



What is PhotoByte?

PhotoByte software integrates critical workflow with a simple user interface to support the business of photography. The best practices of that business are, in effect, enforced simply by using the software.

Any excuse seems to do to put off the perplexing back-office chores that distract photographers from taking pictures. That has an adverse affect on profitability for every individual throughout the industry, because they cannot efficiently manage paperwork that is essential to creating cash flow and collecting revenue. But **PhotoByte allows the creation and electronic filing of administrative records instantly, automatically, and—most importantly—simultaneously with the production of each photo shoot.** It avoids a backlog of officekeeping chores by eliminating the tedium associated with performing them. PhotoByte is an accessory that helps photographers avoid unprofitable transactions, and it helps you get paid faster. It insulates you from the complexities of technology while enabling you to perform with increased efficiency by automating your routine work load, freeing you to satisfy your customers' demands for increased productivity and creativity. You will get more work done by using your computer *less!*

Best Practices

As financial auditors have long realized, computer software is the most effective means to implement business rules. PhotoByte co-opts the “best practices” of the photographic profession. Best practices are promulgated by the leading national photographic trade associations, i.e., ASMP, NPPA, PPA, and APA.

Best practices used to be hard to follow. By having neglecting them, photographers became vulnerable to adverse economic pressure. Terms and conditions were dictated by buyers. They conflicted with the copyright licensing prerogatives that exist to protect your intellectual property rights. PhotoByte elevates the level of professional practices throughout the profession by empowering individual photographers to utilize consistently proven profitability techniques on a daily basis. It follows that, when administrative tasks are truly easy to perform, more photographers will actually perform them. That contributes to the establishment of a de facto industry standard, not just guidelines that are ignored because they are troublesome. **By automating the business side of photography, PhotoByte makes best practices a routine part of any photo assignment.**

Proof of Concept

PhotoByte is already far and away the leading business-automation solution for photographers. It has proven that the idea of a *Business in a Box*[™] can work for creative people. Now it is FREE. Far beyond transposing tasks that were once performed with a pencil, paper, and a filing cabinet to a keyboard, a

monitor, and a hard drive just for the sake of claiming to be “computerized,” PhotoByte represents a whole new way to do business. And, in addition to automating routine chores that used to interfere with picture taking, it provides the kind of information necessary to make decisions that affect the success and growth of any photo business. Here are some examples:

- Intellectual property licensing is automated by the **Copyright Composer™**. This feature facilitates the creation of documents that include all the requisite “legalese” for commercial photographers who grant copyright licenses to their clients in the publishing industry in exchange for fees.
- The creation of a **Virtual Paper Trail™** of business documents is implemented automatically by turning estimates into contracts and, in turn, into job logs, then job change orders, expense reports, film and portfolio delivery memos, invoices, collection letters, and so on, all the while linking the data between them and enabling the user to navigate from one to the other in any order.
- Commonly-used legal documents are created on demand (without the need to keep an inventory of many different kinds of paper forms), including model releases, assignment confirmations, equipment manifests, indemnification agreements, agent/rep agreements, etc.
- It tracks the licensing and distribution of photographic images, so the exact disposition of film submissions for each photo assignment or stock licensing transaction is known in an instant. It also tracks how much revenue each image has earned. It creates a visual record of each shoot on the fly.
- PhotoByte’s unique **ProfitAbility™** feature tracks profits earned cumulatively, line item by line item, for each job during the creation of both estimates and invoices. Photographers can now know exactly how much profit is earned on each job by margin percentage and to the penny.
- It locates clients in specific geographic regions by assignment categories with the unique **PostMaster™** feature. It creates strategically targeted direct-mail campaigns.
- It catalogs scanned images and integrates them into commercial documents; e.g., caption sheets and delivery memos that include full color or black-and-white illustrations of the photos to which they refer.

PhotoByte instills both an awareness and an understanding of the rules governing revenue and profitability along with the prerogatives of copyright. In short, it enforces the use of best practices for each photographer in the profession.

Imagine a typical photographer who is several days into his current photo assignment and several weeks behind on paperwork, including invoicing. Instead, PhotoByte takes care of the administrative part of every shoot. It avoids all drudgery, eliminating a backlog of paperwork. You need no longer feel overburdened as a freelancer. At the very least you will achieve the benefit of increased cash flow by generating invoices more regularly and more quickly. Simply speaking, you will get paid faster!

How is PhotoByte Different or Better than Existing Small Business Software?

The inability to integrate data for documents and reports in accordance with trade practices that are specific to one industry, such as photography, is a limitation of generic software. Users are forced to waste time working around such limitations. Instead, PhotoByte is “photo aware.” It integrates all of the functions and

all of the data necessary to manage a photo business into one software solution, permitting an ease of use and compatibility that cannot exist with generic software.

So-called software suites, such as *Microsoft Office*™—even in conjunction with bookkeeping tools, such as *Quicken*™ or *QuickBooks*™—are not integrated solutions. If a photographer wants to write letters, cut checks, send estimates and invoices, and look up telephone numbers, he will have to cobble together a solution from amongst a number of disparate, single-task-oriented tools that were simply *packaged* together. While they might be labeled “small business software,” such a cobbled-together solution doesn’t share data. While data may be imported or exported from one program to another, the flow is not seamless. Neither is it photo aware. Manual intervention, customization, and computer expertise are required to use other software.

True integration means that a letter is not only formatted and addressed automatically, but it is electronically filed with existing information about the addressee into a chronological and categorical history of correspondence that is easily accessible. That correspondence is also linked to either existing or soon-to-be-created estimates, invoices, job change orders, and financial reports about each photo assignment. Integration means automatically linking each photo assignment to a record in your stock photo archive, so you don’t have to rescan images or retype captions and keywords. It means downloading commercial mailing lists from the Web and updating address. It also means that, each time an invoice is created, a sales tax report is updated simultaneously. All of those data are “attached” to a payment history, so collections are flagged, action items are scheduled, and contracts are composed, etc. This means not only increased productivity, but a paper trail that tracks the progression of every job and its revenue. Moreover, it protects your commercial and legal prerogatives.

The learning curve is short. PhotoByte offers photographers the ability to capture their specific business practices right out of the box with virtually no investment of time or capital resources for customization or programming. It will immediately improve the competitiveness of any photo business by allowing the realization of greater productivity, profitability, flexibility, and efficiency by reducing or eliminating staff requirements, increasing cash flow, and enhancing responsiveness to client needs through automation.

PhotoByte employs a graphic user interface (GUI) that reflects—in tremendous detail—the communal experience of *all* photographers. Therefore, screens can be navigated intuitively, and often-used procedures are scripted to execute with a mouse click. Since photographers are “visual people,” **all documents, forms, and reports that appear on screen are graphically identical to their paper counterparts**, complete with signatures and company logos included on demand. You can work with these “virtual documents” on a computer screen just as if they were real paper documents. But the difference is that they can be instantly modified, filed, or delivered (transmitted) by modem.

PhotoByte has anticipated and mapped-out nearly all administrative procedures that exists for running a commercial photo business. **That applies to corporate, editorial, and advertising photographers alike; and just as well for those who shoot either assignments exclusively or stock exclusively, or both.** So, whether you run a big studio or work out of a suitcase, these procedures have been synthesized

into a methodology that applies to everyone, yet it wraps itself around your existing preferences or habits. It respects a personal style of working.

PhotoByte was called “essential gear” by *American Photo* magazine and “a self-teaching course in business management” by John Retallack, Professor of Photography at the Rochester Institute of Technology. *Outdoor Photographer* magazine wrote, “PhotoByte brings profit and convenience to a photographer’s profession.” It has been endorsed by dozens of top-name shooters in the photography world. PhotoByte is such an important tool that it was selected by Allworth Press for inclusion in the first college-level textbook about the business side of photography, *Photography: Focus on Profit* by Tom Zimberoff.