Protecting Your Work Online

Sharing images online is a given if you want to be taken seriously as a photographer. But with that comes the risk of people stealing your images and not giving credit where it's due. That's why it is crucial that you take the appropriate steps to protect your work. From watermarks to copyrights, we outline the list you should check off before ever posting an image online.

Top Tips

Implementing watermarks

Watermarks act as a stamp -- no matter how people save it, your name or logo will be there. By definition, a watermark is a semi-transparent symbol, text or pattern automatically placed on your photos to identify them. Implementing watermarks is the strongest protection against unauthorized use because they cannot be easily removed without affecting the image. See a great example here: http://bit.ly/1mHTGuP.

Keep out unwanted visitors with a password

When it comes to your galleries, having password protection gives you the power to fully control who can view your photos. By requiring a password, only specific clients can view photographs, galleries, groups and even your homepage. Your site is only as public as you want to make it.

Restricting image size & right-click protection

Another way to protect your images is as simple as not letting others get away with saving them. With image restriction, you can make your gallery images so small that people won't want to print them as is, which will also drive them to buy. Disabling right-click saving is also a great way to stop thieves in their tracks -- when they right-click the image, 'Save' is automatically replaced with 'Buy,' 'Show Link to Photo,' 'Dim the Lights' and 'Download Original,' which also doubles as a great selling tool.

Features offered by Zenfolio

Using watermarks for brand recognition
With either of Zenfolio's Premium accounts, not only can you add logos to all pages of your website, you can also opt to use your logo as a watermark on your images themselves. This way, if you allow sharing of images via social media, etc., your branding can be retained regardless of where they're displayed online.

Security Videos (available to download as needed)
- Watermarks (3:10) - http://bit.ly/1jBikbW
- Image Protection (4:30) - http://bit.ly/1fspfyM
- Access Control (5:00) - http://bit.ly/1lmgn69

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Check out this Photographer's Corner article on protecting your work online from the ZenBlog: http://bit.ly/1iR9j05.

Discussion Questions

1. Is anyone using watermarks now to protect the work they display online? How did you create it? If not, why did you choose not to?

2. Let's discuss a subtle watermark vs. a strong one. What are your thoughts?

3. Does anyone have any examples of when copyright has came into play to protect your rights as a photographer?

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