Workflow

By Robert Edwards

Workflow is one of those buzz words to come from digital photography. This mystical term promises to minimise your time behind the computer. In reality you can expect to be working on the computer equivalent to some 50%-100% of the time spent photographing.

There are as many workflows as there are photographers. After several requests to document my own workflow here it is. Over time you develop workflows that best suit your way of working. Workflows are organic and will change along with the technology. Following are two workflows that are used daily.

Workflow 1 delivers all the high res images finished and ready for re-purposing by commercial clients. This increases the workload (and cost) because you adjust every file, even though the client may not need every image.

Workflow 2 produces low res files from which the client selects those they want supplied as high res. This decreases your workload and cost compared to the first workflow. However you need to ensure your RAW files are safely stored and catalogued for when clients want to license more high res images any time in the future.

Workflow 1 : *Convert the job lot*.

1. Shoot RAW.

2. Download (ingest) using Photo Mechanic:
- Download to two separate hard drives.
- Name folders using shoot date YYMMDD (e.g. 060105).
- Embed general IPTC: - Store original name into IPTC Source - Copyright - Author.

3. Open contact sheet and remove the blinks, blurs and blanks.
4. Review similar images in batches.
5. Rename using date_sequence (eg. 060105_001.nef).
6. IPTC caption and keyword similar images in batch.

7. Open folder in Adobe Bridge and adjust images in Camera Raw (or Phase One Capture One DSLR).
8. Batch convert images to TIFF and low res 600x800 pixel JPEG.

9. Open low res JPEGs in Photo Mechanic and print A4 contact sheets, twenty to a sheet (5x4).

10. Move images from "Work" hard drive to "Images" hard drive.

11. Import all images into iView MediaPro at 320px thumbnails and 1024 previews.

12. Print CD insert, twenty to a sheet (5x4).

13. Burn and verify CD for client with TIFFs, low res JPEGs, and Readme file explaining contents.

14. Backup images, iView catalog and ACR (or Capture One) settings to External HDD using SynchBack (PC) or ChronoSync (Mac).

Workflow 2 : *Convert client selects*.

1. Shoot RAW.

2. Download (ingest) using Photo Mechanic:
- Download to two separate hard drives.
- Name folders using shoot date YYMMDD (e.g. 060105).
- Embed general IPTC: - Store original name into IPTC Source - Copyright - Author.

3. Open contact sheet and remove the blinks, blurs and blanks.
4. Review similar images in batches.
5. Rename using date_sequence (eg. 060105_001.nef).
6. IPTC caption and keyword similar images in batch.

7. Open folder in Adobe Bridge and make rough adjustments images using RapidFixer script (or Phase One Capture One DSLR).
8. Batch convert images to low res 600x800 pixel JPEG.

9. Move images from "Work" hard drive to "Images" hard drive.

10. Import all images into iView MediaPro at 320px thumbnails and 1024 previews.

11. Make custom Web Gallery and upload to private URL for client viewing (eg. www.photographer.com.au/qantas/) or supply on CD.

12. After client has made selection convert those to high res TIFF.

13. Burn and verify CD for client with TIFFs, low res JPEGs, and Readme file explaining contents.

14. Print CD insert using iView, twenty to a sheet (5x4).

15. Backup images, iView catalog and ACR (or Capture One) settings to External HDD using SynchBack (PC) or ChronoSync (Mac).

Resources

www.adobe.com Adobe Photoshop is the industry standard pixel editor. Photoshop CS2 includes the new file browser Bridge.

www.camerabits.com Photo Mechanic is the de facto industry standard image browser and IPTC editor.

www.iview-multimedia.com iView MediaPro is a popular, user friendly digital asset management program.

www.phaseone.com Capture One RAW conversion software offers a streamline workflow.

Robert Edwards is a photographer and educator based in Sydney Australia and is a member of the ACMP (Association of Australian Commercial + Media Photographers) and the AIPP (Australian Institute of Professional Photography). He sits on the ACMP Digital Standards committee and represents the ACMP on UPDIG (Universal Photographic Digital Imaging Guidelines).