

# Stock Photography

**Your company image is important.**

Stock photography is a great way to achieve a rich professional look for your web site as well as your other company printed material. Today I want to present to you some tips on procuring great photos that will help sell your product or services and inspire confidence with your new prospects.

For some of you this is not a new concept but I hope that you like the tools that I am going to talk about.

## Professional Photography

In achieving a professional “look” do not rely on armature photos. Just because you have a digital camera does not mean that your photography needs will be met.

There are special characteristics to professional photos like proper lighting, models, makeup artists and scouted locations that make a huge difference. Trying to pull that all together yourself would be expensive. That is why stock photography is so great and affordable.

## Royalty Free vs Rights Managed

There are two types of photos you can purchase “Royalty Free” and “Rights Managed”. With royalty free images you only need to pay once to procure the image. Royalty free images are meant to be used in advertising graphics and should not be resold as just photos. That would be a violation.

Rights managed photos have restrictions like where and when the photo can be used. These photos tend to be more expensive. The agreement drawn up on these photos may include the overhead of paying royalties to models, photographers and agencies.

## What to Look For

You may have see Royalty Free images that you recognize in local publications. This is the problem with using Royalty Free images, also called Clip Art. Some images are very popular and they may find there way in to a variety of ads. When you see a photo use in an ad that you recognize from another ad it kills the illusion of originality.

For branding purposes you have to be careful not to pick a royalty free image that is too popular. Depending on your investment, you may want to look at Rights Managed to give you some exclusivity while branding.

Many clients ask me what I would change on their web sites. 90% of the time I have to ask "Where are the people?".

Proper use of photography is a psychological element in selling. I call it the vernacular - the human presence. People like to see other people. If you are a restaurant, you should be showing happy people eating. If you install water heaters you should show a happy professional service person.

The proper correlation of text and photos makes an effective advertising piece.

## Where to Get Photos

As a designer for more than 20 years I have had to procure images from many stock photography companies. Lucky for you getting images these days is easy and more economical than in the past.

If you are on a tight budget your first stop might be Microsoft's Clip art Library.

Many of you are already familiar with these photos as they come with MS Office. Be sure to check online for new photos. [office.microsoft.com](http://office.microsoft.com). Make sure you click on the clip art tab and then do your search.

Microsoft is a great resources for clip art but some of the photos are not high resolution. They may work for your web site but if you want to carry the same message in a printed piece or even a big vinyl banner you need high resolution photos.

A good high resolution JPG image is generally 5-10 MB. Look for dimensions past 3000 pixels.

## iStockPhoto

This is my favorite stop for photos. [iStockPhoto](http://iStockPhoto) is a Canadian company and has been around for several years now. I have watched them grow from 100,000 images to now into the millions. They have contributing photographers from all over the world.

You want to [set up an account](#) there and buy credits. \$13 gets you 10 credits. \$31 gets you 25 credits. The more you buy the cheaper the credits get.

Every photos comes in a variety of sizes and credit prices. 1 credit will get you a small resolution. 15 credits for a supper extra extra large photo. With web sites I tend to go with small(2 credit) to medium(4 credit) resolution sizes.

On occasion I will buy higher resolutions because I need to print it large or I want to crop a small piece out of the original photo.

Oh, by the way, They also have stock video clips and illustrations as well.

If you still can't find what you want at iStockPhoto there are many places to go for stock photos. The image libraries are vast and even perhaps better than iStockPhoto but the prices are at a premium.

- [Getty Images](#)
- [JupiterImages](#)
- [ComStock](#)
- [Big Stock Photo](#)
- [Corbis](#)
- [Rubber Ball](#)

## The Real Tip

Some designers may feel that I am giving away a secret about [iStockPhoto.com](#) because the photos are pretty good and inexpensive. The real tip here is to come to your designer prepared. You may not realize the savings unless you hire a professional to search for photos for you. This is as easy as shopping online and you can download the images you buy.

Posted on September 8th, 2007 by Karl Knelson