

Remember Film?

Somewhere roughly about 82,000,000 people in the U.S. have never used any film or handled a film camera. That's roughly 25% of the population that have grown up in exclusively digital photographic households. Mylio.com estimates that over 1 trillion (1,000,000,000,000) pictures will be taken in 2015.

Photo industry estimates are that fewer than 0.5% of these pictures (5 billion) are ever printed. Using our businesses as a yardstick, where just under 1% of all pictures being printed are from film, something under 10 billion photos come from film.

Assuming for a moment that all these photos are from new rolls of film and that the average roll of film produces 25 exposures then about 1,900,000 rolls of film would be used on a world wide basis.

Our experience tells us that about 8% of new rolls processed come from people who, when cleaning the house, came upon a roll, or 2 or 3 or more brought them in saying, "We found these sitting at home. Can they still be processed?". Many of these rolls are one time use cameras. This reduces the number of rolls processed to 1,748,000 newly purchased rolls.

1,748,000 is a long way from 1 trillion. If you worked for a company which manufactured film, you'd have good reason to be concerned about job security.

If your company made machines for processing film, odds are your business would not be expanding. If your business was making parts used in processing machinery, you'd probably retool and make parts for other types of machines.

As the processing machinery breaks down, fewer and fewer parts are available to repair them. Fewer and fewer repair technicians become available to make those repairs. As a result, less film becomes processed and printed. It's a good wager that this trend will never reverse.

When fewer rolls of film can get processed, fewer film cameras will continue to be used. Whatever value such a camera has will diminish until it is worthless. Yes, some cameras will become collectable because anything can be collected - the overwhelming share of cameras, their lenses, etc. will be land fill.

Film may not be dead, but the last few nails in the coffin are finding their pilot holes...

Snap Shots

With scholastic sports being thrust upon us, here are a few hints to help you get better pictures...

Tripods are unenthusiastic. They don't care if someone is making a big play or just scored. They never cheer, they never pout; they just kind of, well, stand there. Which is exactly what your camera wants if you want sharper photos. A photo taken by a camera on a tripod (with a remote release) is ALWAYS sharper than the same photo taken hand held. Always.

Using modern cameras with adjustable rear LCD panels you can see the game without jiggling the camera. Many new cameras allow you to use your iPhone or Android device as a remote control. Depending on the model, you can zoom, focus and shoot using your phone's touch screen and not be anywhere near the camera. Your phone will "see" exactly what the camera is seeing and show you the photo after you've taken it. No wires, no cables, no fuss.

Professional sports photographers (not videographers) don't follow the action, they wait for the action to come to them. If you're shooting ice hockey, for example, you know that the rink is relatively poorly lit and the goal area is lit better than anywhere else. More light permits a higher shutter speed, which stops more action.

Keep your eye and camera peeled for action around the goal. As you see the play develop, start shooting. Don't try to time the first shot to capture the action - get a "running start" by shooting a sequence of shots until the play is over. The odds are good that you'll get a good, sharp photo. You might miss getting a shot elsewhere on the ice, but you can watch that with your "spare" eye. It might have been very exciting, but would you really be happy with a well exposed, super blurry picture? (By the way, ice hockey may well be the most difficult sport to photograph.)

Most amateur photographers make the mistake of buying the longest (most telephoto) lens they can. All too often they find that this is great fun to use, but doesn't get the picture as expected. To be successful at sports photography, the most desirable lens has less magnification coupled with a larger maximum aperture (diameter),

As an example, a lens offering a 4X magnification with a constant maximum aperture of $f/2.8$ will typically deliver clearer, sharper, brighter photos than a 6X or 8X magnification with a maximum aperture of $f/4.5$, $f/5.6$ or $f/6.3$. When the pictures shot with the better lens are cropped and enlarged so that the subject is the same size as the photo from the lesser lens it becomes extremely obvious how much better the quality is.



During recent meetings with Canon, the topic of counterfeit merchandise was explored, with several popular Canon items displayed. It was eye popping.

Apparently Canon (and probably other camera makers as well) is getting a large number of customer complaints and problems from bogus Canon branded products. This happens when a brand becomes so popular that buyers assume that everything with the brand name on it is the real thing.

Almost all the items displayed appeared to be the high quality usually associated with Canon. Without having the Canon and counterfeit units together for close comparison it is VERY difficult to spot the fake. In most cases, the packaging was all but identical with just subtle differences between real and fake.

One item on display was a camera battery charger. They looked, felt and weighed the same. The printing on the units and packaging were equal. The Canon item had a circuit board inside, with a heat management system to protect against battery destruction, meltdowns and ignition. The ersatz unit had a couple of wires and some excess solder (used to add weight). In short, a hidden invitation to start a fire.

Behind glass were 2 Speedlite 600EX-RT flashes (they sell for \$550). Only 1 was real. Trained eyes could not spot

the real from the fraud. On the camera, in use however, one worked while the other shorted out the circuit board in the user's camera. When the customer returned the camera and flash to Canon for warranty service, she was none too pleased to learn that the flash was bogus, using it voided any Canon warranty and she was out about \$1400.

THERE IS A DIFFERENCE between counterfeit Canon products and aftermarket (sometimes called 3rd party) items. These are made - in this example - FOR Canon under a different brand name instead of BY Canon. These products can be of very high or very low quality or anywhere in between. The highest quality brands and items are typically licensed by Canon, who audits the quality and chips.

Our stores feature the Promaster brand of aftermarket accessories because of their quality and licensing. Due to Promaster's high standards, it is now represented on 2 continents.



Due to a combination of staffing and computer concerns, we are pushing back our fall Saturday morning seminars. We hope to have everything back on track next month. Stay tuned, please.