LabPrints LP

Sample Workflow 1

(We recognize that every photographer may have their own workflow. This is just an example of how one photographer does his.)

Digital Workflow & Instructions for Wedding & Event Photography

For safety and simplicity, dedicate one hard drive to image storage, if possible. There are many options for backup and long-term archiving, such as DVD, internal and external hard drives, network attached storage devices, and web-based "digital vault" solutions. The most important part of this decision is to find the approach that works best for your particular business—some studios feel it's essential to keep unaltered raw images in an offsite location, while others only feel the need to keep a copy of jpgs right in the same computer with the originals.

Note that elements of this workflow can be modified to suit individual needs. The keys to any successful workflow are comprehensiveness and consistency; after all, the goals are to work smoothly and efficiently, make your work look its absolute best…and never lose an image!

Organize folders on hard drive
- Client name, then inside will be "ClientName Event raw" (i.e. Smith Wedding raw) and "ClientName Event jpg", along with folders for images from other shoots (i.e., "ClientName Engagement raw"), retouched images, etc.
- Sample path—Z: Smith/Smith Wedding raw

1—Before each event, sync clocks on all cameras (and be sure they are in the same shooting modes)
2—Shoot event, always in raw mode (I use raw compressed to double the number of images that will fit on a card, and I can't see a difference in image quality)
- Note: you might want to distribute cards at the reception giving guests the web address, password, and the date that your photos will be online. Alternatively, you could place cards on the tables for guests to provide their e-mail address, so you can then send the above info to all who indicate interest.

2—Transfer images from CF cards *(from all cameras)* to "ClientName Event raw" folder
3—Re-order images, as necessary
- Open Photoshop CS2 or CS3, then Bridge
- Navigate to folder of images
- Select all images (ctrl-A)
- View menu/select Sort/select Date Modified (this will put all images from all cameras in the exact order shot)
- Drag images to change order (example: invitation photos to beginning, group portraits together, etc.)

4—Rename images
- Still in Bridge, select all images, open the Tools menu, then Batch Rename
- Be sure to use the same protocol for all events (we use "0001 Smith.jpg")
- Note: renaming at this stage will mean that your jpgs (next step) will have the same file name as the raws, which is essential if you ever need to go back to a raw image!
- If you have more than one session to go into the client's folder, such as an engagement shoot and then a wedding, start the wedding numbering consecutive with the last image from the previous shoot; this way, you can import all the client's images into LabPrints without numbering issues.

5—Adjust raw files (this method requires Photoshop CS2 or CS3)
- In Bridge, go to folder of images
- Select 150 images
- Double click on 1st image
- Yes to "Do you want to open 150 images?"
- Wait while images open in Photoshop
- Minimize Bridge
- Scroll through all images, adjust any that are significantly off for exposure and color (there are a number of raw conversion options available, but I think the Adobe raw converter works well and quickly, and is quite comprehensive in terms of potential adjustments)
- Click "Select All"
- Click on "Save 150 images"
- Save in new location: "ClientName Event jpg" folder (ex.: Z: Smith/Smith Wedding jpg)
- Be sure to save as JPGs (color space: sRGB)!
- Repeat this process in groups of 150 until all images have been adjusted
- Note: by adjusting the images in groups of 150, you'll save the aggravation of having to redo everything if you run into a problem and the software closes

6—Backup your images!
- Backup the jpg folder ("ClientName Wedding jpg") to an external drive or a different computer
- Note: You might also want to back up your raw and retouched images, but it probably makes sense to do this on a different drive from the above (perhaps a regularly scheduled backup that will update all altered images, etc.)

7—Import _all_ event jpgs (uncropped, and at full resolution) into LP Production Studio (first, if applicable) or LP Digital Studio (if you don't have LP Production Studio)

All projects created in LP Production Studio will also appear in the project list in LP Digital Studio, *if* they're created in LP PS first.

Importing images into LP Production Studio will give you the option of accessing the high-res version of any composited images, so that you can print them or order products that may not be available from your LabPrints lab (example: I often get orders for pocket-size "mini album" versions of our coffee-table books, and I use these high-res composites to order this product, as my regular lab doesn't make them)

8—Using the "Filing/Grouping" feature in LP Digital Studio, group images to suit your particular needs and events

- Presentation (this would be all the images your clients will see—use the Compare tool to choose from similar images)
- Title page (this is the image that will appear on the LP weddingherald.com or photoherald.com storefront title page)
- Photographer picks (a selection of 30-50 of your favorites—portraits, groups, candids, and some of the more creative images, as well)
- Details and scenics
- Pre-ceremony candids
- Family groups
- Wedding party
- Jennifer and Joe (1st names of bride and groom)
- Ceremony
- Cocktail hour
- Couples
- Reception
- Note: **All** images in the Presentation group should also be in one of the subgroups

9 —Retouch and run a variety of creative actions on the Photographer Picks group

10—Crop the Presentation and Photographer Picks groups

11—Export "Hi-res LP Presentation group"
- Project menu, "Export Image Group", then check "crop images…" and "export high-res…"
- Save in new folder (Z:/Smith/Hi-res LP Pres Group)

12—Upload images to the LabPrints Storefront
- Upload all above groups *except* the Presentation group, in the order they're listed above (this will include all the images selected for the Presentation Group, but they will be divided into the subgroups for ease of locating specific images, as desired)
- Send reminder e-mail to the bride and groom and all others whose address you have regarding the Storefront info (also a good time to update the bride and groom on the next step in your process, depending on what your clients have ordered
- Download Storefront print orders, place them with your lab (you might want to place orders for a given event every two weeks, so that you can reduce the number of orders that don't meet the lab's minimum), and ship prints to clients

13—Depending on your packages…
- Pre-design your clients' album using Album Builder and/or or the Composite Designer
- Note: You might want to design an album which is considerably larger than was ordered, being careful to communicate the ease of editing and making the finished version exactly what your clients want (and within their budget)

14—Get album approval
- If possible, schedule an in-studio album design/approval session, and take the opportunity to sell loose prints, additional album pages, etc.!
- With out-of-town clients, post the album online using the LabPrints Album Design Hosting service (this will allow your client to make comments regarding any requests that you will be able to see

15—Place all album, storefront, and loose print orders with your lab

16—When you feel all the orders have been placed for a given project…
- In LP DS, go to File, then Manage Projects, and make a backup
- Place this ".backup" file in the client folder with your backed up images

- Again, go to File, then Manage Projects, and delete the project (if necessary, you will be able to recreate it from the backup, including cropping info, orders placed, albums, etc.)

17—Archive project (including raw and/or jpg images and the LP .backup file) to an external drive
- Note: You might want to dedicate external drives to archived projects, specifying the time period for all included events

18—Take a break for lunch!