



## The Photo Button

Historically, photo buttons have been used in every political campaign since the 1870's. Today, photo buttons are used as wearable portraits along with photo T-shirts, etc. Photo buttons are most popular as a very profitable sales "add-ons" for sports, dance and event photography and come with a pin, magnet or mirror back.

For other types of studio photography, photo buttons have great promise to enhance that all too shrinking bottom line.

Selling photo buttons is a quick profit builder. At a wholesale price of \$1.30, photographers are selling photo buttons between \$3.90 & \$8.00 (3x to 6x mark up.) Not shabby for just checking the button box in Proshots, LabPrints or in an FTP order. Note: 3x markup is an add-on while 6x is a button sold separately. Size of photo buttons play a big part in demand. Kids really like the bigger buttons--3.5 inch dia. As a refrigerator magnet or mirror, Mom's also appreciate the 3.5" button. Seems the larger image size attracts more attention.

So you are not an event photographer. But, photo buttons for children and pet photography makes sense if used as an "add-on" or a "premium." Grand parents appreciate and cherish every picture of their grand children. Photo magnetic-buttons can certainly satisfy their need. Grand parents love refrigerator magnets. Most photographers could easily make photo buttons of "new borns" and "the 3 month old," a big hit with their customer base including grand parents.

Premiums. Potentially, the use of premiums can help any retail enterprise including the professional photographer if appropriately used. Premiums as a marketing tool can both be used to increase or maintain market share.

Photo buttons as a premium in other studio product lines as a means to increase profits does warrant experimentation.

Example 1: 30% of all senior sessions comprise of a pose: senior with pet. If one stops to think about the long term emotional impact of this particular pose, more portraiture could be easily sold. In just 12 months those seniors

will be off to college or the big city leaving their pets behind in the care of mom and dad. Here the use of a premium could be used to up-sell to a larger print size of that pose with pet. That premium could be the photo button. If you have another premium in mind, try that, but try. Of key importance is not waiting, hit the senior of that emotion during the sales presentation.

Example 2: Schools need cash! Funds raisers are now common place activities at nearly all schools K-12. To raise funds, schools need to sell something---why not photo buttons, magnets and mirrors? Schools these days will take the time to listen to most any fund raising idea. Again, let's look at high school. Photo buttons of sports teams and cheer leader squads can easily be sold to other students and at the games to parents to raise money. Don't forget school bands! These are booster buttons and should be marketed as such. You may want to dismiss the idea, but think it through. Look at the internal contacts you can make: teacher-sponsors, coaches and administrators and to say the least, the student body. You are in the cat bird seat here. You can provide something they need---access to money.

Here is how the school booster photo button program works. You provide photo buttons to the school at \$3.90 to \$5.00 each on sepeculation. They sell the buttons at a 2x mark up (no less) or more to whom ever. This is easy money/profit for the school. Every student or household will purchase a button. You buy the buttons in quantities of 50 or more and reorder more buttons when needed. All you have to do is capitalize on the PR. You are a hero in the school's eyes. In the mean time you are busy photographing individual cheer leaders and athletes in your studio because of contacts you made, all because of a simple promotional button.

Hint: with more of your own imagination you can surely think of more uses that photo buttons can make on improving your bottom line while increasing your market share. Key is the fact that buttons can be used for each sitting or in volume for promotions.

Note: This E-zine will be read by approximately 5,000 professional photographers. Thank you for your readership.

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