The Importance of image licensing

Website Support · https://missionsupport.archden.org/knowledgebase/the-importance-of-image-licensing/

Images are fundamental. Without images, our work would not have as strong as an impact. Photos draw our attention and reinforces the information we read and hear.

Sourcing free-to-use images from commonplace platforms, like Unsplash, is a great way to draw attention to your viewers while protecting your organization from any unwanted licensing issues. It is still important to incorporate and use candid images as much as possible to create an authentic environment for your viewers.

Here you will learn more about licensing images find tips in navigating the world of sourcing images.

What is a License?

Image Sourcing Tips

Tip #1: When possible, work directly with the photographer

There is nothing safer then having written permission from the source itself. this is the best way to avoid any issues later on.

Tip #2: Avoid the Following

To protect your organization and yourself, avoid the following:

- Screenshotting images that can't be directly saved from a file or the internet – even if it is for a simple PowerPoint presentation.
- Dragging or saving images from blogs, news media and the internet in general – you need permission.

This can protect you from online licensing police such as Pixsy and PicRights. Images that are not free to use can result in hefty fines if the correct permissions, licenses or attributions aren't applied.

Tip #3: Be Aware of different licenses found on Creative Comm ons.

Attribution: You let others copy, distribute, display, and perform your copyrighted work, and derivative works based upon it, but only if they give you credit.
Noncommercial: You let others copy, distribute, display, and perform your work, and derivative works based upon it, but for noncommercial purposes only.
No Derivative Works: Yo let others copy, distribute, display, and perform only verbatim copies of your work, not derivative works based upon it.

Public Domain Work: Works, or aspects of copyrighted works, which copyright law does not protect. Typically, works become part of the public domain because their term of protection under copyright law expired, the owner failed to follow certain required formalities, or the works are not eligible for copyright protection.
Public Domain Dedication (CC0): You, the copyright holder, waive your interest in your work and place the work completely as possible to the public.
Share Alike: You allow others to distribute derivative works only under a license identical to the license that governs your work.

Tip #4: Use Trustworthy Sources

Use trustworthy sources such as Unsplash, Flickr Creative Commons and or purchase a license from stock photography websites like lightstock, Adobe, or Getty. Stop googling images and dragging them to your desktop!

Our Top 5 Free Stock Photo Sites

Tip #5: Keep track of how and where you sourced images

Create a spreadsheet with the source and attribution information – especially if you're putting together a social media visual or a website with little to no budget.

In the event that you receive a letter from an unknown licensing firm requesting money, here are a few tips to consider before taking action.

- Ask them to prove that they represent the photographer.
- Request that they inform you how they arrived at their figure. From some documented sources, when people push back even a little, they bring down the fee in hopes of getting something.
- Reply to them saying that you are seeking legal advice before taking any action.
- **Never** acknowledge any infringement on your part until you are advised to do so by a lawyer in the event this is a fraudulent request.

- Search for the photo on Flickr to verify that it has the correct license (that's why it's important to keep track!).
- Make sure they have proof of the image and license in question. Licensing firms will often times index the photographer's work in question on Flickr so it appears like their real account when in fact, it's fake. See if you can determine where you originally found the image and if there is a creative commons license associated with it. If yes, you should be OK. Screenshot the image with the associated license and email it back to the firm.
- Check to see if the photo in question is available on more than one photo library. If yes, they can't do much to pursue legal action because they can't prove where the photo originally came from.

Some terms you may run into when obtaining a license:

- Licensor – The photographer of copyright holder who is granting usage to another person of entity.
- Licensee – The person or entity to whom the license is granted.
- Creative Fee – A fee charged by the photographer for his/her efforts to bring a project to a successful completion. May include factors like photographer's experience, reputation, or anything that contributes to the overall creative efforts.
- Exclusive License – limits not only the client in their use of the licensed image(s), but also the photographer in their ability to license the work to multiple users. This license may be very broad or very specific.

1) "Sourcing photos: making sure you have the right creative license" Resource Media, August 28, 2019, https://resource-media.org/sourcing-photos-making-sure-you-have-the-right-license/

2) "Why is Copyright Licensing and Attribution Important to Researchers?" Enago Academy, May 22, 2018, https://www.enago.com/academy/understanding-copyright-licensing-and-attribution/

3) "Obtaining Copyright Permissions" University of Michigan Library, Oct 27, 2020, https://guides.lib.umich.edu/permissions/licenses