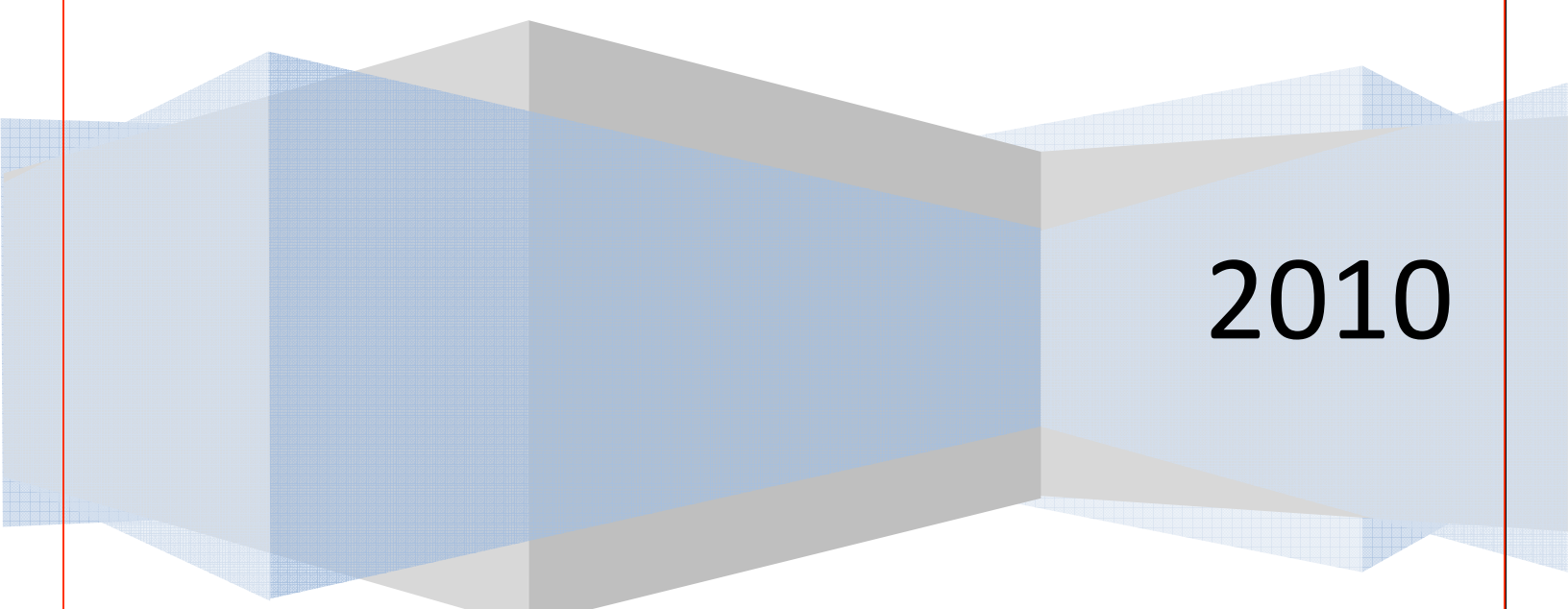


www.HowToBuildAPhotographyWebsite.com

“Photography Building Website Tips Reality Tutorial”

Tips, Tools And Resources From The Real World

Kalem Aquil



2010

The “**Photography Building Website Tips Reality Tutorial**” is a course designed to demonstrate to photographers how easy it is to build a successful photography website that meets your needs and accentuates your style.

You will find this course to be a very valuable contribution to your knowledge skills sets; to your popularity as a photographer; and to your ability to get new customers. But, there is nothing in this valuable course that you will learn that will replace the importance and the value of the need to shoot quality photography.

The course is broken into components:

- The Planning Process
- The Building Steps
- Website Managing Steps
- Website Promotion

Each of these course components are broken into more specific micro components that provide more in-depth content on the topic.

Publisher’s Editorial Note: One of the main advantages of the internet is the easy access to so much available information at once.

One of the main disadvantages of the internet is the easy access to so much available information at once.

The result = **INFORMATION OVERLOAD!** This is a ‘*non-overload*’ course.

This course is specifically designed to teach skills and confidence by allowing you to immerse yourself in the amount of information and details at levels that you choose.

The course information is delivered in multiple formats to meet the diversified needs of the many photographers that use this course. You can get the “basics” of the topics down to the “minute” “geek-speak” details.

The purpose of the course is to teach you a specific set of skills that you can confidently use to fulfill your specific photography goal: to build a *successful* photography website – with ‘*successful*’ being defined by you.

This guide has online companions to provide even more about specific components, to ask questions and to share your experiences with your new skills set. The companions to this tutorial guide can be found at:

www.HowToBuildAPhotographyWebsite.com

This course is designed to teach you how to build a photography website that does what you want it to do.

Another online guide companion is an online community of photography enthusiasts just like you! The only requirement to join this growing community is that photography is a *passion* for you. You can share your photography website building experiences and all of your other photography experiences with likeminded people from all over the world.

www.ThePhotographySpace.com

- ✓ Would you like to meet and know other photography enthusiasts?
- ✓ Do you want to get critiques on your photography website? Then, join the community.
- ✓ Do you want critiques of your photography? Then join the community.
- ✓ Are you looking for other photographers to share experiences? Join us.
- ✓ Would you like to know how others sell their work?

Join us

www.ThePhotographySpace.com

Course Demonstration Lab Website

This course also includes a lab: a demonstration photography website that is built and managed for two specific purposes:

1. As a “how-to” step-by-step, *real* example for this course
2. To make money. You may have a different purpose for your photography website. And that is fine! This course will work for you also. It is important to your benefiting from this course that you know the purposes of the demo site. You will better understand the “whys” of the course recommended steps, in my opinion.

The demonstration site will be shared with you soon in the course. In the meantime, understand that with all of the different formats that this course will be delivered to you, it will be ‘almost’ impossible not to know how to ‘confidently’ build a successful photography website that accomplishes what you want it to accomplish.

We'd be honored to meet you! Join us.

www.ThePhotographySpace.com

Special Note: All the components of this course are important. However, the **planning process** is by far the most critical. It is the foundation of the success of your photography website. At this point in your development, you may not fully understand the criteria for a successful photography website. I know that I didn't when I built my first photography websites. There are a couple of decisions that you must make upfront that will contribute to or detract from the success of your website. So please make sure that you study the **planning process** component of the course before you move on in the course.

The course is designed so that you don't have to, necessarily, follow along step-by-step. But, I can almost guarantee you that if you do not pay attention to the steps in the **planning process** you will fail.

Course Tools – The free recommended tools to use with this course are very powerful and will be more than you have a need for, at this time. Recommended tools are listed here.....

www.HowToBuildAPhotographyWebsite.com

The steps to building a successful photography website provided in this course will work with almost any similar tools. You may have an existing photography website. The lessons in this course will be very helpful to you if you're looking to 'tweak' your website so that it meets your needs better.

Invest In Your Skills For **FREE!** – Since this course and the recommended tools do not cost you any money, it is to your

www.HowToBuildAPhotographyWebsite.com | www.ThePhotographySpace.com

advantage for you to get the tools and follow along using the steps in this course – the ‘course’ consists of this guide and the valuable companion website resources.....

www.HowToBuildAPhotographyWebsite.com

www.ThePhotographySpace.com

You have nothing to lose except your *‘inability’* to build and manage a successful photography website.

The Course

Planning Process

Pre-Planning – There are some considerations that most photographers aren’t aware of when building their website. Unfortunately, once their site is built, they’re troubled that the site isn’t getting the “*results*” that was hoped for. That’s why “**pre-planning**” is so important.

Most photographers want their websites to help attract local business or contacts. Too many of us don’t understand that when website visitors search for us, they use ‘local’ terms, not the ‘*creative*’ names that we choose for our website domains. (Your website domain is the internet name of your website: for example, www.ThePhotographySpace.com is a domain name.)

Photography Website Planning – One of the mistakes that most photographers make when building a website is “naming” their website a name that works against them. This is especially true if

the purpose of the photography website is to expose the photographers to wider audiences.

For example, my name is Kalem, if I named my photography website “Kalem's Photography Website,” “Kalem's Great Photography,” or something like that, it would actually work against me.

People that already know me might type either of those names into an online search engine and “*might*” find me. But, people that don't know me or that don't know that I'm an available photographer will never find me that way. In other words, people that don't know me cannot find me if my website name doesn't include what they type into search engines to find *me*.

This is very important: **People search online for information**. In the case of potential photography customers looking to find a photographer to do business with, there is some specific information that they're looking for. Chances are, they will search using terms that will locate photographers in their local area, city or county. They will type “[the city/county/state name or initials] + photographer” in the search engine. That will bring up the websites of photographers in the *locality* typed in the search engine – if the photographers have included the city and niche in their domain names.

Demonstration Lab Website – My photography business is in Long Beach, California. So, I'm going to include words in the title of my photography website that will ensure that my site comes up in the search results when my city name is typed into a search engine. Also, I will include the type of photography niche that I'm promoting in my photography website domain.

For example, if I'm a wedding photographer, my domain name will include the words “wedding photographer” or similar words. A potential customer will type the words “Long Beach wedding

photographer” (or something similar) into the search engine; and the fact that I put the words “Long Beach” and “wedding photographer” in my domain name weighs a great deal with the search engines. My photography website has a much greater chance of coming up in the search engine results *before* all of the photographers' websites that don't include their city and niche in their website title.

For the purpose of this course, I've dedicated the following website as a demo site:

www.LongBeachHeadshotPortfolio.com

As you can see, the photography niche that I've chosen is “headshots.” There are reasons that I chose this niche that I will expand on later in the section on “marketing.”

What is important that you note here is that my domain name includes my *'locality.'* Research overwhelmingly makes it clear that people searching online do so with *'local'* terms. I can promise you that most photographers don't consider this when choosing a name for their websites. Those that do ensure that their sites will rank higher in the search engines (where potential new customers look to find you) than those that don't consider it.

Lesson over. (If you understood the explanation above, you won't have trouble learning *search engine optimization* – the word “tweaking” explained above is *optimization* of your site - actually, it's “on-page” optimization – there's also “off-page” optimization).

Insider Note: One of my photography websites is ranked #1 in the top search engines like Google and Yahoo. As happy as I am about that – it does little to nothing for my *'local'* photography business because this particular website is not optimized for *'local'* searches.

Search Engine Optimization SEO For Photographers

Your website is found, rated and ranked by search engines such as Google, Yahoo, Bing, etc. Techniques that you use to make your website relevant and valuable to the search engines are *optimizing* your site. There is a slight learning curve to SEO techniques. For more in-depth (and easily understandable) info, visit.....

www.HowToBuildAPhotographyWebsite.com

and get the guide: "SEO For Photographers."

Tracking Your SEO Results

Tracking your results will let you know what is working and, as a result, what you keep doing and improving upon.

You will track your results with "web analytics" software. With web analytics software you can measure:

- Visits to your website
- Where visitors came from
- What pages they visited
- How long they visit each page
- Etc.

With web analytics software you can measure your link-building efforts; what site link to yours; what pages of your site are most popular; what words visitors use to find you; how your visitors found you; where they leave your website; and much more that helps inform you about what is working.

Promoting your photography website with search engine optimization is an ongoing process. With the information from your web analytics software tools, you will *matter-of-factly-know* all of the information related to your website. For more in-depth info on SEO, lessons on using web analytics software, and, of course, the best and most powerful web analytics software, Google Analytics. It's free.....

www.HowToBuildAPhotographyWebsite.com

(Course Note: It is important that you have an understanding of the steps in the “**planning process**” [minus the *optimization stuff*]. Your understanding of that info will be the foundation of your success online.)

A Website Is A Marketing Tool

For a lot of people, photographers and others, this is confusing. But, **marketing is a process**. It isn't an advertising activity or series of activities. **It's a process**. It continues as long as you're in business. (Advertising is for specific campaigns.)

The Basics Of Marketing

There are three basic components of marketing:

1. Find your target audience
2. Find out what your target audience wants to buy or is already buying
3. Give/sell it to them

That's it. Don't complicate it more.

Website *Thought Process*

Here's the background and the *'thought process'* on how I chose the domain/website name of the demo site.....

www.LongBeachHeadshotPortfolio.com

using the above marketing basics.....

Find Your Target Audience – I shoot different photography niches. For the purposes of this course, I wanted to select a niche that is real and profitable.

Living in Southern California, there is a large audience of people that use photographers. There are many aspiring models and actors, as well as other high profile people. All of them have a need for *'headshots'* and, if they're focused on being successful, they need to continuously *'refresh'* their headshot portfolio.

Of course, living in Southern California also brings very intense competition with other photographers. I don't fear or envy my competition (to be honest, I can talk tough now because I *'now'* know what you're about to learn in this course).

My target audience demographics:

Age: 21 – 35

Sex: Female – 67% Male – 33%

Annual Photography Expenditure: \$850.00 (this varies significantly)

Find Out What Your Target Audience Is Buying Or Wants To Buy – This component was very difficult for me, in the beginning.

And, in all honesty, I'm not sure if I can teach the key points in this component of marketing basics.

But, here goes: as mentioned, I'm targeting models, actors and high-profile people that have an ongoing need for headshots and other type portfolio photography. What my research has demonstrated about this particular target audience is that they all also have a need for promotion. Their '*business*' is looking good and getting their *good looks* in front of targeted audiences. My research determined that they 'want' promotion of their image. So, I will give/sell it to them.

Give/Sell It To Them – One of the key elements that will distinguish my photography services from my competitors is my **“Viral Promotion Package”** (sounds exciting, huh?).

My services to my target audience include promoting their image online. I use viral marketing tools to produce '*viral marketing products*' that my target audience can include on their websites, their Myspace and Facebook pages, etc. Also, I've developed some very good "*viral marketing*" skills. So, I can promote their "web presence" and also show them how they can do so themselves. That, plus providing them with viral marketing tools such as ebook portfolios, video portfolios and slideshows, gives me a USP (Unique Selling Proposition).

This guide and companion demo website are designed to show you a model of a successful website development process. Don't feel compelled to follow the steps exactly. Study the course. Consider the lessons. Apply the new knowledge to your situation.

My niche selection fits my style, is competitive (and profitable) and fits the way I like my photography – flexible. Your niche

selection should fit your style and should also be in response to your research. By the way, if you want to know what your target audience is buying or wants to buy – ask them! That’s what ‘sealed the deal’ for me when I chose my USP.

Insider note: the reality is that this particular target audience doesn’t feel that my photography work is that ‘*cutting edge*’ or as ‘*out-of-the-box*’ as other photographers. (Which is cool with me. Overall, most of the photography that I profit from is ‘*inside-the-box*’ stuff. My ‘money shots’ are ‘*in-the-box*.’ My spending photography customers like ‘sameness.’ And I like to please them.) Anyway, the models, actors and high-profile people do business with me because I can promote them online so well. Also, I’m very dependable. And, finally, they get lots of ‘extra unannounced premiums’ when they do business with me.

The “**Viral Promotion Package**” that I offer is highly valued by people that must promote themselves, their images and/or their reputations. (Competition Note: Other photographers can copy my package and compete with me. But, I already own and proficiently use the expensive software tools required for “**Viral Promotion Package**.” It wouldn’t be cost effective for many competitors. In fact, future plans include offering “**Viral Promotion Package**” services to local photographers! It will add value to their services also. But, they will view me as a “player” in the local photography market, in my opinion.)

Your Photography Website Purpose

This is another key element that many photographers get wrong. There are different purposes for your photography website:

Display – This course is designed to walk you step-by-step to building a photography website for display purposes. I will also demonstrate how to make money. However, it is important to know that all photography websites *don't* have to make money to be considered successful.

Make Money – When it comes making money with your photography website there are two methods that your website can make you money:

Active – this is photography work that you actively do like shooting sessions

Passive – this is photography that you get paid for after you've done the work once, like stock photography, for example

Interact – Setting your photography website up so that visitors can choose to interact with you builds your customer base, builds your reputation and builds great word of mouth for your photography. Your 'interacting' strategies can be 'photo of the week,' 'cute baby' photo contests, 'cute dog' photo contests, etc. You can add a blog. You can 'give away' something in exchange for your target audience's name and email address – which allows you to communicate by email with them regularly all year long.

Demo Site Example And Rationale – Website visitors to.....

www.LongBeachHeadshotPortfolio.com

can 'opt-in' for a free guide: "Headshot Portfolio Tips." I offer valuable tips and insider info for beginning models and actors, as well as tips for freelance models – which most of my target audience are.

Although the guide is free, it offers some very good tips that most in the industry will appreciate knowing. Providing the guide gets me email addresses that I can use to interact with potential customers. And the helpful tips, lessons and resources in the guide contribute to my reputation as a “must have” resource for my target audience. I build on that relationship with helpful emails and more valuable tips and resources.

Your Photography Website Design

Disclaimer: I have built many photography websites – some successful – some not successful.

However, I don't do *'pretty!'*

My websites look good. But, they aren't *spiffy* and *sophisticated* (*pretty*). I'm not against *spiffy* and *sophisticated*. I'm just not skilled at it.

Also, I've found that a successful photography website doesn't require *'pretty.'* In fact, *'pretty'* has very, very little to do with the success of your photography website, in my opinion. I find that most sophisticated photographer websites are designed to impress website designers and other photographers – not potential new photography customers.

Your website design should reflect your style. But, more importantly, it must deliver what it is that your target audience will be looking for.

They're looking for information – not for *'pretty!'* This is a general rule for photography customers. What they want to know from any photographer is: *“Can you make me look good?”* As a photographer, that is your job.

The information on your photography website must answer that question for them. Too many photographer websites talk about how wonderful their studio is, how much formal training they've had, how big their mega-pixels are, etc.

None of which answers the question of all photography customers everywhere: *"Can you make me look good?"*

Make sure that your photography website answers that question and your popularity will increase.

The website building tool that I recommend that you use while you are studying this course is a basic, but very powerful software control panel. Of course, it's free. But, more important, it is very powerful and will teach you a lot. You will be able to build galleries and online portfolios. It is very easy to manage and make changes.

Publisher Note: The ability to make changes to your website whenever you choose to do so is one of the most critical factors to building a successful photography website, in my opinion.

The Building Of Your Photography Website

This course recommends the following basic website pages:

- The Home page
- An About Us page
- A Contact Page
- Galleries
- Portfolios

Home Page – Remember, customers looking to find you are looking for information. Make sure that your home page contains the information that you determined that they want during your marketing research. Sure, you can have photos on your home page. But, trust me, visitors that look for you in the search engines are looking for information.

Your About Us Page – Many photographers make the mistake of telling the world how “creative” they are (which usually reads too much like they’re *very weird* – not good for getting new customers, in my opinion). Even your About Us page should include information that assures your visitors that you will make them look good.

There are many ways to do this. They have absolutely nothing to do with the equipment you use, the photography organizations you belong to, how “*extraordinarily-knock-your-socks-off-creative*” you are. Unless, of course, they answer the question: “*Can you make me look good?*”

Galleries – This is different from your portfolios. You can use galleries to demonstrate your range, your ability to tell stories with your work, you can even let your photos speak for you and don’t include any words (this is kind of risky unless your work articulates well).

Portfolios – I use portfolios for two purposes:

1. To demonstrate my styles
2. For customer proofing – where I send customers that I’ve done work for and they want to see their proofs.

“Build It And They Will Come” – No They Won’t!
(Let your competitors keep thinking that!)

It’s time to begin building your website. Of course, you should only be at this point if you studied the entire marketing component of the course. You are cheating yourself and compromising the chances of your success if you haven’t taken the steps in the marketing component.

Use the recommended website building tool to build your site. You will find the link to the recommended tool at the course web page:

www.HowToBuildAPhotographyWebsite.com

Its ease of use probably won’t require that you will need any help. However, if you feel that you do need assistance and/or have questions, feel free to come to the photography community and ask your questions or get some suggestions and tips:

www.ThePhotographySpace.com

If you want a *“reality example,”* be sure to visit the course demo site:

www.LongBeachHeadshotPortfolio.com

Note: Although the site was built for this course and demonstration purposes, it is planned and designed to be successful and profitable – very profitable. There are some monetization (re: money making) strategies that I will implement that are lucrative. Use this demo site for ideas, examples and strategies. The strategies will be listed and fully discussed in the

community. That's another reason for you to join us in the photography community:

www.ThePhotographySpace.com

Managing Your Photography Website

Believe it, or not, this is the easiest part of having a photography website that you built yourself! Especially if you studied and implemented the marketing basics explained earlier in the course, managing your website is simply about tuning it up and testing out visitor attracting strategies.

There are many website managing tools available. Many of them are very, very good. Many of them aren't, unfortunately. What you need to do first, is to learn how to make the changes and updating yourself. That's why it was important that you build the site yourself.

If you've reached this point in the course and have followed the steps, you know and are familiar with how easy the website managing tools (of the website building tools that are recommended with this course) are to use. You will use the same tools to manage your site.

Adding Content – Content for your photography website can include:

Words – Your words should be giving your site visitor the info they're looking for. As your skills develop, you'll also learn how to write to your target audience.

Photos – This is a given on a photography website, of course. But, it helps your website if you can *optimize* the photos that you

have on your site. Optimizing your photos is something that is expanded on inside the photography community.....

www.ThePhotographySpace.com

For the time being, just make sure that you name the photos that you use with the “keywords” for your site. Using the course demo site.....

www.LongBeachHeadshotPortfolio.com

I should name my photos “longbeachheadshotportfolio.jpg” “headshots.jpg” etc.

That is enough *optimizing* for now. As I mentioned earlier, we expand on *optimizing* photos inside the photography community.....

www.ThePhotographySpace.com

For some reason, the search engines like websites with *optimized* photos better. They give your website better rankings.

Video – One of the most popular format online is video. Website visitors perceive video as having more value than any other content format. What is so surprising is that producing online videos is so simple and easy to do. Of course, *simple* and *easy* can only really apply when you *know-how!* Video marketing info and resources can be found at.....

www.Simple-Marketing-Ideas.com

First things first, however. Build your site and publish it first. Then, you can come back later and put video on your site after you’ve learned how easy it is. Stay focused on building and publishing your photography website, for now. Stay focused.

www.HowToBuildAPhotographyWebsite.com | www.ThePhotographySpace.com

Audio – Audio is also perceived as high value by website visitors. You can do an audio giving posing tips, or offering a wedding photographer checklist, etc.

Interact With Your Visitors – Email is very useful for interacting with site visitors. If you have a strategy to get them to give you their email address, you can interact and build a relationship through email. You can send mostly friendly stuff and an offer every fourth or fifth email.

Once you have your website built and published, you can come back later and implement an email campaign. When visitors give you their email addresses, they are “opting in” as it is called. That is, they are choosing to share their email address with you, which, in effect, gives you permission to communicate with them.

Visitors will give their email address in return for something that they *value* and *want*. So, you will give something away to visitors for giving you their email addresses. Email is currently the most effective method of marketing online.

And, of course, this topic will be expanded inside the community.....

www.ThePhotographySpace.com

In the meantime, stay focused.

Photography Website Promotion

I’m a firm believer that “photography marketing is needed because photos don’t sell themselves.” I’ve built a website that is totally dedicated to “photography marketing.”

www.Marketing-For-Photographers.com

When there, click on the “[Site Map](#)” button. I divide website promotion into two basic categories:

Online

Offline

Both, your online promotion and your offline promotion for your photography website should be focused on your website purpose – which you determined in the planning process.

Also, and this is the most important, you should track your promotion results so that you know what works and what doesn't. Web analytics software tools will assist you to find out everything about visitors to your website and if they're there due to your promotion strategies. Revisit the section about “Tracking Your SEO Results” earlier in this guide for links to more in-depth resources to assist you to measure and track your promotion strategies.

This *Isn't* The End

Although you've reached the end of this guide, the course continues here.....

www.HowToBuildAPhotographyWebsite.com

and here.....

www.ThePhotographySpace.com

and, of course, learn photography marketing strategies here.....

www.Marketing-For-Photographers.com

I'll see you on the inside – Kalem