

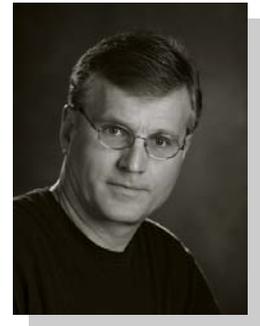
# Artisans Center of Virginia

The Official State Artisans Center

## BUSINESS IN BRIEF

*Topics, Tips & Techniques to Improve Your Business*

ACV Studio School Instructor Mark Miller, of Mark Miller Photography in Waynesboro graciously sat down with ACV Membership Coordinator, Rachel Salatin, to answer some common questions on photography and how it pertains to artists and small business owners. Although it can seem daunting, a fundamental understanding of photography is worth the effort and will greatly assist in your marketing and the establishment of your professional brand.



### Navigating Digital Imagery

*Tips from Mark Miller Photography*

#### **Consider Your Use:**

Before choosing the appropriate camera and the size, resolutions, and orientation of your photographs, consider the end use. Determine if you will be solely using pictures online or for printed materials (brochures, posters, signs, etc). Printable photos require a higher resolution (usually 300 DPI-Dots Per Inch- or above) then photos used on the web or in emails (usually 100 DPI). Secondly, is your website template designed for horizontal, vertical, or square images? Consider the product when choosing an orientation and keep photos as consistent as possible; forcing the viewer to focus on the product and not the changing layout.

#### **The Best Camera for Your Needs:**

A photograph's quality is determined by 'pixels', camera lens, and steadiness of the camera while taking the photo. A megapixel rating tells you how many pixels there are in a photo, determining the resolution or 'clarity' of the images taken. To give you an idea, the average point and shoot camera is usually rated as 10MP to 20MP and the Apple iPhone takes up to an 8MP picture. So how many megapixels do you need? Here's the shortest answer we can muster: for most purposes 3MP is plenty, but you might want to shoot at around 8MP for the crispest possible details. 8MP is a sensible minimum for big prints and 4K TVs, and even higher resolutions allow you to crop photos without sacrificing quality too much.

#### **Can I Use My Iphone?**

Again, it depends on the use of the final image. An iPhone can usually only print a high quality 8x10 or smaller, whereas higher quality cameras have the ability to print billboard size pictures. The lens of an iPhone is not made to take close up pictures (notice the distortion) and it is extremely difficult to hold a camera phone steady enough for a high quality image. If you plan on taking your own product pictures, a tri-pod is the best camera accessory to invest in. One is simply that a higher resolution takes longer to process and consumes more storage space on your camera, computer, and email.

#### **How To Save & Send Your Photo:**

Transfer your pictures from your camera to your computer. Place them in a file and if any resizing or cropping must occur, work from a copy, not the original image. To resize and edit your photos, use Photo Elements or pixlr.com as an inexpensive alternative to Photoshop. These programs are very effective and user friendly. Images can be saved in three different main formats: JPEG, PDF, and TIFF.

A PDF is a print ready file and cannot be changed. Use this format when printing. A TIFF saves the photo exactly the same size as the original and is a large file size. Use this format when sending to a graphic designer or someone who will need to edit and reduce. A JPEG compresses your original, takes up less space than a TIFF, and is the main format to send and upload. A good rule: **YOU CAN ALWAYS REDUCE RESOLUTION BUT CANNOT ADD BACK.**

#### **Investing in a Professional Photographer:**

Feel empowered--you have the ability to take good quality pictures of your work! With the right camera, a roll of inexpensive seamless paper (The most common colors used for professional photography are gray, black, and white), some clamp lights from your local hardware store, and a little patience, a professional photograph is in your reach! However, consider the time and cost and consider hiring a professional photographer. Usually pricing is determined by set up, making a photo of one object the same price as the price for multiple objects. If your art is easily transported, take it to the photographer's studio and leave for them to photograph on their own time. This could be another cost effective way to receive the best images possible and not break the bank! The key is to represent the work "honestly". Colors should not be edited and size proportion represented correctly.

