

# Studio Photography

THE BUSINESS BEHIND THE IMAGE

build & maintain client base

## Website Is Cornerstone of Studio's Success

### Phone Keeps Ringing, Profits Keep Rising

TEXT AND IMAGES BY TOM JUDD

I maintain a small in-house studio for shooting catalog and small-product work, as well as standard headshots, but most of my work is created out on location, where I typically pack up my Honda Pilot with various lighting kits, softboxes, light stands, backgrounds, trusty 17" Apple Mac PowerBook, and a Canon digital camera outfit, consisting of an EOS-1Ds Mark II, 1D Mark II, and 5D, as well as a complement of lenses ranging from 17mm to 400mm. I work with a paid assistant, sometimes two.

A few years ago, I was inspired reading about other photographers who were starting to use the power of the Web to promote their business to a wider potential audience. I hired a local Web hosting company and Web design service. I wrote the copy for the site and selected the images, and let the designers do their thing.

My website has proven to be the cornerstone of my success. When potential clients visit my site, they like the easy-to-navigate, laid-back approach. They see from the images on my site that I'm well-versed in different kinds of work, that I know how to use the most up-to-date equipment, and that I have more than 23 years of experience with which to help solve their photographic challenges.

The phone keeps ringing, and I keep getting emails directly from my website, so it all seems to be working. Business profits were up about 25 percent overall in 2005 compared to 2004, and



in the first two quarters of 2006 profits are up just over 13 percent from this same period last year.

This is also due, in part, to the way I take care of my clients. When they entrust me to do a job for them, I give more than they ask for. I always want them feeling like they are getting their money's worth, and then some. I treat my clients with respect and always try to be very clear in communicating, before, during, and after a job is completed.

I also use my website to upload client images as needed, so they can have nearly instant access to jobs I have done for them. These Web galleries—created with iView MediaPro software—have been a well-received addition to my customer service.

There's a lot of work out there, but you have to let people know who you are and what you can do for them. A website is the perfect way to get that across in today's marketplace. I've essentially dropped all other kinds of advertising and let my website do all my talking.

Having a website and offering Web-based services, such as clients accessing photos from recent projects, has really helped me stay at the forefront of current technology and workflow techniques. I really like it. And as with so many other things that have come with the latest technology, I find myself wondering how I ever did it any other way.

Thomas Judd, owner of Thomas Judd Photography ([www.thomasjuddphotography.com](http://www.thomasjuddphotography.com)) in Denton, Texas, was recently voted one of the top three area photographers in a "Best of Denton" survey conducted by the local newspaper. He shoots advertising work, catalogs, industrial application shots, brochures, Web images, corporate events, and editorial work for his clientele: large, medium, and small companies and ad agencies; publicity headshots for doctors, realtors, CEOs, bank and hospital personnel, musicians, and actors; and occasional family and senior portraits.



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