TIME MANAGEMENT & BUSINESS STRATEGY

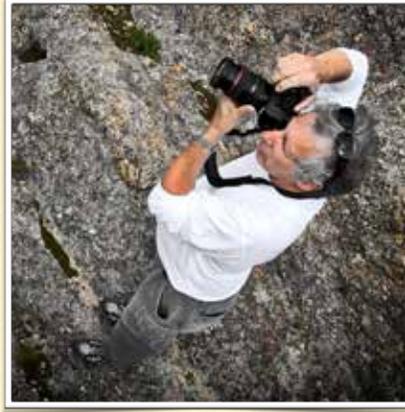Jim Parker, Photographer
parkerparker :: design | photo

Good morning. Thank you all for coming today.

I'm going to talk about time management and business strategy, but first I'd like to give you a little background about myself.

A LITTLE BACKGROUND

- Degree in Visual Communication from University of Wisconsin

- 30 years experience in advertising and sales promotion

  - Agency Art Director

  - Creative Director

  - Managing Director

- Working Photographer

I've been a creative pretty much my whole career. I have a degree from the University of Wisconsin, and started out doing marketing promotions as an Art Director in Chicago, working for William A. Robinson and Abelson-Frankel.

I moved to Detroit in the 80's and worked at Ross Roy for about fifteen years on Kmart, Chrysler and some of our other accounts, like Hiram Walker and FTD.

Twenty years ago, I moved back to Chicago and joined some friends doing interactive work for Motorola & Jim Beam.
Came back here around 2005, and started working full-time as a fine-art photographer.

As a full-time photographer, I shoot rural & Western landscapes. Having grown up in South Dakota. I gravitate to the wide open prairie, and many of my collectors appreciate my design sense, as well as my sense of humor.

FOCUS

How are Time Management and Business Strategy Linked?

First, let me ask you a question. What is a photographer's most valuable skill? [ask for responses]

FOCUS.
Obviously, focus is important in photography! But focus is important in managing your time, and developing a strategy as well.

## HOW ARE TIME MANAGEMENT & BUSINESS STRATEGY LINKED?

- Business strategy revolves around how you spend your time in order to maximize your goals

- Time is your most valuable resource — there's only so much of it available, so you need to manage it wisely

- Focus is the key to managing your time, and the key to developing a winning business strategy

We're going to talk about both today. Business strategy and how you manage your time are joined at the hip, so I'll touch on how to arrive at a winning strategy, and then talk a little bit about managing your time in the second half of the presentation.
Focus is the key to managing your time, and the key to developing a successful business strategy.
I also have a couple of exercises that we'll do together, and discuss during the presentation. It should be fun!

We only have so much time. Lets hope we don't run out of it before the hour ends!

DIVIDING THE DAY

How do creative photographers spend their time during an average day?
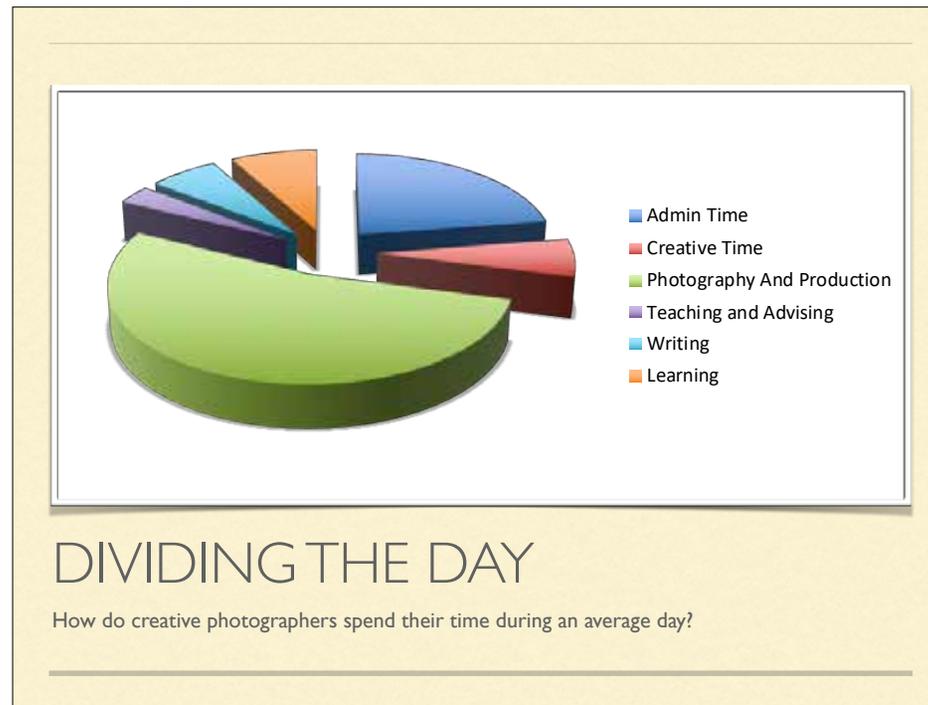
This is a representative chart to show how a typical day in my studio might get divided up.

If I'm lucky, I might get to make some pictures, but most of my time is spent managing other aspects of the business. I try to dedicate several weeks a year to longer photographic trips, and to shoot at least one picture every day, even if it is on my iPhone. About half of my time in the year SHOULD be spent making pictures.

Administrative time includes checking email, planning, billing and accounting, phone calls to clients, booking talent…

Creative time is consulting and design for ongoing projects.

Photography includes shooting, building sets, location scouting, post production, and framing

There is always some writing involved…

Education is looking up how to accomplish a specific task, on YouTube, for example, or reading.

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Breakdown of time spent yearly on the road vs. in the studio
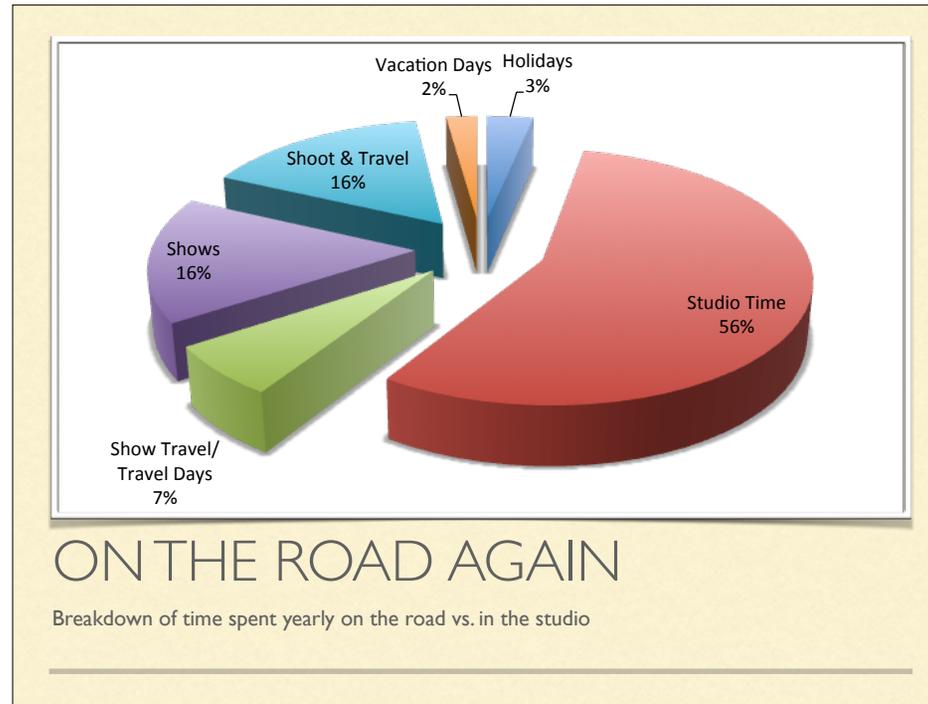
In past years, I have spent almost 180 days traveling for fine art shows. This chart shows how that breaks down over the course of a year.

A lot of the bookwork gets done when I'm in the studio, but there are mornings when I can do some in a hotel room.

DAILY TASKS

CREATIVE	ADMIN	PRODUCE	SALES	STUDENT	ROADIE
Shoot	Accounting	Make Prints	In-person Sales	Learn new software	Travel to Shows
Post-production	Manage Shows	Mats & Framing	Web Orders	Learn new skills	Set-up & Tear-down
Location Shoots	Book Travel	Displays & Signage	Marketing	Watch Video	Layovers
Create Samples	Email & Phone	Booth & Display	Social Media	Solving Problems	Mechanical Issues

As photographers, we wear a lot of hats.

Shooting on location or in the studio, managing travel and clients, handling sales, and marketing via social media. How do you find time for all of those tasks?

Prioritizing tasks, and identifying core skills is important in managing all of these competing tasks.

What do you need to do to compete, and to stand out?

A BALANCING ACT

- It's tough to wear a lot of hats
- Identify your core skills
- Creative versus Production versus Administration
- Organization and planning is key to success
- Stay **flexible** and keep your **focus**

It's a balancing act. We all know it's tough to wear a lot of hats.

How do you identify your core skills?

What comes first, Creative, Production, or the business?

What should you do first when two clients want their job at the same time?

Sometimes, they all seem to be vying for your attention.

How do you stay organized and avoid distractions?

Flexibility and Focus.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?

- What you **WANT** to do opposed to what you **HAVE** to do

- Focus on core skills — differentiation before diversification

- Determine who your audience is

- Can you fill one or more needs for that audience?

- How can you leverage your existing strengths?

- Develop complementary revenue streams to augment your workflow

The key to developing a strategy that works for YOU is to answer these questions:

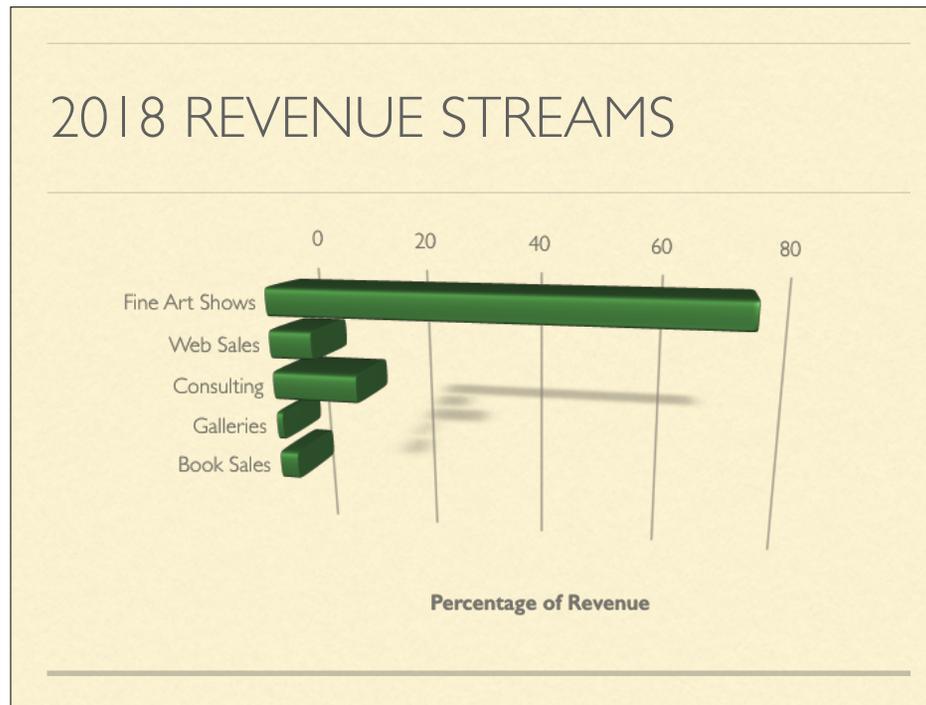What is your passion? What do you WANT to do? What do you ENJOY doing?

What are your core skills?

I suspect that not only are you good at making pictures, but you're also good at other non-related skills as well. First figure out what your core skills are, and then look for a market niche and ways to leverage your existing strengths.

If you can, develop complementary revenue streams. For example, if you shoot weddings or senior portraits, you should be doing in-person sales to market prints to your clients. If you like working with families, what about working with babies?

Let's take a few minutes to do a quick Skills Assessment [handout 1 - 10 minutes]

[Skills Assessment Handout — ten minutes]

2018 REVENUE STREAMS

Fine Art Shows
Web Sales
Consulting
Galleries
Book Sales

0   20   40   60   80

Percentage of Revenue

Here's a look at my current revenue streams.

Although I'm doing fewer shows now than I was five years ago, they still account for almost 75% of my revenue in 2018. I am looking at ways to travel for shows less, and utilize some of my other skills.

Traveling less will give me more time to focus on new revenue opportunities.

For me, that means more writing. I'm looking at ways to expand into content online too.

Book sales and consulting make up another 17%, and gallery sales have never been a primary source of sales.

DEVELOPING A BUSINESS STRATEGY

Think different.

So let's talk a bit more about developing a business strategy.

We've looked at your core skills, and maybe unearthed some things about yourself that you hadn't considered. Sure, we all identify as photographers, but there are a lot of nuances and variation in how we can go about being photographers.

I know a photographer who started out doing art shows about the same time I did. After a couple of years, he found that he enjoyed talking about his work, and how he accomplished it, that he started doing workshops and showing people how to do what he does. Now ten years later, he travels all over the country, running successful macro workshops. Some of you may know him… Mike Moats. He developed a strategy that worked for him, but might not have been obvious at the start of his photographic career.

ANALYZE BEFORE LEAPING INTO THE VOID

- Cost of Goods
- Competitive Pressure
- Target Audience
- Perceived Value
- Current Knowledge Base
- Resources

When starting out as a photographer, it's useful to have a plan, even if it is just scribbled on a bar napkin. And it's useful to revisit that plan at least once a year.

If you are producing hard goods, such as fine art prints, what will it cost you to produce?

What's the startup cost for a small studio?

Will you be a big fish in a small pond, or a small fish in the ocean?

Will your current knowledge be enough to create high perceived value?

Do you have unique skills or a unique Point of View to offer?

What outside resources will you need to be successful?

   * Studio * Print lab * Assistant, Hair & Makeup, Stylists *An accountant or a bookkeeper

TANGIBLE OR INTANGIBLE?

- Are you providing a service or a product? or both?

- What are your key differentiating elements?

- What are your key value drivers?

- What's your time to market?

- Do you have the tools necessary to produce?

It's important for you to have a handle on this stuff before you get too far down the road.

Look at what you can provide — is it a service or a product, or both?

What makes you special? Is it your affinity to gardening and growing tied to your style of shooting?

What kind of extra "something" can you offer that makes you different?

Are you ready to go now, or is it going to take some time to build a studio?

What new tools will you need? And that includes other resources, not just the camera in your hand…

Often, creative people don't think about what it's going to take to gain a foothold in the marketplace.

Take a little time to answer these questions as you begin to practice your craft.

How are you going to talk to your audience? In person? Online? Through flyers left in doors? This should be part of your overall strategy.

Where will you connect with them? You know what they say… "fish where the fish are"
    Social media
    Email
    Word of Mouth
    Web site
    In-person sales
    Art shows — for me, art shows are terrific advertising. They have opened up some really fun projects in the past.

BUSINESS STRATEGY
TAKE-AWAYS

Show up!

- **Focus** your efforts to add value

- Don't try to compete on price alone

- Diversify your client base

- Do more than you're asked to do

So to summarize, the one thing that you can do that will make a difference in all of your efforts:

SHOW UP! Be present and **stay focused.** Don't be distracted when you're on the job. Pay attention, and listen top what your customers are telling you.

Don't try to be the price leader.

Don't put all your eggs in one basket. Try to identify more than one core audience for your work.
Maybe you are good with people — or maybe you like street photography. Or both. Having more than one type of client can be very helpful.

Provide extra value to your customers - under-promise and over-deliver

GETTING IN THE FLOW

Time Management Techniques

Okay, so I've talked a bit about how to develop a business strategy.
But even a good strategy is not much good without the time to implement the plan.

How do you go about finding the time?

By prioritizing. By focusing on one task at a time.

PRIORITIZING YOUR TIME

Important/Urgent	Important/Not Urgent
Not Important/Urgent	Not Important/Not Urgent

The Eisenhower Matrix uses a four part grid to assign priorities to tasks

Important tasks are things that contribute to our long-term mission, values, and goals.

The fastest way to finish a task is to eliminate it

The Eisenhower Matrix divides tasks into things that are important, and things that are urgent. Generally speaking, these two quadrants are mutually exclusive.

The important stuff usually takes time and thought. The urgent stuff is stuff somebody else needs in a hurry. The fastest way to finish a task is to not do it at all!

Let's do another exercise. This one has two parts. **Prioritizing Your Time [ten minutes]**
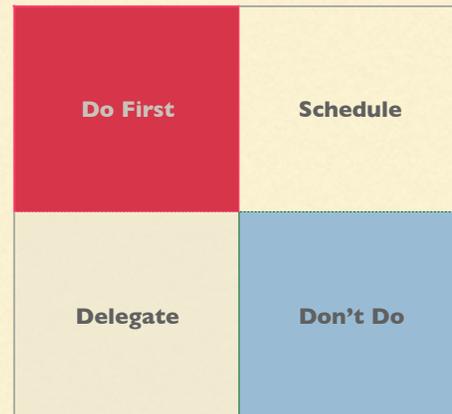
1. List Ten Things You Do Everyday

2. Now put them into one of the four quadrants

ANALYSIS

How many tasks do you have in each quadrant? How many tasks do you think move you towards your goals?

How much time do you spend distracted by social media, text messages and email?

PRIORITIZING YOUR TIME

Do First	**Schedule**
Delegate	**Don't Do**

Pareto Analysis
(the 80/20 Rule)

Knock off the easy wins first

Break big projects into bite-size tasks

The key takeaway here is to try to get the important/urgent tasks off your plate as quickly as you can. Do your email and your follow-up calls at specific times during the day. Try not to get distracted by the little stuff. And if there are checks to be deposited, by all means, get paid!

Pareto Analysis (the 80/20 Rule) — the idea that 80% of tasks can be completed in 20% of the available time
Knock off the easy wins first
Break big projects into bite-size tasks

TOOLS TO GET THE JOB DONE

- **"Getting Things Done"** — David Allen

  - Assigns priorities A, B, C to streamline task list

- **Franklin Covey** (Stephen Covey) — same principles as GTD

- Things, Omni Focus, Wunderlist — just a few of the apps

- Paper lists can be just as effective — "GoodNotes" on iPad

I learned a lot from having a Franklin Planner, and using OmniFocus, but in the end, they were too fussy, and took too much time to keep up with.

Simpler task managers like Things, OmniFocus, Wunderlist, and ToDo do help prioritize tasks, and you don't have to keep looking for the list you left someplace. I like the ones that sync across devices.

Paper task lists can be just as effective, but they are easier to lose and harder to keep updated.

I like "GoodNotes" on the iPad with the Apple Pencil — it's like having a yellow pad, but no paper clutter

THE CHALLENGES OF THE MOMENT
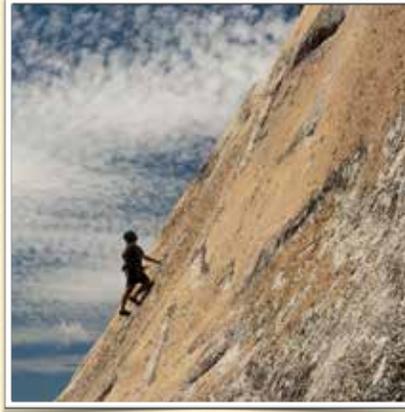
- Attend to important things as soon as possible

- Keep track of time spent on projects

- Set specific times for email, text messages, and social media

- Learn to say "No" to time-wasting projects

- Don't procrastinate

So how do you make sure that everything you need to get done in a day actually gets done?

Answer: you don't. You plow through the important tasks, put out the fires that invariably crop up, and keep climbing upward.

Keeping track of time, especially on billable projects, can open your eyes to how much time a project really takes.

Turn on "Do Not Disturb" on your phone if you really want to focus — the endless notifications, texts, and phone calls can be a real drag on your concentration.

And don't put off until tomorrow what you can do next week ;-)

Goal Setting
        Daily, Weekly, Long-term
They don't have to be big goals — taking out the trash is a goal. But arguably the future goals are the biggest, and the most important.
[List 3 Long-term Goals - five minutes]

What distracts you from accomplishing your goals? What keeps you from focusing on the task at hand?
Anticipating unexpected obstacles is a little like budgeting. Keep a little extra time for the unforeseen.

It might help you to keep a journal of your successes and failures.
Analysis can help you see where you're spending too much or too little time.
Time trackers can be of some use, but I've always found them to be onerous.

A PERSONAL TOOLKIT

Software is absolutely essential to streamlining your workflow. But what software?

Now I'm going to talk about resources. We all have tools besides our cameras that we just can't live without. Most of us use a computer, and software tools have become the new darkroom. (Except for those who still use a darkroom). Here are a few you might be using, and maybe a few you aren't. We all know that software SHOULD save us time.

What are the essential tools YOU need to run a photography business?

I'll break it down into the major categories.
Creative Tools | Business Tools | Communication Tools | Marketing Tools

CREATIVE SOFTWARE

- Adobe Photoshop, Lightroom
- Skylum Aurora, Luminar
- InDesign, Illustrator
- Premiere, Audition, Final Cut
- Scrivener, iAWriter
- Suitcase Fusion

For photographers, Lightroom and/or Photoshop are pretty indispensable. Luminar is an outstanding newcomer.

I personally rely on Adobe Lightroom for managing images and for tethered capture

(Adobe Bridge is one alternative; Phase One's Capture One is another)

For HDR compositing, Skylum's Aurora is about the best, currently. Nik HDR EfX Pro, Photomatix are two other good ones

InDesign and Illustrator are two of the best design tools, one is good for short form layout; the other is best for books and long-form layout

If you work with video, Adobe Premiere or Apple's Final Cut Pro are the two biggies. DaVinci Resolve is also good.

For audio, Audition is a strong contender, or any of the good DAWs out there

Lightweight writing tools iAWriter and Scrivener are both far better for creatives than that behemoth, Word. Writing is an essential skill, even for visual communicators.

For managing fonts, Suitcase Fusion is still my hands-on favorite.

BUSINESS TOOLS

- Microsoft Office (Excel, Word, PowerPoint

- Apple: Pages, Numbers & Keynote

- Calendar — iCal or Google Calendar

- Contact Manager — Contacts, Salesforce

- Database — FileMaker Pro or MS Access

- Email — Gmail, Apple Mail, Outlook

Everyone knows about the standard office tools. They've become indispensable. You might be able to do business with just an address book and a pad of paper, but these tools make communication and back-office tasks a whole lot easier.

Microsoft Office (Word, Excel)
Pages, Numbers, Keynote (Mac)
FileMaker Pro, Access (database) — I rely on Filemaker to keep track of my print sales.
Contact Manager (Contacts, SalesForce)
Calendar (iCal, Google Calendar)
Email — Gmail, Apple Mail, Outlook

SECONDARY TOOLS

- Accounting — Quicken, Quickbooks

- Task Manager — Things, ToDo

- Time trackers — Tyme

- Cloud Filesharing — DropBox, OneDrive, iCloud

- Backup - CarbonCopy, ChronoSync, Acronis

- Calculator — Tydlig

Accounting — Quicken or QuickBooks. I personally like Quicken Home & Business — I can run it on a Mac in a Windows virtual machine (Parallels)

Task Managers —Things, ToDo - I find that having a task list synced to all my devices is a huge help in keeping track of projects. While it won't prioritize my time, it does help remind me when things are due.

Time Trackers (Tyme) - there are tons of them out there. If you want to know where your time goes, try one of these for a week or the duration of a project. But most creatives hate timesheets…
Backup Systems — absolutely crucial that you keep multiple copies of your image files
Cloud Filesharing —DropBox, OneDrive, iCloud
Calculator (Tydlig) — best ever (iPhone)

PHOTOGRAPHER SPECIFIC

- Cradoc **FotoBiz X** is very useful for generating client bids and stock photography estimates

- Website for online selling: **ZenFolio**, **PhotoCrati, WordPress**

- Mapping and Navigation Software — **GAIA, FocalWare**

- Weather Apps - **Weatherbug, WUnderground**

FotoBiz and FotoQuote — Getty Images is often used as a benchmark for stock licensing.

Pre-built store sites, or roll your own:
ZenFolio, PhotoCrati, WordPress

Mapping and Sunlight Trackers (iOS)
      PhotoPills, FocalWare, The Photographer's Ephemeris, Photo Transit
      Waze, Earthmate, Gaia GPS

Weather Apps
      Wunderground, Weatherbug, AccuWeather, StormRadar, DarkSky, Weather Channel, Radar Scope

SHOOTING HARDWARE

- An organized camera bag — I like Mindshift and ThinkTank bags

- A good tripod and head is worth its weight in gold — Gitzo, RRS

- Buy good media cards

- A backup system — three drives minimum

- Pelican Cases

I almost forgot to talk about actual Photography Hardware! It's so ingrained in my system that I usually forget about it.

First off, **keep your camera bag organized** so you can consistently put your hands on the tool you need when you need it. Lenses, bodies, shutter release, batteries, cards… they all need to be accessible in an instant. I have bags for every camera system so that I can grab one and go. Canon System, Sony System, Drone…

Do NOT skimp on your tripod. I have several carbon-fiber sticks, a Really Right Stuff head, and several smaller 'pods. I leave one in South Dakota because I fly there so much. A short one that'll fit in a carry-on bag is good for tourist-y international travel.

Good media cards, and lots of them. It's your film. Several smaller ones are just as good, if not better, than on big one

Backup your files. I use two different systems. ChronoSync writes changes from my main computer drive to another computer nightly. I also carry a portable drive with my entire current Lightroom catalog in the field. I use Western Digital drives (4G USB drives) almost like paper bags I have so many.

Pelican Cases are very very bomber for equipment that goes on location.

Dayna will be talking about marketing in the next presentation, so I'll just touch on the obvious here…

Social Media is where much of the action is nowadays. Building a following takes time, but you all probably spend way more time on it than you should. **Facebook, InstaGram and Pinterest** all have their proponents.

LinkedIn is more business focused and has molded itself to be more like Facebook with feeds in the past few years. It is predominantly aimed at business professionals looking for work, but that's what you are, right?

Mailing to new prospects and old clients is much easier if you have more than a few hundred names in your mailing list. These online apps make it easy to manage campaigns and track response rates, which you can't do by mailing directly from your email client. **Vertical Response** and **SendPulse** have pay-as-you-go pricing, but **MailChimp** and ʃ are subscription based. Expect somewhat of a learning curve.

MULTITASKING — IS IT FOR YOU?

- **Focus** on one thing at a time
- **Finish** one task or a complete step before moving to the next
- **Schedule** only 1 or 2 high priority tasks to accomplish in a day
- **Sync** up your lists daily
- **Plan** tomorrow's work at the end of today

It's a proven fact that multi-tasking actually lowers your productivity. Eliminating distractions when you work is extremely hard to do with email, text messages, and social media constantly bombarding you.

These are a couple of tips that help me stay on track during the day.
• Focus
• Finish one thing at a time
• Schedule one important thing, and two or three less critical things per day
• Sync up your lists daily
• Plan today for tomorrow

There will be a couple of links in the resource file if you'd like to read more about multitasking.

TEN TIPS TO STREAMLINE
TIME MANAGEMENT

1. Do what you love FIRST

2. Plan, schedule and organize

3. Write down your plan

4. Set goals and prioritize them

5. Use data to analyze what's working, what's not. Don't get caught up in "analysis paralysis"

Planning, goals, data - it all comes down to passion. Here are ten ways you can work smarter and faster.

1. Do what you love first.
2. Plan, schedule and organize.
3. Write it down, remember it. Then go do it.
4. Set some goals. Make some priorities.
5. Use data, but also use your own intuition as to what's working and what's not.
   If you're spending too much time on Facebook, you'll know it.

TEN TIPS TO STREAMLINE TIME MANAGEMENT

6. Assume every thing will take longer than you think it will

7. Use tools — for time tracking, data management, project mgmt

8. Take care of the money-makers and

9. Say no to the time-wasters

10. Organize yourself and strive for less clutter

6. As far as time goes, it all takes more of it than you have.

7. Use the tools you have to streamline your workflow.

8. Take care of the money-makers first.

9. Pick and choose your projects carefully. Learn to say no.

10. Stay organized, and keep the passion alive!

TimeManagement_2019.key - March 16, 2019

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME!

Jim Parker — http://photo.parkerparker.info

Additional Resources can be found at: https://photo.parkerparker.info/blog/2019/3/togresources

I've posted some additional resources online — https://photo.parkerparker.info/blog/2019/3/togresources

The presentation should be available to you in a couple of days as well.

Thank you all for being an attentive audience. If we have a little time left, I'm happy to answer any questions you might have.