

MARKETING MIX

Offering print and digital marketing tips for the average business



Oh Snap!

WHY PUTTING YOUR BEST IMAGES FORWARD EFFECTS YOUR BOTTOM LINE

If a picture is worth a thousand words, a striking product image is worth a thousand website visits.

BY BRIAN BLATNICKI

Consumers are always looking at ways to save time, and their attention innately looks for the fastest way to consume information – images. Did you know that people remember upwards of 90 per cent of what they see and only 10 per cent of what they read?

The truth is that the better your product images, the higher your sales will be. So why do so many people not take product photography more seriously?

The problem is that producing quality product images for your business is not exactly point and shoot. Owners that usually have great products and ideas struggle when it comes time to execute or present them, so having great imagery and visual branding is one of the biggest challenges business owners face.

SO WHY DOES PRODUCT PHOTOGRAPHY MATTER SO MUCH?

Well, not only do product images serve as evidence to the quality of your product but they also provide a sneak peek into your online store, building two very important things: trust and transparency.

Your audience's first impression is formed through images, building a moment of truth: will they continue to browse and in the end, make a purchase?

When selecting images, you will want to select ones that:

- Engage
- Convert
- Lift the lifetime value of your customers

Try thinking about the last time you were online shopping and you stumbled across a poor product image. It could have been one that was out of focus or maybe too dark. Perhaps you couldn't determine the actual size of the product or it wasn't clear what colour it would be. Maybe there was so much happening in the image that you couldn't figure out what item was actually for sale. Odds are that you didn't end up buying the item.

When you browse online, the user experience is much different than when shopping in a brick and mortar store; you can't hold the product and you can't touch it or feel the texture. You base your buying decision on the images. For the customer, this can be unnerving, so it's your job to put them at ease with the best possible product images.

WHAT ARE THE INS AND OUTS OF PRODUCT PHOTOGRAPHY ANYWAYS?

Product photography uses specific techniques to attractively represent products and entice potential buyers to purchase. Product photography is a critical part of both online and offline marketing, including social media, online ads, company websites, catalogues, brochures, magazine ads and billboards, specifically when selling products direct to consumer.

A few things a product image should accomplish:

- It should grab people's attention and make them want to buy or click on your product
- It should communicate important information about your product clearly
- It should contain purpose, emotional connection and style that denotes your brand
- It should aid people in visualizing what it would be like to own and/or use your product

There are two core types of images that you should use for your products marketing.

The first are product-only images. These are clean-cut, white background images that must include your featured product and an assortment of images displaying your product from various angles. These should be predominately used for your e-commerce.

The second is lifestyle photos or in-context photos that show your product being used in its envisioned environment or together with complementing products.

PRODUCT-ONLY IMAGES

Product-only photos should demonstrate your product in its simplest form from all significant angles. These should be shot on a plain background to help create a consistent look across your product line. These images are a visual way to describe your product and are best-suited for your online store. Their job is to nurture your website visitors towards making a purchase. Despite what you may have heard, I suggest having six to twelve images on your product page, not just one or two. The majority of them should be product-only shots, with one or two lifestyle photos to create an added emotional bond with your product. Product-only images are most suited for website stores because they have a significantly higher rate of conversion.

IN-CONTEXT IMAGES

Lifestyle shots, ones that tell a story, are best-suited for your social media channels, blog posts, emails and other marketing channels at the top of your conversion funnel. It's also good to add a few in-context snaps to your website to help boost emotional engagement.

Lifestyle photos allow you more creative freedom, but the same rules apply to lifestyle images as in product-only shots. Experiment getting some images using a camera with and without a tripod. Experiment with taking your products photos outdoors to a setting that works with your brand's voice.

The world of e-commerce and social media is showing no sign of slowing down. Your product images offer your audience a virtual window into your business, and visual content plays a massive role in online purchasing decisions.

Customers are constantly being inundated with information online and are being forced to make immediate decisions based on the content you choose to show them. To grab their attention, create polished, consistent images for your product pages and marketing channels.

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