

Marketing Newsletter

The real money in portrait photography is made through the sale of portraits for home decor.

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MuseumBond offers these ideas to help you sell Wall Portraits

A wall portrait is the way your client will get the most enjoyment and benefit from your photography. It is your responsibility to ensure they have an image large enough to be appreciated by all that enter the room. Charles Lewis offers these tips to sell larger prints.



•**DISPLAY A WHOPPER.** Offer an item so big and so expensive that practically no one could afford it. Show this up front so it makes everything else look reasonable. (Please note: there are people that will have only the best,

so you will sell a few whoppers)

- **SELL DOWN.** It's much more effective to start with your highest priced products and services. Then if you must, slowly, very slowly, move down the list.
- **SOAK-IN.** Allow sufficient time for the client to get used to the larger print, and price. Let the beauty of the larger print soak-in. During your presentation, compliment the image, but mostly listen. Let the client sell themselves.

- **VOLUNTEER** the price before being asked, and do so in a confident manner. This says two things: (1) that you know you are worth what you charge, and (2) you are proud of your work.
- **STAY FOCUSED.** If you want to sell more wall portraits and earn the big \$, sell the large wall portrait before moving on to other options.
- **SIMPLE DECISIONS.** Carefully craft your presentation so the client is making small, easy decisions, one at a time, until the sum of those decisions leads into deciding the best.
- **WRAP-UP.** Get the decision today, and collect the money. Remove any risk to the client by offering a satisfaction guarantee.

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You Sell What You Show

If your studio's display consists entirely of large, canvassed prints, that is what you will sell. We suggest you show one size larger than you want to sell (If you display 30x40s, you will sell a bunch of 24x30s.) To maximize profit, the published price of your image should include the canvassed print and a frame.

How to determine adequate print size

It's all about space. In each of these prints, the head size is about the same. What allows you to sell a larger print is the inclusion of space around the subject(s).



16x20"

A head and shoulder shot requires a 16x20 sized print. At this size, the subject will be recognizable when the print is hanging on the wall. The operative phrase here is, "hanging on the wall."

When showing displays, if you let the client hold the print, they will buy an 8x10, because at arm's distance, it's big.



20x24"

A full length image should be a minimum of 20x24. By including just a small amount of space around your subject, you will be able to sell up from a 16x20.

The best way to sell large portraits is display the proofs one size larger than the size you want to sell. Using a projection system or large screen TV, show all the proofs as 30x40s, and you will sell large prints.



20x30"

Photographers often overlook this size in favor of the 24x30". This format does display environmental portraits well, (beach scenes with the excess sand and sky cropped off) and side-by-side, head and shoulder portraits.



24x30"

A close cropped family grouping looks best at 24x30. Explain that with the next size down, the faces will be so small that they will be unrecognizable.

If the client feels this size is too big for their wall, suggest that they purchase the larger size, take it home and let it hang for a month. If they still feel it is too big, you will print the smaller size and refund the difference (They seldom come back for the smaller print.)

When you start including a significant amount of background, remember to use a shallow depth of field to throw the background out of focus.



30x40"

Environmental portraits with an expansive landscape need a 30x40 print to look good. The difference between a 24x30 and a 30x40 is nothing more than space, filled with a pleasant background.

To encourage the sale of larger prints, include sufficient space around your subjects when shooting. Don't allow the client to crop your image just to get a smaller print. Explain that to ensure proper composition, the space is needed.



Proper Presentation

To emphasize proper size, place a 40x50" over a couch or chair, and keep the viewer 8' from the print by including a coffee table. Explain this is how a print will look in their living room. If the client's room has 10 or 12' ceilings, a 40x60" print may be required.

In this setting, your Whopper won't look that big, allowing the sale of larger sized prints.

Proper lighting also helps sell wall portraits. Install track lighting with a dimmer control. Adjust your lighting so that it blends well with the light spilling in through your windows.

Why Sell Canvas?

When selling canvas, you do not need to factor in studio overhead cost, inventory cost, equipment cost, or labor. Canvas is all profit. In fact, you can easily make more profit from the addition of canvas, than you could make on your original print.

Pricing your canvas line is simple. At a minimum, take your canvas cost and multiply by 3. Add this to your price of an uncanvassed print to get 100% profit.

If your competition uses their lab for canvassing, you can charge more than they do because a MuseumBond canvas is visually and technically a better product. Clients can make a side by side comparison and see the higher quality of our canvas. Quality canvas will set your studio above the competition.

Photo Credits

16x20" Kent Smith M.photog.,Cr.,CPP

20x24" Shannon Turner CPP

20x30" Beverly Walden M.Photog.,Cr

24x30" Diane Dultmeier

30x40" Wes Eubank

40x50" Charles Neubauer FDPE,FSA