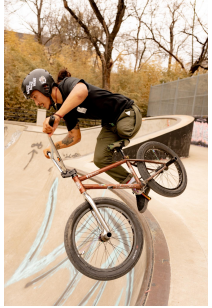


the talon

www.thetalonnews.com | @thetalonnews

Making Money With Photography

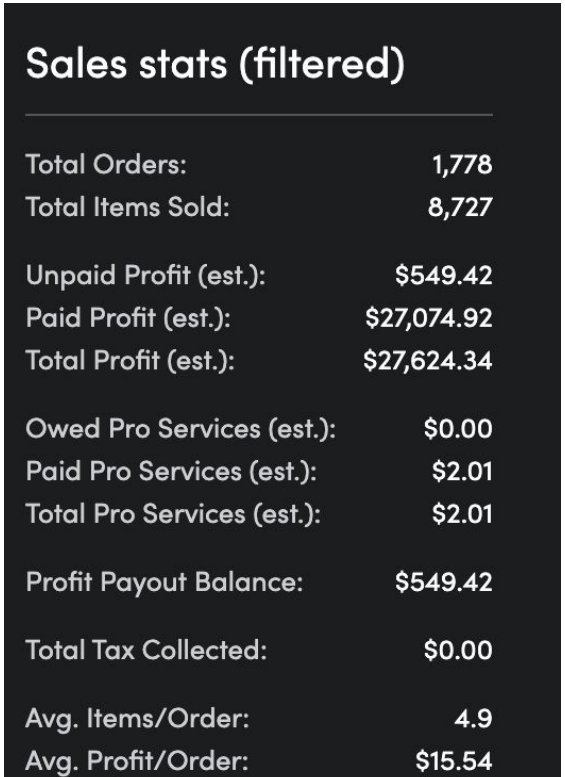
Stacy Short, Advisor

Why do you want to sell photos?

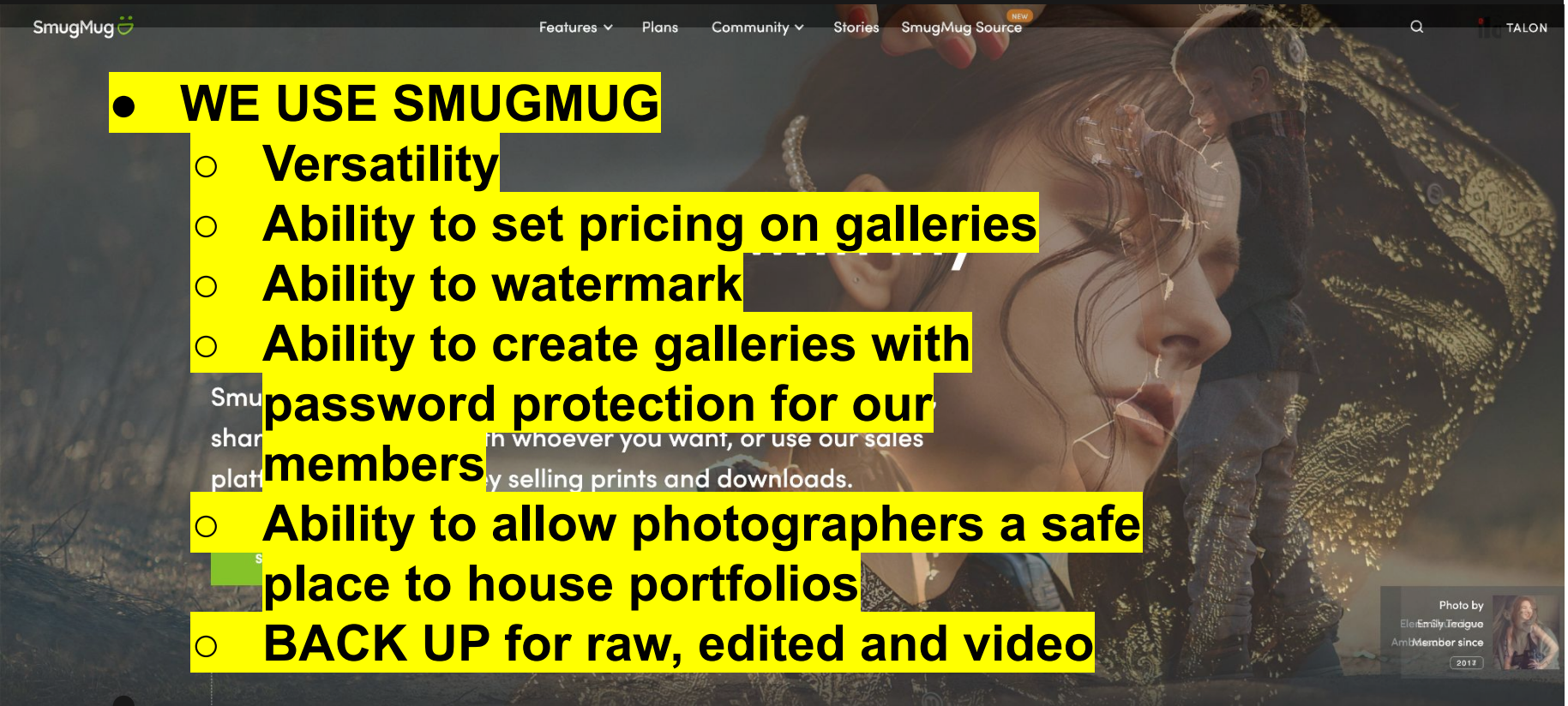
- Before you begin, you need to have a plan
  - Do you have photographers?
  - Do you need money for your program?
  - Are you committed?
  - What are your expectations?
  - What are the expectations of your community?

Supplement Your Ad Revenues

- Since fall of 2011 we have earned over $27,624 in online sales through our SmugMug website as of 01-26-24 ($2,209/yr).
- We double our income through a photo membership program that brings in around $3,000 annually
- To date, total online and membership sales = $67K +
- We use the money to pay site fees, basic supplies and scholarships

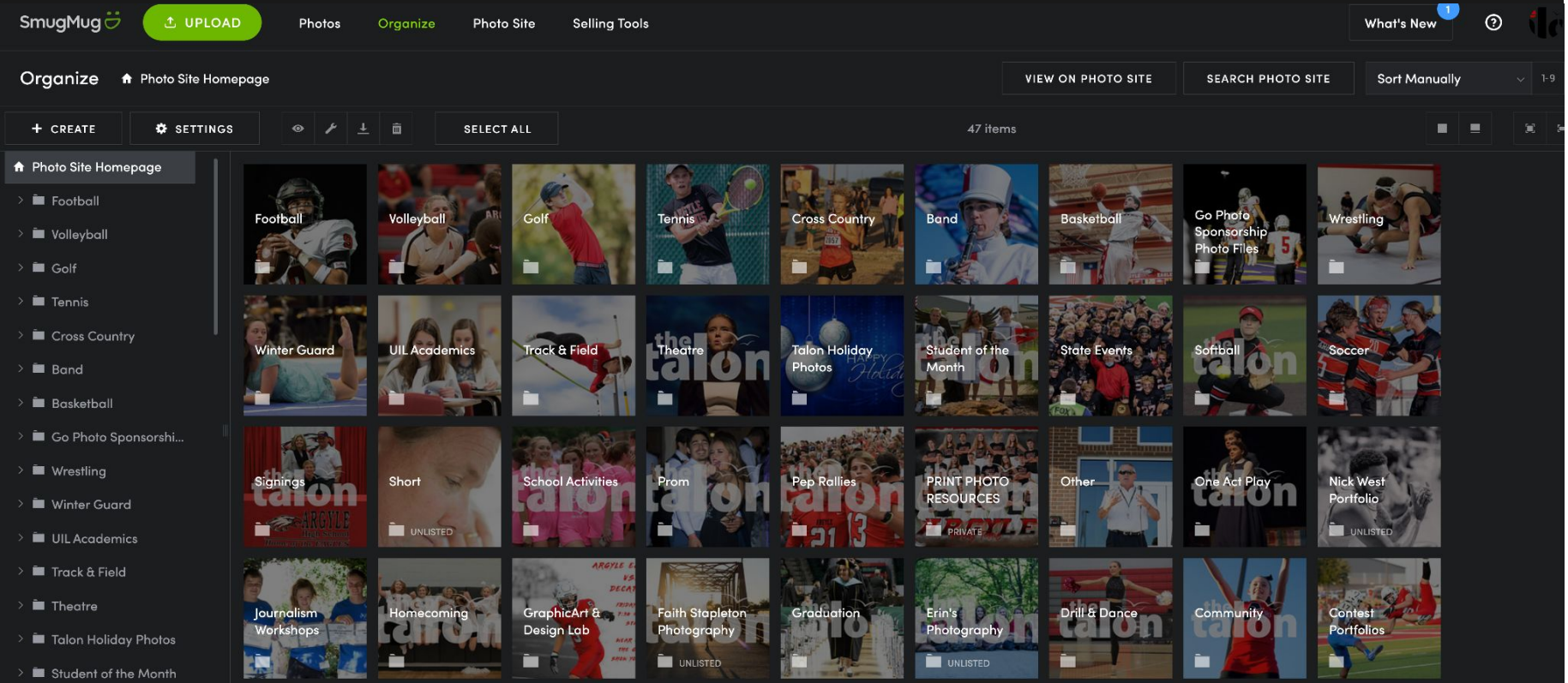


CREATING YOUR SITE

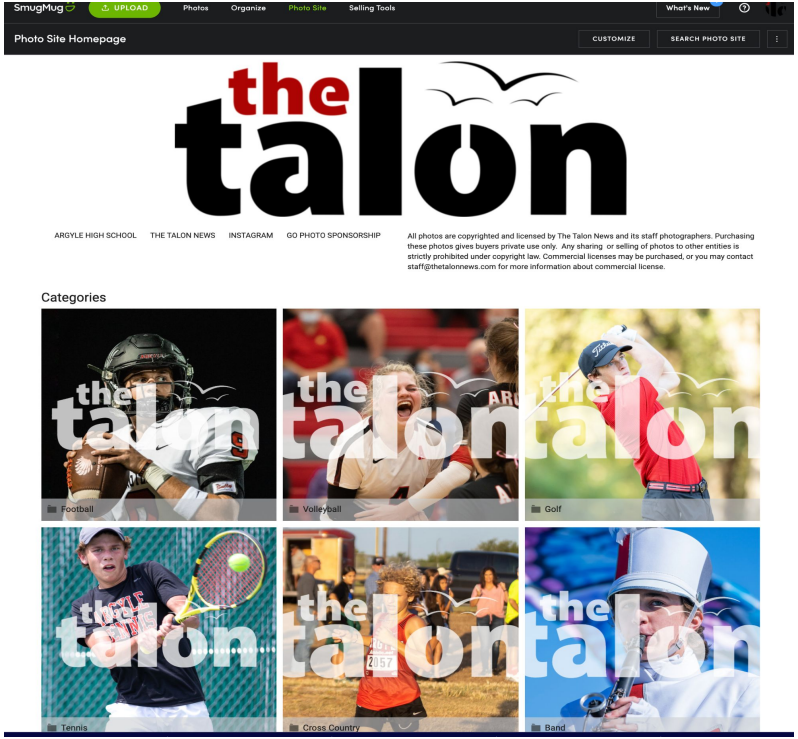


- **WE USE SMUGMUG**
  - **Versatility**
  - **Ability to set pricing on galleries**
  - **Ability to watermark**
  - **Ability to create galleries with password protection for our members**
  - **Ability to allow photographers a safe place to house portfolios**
  - **BACK UP for raw, edited and video**

CREATING YOUR SITE

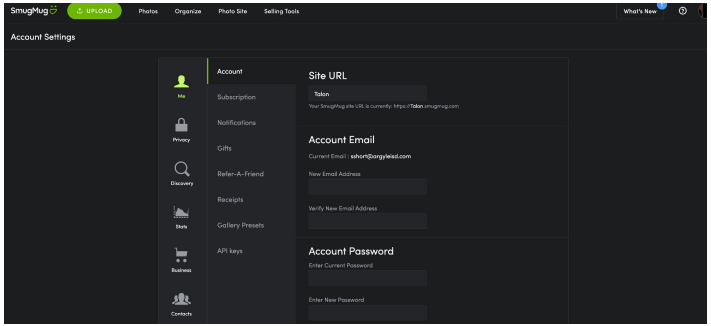


CREATING YOUR SITE



- After you have set up your BRAND, design your front page.
  - Logo up front
  - Links to relevant connections
    - Website
    - Membership form
    - School website
    - Main social media platforms
    - DISCLAIMER/copyright

CREATING YOUR SITE



- Use the settings and create with the dropdown menu (far right)
- There are GREAT tutorial videos on setting things up here! Use them. The Smugmug support team is GREAT! They just never CALL you. Everything is through email.

Site Flow/ Hierarchy

- NAMES/DATES - must be consistent (for ordering and numbering) - spending time on this upfront will same you lots of time later
- FOLDERS - set up folders/categories for all the things.
  - ONE FOR EVERY SPORT
  - School life
  - ONE FOR EVERY FINE ART
  - Community events, etc
- GALLERIES - Housed inside each folder, you create a gallery for each individual event/thing you do.
  - FOOTBALL (folder)
    - Eagles vs LaVega (10-6-21)
    - JV vs LaVega (10-5-21)

PHOTO MEMBERSHIP GALLERY Site Flow/ Settings

- Gallery (housed under Photo Membership FOLDER)
  - Lastname, Firstname (date set up)
  - PRESET (Go Photo - set this up once, then create the preset and name it PHOTO Membership)
  - File SIZE - original
  - Security

REGULAR GALLERY FOR SALES Site Flow/ Settings

- Gallery (housed under CATEGORY FOLDER)
  - NAME OF EVENT (date set up)
  - PRESET (DEFAULT - set this up once, then create the preset and name it DEFAULT)
  - File SIZE - original
  - Security
    - DOWNLOAD OFF
    - WATERMARK ON (must upload watermarks in a private gallery labeled with branding and logos uploaded)
  - CAPTIONs - Have a preset template that is generic, but change date, location, activity, photographer name per gallery.

WHAT SELLS?

- Team portraits
- Action shots for all sports
  - Feature
  - Action
  - Reaction
- Senior night
- Theater
- Studio portrait sessions
- Senior photos

- Special Events
  - Signing day
  - Inductions
  - Parent night
  - Prom
  - Dances
  - Carnival
  - Pep rally (crowd and performers)

- **If you can think of it it will sell**

PHOTOGRAPHERS TAKE PHOTOS - OF EVERYONE/EVERWHERE

- GOOD PHOTOS MATTER, BUT PARENTS WILL BUY WHATEVER YOU PUT OUT AS LONG AS IT'S "OKAY".
- HAVE A STANDARD FOR QUALITY AND QUANTITY PER GALLERY. (25-40)
- IF YOU GO TO AN EVENT, MAKE SURE TO GET AT LEAST ONE DECENT PHOTO OF EVERYONE ON THE TEAM OR AT THE EVENT...EVEN THE BENCHWARMERS!
- THE MORE EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES YOU ATTEND, THE MORE REVENUE YOU WILL BRING IN.
- POST LINKS TO UPLOADED GALLERIES EVERY TIME YOU UPLOAD (WITHIN 24 HOURS)!!! REPEAT posts frequently (if they missed it the first time, they might see it the second time)

Operating Costs

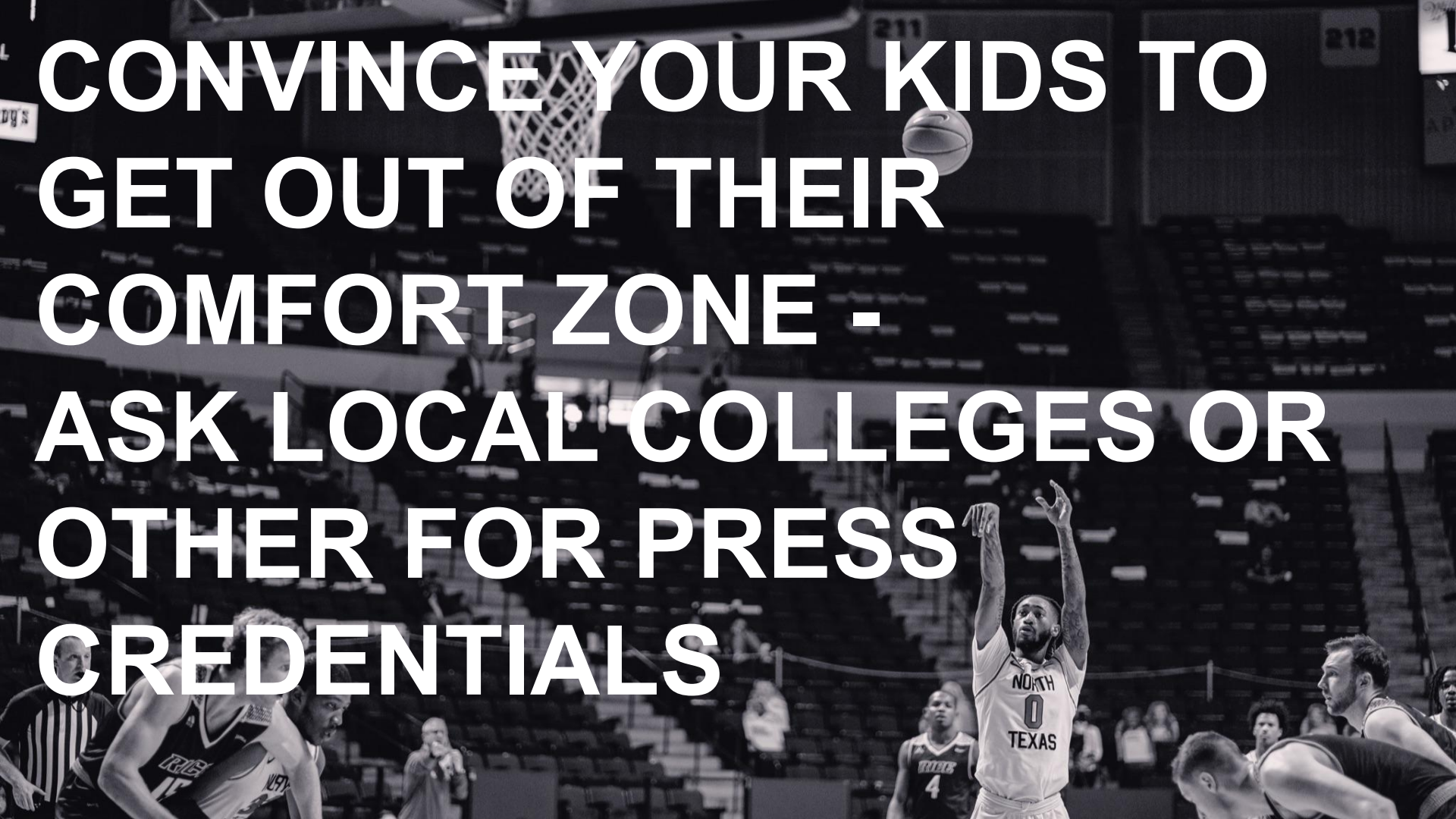
- Hosting/website professions cost $350 a year
- If you don't already have professional camera equipment, that will be an upfront cost you'll have to cover before starting (we started with one T2i and invested in a 70-200 lens. We built from there. We now use Canon 90Ds, 7Ds, and a Mark III. Biggest investment is good lenses. YOU have to get a 24-70 2.8is, a 70-200 2.8 is, and several 40mm or 50mm 2.8 primes. Other than that, some NICE things to have for portrait and long range sports: 300 is 2.8 (6,000+), 85mm, 35mm
- Also, you'll need to have software: Lightroom is great (can use Bridge to organize and sort before toning/editing, Photoshop for

Operating Costs cont...

- Cameras (Canon)
  - 4 7D Mark IIs
  - 5 90 Ds
  - 1 5D Mark IV
  - 2 EOS Rs
- Lenses (Canon)
  - 5 70-200s 2.8
  - 4 24-70 2.8
  - 1 85mm

Starting Out

- In order to receive profits from SmugMug you will need a bank account linked to your SmugMug account
- Find a way to talk your administration/bookkeepers into it


CONVINCE YOUR KIDS TO GET OUT OF THEIR COMFORT ZONE - ASK LOCAL COLLEGES OR OTHER FOR PRESS CREDENTIALS
211
212
NORTH
0
TEXAS

Starting Out (cont.)

- Link your SmugMug account to your own domain and customize it to look similar to your main online website.
- Avoid dumping all your photos online. Cull through and pick out 40-75 of the best ones, preferably with shot variety on subjects.
- Caption all photos from the beginning. You can have a generic caption for each gallery, but for contest purposes, this will help.

Starting Out (cont.)

- Once you have adequate equipment and your site is up and running, constantly market your website.
  - Announce on the intercom at school and games
  - Poster/banners around school w/ photos
  - Get a list of parent emails for each of the sports (get parents to help; they love this program)
  - Show up at games TO WORK, but also with flyers about the program

Starting Out (cont.)

- Digital advertising and options added after COVID
  - QR codes on all flyers posted around school
  - Digital sign-up options
  - Digital / credit card options (RevTrak)
  - Business manager to help track memberships and payments
  - Go to bank often with any cash/check payments
  - Track EVERYTHING with your accounting system

Get in the Race…
Get out of your Box…

Starting Out (cont.)

- Branding and marketing is very important right from the beginning.
- Without a strong logo and marketing strategy in the beginning it will be difficult to make up for your first impression.

Starting Out (cont.)

- Use social media to promote your photos as well
- CREATE Membership Forms and send to EVERYONE
- If possible, look into covering events live with photos on Twitter , Instagram and Facebook
- WATERMARK YOUR PHOTOS

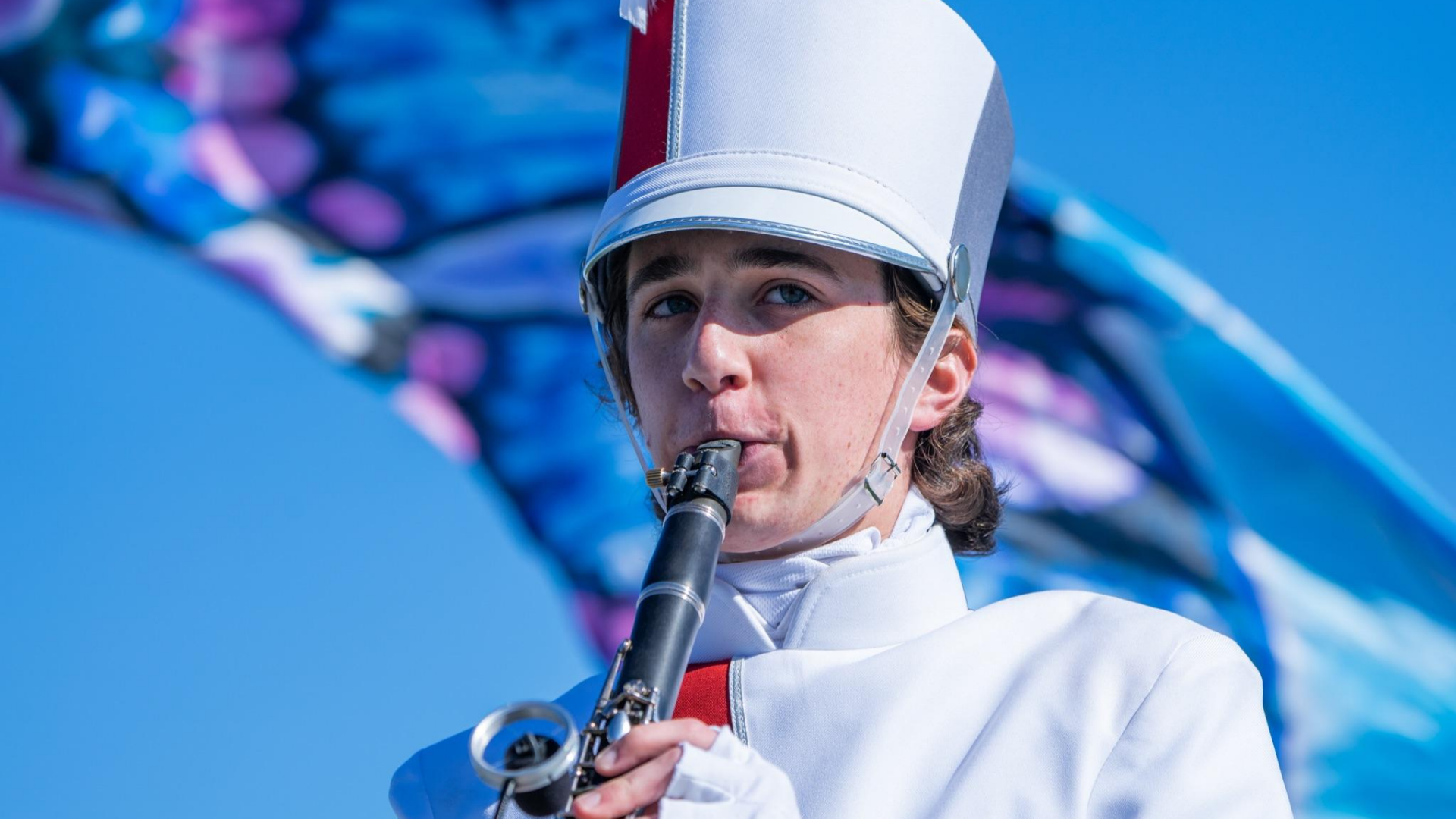
Polaroid
803
Polaroid
PANIC
600
instax
Panasonic
BOWER
Accessory Holders
Nikon
Vashica-D

Starting Out (cont.)

- Student photographers own the rights to their photos so you need release forms that allow your organization to sell their photos and license for all district media (with photo credits)
- LINK FOR RELEASE FORM WE USE
-

Be a Presence

- We travel nearly 6,000 miles per year as a staff. People know when we are at games and they know what to expect from us. When we started out, we set a precedence to **wear matching shirts that clearly branded our staff photographers.**
- Cover every playoff game. You never know which one will be the last.
- The number one rule in newspaper is **get there early and leave late**. First to arrive, last to leave!



Use Social Media

- Social media is a phenomenal tool to drive audience to your website and ultimately increase photo sales.
- We publish the best photos of events live through Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook (get a camera with wifi/bluetooth connection, or WiFi card)

Workflows

- Schedule Events, Charge batteries
- Check out cameras on day of event
- Show up early to event
- Shot list (Crucial)
- Take photos
  - focus on technical perfection
  - peak action, highs/lows, faces, perspective
  - Capture the entire event
  - shot variety
- Leave after all the action is gone
- Within 24 hours
  - Edit, tone, export
  - Create new gallery on Smugmug
  - Upload
  - Caption
- **Tweet galleries on social media**

- Make sure you shoot on RAW (if you have two slots, shoot the CF card on RAW and the SD slot on Medium JPG (if you are uploading to social media, send from the SD card)

FAQ

Q: What kind of camera equipment should we look at purchasing?

A: 70-200 f/2.8s will be your bread and butter. Anything short of that and you will struggle to photograph most sports. As for camera bodies, at least a Canon 7D is ideal, however we have utilized Canon Rebels Ti series and above and some Canon 100M mirrorless for basic school activities or school life shots

USE THE CAMERA YOU HAVE WITH YOU! The newer

FAQ

Q: What should we do when friends, parents or kids ask for FREE/give away photos?

A: You need to shut that down as quickly as you can. People need to understand that you have invested $1000s into photo equipment in order to capture those images. **Explain it is against policy and tell them they can go see the photos on the website** - make sure they can access that way.

B: Handle this responsibly and professionally

FAQ

Q: Should we create a photo membership program?

A: Although it is a lot of work keeping the galleries up to date, it is a great supplement to the sales we already make from SmugMug. BUT community will expect whatever you do. Be sure you can follow up and consistently

FAQ

Q: Why should we have our own domain name for our SmugMug site?

A: It makes it easier for your potential customers. It also helps create a brand for your organization. Ideally your SmugMug website would look like an extension of your main website.

Contact Information

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