

**This is an excerpt from the first chapter of
Byron and Susan Jorjorian's newest e-book:**

Marketing Your Images: Steps to Success in the Stock Image Business

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Chapter 1 Questions and Answers

Before you get started, here are some questions for us, the book authors, and for you, the potential stock image photographer.

Who are we?

We are Byron and Susan Jorjorian, the husband and wife team behind Byron Jorjorian Photography. Byron, the photographer, has been photographing the natural world for thirty years. His photographs have appeared in countless magazines, books, posters, calendars, e-books, and other publications. Susan, the marketer, works to promote and market Byron's images. Together, we have built a successful and profitable stock image business.

This e-book is our joint production that brings together all we have learned in building our business. Here, we will guide you past the pitfalls and mistakes we have made and show you what really works and what does not in order to help streamline your path to your own stock image business.

How did you get your start in the stock image business?

This is Byron talking. All my life I've loved photography and nature. More than 29 years ago, I sold my first stock image as a greeting card. I was thrilled! I had found a way to make money by doing what I loved! The business and marketing side of the business got a tremendous boost when I met Susan, who has a degree in marketing. A wonderful side benefit of this is that we fell in love and got married. Now we can collaborate any time, working out of our home office.

How did you learn everything you need to know to run a successful stock image business?

We learned everything that we know about marketing and the stock image business through experience, also known as "the hard way". It has cost us both

in money and time to gain this knowledge. Conservatively, we estimate this cost at:

- \$50,000 to \$100,000 in misspent funds and lost revenue.
- Five to ten years spent making mistakes and trying things that did not work.

Even though the cost in money is great, we can recoup that. What we cannot get back again is the time that we wasted. What this e-book can do for you is to save you time and money by jump-starting your experience level. For a very small fraction of the cost of making mistakes, you will learn what it took us years and thousands of dollars to bring together. I would estimate that you can achieve in two years the level of success that it took us 15 years to achieve if you read, understand, and apply the information in this e-book. Now that's a return on investment!

Why are you giving out all your marketing secrets? Won't this hurt your business?

Many photographers (as well as those in other fields) get real quiet when you ask them for details about how they do business. They seem to think that, if you don't know what you're doing, it will somehow help them. They want to maintain "an edge" over everyone else in their profession.

We have a different opinion. We're just as interested as the next fellow in promoting our own business and being successful. But we feel that open sharing of information actually helps everyone in our profession, ourselves included. There are several reasons for this:

- For one thing, when stock image photographers know "the right way to do things" and apply that knowledge in their dealings with clients, the clients have a better experience and will tend to treat stock photographers better as time goes on. As an example, let's say a client asks you to submit a file in digital form. If you don't know how to submit the file correctly, you may leave the client with a bad impression not only of digital image submission, but of stock image photographers in general.
- This also creates a level playing field for stock image photographers. The client should choose images on the basis of the images themselves, not on cost, the photographer's personality, or the level of the photographer's professionalism.

The end result is that we can all be in this business together. There is plenty of room for photographers of all kinds in the stock image business. Why should we

keep our information secret, when doing so could actually hurt our business?

What are my stock images worth?

My experience with selling stock images of nature has shown that, conservatively, I can expect at least \$1 of income per year for every one of my stock images. So, if I have 10,000 stock images, I can expect an annual income of \$10,000 from stock image sales. I like to think of these images as "little oil wells" that just keep pumping out money year after year. Every time you press that shutter button you are drilling for oil!

Naturally, some images earn much more than others. You might say that some of my images are "dry holes", some trickle out oil, and a select few are gushers. Let's look at a few images that have done very well for my stock image business. We have used some of these images in our own publications and haven't counted the royalties from those publications into the final figure. So these figures are all low estimates of the total earnings from each of these images.

Streams of Revenue

This very simple composition has earned me \$7,590. Contrary to what you might think, simpler compositions sell better as stock images than busier or more complicated images. Simple compositions have a broader audience appeal and are picked more often by editors, art directors, and other stock image buyers. So, whenever you're tempted to cram as much complexity into your images as possible, remember this rule:

"Simple sells".





Why I love assignments

I took this shot while on assignment. In less than one year, it has earned me \$1,975. When I took this shot, I was in full-bore right-brain, "artistic photographer" mode, really enjoying the play of light and shadow. To be successful, you need to be both a creator and a businessperson.



Money from a Macro: \$2860

I lead several photographic workshops every year. These range from days-long trips to the Everglades and Yosemite to one-day local outings in Middle Tennessee.

I shot this image while leading a macro workshop, which people were paying me to attend. While everyone else was clicking away in one direction, I turned in the opposite direction, saw something that no one else saw, and took this image of iris leaves. Not only did I earn money by teaching the workshop, I've actually earned much more than that from this one image taken that day.

Try to be alert and looking for stock images at every opportunity.



**Simple Composition
= \$11,354.32!**

Here's another very simple composition that I took in Cades Cove, a 6000-acre meadow in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. To date, this image has been used in ads and in prints. It has earned over \$11,354.32! Not bad for an image taken "on the fly"!

If only they were all like this!

Here's my all-time champion gusher! Yes, you read the figure right: over \$26,950.15 from this single image! I was crouching down to get a "deer's eye view" through the grass and got the shot that I call "Keeping Watch". I think part of the appeal of this image is that it suggests the deer, rather than showing them explicitly. That sets this image apart from others that show deer clearly and distinctly; always look for that edge that will set your images apart from others.



Just Ahead

In the next chapter, we begin discussion of the "business side" of the stock image business. There you will learn how much you might earn, and what steps to take to get you to your business goals. Let's go!