FULL CHAPTERS NOT COVERED IN MY CLASS



CHAPTERS:

Sell Prints On-Line

Take Stock in Stock Photography

YOUR MONEY CAN WORK HARDER FOR YOU THAN YOU CAN

GOOD NIGHT AND GOOD LUCK

SELL PRINTS ONLINE

"I don't care if you make a print on a bathmat, just as long as it is a good print." —Edward Weston

This chapter is one of my favorites in this book, because three of The All-Star Photo Marketers—Karen Hutton and Jonathan & Angela Scott—share some valuable advice for selling prints online and I love listening to them.

It's such good advice, in fact, that after I finish writing this book, I am going to look into selling prints online. Right now, I only sell prints that I print myself, a process I thoroughly enjoy. It also gives me 100% creative control, and I can manually (as opposed to digitally) sign and number each print.

However, I can't do it while I'm asleep. Speaking of keeping me up, packing and shipping prints also takes away from my nap time, as does speaking with customers about orders.

My technique for selling hand-printed editions: On each page of the Galleries on my website/store, I have box: Prints for Sales. Contact <u>ricksammon@mac.com</u>. I also have a page on my website, Prints for Sale that shows my price list. If you are interested in selling prints online, which, as Karen Hutton points out, "is a ton of work in the beginning," I think this chapter is for you.

Karen Hutton

I've had a camera in my hands almost my entire life. My heroes were Ansel Adams, Edward Weston, Minor White, Paul Caponigro, and others of that era. My dream from the very beginning was to sell beautiful prints on amazing materials. In other words, fine art.

As life would have it, my career took off in other directions teaching, traveling, leading photographic retreats, speaking, and brand partner collaborations.

I loved it all, and I still do! But the fine-art dreams? They consistently took a back seat. Sure, I sold prints along the way, usually large format ones, but it wasn't my focus; it was simply a by-product of everything else I was doing. And yet, I looked at those moments as a sort of proof-of-life that kept the dream alive.

The year of COVID-19 wiped the slate clean in one fell swoop. Disappointing? You bet. But I also saw it as an opportunity to lean into fine art at long last.

That happened in two ways:

1. I developed an entirely new line of art that I call "Whimsical Reveries," borne out of the intense introspection and exploration of 2020.

2. Turning my focus at last to the one thing that started me on my photographic journey in the first place: creating and selling fine art photography, creating installations, collaborating on projects that needed my brand of visual storytelling.

As a lifelong entrepreneur, one thing I've learned is to always have multiple streams of income, which is what Rick also recommends. As a photographic creative, that might mean writing, teaching, speaking, brand partnerships, commercial projects, portraits, weddings, or whatever avenues suit one's unique talents and interests.

In my case, I still teach (online), speak (online), write, collaborate on projects, maintain brand partnerships and now, finally, I create/sell fine art prints.

I love my in-person collaborations and installations, which I'm blessed to be doing again.

But if there's one thing the year of COVID-19 taught us all is that selling art online is a crucial avenue to include! The art world did indeed experience a shift of epic proportions, with galleries and museums closing (some temporarily, some permanently), and losing millions of dollars of revenue. What took its place? Online sales. Even the staunchest, old-school galleries figured out some way to do it, much as it pained many to do so. The consensus: even as in-person sales are picking up again, online art sales are here to stay.

The best part for artists? It opened up a massive opportunity. The fact that artists could take their destiny and sales into their own hands, and build their own following, client base, and business and income stream meant a whole new world transformed before our eyes.

Here's why I do it:

- 1) It puts the power and control of my destiny into my own hands.
- 2) Whether I succeed or fail is all up to me.
- 3) While it's a *ton* of work, especially in the beginning, it's also a way to experience that much-sought-after passive income. Let's be clear though: it's only passive in the sense that you can wake up in the morning to new sales transpiring while you slept. Because creating those sales is anything *but* passive!
- 4) I can tell my story, my way—to a much broader audience. The online aspect of fine art presentation offers a variety pack of opportunities: social media, live broadcasts, self-made or professional videos, writing about my work, doing all kinds of fun events and seasonal or spot sales, giveaways, sharing "extras" with my email subscribers. All of these offer ways to

connect with and reach people in my own unique way. I love connecting, and I love creating a "world" where people can come and feel good, enjoy spending time, have a laugh, walk away feeling uplifted, and perhaps with a bit more O₂ in their souls. I refer to my work as "Oxygen for Your Walls," you see. It's all part of my "why" for creating art in the first place. Always has been.

5) Giving back. I've always given back in real-time, to my people, in person. But working online is offering new ways to do that. Better still: it blends my love for fine art with helping others in truly unique ways.

Here's how I do it:

1. Websites. For the variety of avenues in my business (besides art/photography/teaching/speaking (I also do voiceovers professionally), I need more than one website. Each one is a specialist, offering the best tools for the job I require. As of this writing, here's how it works:

• Karenhutton.com is the portal to my world and is built on WordPress. Voiceovers, teaching, upcoming events, etc.—you can get to any of my tracks from there.

• KarenHuttonArt.com is my fine art print gallery and shop. Open editions, limited editions, custom prints—I can offer them all in one

place. It's built on Art Storefronts (artstorefronts.com). Their tools and features are all geared specifically toward fine-art sales—clients can even use Live View with Augmented Reality to see how art looks in their space or use a selection of rooms where they can change rooms, wall colors, etc., to get an idea of how it will look. Between that and their tech and marketing support, it's the best place for my fine-art online presence.

• KarenHuttonPhotography.com is my photo portfolio site. It serves the collaboration, installation, and projects work I do directly with clients. As such, it's the service-based (vs. product-based) segment of my business. That site is built on SmugMug (smugmug.com). To me that's their specialty and where they excel since the backend they provide is second-to-none and my images look incredible there.

- 2. Social media for connection and marketing. Platforms morph and change, but right now, I focus more on Instagram, with its rich set of tools in Reels, IGTV, LIVE broadcasts, Stories, etc. I like one-stop shops. Overall, social is a great way to find *new* members of your audience who are just waiting to discover you. And it's another way to connect with existing followers who like to know what you're up to and what's new.
- 3. Newsletters. I value personal connection, as well as offering those who take the chance with me some extra goodness. I

think of them as my "Insiders' Club," and enjoy finding fun ways to educate, inspire, and share new art and adventures. *Note:* You can create "Behind the Scenes" videos, include new work and your thoughts about how and why you created it, and even create educational videos about your work, and then share it all with subscribers. Invite the world to join! Your subscriber list is pure gold. Take good care of them and they'll be your best ambassadors the world over!

4. Events, especially virtual ones. The online world offers wonderful opportunities to show your work, sell it in real time, and connect with your audience through live events, charity events, and just about any other kind of celebration or event you can think of to build around your art sales.

Karen Hutton

<u>www.karenhutton.com</u> Photographer, Artist, Purveyor of Awesomeness

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Jonathan & Angela Scott

Shortly after we launched our fine art collection, the world experienced a massive shift as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. With galleries temporarily closed, world travel paused, and live events postponed, we were forced to re-evaluate our strategy for sharing our artwork and shift to a mostly online model. After a year of selling our fine art photography online, we're excited to share our tips for generating passive income through online print sales.

Identify the Best Tools & Partners. As with all online businesses, the processing of payments, production of products, and fulfillment of orders can be a very challenging and complicated process. When you begin setting up the infrastructure to sell your artwork online, our biggest tip is to find the best tools and partners to streamline the process.

By using a robust e-commerce platform, Shopify, we were able to simplify the process of accepting payments and processing orders, while also gaining access to basic analytics. After countless hours of searching, we were also able to identify a printing partner with the ability to seamlessly print and fulfill our international print orders. We even found a Shopify integration—Change Commerce—which allows our customers to seamlessly donate a portion of their purchase to a specific non-profit organization. The use of automation tools such as Shopify and Change Commerce has allowed us to save time, streamline our operations, and identify ways to grow the business.

Share the Stories Behind Your Work. By selling prints exclusively online, unfortunately you miss out on some of the more traditional

ways people interact with artwork and engage with artists. For instance, there may not be physical galleries where customers can see and experience your artwork. Secondly, you may not have walk-in exhibitions or events, where there's usually an opportunity to share more of the passion behind your photography and engage with potential customers face-to-face.

For these reasons, we found that sharing stories through virtual channels is a very important aspect of our fine art photography marketing strategy. For example, with the launch of our gallery website, we also launched a YouTube channel. Here, we share "Behind the Shot" video stories that provide subscribers with more insights behind each photograph—what happened that day, the story behind the animal/location, how we visualized it, etc.

Another aspect of our photography is giving back to conservation. With donate 10% of each sale of our prints directly to a conservation organization that we believe in. For that reason, we have also tried to tell stories about the organizations and causes that our fine art photography supports. For example, we'll focus our content on a particular theme (i.e., World Cheetah Month) so as to share more conservation stories and raise awareness.

Jonathan & Angela Scott

The Jonathan & Angela Scott Collection, curated by David & Tori Scott, on <u>www.thuranima.com</u>. Prints are also available on <u>www.bigcatpeople.com</u>.

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Rick here: Fine Art America (<u>www.fineartamerica.com</u>) is another website that offers online photo sales, and more—from t-shirts to throw pillows, and from coffee cups to, believe it or not, shower curtains.

You can also sell prints (and lots of other stuff) on Instagram via the Instagram Shopping Cart.

TAKE STOCK OF STOCK PHOTOGRAPHY

As recently as the early 1990s, I knew photographers who were making more than \$100,000 a year selling stock photography. One friend licensed a 35mm slide of a high-flying bald eagle with a fish in its talons to a German company for \$18,000.

Today, in 2021, you can buy a high-resolution digital file of a bald eagle with a fish in its talons from iStock (istockphoto.com) for under \$18.

Another photographer I know told me he bought a brand-new Mercedes Benz with the money generated from one month's worth of stock sales. Again that was back in the early 1990s. I trust and respect this photographer so I don't think he was exaggerating.

The world of stock photography has changed, no doubt. But as the saying goes, "When you are though changing, you are through." That saying applies to virtually every aspect of photography—and of course life. Changes bring opportunities, and opportunities are what photographers need to grow their business.

I'm not an expert on selling stock photos, but I am skilled at finding experts who can share their expertise with my readers. To get some insight in selling stock photos, I reached out to **Mat Hayward, Adobe Stock evangelist**. Take stock in what he says. Take it away, Mat!

Photographers, videographers, and illustrators have a fantastic opportunity to monetize their work by putting it in front of the millions of Adobe customers around the world using Adobe Stock.

Adobe Stock is a traditional stock photography agency working as a free-standing site (stock.adobe.com) and is incorporated into Adobe applications such as Photoshop and Premiere Pro. Customers can purchase a license to use your work and that can provide a passive revenue stream that can flow for years.

You don't need an Adobe Creative Cloud subscription to become an Adobe Stock Contributor. The only requirement is an active Adobe ID (email address) to sign up.

If you are a Creative Cloud member, you can use the same Adobe ID to create your Adobe Stock Contributor account. You can upload your work directly through Adobe Bridge, Photoshop Lightroom, and Lightroom Classic.

To get started, visit the Adobe Stock Contributor portal: contributor.stock.adobe.com.

There are many tutorials online that show you the specifics of how to upload your content, so be sure to check them out if you are uncertain of the process. I'm going to provide you with some practical advice on how best to establish a solid portfolio with consistent sales.

10 quick tips:

- Emphasize space for copy
 - Leave room for designers to add text to your image when possible.
- Submit the maximum file size your camera can create
 - Minimum file size is 4MP, though many customers
 filter based on size expectations/requirements so you
 could be leaving money on the table if you unnecessarily
 downsize your photos
- Seek alternative angles and provide customers with options
- Keep it real
 - Customers are looking for real looking people in real situations. Authenticity is key in today's world of stock photography.
- Stay up to date on current events
 - Watch the news. If you see something big is
 happening, try to capture it in a way that can be used
 commercially.
- Submit the best of the batch
 - Be selective and ensure each image you submit
 provides unique value to customers. If you are shooting

20 frames per second of a static pose with little difference, that is not 20 unique stock images.

- Representation
 - People want to see themselves represented in advertisements and other visual media. We live in a diverse world. Do your best to represent your interpretation of diversity and to be as inclusive as you can in your work.
- Plan for seasonal events

Customers are typically buying seasonal content 2–3
 months in advance of the event/season. Don't submit
 Christmas images on December 26, for example. Shoot
 some stock under the tree, for example, but save it and
 upload it during the following October so customers can
 more easily find it when they need it.

- Less is more when it comes to post-processing.
 - Avoid filters, borders, etc. Submit the clean, sharp,
 color version of your photos to give customers the most
 flexibility. For example, if a customer wants your photo in
 black and white, it's relatively easy for them to make the
 conversion themselves. The reverse isn't always true.
- Shoot what you love

 Adobe reaches a wide stock content buying audience.
 With that diverse group of customers comes an equally diverse need for content. If you shoot it, there is likely an audience for it. Start with your passion and learn what sells for you. Continue to evolve and expand your portfolio.

Keywords count, and other things to know

You can submit the best photo in the history of the camera to Adobe Stock, but if a customer isn't able to find it, they won't buy it. It's up to you to help them find it. The most effective way to do this is through accurate, descriptive keywords and titles. Before you submit your work to Adobe Stock, you must add between five and forty-nine keywords (fifteen to twenty-five is usually the sweet spot). It is very important to note that the Adobe Stock search engine puts an emphasis on the first ten keywords you add. Make sure you list the most important and relevant keywords in the top ten!

You must also add a title describing the image before you can submit it. The title should read like a sentence. Words listed in the title are also searchable so be sure they count. It's encouraged to duplicate words that are listed in the title in the top ten keywords for added weight in search. Adobe Sensei will recommend up to twenty-five keywords and a title for you automatically if you do not embed the metadata prior to upload. Be sure to review the auto-keywords for accuracy. Remove anything that may be irrelevant, move the most important keywords to the top ten, and add anything you think may be missing.

If your image contains recognizable people or property, you must submit a signed model or property release with the file. Recognizable doesn't just mean a face when it comes to people. There are plenty of other ways to identify a person including a tattoo, scar, unique hairstyle, etc. When in doubt, get a release signed.

Once you've submitted your images, the Adobe Stock moderation team will review your content to make sure the quality standards have been met or exceeded and that there are no intellectual property violations. Watch out for trademarked logos or brand elements. The licenses being distributed through Adobe Stock are for commercial use, so trademarked content will always result in a rejection.

The intent is for your content to be approved and made available for sale. However, rejection happens to even the best photographers from time to time so don't take it personally. Possible rejection reasons are if the image is out of focus, has exposure issues, has excessive noise, etc. The ideal result is that your photo is approved upon review. After approval, it is online and available in your portfolio for Adobe Stock customers to purchase a non-exclusive license to use. When a customer purchases a license for your work, you earn a royalty, paid into your Adobe Stock contributor account. The rate for images is 33% and the rate for videos is 35%. The price paid by the customer will vary based on how many licenses they commit to buy. Once your contributor account balance reaches a minimum of \$25, you can submit a payment request using PayPal, Skrill, or (in some regions outside the U.S.) Payoneer.

Continue to grow your portfolio and watch your revenue increase. Even while you sleep.

YOUR MONEY CAN WORK HARDER FOR YOU THAN YOU CAN

The year was 1985. Susan and I were night scuba diving along with some friends, off the Kenya coast. Seeing and photographing the underwater wonders of the Indian Ocean was an amazing and memorable experience.

After the dive, standing on the beach and looking up at the stars in wonderment, we were talking with two of our friends, Gus and Jean Gilderbloom. They were in their early 70s; I was 35. We were talking about how lucky we were to be doing what we wanted to do.

"May I give you some advice?" Jean asked.

"Please," I said.

"You are young and have your whole life in front of you. Always remember this: your money can work harder for you than you can." Jean, who traveled the world with Gus, went on to talk about the importance of saving money and investing wisely. "It's the key to keep doing what you want to do," she said.

I have always kept Jean's advice in mind, working hard for, and saving, those "peanuts" that my dad talked about. Susan and I have also lived below our means and have made investing a priority. I really can't give you any solid financial advice because I am not a financial expert. One suggestion, however, is that it's important to seek financial advice: find an accountant, financial advisor, or wealth manager if you "want to do what you want to do in life," especially as you get older.

Your financial advisor *may* suggest (as I suggested earlier in this book about your photography business): "Don't put all your eggs in one basket." In other words, diversify your investments as well as your photo skills.

One more tip: If you can, it's probably best to wait until you are seventy to collect social security. The payout at sixty-five is substantially lower than it is at seventy. Hey, if you're in your thirties or forties, that may seem like a long way away. All I can say, my friend, is this: don't blink.

I do, however, know someone who can give financial advice. He's my good friend, excellent photographer, and a wealth advisor at a major Wall Street firm.

The firm' policy does not allow freelance work, so I can't share his name with you. But take it from me, he is one very highly respected wealth advisor. When I asked my friend to contribute to this book, he enthusiastically agreed, because he is one of the nicest, most caring, and most sharing people I know.

Following are his words of wisdom.

Money: A Blessing or a Curse?

Money is a topic of discussion that brings up many feelings, emotions, opinions, and satisfaction or frustration. In and of itself money is neither good nor bad. Money is only a tool. It can be used for noble or wasteful purposes. Remember, money isn't the "root of all evil," it's the *love* of money that is the root of all evil. Money can control us, or we can learn to control it.

Whatever our endeavors are, we are going to need to learn to use money to benefit our lives, our family, or it can enslave us and destroy our family, our future, and everything we hope to accomplish in our lives. We live in a society where money is the means of exchange. So, no money, no exchange, no food, no clothes, no housing, no travel, etc. We have to have money to survive, subsist, and flourish. How much is up to you. Last time I checked, Canon, Nikon, and Sony were not willing to barter for their equipment.

After forty-one years as a financial advisor, I have seen both those who are "good with money" and those who never learned to control and manage their financial lives. You have heard people say that a photographer has a "good eye."

That does not consider their knowledge, their experience, their discipline, their vision, their following of great photographers (e.g., Rick Sammon), etc. It is the same with money. People are not just good with money, it takes time, knowledge, experience, work with experts, and study to be successful with money. Like almost all good things in our lives, handling our financial lives takes discipline, commitment, and a long-term plan. It takes self-control, focus, and desire.

I have worked with many very wealthy clients and some look at money or their net worth as a score card, to see how much they can run up the score. Other clients have met all their own needs and then accomplished much good with what they have accumulated. Their generosity has helped, blessed, and lifted many others through their support of worthy causes.

I have always loved this Norman MacEwen quote: "We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give."

I also like this thought from Franklin Roosevelt: "Happiness lies not in the mere possession of money; it lies in the joy of achievement, in the thrill of creative effort."

So, what are some of the basic principles of financial success? Most are long-term lessons we learn that require discipline and consistency. You will notice that none of these talk about how much money you earn, but what you do with what you earn.

Here are a few to consider:

- Create and use a budget. Get organized and know your income and expenses. Set some goals and stick to those goals consistently over the long term.
- 2. Pay down or eliminate debt. Nathan W. Morris said, "Every time you borrow money, you are robbing your future self." Debt should never be permanent; it should be temporary and paid off as quickly as possible. Sometimes you have to borrow money to buy a home or start a business or get an education. But pay it off and finance yourself as you soon as you can. The best leverage is no leverage. The best feeling you can have is to be debt-free.
- 3. Save some money consistently every month. The first place to save some money is in an "emergency fund." This fund should be four to six months of your monthly living expenses and is used to pay for unexpected costs. This money needs to be safe and liquid and not in your checking account. It can be used for home repairs, car repairs, and medical bills so that you do not have to put those expenditures on a credit card. Rebuild it quickly after using some of it.

- 4. Save in another account for intermediate term needs for the next five years like a new car, some new equipment, college expenses, or a down payment on a home. The amount in this fund needs to be appropriate to upcoming expenses. While you are saving in this account, it can be invested conservatively for a little higher interest rate. You can have multiple accounts designated for various needs. Again, this will save you from having to borrow money.
- 5. Save for retirement. While this purpose is often pushed off into the future, this is a mistake. To produce a comfortable retirement, it takes your whole career to save enough; it is not something you can do in the last five years of your career. If you work for an employer that has a retirement plan like a 401k, absolutely use it, especially if the employer offers a company-paid match. Always save at least up to the level the employer matches. It can be more difficult when you are self-employed, but is just as important and takes even more discipline. Set up an IRA, Roth, or retirement plan for the tax benefits and make a rock-solid commitment to contribute to it every year. You can also save for retirement outside of a retirement plan too, but invest it suitably for the time frame and the tax issues.

6. Learn to invest appropriately. To earn returns higher than money markets or bank accounts, you have to accept some risk. But that risk can be modest, and in the long run, acceptable. Do not speculate on high-risk or get-rich-quick schemes. If the speculated rate of return seems too good to be true, it probably is not true. With all investments, be aware of the risk, the administrative costs, and tax issues. Also consider the liquidity and penalties if any is withdrawn. Do not let short-term volatility or market swings derail your long-term goals. Be patient and do not let emotions cause you to make short-term decisions. Most of all, get professional help from reputable firms. Professional help is critical for tax, legal, and investment advice.

These steps cannot be taken overnight, but you can get started and be consistent. As you earn more or pay down debt, savings can be increased and diversified. It will be amazing to you how fast savings and investments can grow as you are consistent and committed to your future.

As your financial life is planned, carried out, and goals are met, your reward is freedom—the freedom to buy what you need or want and to travel to places you dreamed about—and the security of not having to worry about your financial future. As that freedom is achieved, the next greatest feeling is to be in a position to support causes and organizations that are doing good and helping others. Money can be a blessing or a curse, it is up to you and how you plan and control your own destiny.

GOOD NIGHT AND GOOD LUCK

"Good night and good luck." —Edward R. Murrow

This book is dedicated to my dad, Robert M. Sammon, Senior, who as I previously mentioned, gave me some good business advice (as well as lots of love) when I was growing up.

As an aside, in the 1950s he worked with famed on-air reporter Edward R. Murrow on the CBS television program, *Person to Person*, one of the first live television programs.

At the end of each program, "Murro," as my dad used to call him, always said, "Good night and good luck."

It was that quote that inspired the final chapter in this book.

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I hope you now have some ideas on how to make some money while you are sleeping after you have put in the hard work to generate products and services to put on your website (your store) and other places online.

Before I say, "good night and good luck," I'd just like you to consider the benefits of getting a good night's sleep, and even taking a nap, because I believe being rested will help you be more productive while you are awake. I'm not an expert on the scientific benefits of sleeping, but I am interested in the topic, so I did a search.

In my search about napping, I came across this interesting fact that I found on WebMD: "A team of German neuropsychologists found that napping after learning something can make your memory of that information five times better than if you had stayed awake afterward. The researchers say your brain's ability to go into a tranquil state during sleep is linked to your ability to remember. Mandatory naptime at the office? That's just good management."

And when I was searching for the benefits of a good night's sleep, I found the following on sclhealth.com:

"Even though sleep gives your body the rest it needs, your mind is still hard at work. It's actually processing and consolidating your memories from the day. If you don't get enough sleep, who knows where those memories go. Or worse, your mind might actually create false memories.

"The bottom line: Sleep is good. And necessary. Roy Kohler, MD, who specializes in sleep medicine at SCL Health in Montana, reaffirms all we know about the benefits of sleep, citing research that shows people who get less sleep tend to be heavier, eat more, have a higher BMI, and are more likely to be diabetic. 'Consistent sleep of seven hours a night is what's recommended for adults just for daytime functioning—being on task, being alert for the day and being able to concentrate and not be so moody and tired during the day,' says Dr. Kohler.

"While there will certainly be ebbs and flows to your sleeping patterns, we hope this is enough evidence to convince you to aim for seven to eight hours a night so your mind and body can fully reap all the benefits.

"Need some help counting sheep? Create a nighttime routine to get your mind and body relaxed, maybe try meditating. Oh, and stop looking at your phone or tablet — those social media alerts will all be there in the morning. Sweet dreams!"

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Although I am not a sleep expert, I am, as Susan Sammon will tell you, an expert on the actual process of power napping. For the past twenty years or so I have taken a power nap just about every day, while at home and while away. When I wake up, I feel refreshed and invigorated. I also pride myself on getting a good night's sleep, going to bed early, but waking up early, too.

With that, I'll say, "good night and good luck." Pleasant dreams my friends, and I hope all your dreams—of making good photographs and making some extra income—come true.