

# IAPP e-MONITOR

Punch holes here



## WIDE VIEWS WITH DAVID LAWRENCE

*I recently had an opportunity to sit down and visit with long time IAPP member David Lawrence. We enjoyed a great lunch and I enjoyed touring his offices and studio.*

*—Dawn Snow, CPP*

**Q:**

**When did you start shooting & what did you start shooting?**

I started shooting in Jr. High school, as a science project. I made a pinhole camera from an oatmeal box and developed the black and white film in a closet. I worked as a photographer (and later editor) for the high school yearbook. Then I discovered they were looking for a photographer to film the football and basketball games. I took 16mm movies, had reserved spot on the 50-yard line, and rode to the away games on the band bus. I thought, "Wow, this is pretty cool."

I continued to photograph for a college newspaper while working on my degree in Environmental Biology at Ohio State University.

I moved to Florida after college. I did some assignment work for the Clearwater Sun newspaper. Found a sports niche, shot for the Buccaneers football team in Tampa. Along with sailing races, windsurfing and water sports.

That was about the time stock photography really started taking off. A stock agency in Miami, Sharp Shooters, saw my windsurfing work, and asked if I wanted to join their agency. I was shooting 35 mm at this time. I joined this agency for a while. They really focused on mostly Florida images. And by now I was doing more transportation and travel



work, so I signed with the Stock Market agency in NY.

I went to Photo Expo in NY, and saw a panoramic camera there. I was getting ready for an annual report for Tampa International Airport at the time. It's a real strong horizontal subject. So I rented an early Fuji 617 panoramic camera in 1987. Another company saw what we were shooting and wanted panoramics for their AR as well. I was racking up a large rental fee & ended up buying the rental camera. I started doing more & more panorama photography. I loved that 617, it worked just like a big 35mm. Panoramic Images in Chicago was starting about that time and I worked with them for a number of years.

I've traveled around the world four times on assignment. I always stayed extra time at locations building up my library of stock images.

Then stock photography started to melt down in the early 2000s. I pulled all my work back I could and started to market on my own images. To me it just didn't make business sense to shoot Royalty Free images and sell these images for \$9 a pop.

In the 80-90s I did 60% assignment work. Today, I don't do nearly as much assignment work. Most of my work comes from making large scale artwork and wall murals. Visual Therapy. Images of gardens, tropical beaches and mountainscapes ... I've also been supplying them for MRI units - visual therapy for overhead lighting. Images of escape for those in hospitals and high stress environments.

Last month I got an email from a woman in Boston. Her husband is a Captain in one of the "medical stress units" in Iraq. She saw my mini-murals and wanted to send several to him. For a year he

will be working in an 8x10 foot room with no windows. I threw in a few extras for that unit. I feel rewarded that some of my images might help brighten their day a little.

**Q:** Do you send out prints to a lab?

Not for my art pieces. I print on canvas and paper in my studio with an Epson 44" wide printer. I like the quality control of doing my own printing ... and using unique art papers. I do work with an associate in Minnesota who does my printing for wall murals on commercial grade wallpaper. He prints to my specs with test strips and strike-off samples. The largest mural we did is 10 feet by 70 feet. For the NY office of a major on-line travel company.

I used to have a studio by the airport. I was there for several years. I sold the lease and improvements to another photographer. I found I just needed corporate office space since I did travel and location photography. I found a 900 sq ft office, with no windows, in a corner of the building. I got a good rate on it since it was so dark and unusual. I filled it with light tables, so I was fine. Since I lived on the beach at the time, I kept all my photo gear at the office to keep all the sand away from the equipment.

**Q:** Where do you work?

We always seemed to be driving to Palm Harbor to visit family, so we looked for a house with a lot large enough to build a studio on. We did that several years ago. I now work out of a freestanding office/studio at my home. Hey, it's great to walk to work everyday.

**Q:** How much of your business is from art shows?

I do 3 or 4 shows a year in the Tampa Bay area. It was a learning experience: surprisingly, I didn't anticipate that people would order large prints directly off the web. I thought people would see it at an art show first, and then order custom off the web. So I bought the tent, display walls ... and a trailer.

I do like the experience of talking with people and seeing how they react. It helps me in my editing and creating new work. But it's not extremely lucra-



tive. There is so much good work out there; especially in smaller sized prints ... there are so many things to buy. I make it a rule to not do a 1-day show. I admire the guys who do the circuit. I don't know how they do it. It's a lot of work. I think at one time it was more profitable for them. There was less competition, not only amongst the artists, but also amongst the shows.

Q:

**Would you get into the shows again, since it doesn't seem to be very lucrative?**

Some people play golf, some people go fishing. I set up the art shows as recreation. I often communicate via email, but it's real nice to get out and talk to people. I don't enjoy the early morning set up or tearing down in the rain, but the actual show process itself, I enjoy.

I'd like to be known for making large prints. With only a 10 ft space, I can only show several large pieces. I also heard, "I just don't have that kind of wall space at home." So I came up with a series of small panoramic prints printed on bamboo (eco friendly).

### Personal Pans

I call them my "personal pans". 4x12 inch prints matted to 8x16 inches, a very economical size. There is no waste on the foam core, mat board, etc. I sell a couple of big pieces, but then I sell a number of these at \$20. This also allows me to show a large selection of pans that are "available" as large prints.

People can also put a face to my website. I hand out a lot of brochures and make a few contacts.

I've become more active in the local artist's community, I work on some of their committees and things, and you get accepted a little more into their world. It gets real competitive in the art world. I mean painters are looking at our canvas prints and thinking, here's a photographer who snaps a picture at 500th of a second that they would have to hand paint. Of course, we look at a painting and think, well; I don't see any power lines in that picture. There's a little bird over there and a rabbit over there and everything just came together. We have

to travel to the location, sometimes wait days to get good light. I think it is great to work together. I can share some of my knowledge about digital imaging and printing with them ... it helps to break down the barriers.

Q:

**How do you feel about an artist taking a photograph you made for inspiration and making a big painting of it and selling it for 1000s of dollars?**

Ah, the same thing about people snagging images off the web to use on their websites. You know it's going to happen... You could lock your images in the studio but then you would never sell them. I see paintings in museums, and they influence my photography. If they're copying it, I think that is an issue

of how they feel about it. If they could take a photograph and paint it verbatim, do they feel comfortable doing that? I would not feel right copying a photograph. It's more of a personal ethical question. If someone would ask me, I would ask him or her to change something slightly. But I'm probably not going to sue them over it.



Q:

**Lets talk about workflow. Do you go out with a firm conception in mind?**

Most of my work is not fully preconceived. I like to put myself in a location with good light and good weather and see what happens.

Like recently when I wanted to get some new sand dune panoramas. I traveled to the panhandle [of Florida]. I returned to a location I photographed before ... but the growth of the area was phenomenal. So, I kept traveling. Everywhere I went, there were condos or building or wires. I just kept going. I ended up in a State Park where they had just redone the dunes from last year's hurricane season so the dunes and sea oats were very fresh and beautiful.

I still like to shoot panoramics on 617 film. After editing, I scan low rez on an Epson scanner to get the images on the web. Then I scan high rez the first time an image sells (with Imacon scanner in the

studio) That is when I retouch out the dust and prepare a 400MB master file for printing.

Its funny, my wife says people are not going to go through 1000s of images to find one that they want. But I find there are 2 types of shoppers... those who like to hunt and those who like to see a more edited collection. So I feature the images that are already prepped and ready to go in various "themed" collections. "A Garden Walk", "Tropical Islands", etc. About half the time someone will pick an image from a themed collection.

I've been shooting corporate assignment work with digital since Canon came out with the 1DS. I have created some digital panoramas (multiple images stitched together) I find it works for me in a few situations.

However, when leaves are moving in the wind or a wave washed onto the beach, I am often not happy with the results. (with automated stitching) ...sometimes it looks great on screen but when an image is printed to a 10' mural and a seam is wrong, that's where your eye goes every time.

I do all my own web work. I started very early using CompuServe and Email I don't even remember when I started my first Prime Images web site. I do my own search image optimization as well. I have about ten different websites: each one search engine optimized to bring in different niches.

**Q:**

**What about your website? Today it's your storefront so it is very important to your brand.**

Each web site is tailored towards different key words, text and links. And I find that makes it easier for people to find my sites.

The first mistake I made was putting the site under my company name, Prime Images. But my name isn't Coca-Cola. And people weren't searching for Prime Images because they didn't know that name. I then started tailoring the web site names and urls to the search terms. I also found that using hyphens is not a bad thing. So now when I register a website I try to get both, and use the hyphenated name as the "official" website. I find that [Photography-Murals.com](http://Photography-Murals.com) indexes well .... Considering that the search term "photo murals" shows several hundred thousand other web sites in the results.



I tried Google Ad words & I got click throughs but it really didn't work for me. I think it would be very difficult to do what I do, and not do my own web-work. It would be very expensive. I'd rather spend my advertising money on books and web site names.

*Don't Make Me Think* is a great book on this subject - people want get in and get the information.

They don't want to get in there and try to figure out a web site's navigation. It's an excellent book. I've changed all my websites navigation to go with tabs on the top. It's a way to show what page you are on with the tabs. But as you go from site to site, the navigation doesn't change, each site looks like the same company.

I find shopping carts and such are quite complex. Not to mention the security issues of hosting shopping carts. I receive credit card payments via a secure form that is hosted by a third party on a secure web server. Once a customer submits a payment form, I get an email. I then log onto their secure sever and read the information. Almost all of my sales are custom sizes .. Not really "spur of the moment" decisions. We usually communicate back and forth a few times before the customer actually orders and pays.

**Q:**

**What do you think about workshops?**

I am currently working on offering a few small workshops on digital imaging and printing here in my studio. Some people find classes held in an academic setting as too intimidating. People can have fun ... and make something cool at the same time. It could be a canvas print from their vacation last year .... Or some personal note cards.

Ever notice how people pay a lot more at Hobby Lobby or JoAnn's to buy the "parts" to make their





own crafts ... compared to what they could buy an item already finished? It's the fun and experience of making them.

**Q:**

**Would you consider doing a scheduled workshop in concert with other IAPP instructors across the country?**

That would be a possibility. I think that would work. The underlying message from last year's IAPP membership survey was that people don't want to pay a lot to get somewhere. I myself, can only make 1 or 2 "fun" trips a year. I have to be very selective. But if we were to plan a nation-wide, yet, regional workshops, I think it may be great. Several going on at the same time.



Thank you, David! I enjoyed meeting you face to face!

**Q:**

**What organizations are you a member of?**

I am a member of the National Press Photographers Association, ASMP, North American Nature Photographers Association, Professional Association of Visual Artists, National Association of Photoshop Professionals, and IAPP. I tend to cross over in a number of different fields. I would find it very difficult to choose one.

As artists I think we need to work harder to attract people to join IAPP, because there are so many other organizations that also put on panoramic photography sessions.



Note: The feature articles that were mentioned in the December issue about "Out of this World Panoramas" and "A \$3,000 Camera Stand" were not completed in time to make this issue. Please look for them in an upcoming issue of the e-Monitor.  
—Editor

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## TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

by Michel Dusariez

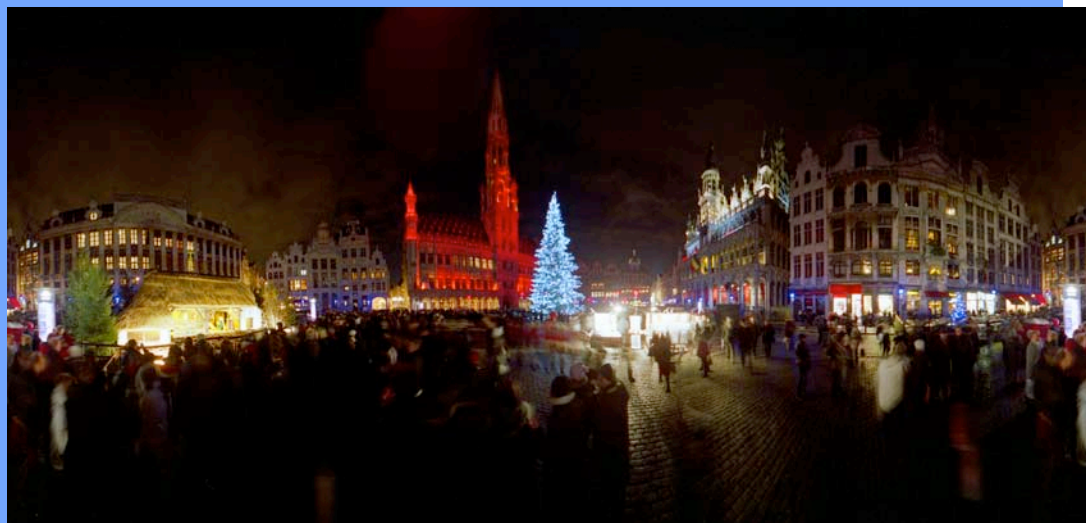
For many panoramic photographers, a great way to become better known is to provide panoramic images to magazines and newspapers to help illustrate their stories.

You should sign these images and provide contact details to be added to their articles. In this way your images will be seen by thousands of people.

It is not a bad idea to offer your first image for free and then price any subsequent images at a competitive price.

I tested this system with success recently. The magazine then

asked for a series of 4 images to illustrate the Christmas period. This is a very easy way to have your images published and seen by thousands of people without the cost of exhibiting in art galleries.



## THINGS TO DO

### IAPP AT IMAGING USA IN SAN ANTONIO

January 16-18, 2011 are the dates to mark on your calendar. The Professional Photographers of America's **Imaging USA** takes place on those dates. The location this year is in one of the most picturesque cities in America, and one of the most comfortable in January - San Antonio, Texas.

Along with the PPA's conference there will also be the Society of Sport and Event Photographers, the Evidence Photographers International Council, and the Stock Artists Alliance to offer something for everyone who is into Photography.

Of course, the International Association of Panoramic Photographers will not be having



their conference there at that time but we will be represented by many IAPP members manning our organization's booth for the duration of the conference. We will be showing the photographers of the world what Panoramic Photography is all about.

If you were planning on coming to **Imaging USA** please stop by our booth and say "hello". You can find more information by going to:

<http://imagingusa.org/>



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**We Don't know Yet!**

**We'll let you know next month!**

## IAPP e-MONITOR

The monitor on the rear of a digital camera is a device we use to quickly examine information about our photos. The IAPP e-Monitor was designed to give our membership a quick look at what is going on with the IAPP and with panoramic photography in general. It was originated to give our membership quicker information while they await the release of the PANORAMA.

We welcome any and all articles and photos from IAPP members for inclusion into the IAPP e-Monitor. This is a publication for the IAPP, by the IAPP, and about the IAPP.

## IAPP

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## How to Submit Articles to the e-Monitor

This is your organization. And your newsletter. If the subject matter isn't what you want to read about, then send in the perfect (to you) article. If the organization is making a turn that you do not agree with, step in. We welcome all volunteers.

Email (to [bryan@snowprophoto.com](mailto:bryan@snowprophoto.com)) your article as a document, with notations within your article where you want your photographs to appear. Please do not place your photographs within your document as this will compress the images too much. Please send them as separate files: tiffs or jpegs; 300 dpi and not larger than 7 inches on the long side.