

## Digital Tools that Modern Professionals Love

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### **These days, we don't just point and shoot.**

In the old days, a photographer's process from beginning to end was:

1. Take a picture.
2. Develop the picture.

That's it. That's all they could do. After that, maybe they'd be lucky enough to find their photo in a magazine or a gallery. Maybe a few hundred or few thousand people would get to see it.

Fortunately, the modern photographer has immeasurably more digital tools at their disposal to transform naturally great shots into "OMG" shots, and make them easily available for millions to see.

From software standards like Photoshop and Lightroom, to cutting-edge developments in camera hardware, online interaction, and connectivity, photographers have incredible choices to better their craft.

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### **Digital Tools Aren't Just For the Photos**

They're for the experience, too.

There are endless ways to tailor the process to the demands of each individual's work.

Sure, all these modern tools help achieve perfect photo results, but modern photographers also utilize tools which reform the entire photo-taking experience, both for them and their subjects.

Tethering to a display app lets a customer or model view a photo as soon as it's taken.

Instantly editing and posting photos on Tumblr, Facebook or anywhere else on the web means photographers can disseminate their art and get feedback within moments.

Everything is being transformed.

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## **Contemporary Tools Redefine What Being a “Photographer” Means**

Tools like Instagram have instilled a booming interest in photography among the masses. With the incredible technology in consumer-level cameras, the widespread accessibility of photographic editing software and the prevalence of social media, the tools to take photos, edit them, and show them off to millions of people are there for everyone. Photographers with no background or training are blossoming into professionals every day, and that’s changing the entire landscape of the photography industry.

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## **So, What Tools Are the Top Photographers Using?**

What are the most crucial and significant tools used by today’s top photographers? How does all this technology help different photographers – the career photographer, the headshot photographer, the landscape photographer – each do their thing? What advancements in the past years or months are proving most essential to their techniques?

All good questions – so we asked some photographers for their answers. Here’s what they said.

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### **[Frank Doorhof](#)**

Frank Doorhof is a fashion/celebrity blogger whose tool kit is all about tech. His favorite must-have technology is shooting with the Capture One tether and its associated app, Capture Pilot, which allows him to view, zoom and pan high-res images during the shoot via a tablet or iPhone.

As he states, “The immediate feedback to the customer is priceless.”

Capture Pilot doesn’t just help during live shoots. Frank also uses it as an educational tool.

“During workshops, students can see each other’s photos instantly on their own phones or tablets. Even people not in the studio can view them.”

The other great modern invention is Wi-Fi built into digital cameras.

“Being able to shoot on the street and transfer your images straight to your mobile device, edit them and share them is simply amazing.”

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### **Brendan Van Son**

Brendan Van Son is a renowned travel photographer and the man behind Brendan's Adventures, one of the top travel photoblogs on the Internet. Being constantly on the go around the world, Brendan's toolbox is all about connectivity, and tools that allow him to share his photos from anywhere. He tells us:

"These days, we expect all cameras to not only have GPS tracking and tagging within the camera, but Wi-Fi so we can load the images from our cameras to our phones to share."

In Brendan's perfect world, the camera itself would be able to run apps like Facebook and Instagram, streamlining the process of connecting and sharing online by removing the cell phone middleman.

"Imagine being able to take a photo on a DSLR and then uploading it directly to your Instagram feed. How awesome would that be? Honestly, I think that style of camera is only a short while away."

It would be the perfect next-step for a mobile travel photographer.

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### **Jimmy Chin**

Jimmy Chin likes to climb big mountains and take even bigger photographs. From humans standing on snowy mountaintops to surfers riding mid-wave, his work captures the astoundingly powerful raw landscapes of Earth's geography, and the people who try to conquer them. Despite the organic, terrestrial nature of his photographs, what he finds most impressive of today's modern tools is social media.

He writes: "Being able to build an audience, personally curate images, share them with people around the world, get immediate feedback and have real time interactions between photographer and audience has changed photography. The access to large audiences can be quite powerful."

And not just powerful for the sake of art, but for social impact. Jimmy worked with National Geographic photographers to launch a flash print sale via Instagram that generated over \$425,000 in one week for Everest avalanche relief.

“We were all blown away at the power of sharing pictures and how much has changed in the world of photography.”

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### [Jake Olson](#)

Nebraskan photographer Jake Olson is a successful portrait photographer. His favorite tools from recent years revolve around social networking, which he loves for its ability to connect him with people and clients, and for what it has done for the industry.

He says, “My biggest tools are Facebook and 500px, a commercial market. Social media has been great for photography as a whole because more and more people want to represent themselves through high quality images.”

Commercial social networking sites like 500px can be invaluable for rookie and veteran photographers alike to find the attention of new clients.

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### [Peter Hurley](#)

The widespread popularity of social media has not only had its benefits for photographers showing off their work, but creating demand for certain fields. Peter Hurley is a distinguished headshot and portrait photographer whose work is more desirable than ever before.

He explains, “About Me pages and people’s desire to formulate their own personal brand and establish their digital identity has changed the landscape of headshot photography. For years I mainly had actors coming in for headshots, now I have people from all walks of life.”

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### [Jack Hollingsworth](#)

Texas-based Jack Hollingsworth is internationally renowned for taking decades of bright, culturally-diverse people photos. And these days, he’s all about the iPhone 6. He even has an [Instagram page](#) of nothing but iPhone-captured shots. He tells us:

“Right now the most valuable and treasured tool in my camera bag is my beloved iPhone 6 Plus. It's a camera I use every single day of my life. I can think of no single manufactured device that has changed the conversation about photography more than the iPhone.”

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### [Frederick Van Johnson](#)

Photographer and popular podcaster Frederick Van Johnson loves to photograph women – because who wouldn't? He believes women are the most beautiful subjects on earth. His recent passion is multimedia photography, and he accomplishes it all by turning his methods toward mirror-less camera technology. In his words:

“I shoot with the Panasonic Lumix GH4. For my chosen genre, mirror-less cameras are ideally suited. The advances in mirror-less camera technology and sensors have really blown me away. It's an exciting time to be a photographer.”

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### [Gary Arndt](#)

Gary is a photographer that appears to have done everything and been everywhere, and it's all collected on his blog.

The most important piece of new technology in his arsenal is the TriggerTrap app – programmable shutter software which allows you to trigger your camera from an iPhone.

For a perpetual traveler, nothing beats the basics. He says:

“My most important tools are my camera, my laptop and Lightroom. I have to take photos and process them, and I have to do it on the road.”

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### [Jordan Loyd](#)

Jordan is a Denver-based music, commercial and editorial photographer. Like many photographers we've profiled, he relies heavily on the iPhone, social networking, and Lightroom and Photoshop.

One thing that has impressed him lately are the advancements in technology in the high-end compact camera market. He tells us:

“I recently picked up a Panasonic LX100. The advances made in this area of photography are incredible. I travel 80% of the year and having a camera that is easy and fast to capture moments is a nice change from setting up my DSLR bodies.”

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### **Closing**

With a variety of digital tools at their disposal, modern professional photographers have the ability to tailor their craft as they see fit. Between digital software, apps and tools, social networking mediums and camera technologies, photographers have the resources to achieve exactly what they want, how they want, where they want. New people are getting into photography every day while seasoned photographers are finding new ways to strengthen their expert crafts, and modern digital tools will enable the industry to continue its upward progression in popularity and possibility.

A big thank-you to all the photographers who let us know what tools are helping their work!