

creating images

Using a professional photographer is the ideal way to capture your project or company images.

However, when this not an option, you can still go a long way towards creating quality images that capture your project and reflect your company's image in a professional way.

in general

- > Aim for all images to communicate your company's values as well as the specific message.
- > Be mindful of consistency when taking a series of photos – i.e. ensure the background, lighting, colours and photographic angles are the same and the subject orientation is consistent:



These two images do not work well together as a series; the backgrounds, subject orientation, image cropping, and the photographic angles are significantly different for each image.

- > Be conscious of reflections, shadows, and the background:



Not only is there a reflection of the photographer in shot, there are a number of distracting elements in the background. Don't forget to look for reflections in any surface – such as a window, spectacles, or a computer monitor.

- > Ensure that there is sufficient space between the subject(s) and the background to avoid a harsh shadow:



The subject has a harsh shadow in the photograph on the left. By stepping away from the background slightly, the harsh shadow is no longer behind the subject in the photograph on the right.

- > Make sure that there is enough light to see the main focus of the photo.
- > With digital photos, think about the compression (file size) you use. You can only reduce a photo's compression – you cannot increase it without the image becoming pixelated and grainy.
 - > Smaller compression is good for email
 - > Medium compression is appropriate for use on web sites
 - > High compression is to be used for print – but remember that images this size can be reduced for the web and email too

images of people should directly engage the viewer

- > Ensure the photograph focuses or centres on people – try to reveal something of their character; aim to talk directly to the viewer.
- > The subject's personality should dominate the image:



The personality of the subject is dominant in this image—the pose and expression are both natural and dynamic.

- > Don't tell them when you are taking the photos, so that they are more likely to relax

- > Try having someone talk to them off camera
- > All subjects should appear natural
- > When taking photos of clean shaven men either make sure either they have shaving kit or take the photo in the morning to avoid the 5 o'clock shadow.
- > With groups of people, make sure they're interacting, engaged and displaying confidence:



This is a great example of a successful group photograph – all subjects are looking to the camera, close together and interacting, and all looking confident. The camera angle also adds interest.

- > In many instances it is better to have groups of people closer together than is normal as this will look natural in the final image.
- > Stick with the tried and tested shots of people:
 - > Head Shot
 - > Head and Shoulders
 - > Head, Shoulders and Folded Arms
 - > Full Length



From left: Head Shot; Head and Shoulders; Head, Shoulders and Folded Arms; Full Length.

- > Ensure that there is enough light from behind you so you can see the subject's face

images of objects can be a great way of bringing information to life

- > Look for images that focus on presenting the information in a clear and dramatic way.
- > Remember that details can be more informative than the wider view:
 - > Instead of taking one overall shot of the subject, several detail photos of important features will provide greater impact and understanding



These detailed shots of the Melbourne Museum not only inform the viewer of some of the attractions at the museum, they also tell a story about the architecture in an interesting way.

- > Look for the most dramatic angle to show both form and function.
- > Make sure there are no distracting elements around the subject:



The bus parked behind these sculptural pieces is a distraction in this image and clearly was not considered when taking the photograph.

- > It is best to photograph objects with a white background unless it is important to have the object in context.

action or activity imagery brings a sense of energy and engagement with life

- > Use light and open space to create variety and balance with the overall landscape.
- > Experiment with the balance between foreground and background area to create further interest.
- > Crop carefully to highlight strong shapes and create eye catching compositions.
- > Think about the point-of-focus – what message is the photo to convey and is it obvious?:



The sculptural pieces in the photograph on the left are not clearly the point-of-focus – they are heavily shadowed, and ‘dwarfed’ by the distracting building in the background. Try moving closer and ensuring good light is on the subject, and look at different angles around the subject, such as in the example images on the middle and right above.

working with a professional photographer

- > Spend some time with the photographer, art director and any design agencies you may be using to get know their style/processes etc.
- > Plan well ahead and determine as many elements and variables as possible.
- > If you’re shooting on location, a pre-shoot planning visit is the preferred option. If this is not possible make sure everyone has as much visual reference as possible. This will help get the most out of the location on the day.
- > Think creatively as a group about the message you want the photography to deliver.
 - > You may find surprising new subjects or interpretations that will make the company’s photographic style more effective
- > Respect the creative input of photographers but also ensure they are familiar with your brand values.

And finally...be prepared to get up early to capture that sunrise shot.

Have fun and enjoy the experience.