



A PHOTOGRAPHER'S GUIDE TO EMAIL MARKETING

A Photographer's Guide to Email Marketing

If you're marketing your business with a web site or ads, you're off to a good start. But most people won't remember your site or ad months later. If they're not ready to hire you on first encounter, you may not get their business.

Email marketing solves that problem. By sending regular updates, you can present more and more reasons for potential clients to choose you as their photographer when the time comes – all while keeping your contact information on hand.

How does email marketing lead to booked sessions and happy clients?

- To start with, email is sharable. With just a click of the “forward” button, your audience grows.
- Email is selective. With email marketing, you can target your advertising dollars to people who are already interested (and most likely to respond).
- Over time, emails let you build relationships with your readers. By hearing from you and seeing your work, they'll begin to feel comfortable with you.
- Emails invite immediate response. Your ad isn't on a billboard, where people have to remember to look you up later. It's in the inbox, directly alongside a “reply” button. Prospects can become clients in a matter of seconds.
- Emails give you endless chances to show your readers why they should purchase from you. In short, they sell.

Your first step is finding people to sign up for your emails – your subscribers. After they sign up, they'll automatically get each message as you send them out.

How to Build A Subscriber List

A subscriber list can be thought of as a community - a group of people who care about your topic, identify with your brand, feel comfortable with your writing “voice”, and who, for all those reasons and more, appreciate getting your emails.

Your family, friends and social networks are a good place to start asking for subscriptions, of course. And they can send your emails on to whomever they think will be interested so they can sign up, too.

But you don't have to rely on word of mouth referrals. You can find subscribers online and off, whether you have a web site or not.

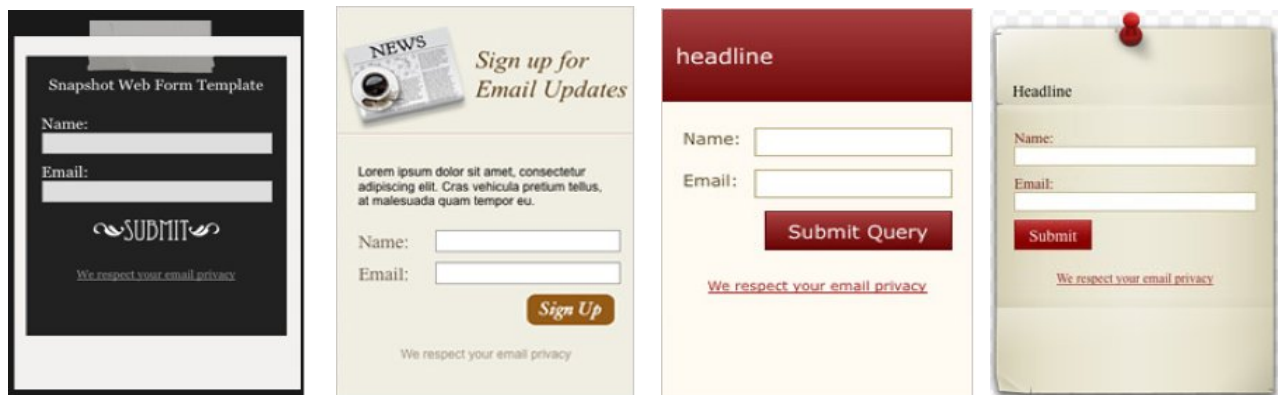
Building Your List Online

You probably run into a few dozen people in a typical day. Most likely, there are thousands of others that you *don't* run into who are close enough to be clients.

Many of them go online regularly. Meet them there, and invite them to subscribe with an online sign up form, called a **web form**.

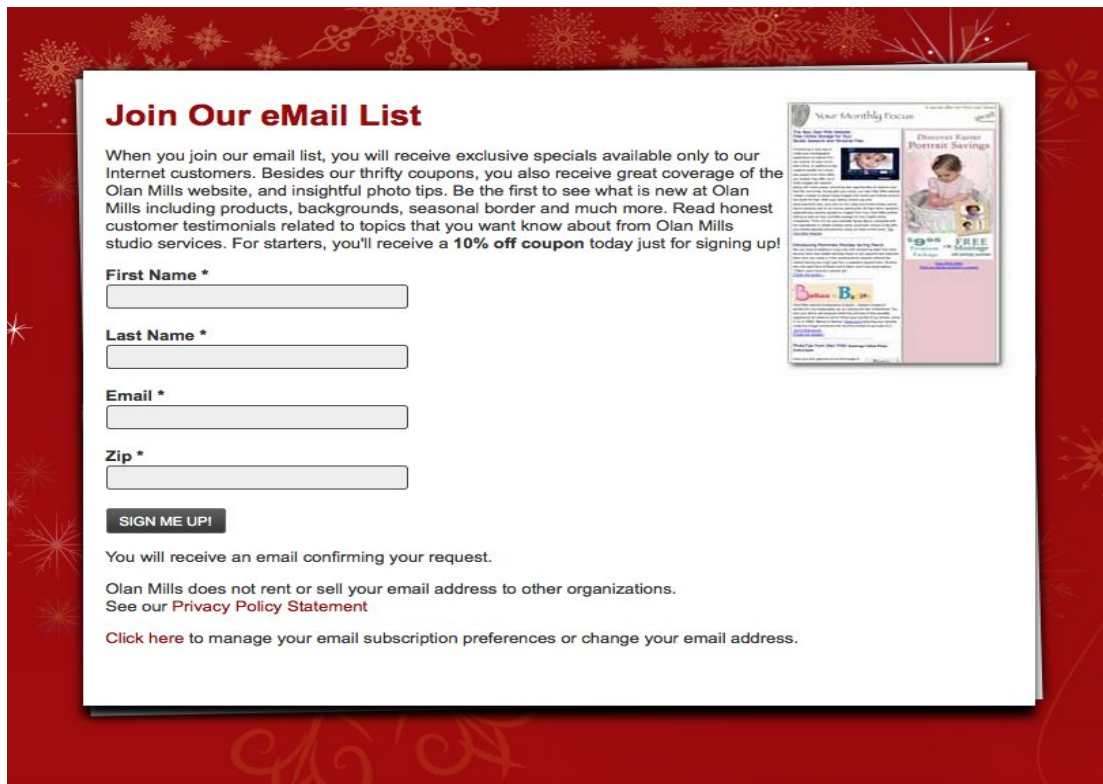
With AWeber, you can create a web form in your account. Site visitors just enter their information, and they're automatically added to your subscriber list.

We even have a library of [web form templates](#) you can choose from. Pick the one that fits your business best, then customize it however you like with the [web form generator](#).



Once your form is ready, it's time to get it out there! There are three places you can put it to collect subscribers:

Your web site. Everyone site visitor could become a subscriber. You never know when they'll be ready to sign up, so ask on every page - either display your web form or an invitation to fill it out on a separate page.



Join Our eMail List

When you join our email list, you will receive exclusive specials available only to our Internet customers. Besides our thrifty coupons, you also receive great coverage of the Olan Mills website, and insightful photo tips. Be the first to see what is new at Olan Mills including products, backgrounds, seasonal border and much more. Read honest customer testimonials related to topics that you want know about from Olan Mills studio services. For starters, you'll receive a **10% off coupon** today just for signing up!

First Name *

Last Name *

Email *

Zip *

SIGN ME UP!

You will receive an email confirming your request.

Olan Mills does not rent or sell your email address to other organizations.
 See our [Privacy Policy Statement](#)

[Click here](#) to manage your email subscription preferences or change your email address.

Olan Mills uses a separate sign up page to present all the benefits of signing up for their emails – including a 10% discount.

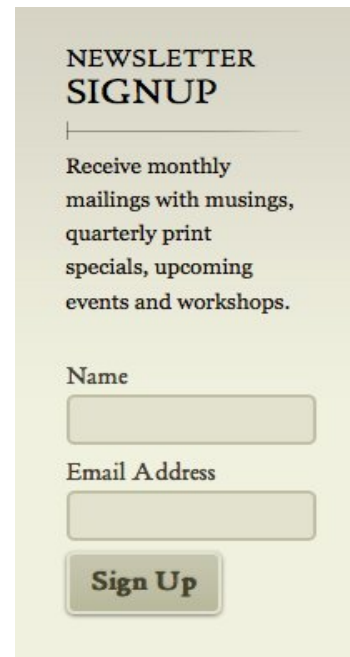
Your blog

By offering the chance for your readers to subscribe to your emails, you make sure they hear from you regularly, instead of whenever they happen to remember to check in.

Social media sites

Hop on your favorite social network, and you're a few clicks away from millions of people. Finding subscribers is as easy as directing those millions to your web form.

If you have a fan page set up on Facebook, you can [add your web form](#) so your contacts can sign up. You may even want to [tweet a sample newsletter](#) to show the Twitterverse what you have in store.



NEWSLETTER SIGNUP

Receive monthly mailings with musings, quarterly print specials, upcoming events and workshops.

Name

Email Address

Sign Up

Even if you don't have a website, or if your blog doesn't allow you to post your web form, you can still collect subscribers online.

Just create a form in your AWeber account, and we'll [host it for you](#). Then you can link to the form anywhere you leave footprints on the Web.



Johnbatdorff: The January **newsletter** will be going out soon... make sure your name is on the mailing list! <http://ow.ly/3totO> [#photography](#)
3 days ago via *HootSuite* · [Reply](#) · [View Tweet](#)

Building Your List Offline

Just because emailing happens online doesn't mean you're limited to the Internet for finding subscribers. Anyone in your area is a potential subscriber.

The key to collecting sign ups is in the way you approach them. You don't want to be too reserved (you do need to ask for their subscription), but you don't want to be too obnoxious, either.

- When you assemble portrait packages, include a sheet of free wallets with invitations to subscribe on the back of each. Your customers will pass them out, growing your list for you!
- When you book a new client, ask them in person if they'd like to get your emails. If they do, [import them to your list](#).
- If your town has fairs or community days, rent a table. Arrange your best work alongside a sign up sheet or an iPad or laptop displaying your web form.
- Pass out [QR codes](#) on postcards, flyers, business cards – anything. People with smartphones will be able to subscribe immediately.

What Happens After Sign Up?

Occasionally, computer scripts (or even people) may stumble across your web form and subscribe with someone else's email address.

Other times, people misspell their addresses, and you end up sending to the wrong people.

In these situations, the recipient thinks the messages are unrequested junk mail, otherwise known as spam. You're not likely to get much response from these people.

And if they click the "report spam" button, ISPs (Gmail, Hotmail and the like) notice. If enough people complain, they may stop delivering your messages.

The Solution: Confirmed Opt-In

To prevent this problem, the first thing that happens after sign up is confirmation.

This simply means new subscribers are sent a message asking them to confirm their choice to opt into your mailing list by clicking a link.

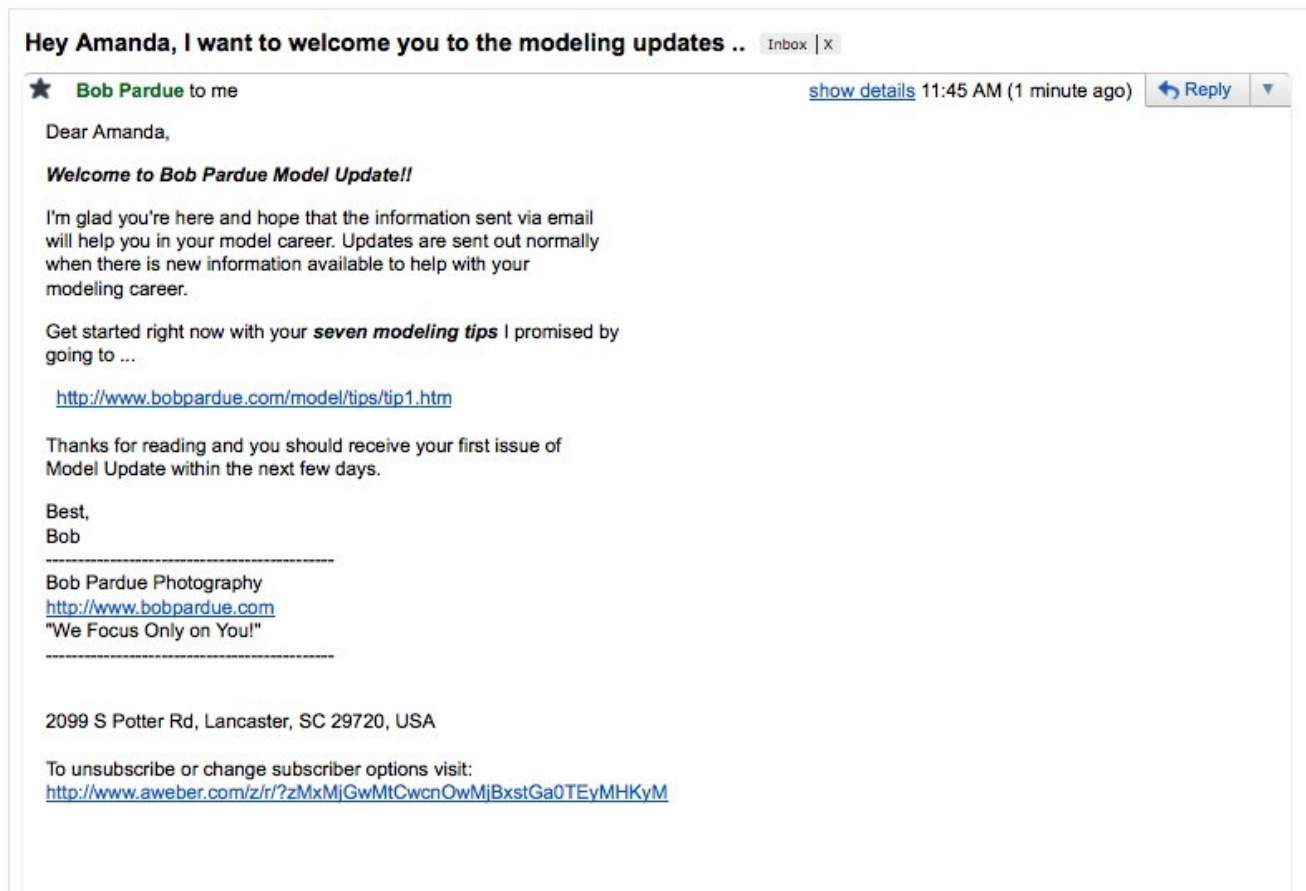
When the link is clicked, the address is added to your list. As a sender, you're assured the address is legitimate. And since your new subscribers have bothered to confirm their interest, they're likely to be engaged and responsive.

Welcoming New Subscribers

Subscribers' interest is often at a high point when they sign up for your email campaign. It's important to start emailing them right away, or you may miss a business opportunity.

So greet them with a welcome message. Let them know they've signed up successfully and tell them what they can expect from you.

Let them know how often you'll be emailing them. Invite them to respond to any email by hitting "reply" or calling you. And if you promised anything in exchange for signing up, this is your chance to deliver it.



Bob Pardue welcomes new subscribers to his modeling advice list with seven helpful tips. After demonstrating his expertise in the modeling industry, he offers his services as a glamour shot photographer.

What to Send In Your Emails

Every email is a chance to turn subscribers into clients. Because you have permission to email your subscribers as long as they are on your list, you don't have to go for the hard sell right away.

Instead, create a vision of the experience people get when they book with you: your friendly, easy-to-work-with personality, your creative genius and beautiful, striking photos.

No matter which type it is, each email should include the following:

- A subject that accurately reflects the content inside
- Your company name. Put this in your [from line](#) so your readers can see who the message is coming from.
- Your contact info – all of it. Web site, email address, postal address, phone number, Twitter handle – give subscribers every available option for contacting you.
- A call to action – ask your readers to respond in some way, whether it's clicking over to your site to see more photos, booking a session, following you on Facebook or just keeping you in mind.
- Pictures. Your work is your eye candy. It's what attracted your subscribers in the first place, and it's what will get them to buy.

Any other content you include will differ for each email. There are four different things you can accomplish with your emails

- Get readers started with a follow up series
- Send regular newsletters
- Make timely announcements
- Broadcast from your blog

Each type of message helps you communicate with your subscribers in different ways.

Getting Readers Started

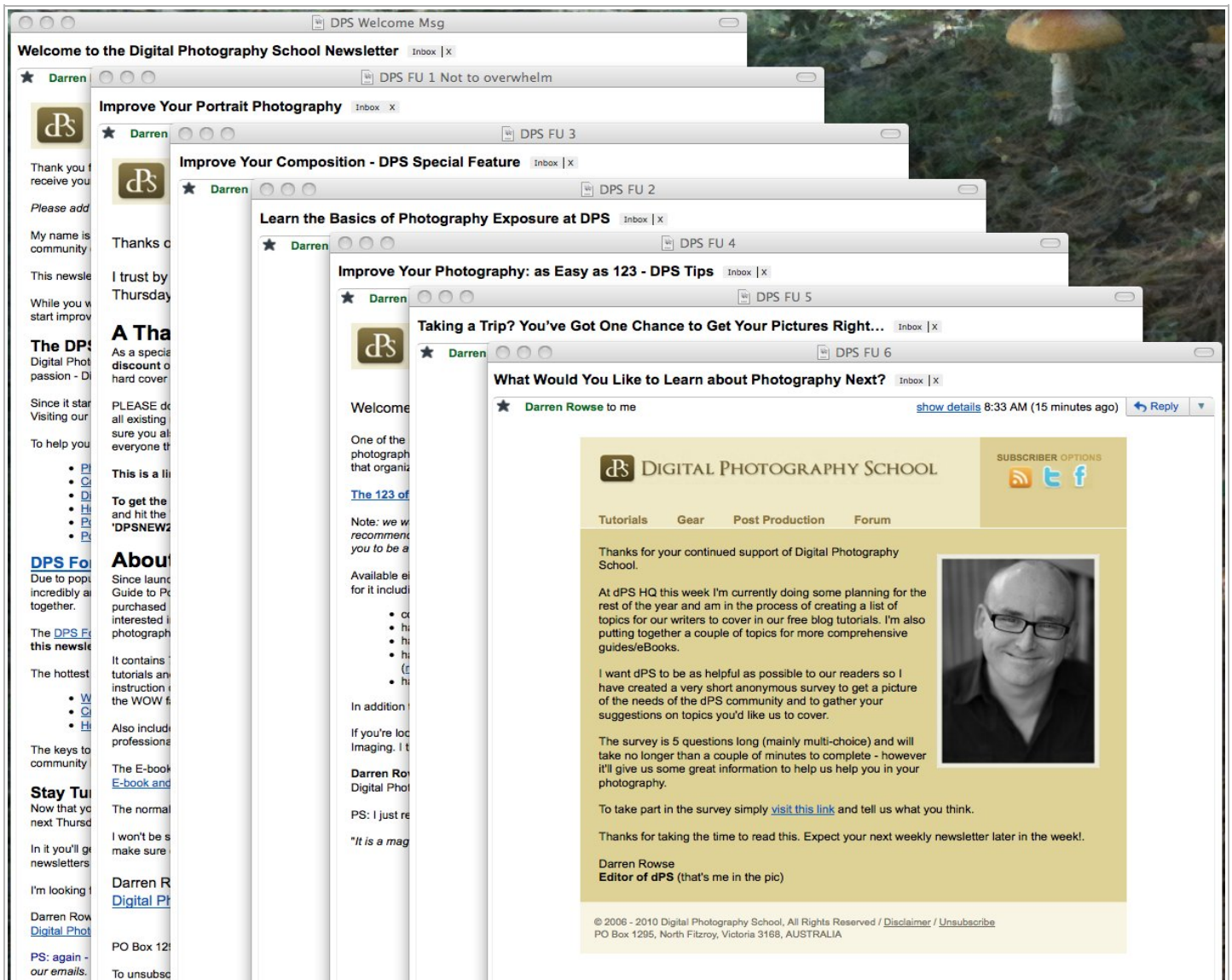
Not every reader will join your list right at the beginning. It may take years for some of them to find you. By the time they sign up, they'll have missed all the emails you already sent out.

But you can make sure everyone starts off on the same foot with a follow up series. This is a sequence of messages that are automatically sent to new subscribers. Each follows the other at an intervals that you set up beforehand.

You can design your follow up series around whatever information you think would make a helpful introduction to your campaign, but here are a few suggestions:

- DIY photography tips. Your readers will appreciate the tutorials, and you'll hopefully help them take some special pictures of their own. But it's not likely that they'll be able to produce studio-quality images with those tips. So when they want to chronicle a big event, guess which photographer they'll call?
- Themed presentations. In each email, showcase your work in a different category. Display wedding photos in one, sporting events in the next, family portraits in the next.
- A series of your best work. Your sweetest, most striking images have a lot of selling power. Put them in a follow up series to make sure each new subscriber gets a chance to appreciate them.

Over time, your new subscribers will grow familiar with you and come to appreciate your helpfulness. And when they're ready for a photographer, you'll be the first place they turn.



Digital Photography School has a follow up series designed to teach photo-taking basics to amateurs.

Sending Out Your Newsletter

Sent monthly, weekly, or even (with the right kind of content) daily, newsletters help you become part of your subscribers' regular routines. They'll come to expect and even look forward to hearing from you.

With a newsletter, you can send updates on your latest happenings, upcoming events and newest offerings. Offering outdoor fairy sessions for the summer? Almost fully booked for graduation season? Transitioning from just portraits to full-on photojournalism? Let your subscribers know.

The frequency of your newsletter is going to depend on how often you have time to put one together and how much you have to say. Make sure you establish a frequency that you can keep up with – subscribers will come to expect your mailings.

If you send frequently, include only an item or two in each message. This gives you room to go into specifics without overwhelming your subscribers. The less often you send, the more you can put into each message.





Trey Ratcliff of Stuck In Customs sends out a regular newsletter so subscribers can scan through his latest creative shots.

Making Announcements

Whenever you have something new to say, you can send an announcement as a [broadcast](#). While follow up messages are sent in sequence, broadcasts are sent once, to your entire list or a [group of people](#) you specify, at the [date and time](#) you specify.

Even if you send a newsletter, use these between mailings for information that can't wait.

Each update should have its own, specific subject. Announce:

- Fairs or community events you'll be at. People may want to meet you or get a look at your work in person.
- New packages you've just made available.
- Photos that you're willing to sell high-resolution images of. Link to a page on your site where readers can purchase each image, then email them the file.
- Pictures from your latest shoot – especially if you've tried something new.

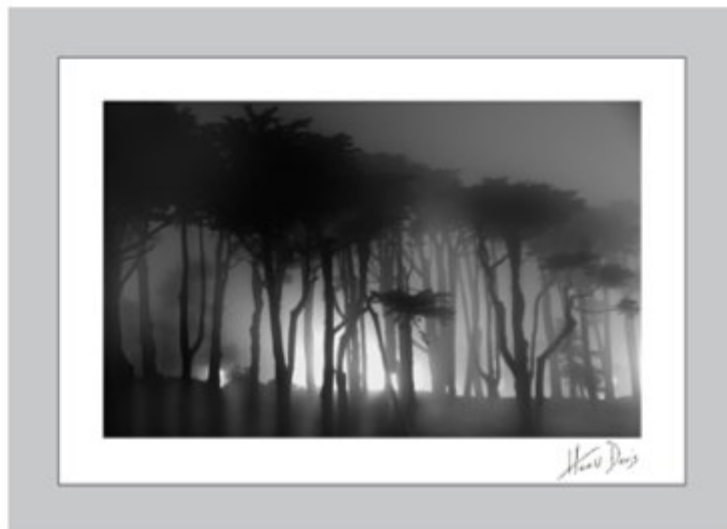
☆ Harold Davis to me

[show details](#) 1:31 PM (20 hours ago)

[Reply](#)

Harold Davis Print of the Month

For 2011, we are offering something new. Each month we will be presenting a very special archival print at a special price. If you've wanted to own an original print of my work, then each month you will have the opportunity to purchase one of my best images. At the same time, you'll be benefiting a living artist and helping me to continue my work.



I am not comparing myself with the great masters of photography, but it is worth noting that during the many years that Edward Weston and Ansel Adams were active, you could have bought one of their prints for a few hundred dollars (at most). These prints sell for tens of thousands of dollars at auction today.

January Print

Our January Harold Davis Print of the Month is [Trees in the Fog](#) (shown above). *Trees in the Fog* is made by hand and giclee-printed with tender, loving care in my studio on 325 gsm Hahnemuhle FineArt Baryta 100% a-Cellulose paper. This popular image has appeared in [Creative Night](#) (Wiley) and on the cover of [Creative Black & White](#) (Wiley).

My normal, retail price for this archival print is \$450.00. For the month of January, 2011, I am offering *Trees in the Fog* for \$195.00. This includes careful, custom packing and insured Fedex ground shipping within the United States. (For orders outside of the United States, please contact me for shipping costs.)

You can read more about the image, the print, and the [special offer](#) by following this [link](#).

Harold Davis Photography sends out print-of-the-month offers. Not only do these emails give Harold a chance to impress his readers with creative shots, they invite readers to purchase the prints.

Broadcasting From Your Blog

A blog takes your marketing to the next level. New posts on the latest news and tips keep your customers and prospects engaged.

But you can't rely on readers to keep coming back on their own. Instead, with [blog broadcasting](#), your latest posts are automatically converted into a newsletter for you to send out.

You set the preferences: how many articles, how often and who will receive them, and the rest is taken care of automatically.

Blog broadcasts are good for sharing much the same kind of information as regular broadcasts. You'd choose to update from your blog instead in two situations:

- if you already have a blog
- if you'd like to add a blog to your site so people can get your information there or by email, whichever way they'd prefer

Either way, once your blog is ready, it only takes a few minutes to [set up your blog broadcast](#) and start sharing your posts with your subscribers.

AWeber WordPress Plugin

Add web forms to your Wordpress blog with the click of a button! Just choose the form you want, and we'll do the rest. [...]

[Download It Now!](#) ➔



Scheduling Your Emails – When to Send?

Wedding season, graduation weekend, the holidays - certain times of the year, the demand for photographers rises to a fever pitch. These are the most important times for you to get your marketing messages out there.

Unfortunately, they're also the times you'll be busiest, you know, actually taking pictures. How can you send emails that will get results at the same time?

Simple. Just create them beforehand – whenever you have the time and the inspiration. The [schedule them](#), and they'll automatically be sent on the date and time you choose.

For example, you may expect quite a few bookings for senior portraits in March. So in February, you put together your March newsletter, with senior portraits you've taken in the past, the discount you're offering for graduation and a reminder to brides that June weekends fill up quickly.

Then in March, in the midst of the chaos, your newsletter's already taken care of!

Email Marketing To Go

With these tips and ideas, you hopefully have a crystal clear picture of what you need to do to get your email campaign started.

When you're ready for a snapshot of the next step, come find one on our site or social pages!



Stop by [Inbox Ideas](#), our blog



Follow our [Twitter feed](#) for the latest marketing links



Watch our [YouTube videos](#) for helpful how-to's



Become a fan on [Facebook](#) to interact with other marketers

We have lots of helpful tips and advice ready for you. Can't wait to see you there!