

## Quick Tips for the Summer Selling Season

There are only a few months left of the summer season. If you need to photograph any of your items and use the results before the season is over, this information should be of major interest to you.

If you don't fall into that classification, you will benefit from the information anyway, just not for a few months or so. But, you'll never know unless you read it...

### When Is Having People in Your Pictures A Good Idea?

Your creation *has to be in the picture* (unless you're making the next generation of the invisible dog leash). The question you need to ask yourself is:

**Will your product benefit from having people in it or not?**

Since the answer is beyond the scope of this photography series, we will proceed on the assumption that for some pictures, there's an advantage to include people. If that's the case, how do you pose your product and the people for maximum impact?



The key to remember is that for product-related photography, **your product is the star** and **the people are only props**.

Therefore you need to pose the people in a way that adds to and emphasizes **your product**, rather than takes the viewer's focus from it.

Let's pretend the 3 bowls on this table are wooden bowls you created. Your objective is to showcase your products without giving the viewer any reason to focus on the people.

Take a look at this picture. Did you notice anything that pulls your focus

away from the bowls? The little girls #1 and #2 are nicely focused on the bowls and



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therefore tend to draw the viewer's focus to where you want it. But what about girl #3?

Since she is not looking at her bowl, as a viewer I get curious as to what she *is looking at*. That results in me no longer looking at your bowls, but rather trying to figure out what she is looking at. YOU JUST LOST YOUR VIEWER.

## The Moral

There are several key points to remember:

- ✓ Whatever the people are doing, make sure it encourages the viewer to look **at your product** rather than anything else.
- ✓ There is nothing wrong with having people show emotion. The girls in this particular example had neutral expressions. Having your human "props" show amazement, awe, or any other emotion is completely acceptable... *as long as it is appropriate for the mood of the photograph and your product.*
- ✓ No matter how clear your instructions are, never assume that people will be doing what you want, at the exact moment you take their picture. And **you should never rely on your LCD screen** to catch the subtle facial miscues, regardless of how big the camera's LCD screen is.

## Your Photographic Insurance Policy

So what do you do? Actually, there are several good options.

First, whatever pose you end up with - take multiple pictures of it. Yes... **the same exact pose**. The best way to do this is to have your camera on a tripod and let your subjects know that you are going to take several shots so they should not move after the first picture.

Change absolutely nothing in the background or in your camera settings. Don't move your camera or anything in the picture. If your camera has the ability to take [continuous photos](#) (also known as "burst mode"), use it to capture several pictures in rapid fashion.

This approach is only appropriate when **a flash is not needed**. The reason is that even professional flashes will need more time to charge back up, than the time interval between the pictures being taken. Too technical? Sorry.



So what is the point of taking multiple pictures of the same pose? It all comes down to insurance. You just got done spending a lot of time, effort, and expense setting up and taking your pictures. If you are not going to find out if there was a problem, until you get home and download the images, **that is too late.**

You certainly are not going to want to go through the entire process again 2 days later just because somebody was blinking, are you? It makes a lot more sense to take an extra 45 seconds (everything is set up to take the pictures anyway), than it does to spend an hour and a half on a different day, to shoot everything all over again.

Is this just a photography "urban legend?" Hardly.



The reason it is true (and has been mathematically proven) is based in probability and statistics.

The more people there are in a photograph, the greater is the probability that **at least one person** will either blink, look where they aren't supposed to, or add some undesirable facial action.

To make matters worse, as the group size increases beyond 10, the probability that *at least one person* will ruin your masterpiece, **approaches 100%**.

Take a look at the picture above. Each one of those blue circles represents one of the 14 people who should not be included in a final quality group photograph. If you want to be **100% sure of getting a perfect final image** (regardless of group size), that is also possible. For more information on that, you can check out this [video](#).

Photographically yours,

*Robert Bezman*

Robert Bezman,

Professional Photographer and [Webmaster](#)

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