



Show Notes

Season 4, Episode 12:

Your starter guide to sourcing images, free and paid

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What's in this episode?

Hosts Rachel Smith from [Rachel's List](#) and journalist and content creator [Lynne Testoni](#) talk about how to source the best images for your copy and for clients.

In this episode we discuss:

Free places to find images

- **Canva.com** – access to up to 400,000 free and paid images on a Pro account
- **Gratisography.com** – a free image library, whimsical and off-beat stuff
- **Giphy.com** – the undisputed site for great gifs, but also try Tenor.com
- **Pixabay** – a great image library (and also the one used by WordSwag, which is an app for doing social images)
- **Pexels.com** Free images and videos
- **Unsplash.com** Images submitted by photographers and usually great quality
- **Adobe** also has free images on file, which make design for social media quicker if you use those programs.
- **Google images** You can use these if you filter for copyright/royalty-free images, which sometimes works. Quality is pretty average though. You can sometimes use it to source images, but then go to the source for the original. There is usually a cost to include source.

Commissioning photographers

- Knowing good photographers and choosing the right one for a job, is a particular skill. It's good to have a little black book of photographers for clients in case they need images that aren't readily available in stock libraries



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- Know your copyright law – in Australia, it rests with the photographers (and the writer for the words). This means that even if you commission a photographer to take photos of a client's project, they still own the images and technically they need to be paid whenever a client uses them. Most photographers, however, are happy to give you copyright as part of the commissioning project, but a few clients (and me) have been caught before. Also, most media outlets these days make photographers sign away their copyright as part of a contributor agreement, so you can't use any images that have been published without paying the media outlet.
- If asked to supply images, start the project by seeing if it would be easier to commission a photographer than use stock images. The end result is better. Sometimes, however, this is not practical because of time, distance or cost.

Using stock images

- Shutterstock and Getty are the two main ones for paid images
- It costs around \$49 for a 5-pack of images on Shutterstock
- Get a free trial from Gratisography.com or StockSnap.io

NB: Always check the copyright on all these services (free and paid) as some – particularly Shutterstock – won't permit usage if it's for a commercial service, such as content work.

Sourcing images from PRs

Develop a good contact list of PRs in your niche so you can get them to supply images if necessary. You can also use image libraries such as Press Loft and Flaunter, where companies upload their product images.

Sometimes you can source images for an editorial story via Sourcebottle or by going to Georgia's Media Circle on FB, which is full of PRs.



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Technical specs for images

- If you're sourcing images for a client's Wordpress blog, be aware banner sizes will differ depending on the blog theme. Ask the client for banner specs and if they don't know, log into the CMS, go to the Media Gallery and check the specs on any existing banners. If you're starting on a site that's brand new and there are no banners or media images to follow, search the theme in Google with the word 'documentation' to find tech sizes for images.
- Stick to 72dpi for websites otherwise it will take ages to load the page (should be sufficient if you choose 'medium' when creating images in Canva and downloading the finished image)
- If you need images for print they need to be 300dpi and a decent size. This can be tricky – it is surprising how few people understand the differences. Jpegs are usually best, although for print ask for TIFF files, which ensures they are high enough in resolution. Print-ready photo files are huge too, so you need cloud-based storage and some sort of way to transfer them to your client. Dropbox or Google Drive works well.
- And the other thing to note is that if you are sourcing images for websites or online, look for landscape (horizontal) versions, rather than portrait size. The web and Facebook usually favours landscape while Instagram needs a square image. When commissioning photography, request that at least 2/3 of the images are landscape and the hero image is always landscape. Same when sourcing images. Print is different, but these days, online is the most common destination.

Don't forget that sourcing good imagery is time-consuming, so it's important that you charge clients for your time (a project management fee is fine).

That's it for this episode. Hope you've found these show notes useful.

Cheers, Rachel and Lynne

Got a question? Email us at thecontentbyte@gmail.com