Ways to Present Images

Steve Wells

So, You Pressed the Shutter…

Once you have taken a picture, what are you going to do with it? Perhaps you want to look at it and maybe show it to someone else. In fact, the vast majority of images are taken on mobile phones and digital cameras are never seen again! They stay on the phone until the phone is replaced. Then, unless they have been uploaded onto something like Google Photos on the cloud, they are lost forever.

So, you have a picture. Now what?

Assuming that you don't want to lose the image, you save it to the cloud or onto your hard disk… but then what? What are your options for showing the image to someone else?

You could be traditional and print it or project it. You could save it to a portable device such as a phone or tablet. You could share on social media. Alternatively, you could get the image printed onto anything from a T Shirt to a coffee mug. There is something rather fun about the idea of having a mug on a mug!

Before doing anything, go through your images and delete the rubbish. It may be a picture of a granddaughter but of it is out of focus and the child moved during the exposure it is not worth keeping. No-one wants to see rubbish pictures.

Junk the Rubbish.

The great thing about digital is that you can take lots of pictures. This is also a problem because you will get lots of duplicates. No-one wants to see lots of almost identical pictures. Be selective and only share the best. If it is a bad picture or a duplicate… delete it. If it is not good enough to show, it is not worth the disk space.

If all people see are your really good pictures they will be really impressed. (They don't have to know the truth…)

What I am going to describe here is what you can do to show off your world beating image AFTER you have deleted the rubbish.

Making a Print

The traditional way to show a picture, going right back to the beginning of photography, is to make a print. In the past they have been made on plain paper, metal plates or glass. Today photographic prints are made on a paper base coated on both sides with polyethylene. The colour of the paper is that colour of the polyethylene.

If you want to go this way, the first choice is whether to print it yourself or go commercial?

Commercial can be cheap if you limit the paper choice. It gets expensive if you want a wide choice of paper. If you have a local printer, then try them. If you have to send your images away, the cost of post and packing can be more than the cost of the prints so you may need to batch them up.

Home printing is more convenient in that you can make a print whenever you want one. You don't have to spend weeks batching things up to make the expenditure on post and packing worthwhile. However, the initial outlay is greater. You need a suitable printer and you need a stock of paper. The cost of printer inks is high. It has been suggested that weight for weight printer ink costs more than gold dust.

Having said that, there are ways to reduce costs. To produce a perfectly good print you do not need an expensive photo printer. These days, a simple office printer with three colours and black will produce excellent results. You may find that the printer you already have will do the job perfectly well.

The key is to standardise everything and to profile the every ink and paper combination you use. Use the same paper and ink – don't use cheap alternatives. Profiling means setting up the printer and software to produce accurate colours. Some companies such as Fotospeed will do this free of charge if you use their paper.

Three colours (and black) can produce excellent results

You also need to profile your monitor. This requires something like a "Datacolor Spyder". Yes… this is another expense!

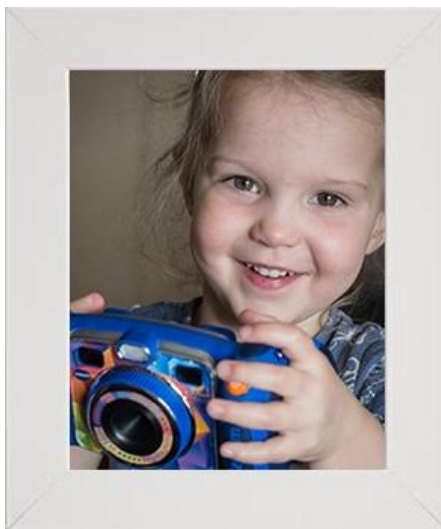Once you have the print you have to display it.

Making a Print

Displaying a Print

The obvious place to put a picture is hanging on the wall. Frames are available from many shops: don't forget IKEA, Asda and Poundland for cheap frames. Keep clear of clear plastic rather than glass: static electricity will make the plastic attract dust.

You may want a card window mount. You can buy the card and cut your own. However, mount cutters are yet another expense. Frames usually come with a basic mount. It is often easier to make the photo fit the mount that came with the frame than spend time and money cutting mount board. IKEA picture frames come with mounts in standard sizes (eg 50cm x 40cm which is a standard size used in camera clubs.)

If you don't want to hang it on a wall, picture frames to stand on shelves are available. Again, they come in standard sizes.

Usa a simple card mount to hang on the wall, or put it on a shelf

Photo Frame

These are effectively small computers. You load a memory card containing images and the photo frame displays them in sequence. They were popular a few years ago but seem to have dropped out of fashion.

Once set up they need to be reloaded regularly with the latest holiday/birthday etc. In practice this does not happen and the content becomes stale. This is probably why they have gone out of fashion. They can also get a bit irritating with them continually changing picture: flickering in the corner of your eye.

Photo Frames are probably best used for special occasions. At a birthday party you might have a frame showing old photos of the birthday boy or girl. After the party, put back into store until next time.

Photo Book

This is effectively the modern equivalent of the traditional photo album. The suppliers will give you software with which to create the book you then upload it and a few days later get the book and a debit from your credit card. They are not cheap. If you start making copies for every member of the family the price can mount up quickly.

If you are going to take this approach, ask around for someone who has already produced some books and take a look at examples. Look critically and learn. It is easy to produce a photo book. It is far less easy to produce a good photo book.

Photo Book

Projecting Images

This is the Modern version of the slideshow when Uncle Albert would set up a projector and screen and bore the family with blurred images of the last ten visits to Margate (other seaside resorts are available and I have nothing against Margate!)

It used to be the case that every photographer had a slide projector and screen: the digital equivalents are far less common at least at home.

It is a great way to show pictures to a large number of people. But… keep it slick or you will bore a large number of people in one go. This means that you need to practice in advance: get the show working in advance so that the audience sees it working correctly first time.

Digital Projector

You will be using a laptop computer and will need presentation software. Here are some of the options:

- PowerPoint is designed for the job and is easy to use. However you do need access to Microsoft Office – another expense.
- Software designed for browsing images will often do the job. In this case, look at "XnViewMP", "FastStone" and "IrfanVew". These three options are all free.
- The other image browser software you already have available is your operating system. Windows may already do everything you want.
- If you want to go a stage further and add sound, "PicturesToExe" will do a good job but you have to buy it.

Phone and Tablet

These days most people carry a phone. You can show pictures are there whenever the opportunity to share them comes available: at home, at work, in the pub, on the bus etc. The downside is that phones have a small screen which may not show your masterpiece to best advantage.

Phone or Tablet

Phone and tablet controls tend to be round the edge where the viewer holds it. This often means that the images disappear when the device is passed from one person to another.
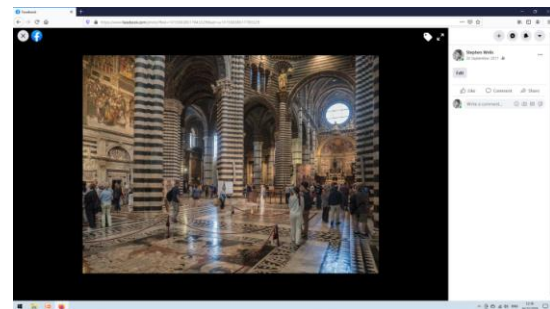
As with everything you have to plan in advance. You are creating a show. You should not be simply showing the heap of images which accidentally wound up on the phone.
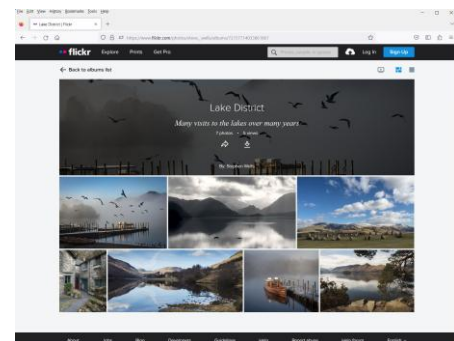
On-Line Sharing

This is where you make images available for other people to view on the Internet. This has the advantage that your friends can take a look whenever they wish and wherever they are: perhaps in a a different timezone on the far side of the world.

Steve's image of Sienna Cathedral Facebook

"Flickr" is designed for the purpose but "Facebook", "Messenger" and "Instagram" amongst others are widely used. These various options are not independent:

- Facebook (Owned by Meta)
- Messenger (Owned by Meta)
- Instagram (Owned by Meta)
- WhatsApp (Owned by Meta)
- Sumgmug (Privately Owned)
- Flickr (Owned by SmugMug)
- YouTube (Owned by Google)

Steve's Flickr Page
https://www.flickr.com/photos/steve__wells

You might also like to think about privacy and copyright. Once you have posted your image:

- who owns them?
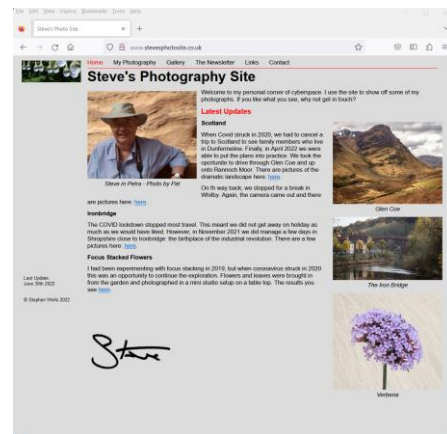- where are they stored? Images stored in the USA will not be subject to UK copyright law.

If someone steals your image there is not a lot you can do about it!

You can minimise the use someone else can make of your pictures. Resize to just big enough. 1024x768 pixels (XVGA) or 1600x1200 pixels is usually plenty for Facebook and email.

Your own Website

A bit extreme, perhaps, but this is an option if you have a lot of images and you want total control. There are tools available to enable you to set up your own web site so you don't have to learn to code the site yourself. Mind you, knowing a little HTML can add to the fun (in a perverse kind of way.)

Continuing costs include the annual cost of your URL (your web address) and the rental of server space to host the site.

Steve's Web Site
http://www.stevesphotosite.co.uk

Oddities

There is practically nothing onto which images can't be printed.

- Mug
- Photocube
- Bookmarks (make your own)
- Fridge Magnets
- Keyrings
- Christmas Decorations
- Beermats
- Snowglobe
- Jigsaw

You can, of course. get photos printed onto T Shirts. Should you feel the need, you can also get images printed onto underwear!

Now It's Your Turn

Now it is over to you. You have the images and now you know some of the options which are available.