because you took the photograph and shared it. Stick your logo on the photo, and make sure you include your website address in the description.

Now think about the opportunities this provides for you. If you look at the photo from a wedding I photographed, you can see the number of comments that others have left. This is viewable by the friends of my clients, which creates the possibility for hundreds or perhaps thousands of potential customers. The more people see your work, the greater the chances are that you will get hired.



Like **Comment** **Tag Photo**

William 'Bahia' Bay
To see more wedding and portrait photography come to <http://willambayphotography.com/> — with [redacted], [redacted], and [redacted]
Like · Comment · Share · Edit · November 12, 2008

Album: William Bay Wedding Photography · 12 of 57
Shared with: Public (edit)

Tag This Photo
Add Location
Download
Make Profile Picture
Delete This Photo

Jump and Rock
Book your next birthday party at Jump & Rock, Eastlakes newest bouncy house venue with a state of the art club flair!
Like · 257 people like this. Sponsored

[redacted] This photo is just to hysterical....Takin' care of business...owww!
January 13, 2010 at 11:59am · Like

[redacted] Friends with Donna Koren and 1 other
That is a classic photo. I think it should go b/w and when she is about 35 years old give it as a gift at a white elephant christmas party.
January 13, 2010 at 12:01pm · Like

[redacted] And Jenny you just look so sweet and innocent here...where are your little devil horns...ohhhh I think I do see them poking up from your head. Boy we sure had some wild times girl! Luv to u!
January 13, 2010 at 12:24pm · Like

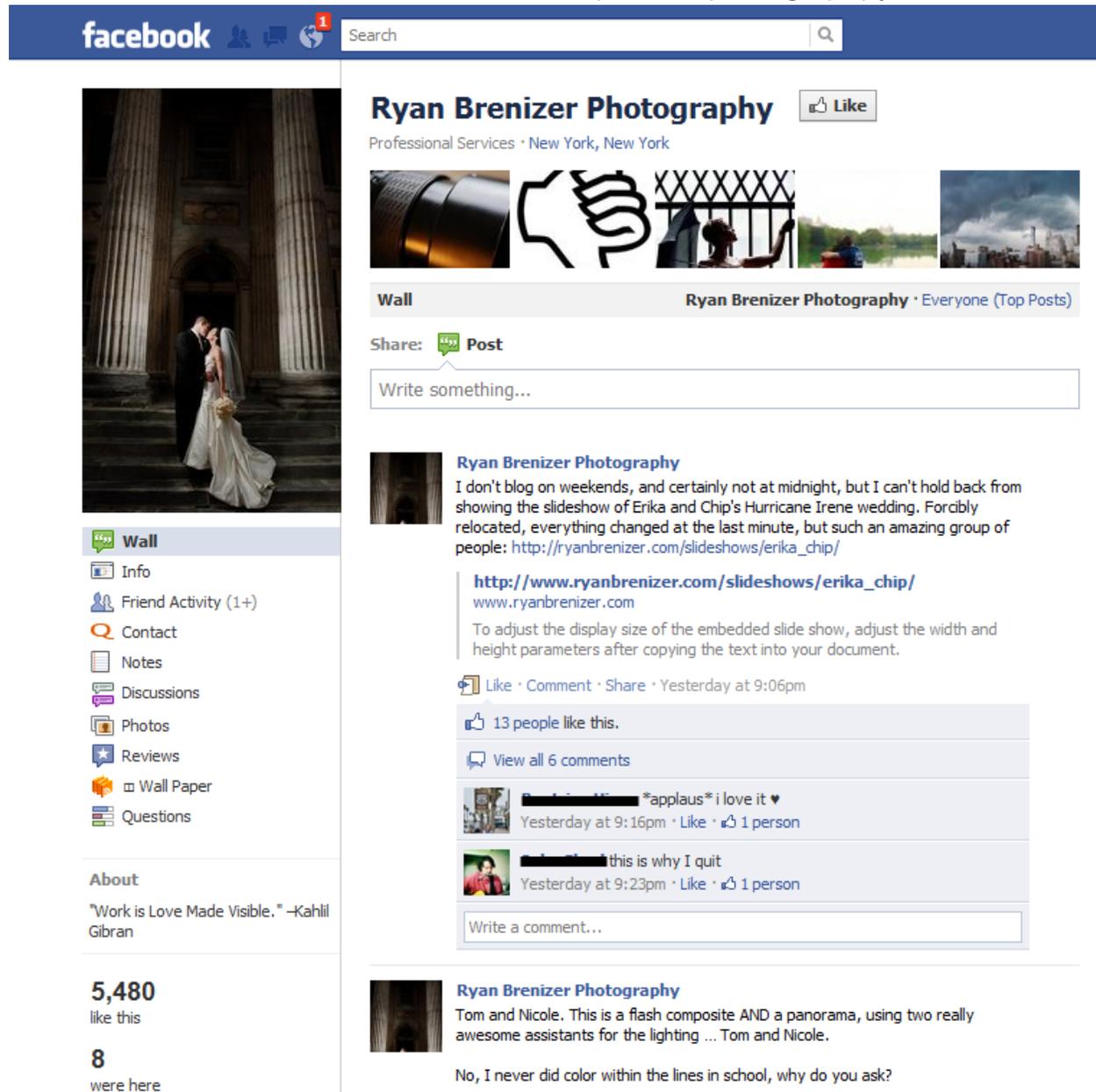
[redacted] 2 mutual friends
Donna... u r too funny :) Line those tequilla shots up lady.. haha!!! GREAT memories & would love to catch up one day!
January 14, 2010 at 11:33am · Like

[redacted] same here Jenny 8675309eine! Jenny, Jenny....
January 14, 2010 at 11:37am · Like

Facebook Fan Pages

Fan Pages are a unique approach to having a business presence on Facebook. They are like websites on Facebook specially designed for your business. They allow you to have more than 5,000 friends as you can see on New York Photographer Ryan Brenizer's Fan Page.

Fan Pages also are public and searchable across Facebook so you can maintain your privacy on your personal profile, yet have everything you want to share be only on your Fan Page. Because it's searchable, people may find your services while doing a search on Facebook. It's not uncommon to receive inquiries for photography jobs.



The screenshot shows the Facebook interface for the fan page "Ryan Brenizer Photography". At the top, the Facebook logo and search bar are visible. The page header includes the name "Ryan Brenizer Photography" with a "Like" button and the location "Professional Services · New York, New York". Below the header is a banner image featuring a camera lens, a hand holding a camera, and various wedding photos. The main content area shows a post from the page with a text description, a link to a slideshow, and a comment section. On the left side, there is a navigation menu with options like "Wall", "Info", "Friend Activity", "Contact", "Notes", "Discussions", "Photos", "Reviews", "Wall Paper", and "Questions". At the bottom left, statistics show 5,480 likes and 8 people were here.

facebook Search

Ryan Brenizer Photography

Professional Services · New York, New York

Wall Ryan Brenizer Photography · Everyone (Top Posts)

Share: Post

Write something...

Ryan Brenizer Photography
I don't blog on weekends, and certainly not at midnight, but I can't hold back from showing the slideshow of Erika and Chip's Hurricane Irene wedding. Forcibly relocated, everything changed at the last minute, but such an amazing group of people: http://ryanbrenizer.com/slideshows/erika_chip/

http://www.ryanbrenizer.com/slideshows/erika_chip/
www.ryanbrenizer.com

To adjust the display size of the embedded slide show, adjust the width and height parameters after copying the text into your document.

Like · Comment · Share · Yesterday at 9:06pm

13 people like this.

View all 6 comments

[User] *applaus* i love it ♥
Yesterday at 9:16pm · Like · 1 person

[User] this is why I quit
Yesterday at 9:23pm · Like · 1 person

Write a comment...

Ryan Brenizer Photography
Tom and Nicole. This is a flash composite AND a panorama, using two really awesome assistants for the lighting ... Tom and Nicole.

No, I never did color within the lines in school, why do you ask?

Wall

- Info
- Friend Activity (1+)
- Contact
- Notes
- Discussions
- Photos
- Reviews
- Wall Paper
- Questions

About

"Work is Love Made Visible." -Kahlil Gibran

5,480
like this

8
were here

Advertising on Facebook

Another dimension of Facebook is the ability to advertise similarly to Google AdWords. What makes it incredibly potent is the capacity for an even finer demographic.

The information that Facebook obtains is detailed. Facebook users provide a lot of information about themselves when creating their profile. Here is some of what people can specify:

- Location
- Age
- Sex
- Relationship status
- Education levels
- Interests
- Unique Keywords in Profile

Based on this information a Maternity/Newborn Photographer that has a clientele of mostly Yoga moms, could create a new ad campaign that targets: Females, aged 25-35 in the San Diego area who are college grads, married, interested in yoga, and has used "pregnant" in her profile.

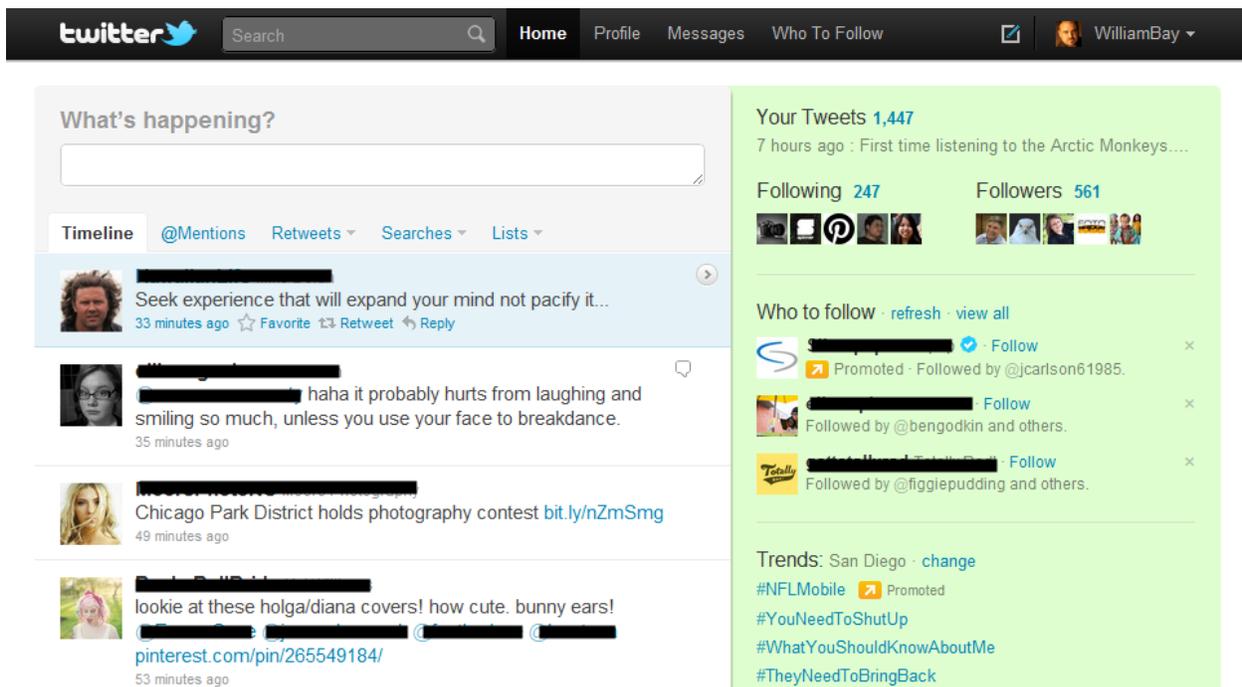
In the above example, the photographer would want to create a page on her website with some form of promotion to grab the potential customer's attention and have the ad point back to your website.

Always remember that your website will be your digital hub, and the key will be to getting people back to your website where you can convert them into customers.

Twitter

Techies like to call Twitter micro-blogging, but I like to think of it like Facebook, without all the bells and whistles. And while Facebook is closed, and only if you're friends with someone can you see their status, with Twitter, you can see anyone's status or information.

This is what Twitter's interface looks like.



Business Potential with Twitter

Unlike Facebook, there is no way to advertise on Twitter. And you are limited to posting short 144 character messages, or Tweets. However, the potential for creating connections and potential business relationships is strong.

I follow several well-known photographers, a couple actors and directors, influential SEO experts, as well as 10-time World Champion Surfer Kelly Slater. And I have sent messages to them as well. If you can win some interest and build your following, the odds of obtaining work can be quite good.

Using Twitter to search for prospective clients

Twitter has a built in search component which can be used to find users using certain words. If you use search to find people talking about "getting married" or "I'm pregnant" etc, you could contact those people with information about your services. See <http://flauntyourself.com/find-new-clients-using-tweetdeck/> for a video tutorial on how I use Twitter to search for potential clients.

Google+

Google+ is brand new to the social network game, but has potential for taking off. It has a number of kinks to work out, and how much will it be adopted compared to Facebook is still unknown, but the promise with Google+ comes to when those kinks are worked out and they begin advertising. At that point, Google+ will have an even greater handle on the demographic type of information that only Facebook has now.

The screenshot displays the Google+ web interface. At the top left is the Google+ logo. Below it is a user profile for 'William' with a profile picture. To the right of the profile is a 'Stream' section with a text input field 'Share what's new...' and icons for photo, video, link, and location. A post from a user (name redacted) at 1:01 AM is visible, featuring a small thumbnail and text: 'Sneak peek from tonight's wedding in Hutto, Texas! This is a "flash composite" a la + [redacted]'. The text continues: 'The 2 frames were lit using a single 580exII speedlight with a 50 degree grid to direct the light beam. This was my first real world use of the new Odin E TTL flash triggers made by Phottix. 1/4000th sec shutter was accomplished using the High Speed Sync capabilities of the new system. Worked like a charm!'. Below the text is a link 'Wedding Favorites (40 photos)' and a large photo of a bride and groom standing under a tree at dusk. The photo is credited to 'BenGodkinPhoto'. On the right side of the interface, there are sections for 'In your circles' (a grid of profile pictures), 'Suggestions' (three suggested users with 'Add to circles' buttons), 'Send invitations' (an 'Invite friends' button), and 'Hangouts' (a 'Start a hangout' button). A 'Chat' section is also visible on the left side of the profile area.

Social Media Do's and Don'ts

Do's

- Do engage with people and be sincere in your friending them.
- Do share things that people would be interested in, even if it isn't something of yours.
- Do connect with old friends, you'd be surprised at what types of new relationships (personal or business) can be formed out of doing so.

Don'ts:

- Don't over promote yourself.
- Don't link to every post you put up thinking that everyone cares.
- Be discretionary with what you share.

Resources

Websites

Photography business

- [The Modern Tog](#)
Very talented Wisconsin photographer, Jamie Swanson runs this website/blog for running a business. Get your weekly dose of information as well as a few products like her Pricing Guide that will help you figure out how to price your services and products.
- [Chase Jarvis](#)
Chase is predominately a commercial photographer, but has spent quite a bit of his time educating and sharing his experiences with other photographers on his blog.
- [Digital Photography School](#)
This is the most visited photography blog on the internet. It's predominately for amateurs, but you get the occasional nugget of information that is relevant for running your business.

Marketing

- [Seth Godin](#)
A marketing genius, and bestselling author who shares his thoughts, tips and ideas about marketing. See him also in the Books Section.
- [Flaunt Your Site Blog](#)
Here at Flaunt Your Site, we like to share marketing ideas and thoughts with on photography.

Books

On Marketing

- [Permission Marketing by Seth Godin](#) (or anything else by Seth as a matter of fact).
- [Inbound Marketing by Dharmesh Shah](#)

On Writing Well

- [The Elements of Style by William Strunk and E.B. White.](#)
- [Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life by Anne Lamott](#)
- [On Writing Well by William Zinsser](#)
- [On Writing by Stephen King](#)

Online Communities

Joining an online community can be the equivalent to enrolling into Harvard Business School for your photography. The people you find on most forums are really there to share their knowledge and have other photographers win at the game of owning their businesses.

- DWF (Digital Wedding Forum) – <http://digitalweddingforum.com>
I've heard that that this paid forum can get a little "catty" at times from some users, but it's a great resource to learn the ins and outs of the wedding photography business.
- Starting a Wedding Photography Business (Flickr Group) - <http://www.flickr.com/groups/startingaweddingbiz/discuss/>
A free resource on one of the more active Flickr groups. A great community of aspiring wedding photographers as well as some seasoned veterans with plenty of knowledge to share.
- Pro4um - <http://www.pro4um.com/>
Started by photographer Kirk Voclair, the Pro4um is a paid Forum, but a great resource to improve your photography, marketing and sales. Seasoned professionals provide some great knowledge and help you produce quality photography quickly.
- Photogs Unleashed - <http://photogsunleashed.com>
A free resource for budding photographers, similar to Pro4um, to improve their photography, marketing and sales. There are standout photographers and vendors to provide advice.

Help

If you find yourself at any point having difficulty with any of the concepts discussed in this book, please feel free to contact us at Flaunt Your Site for help.

We do offer the following services and can help you with any of them:

- Hosting
- Domains
- Website Design and Development
- SEO (Search Engine Optimization)
- PPC (Pay Per Click – AdWords)
- Facebook Advertising
- WordPress consulting and training

You can reach us at www.flautyoursite.com and catch us on Twitter at [@flautyoursite](https://twitter.com/flautyoursite).