

SOCIAL MEDIA

6 FREE Tools That Every Photographer Should Know About

BRENDAN HUFFORD – [Photo MBA](#)

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

I'm a veteran teacher and family man who is absolutely in love with photography. On the side, I build online businesses. Trying to do it all is super demanding but I could never imagine my life any other way. That's why when I meet a photographer, I see myself.

I know how incredible it feels to be financially independent doing work you're proud of.

That's why I created The Photo MBA. I want to help photographers just like you build a business that allows you to live the life that you determine.

Here's the FREE tools I used to grow my business from 0 to \$100k. **Want more than just tools?** [Click here.](#)



WHY SOCIAL MEDIA MATTERS TO PHOTOGRAPHERS

Social Media is the photographer's unfair advantage. When you share updates about where and what you're shooting next to amazing images of what you're working on now, you're not just attracting new clients – you're letting your potential clients see more of YOU. That connection and trust, not some genius pricing structure, is what's going to get you booked solid.

Every tweet is a chance for a client to decide they want you to hang out at their wedding for 10+ hours. Every Instagram photo gives your followers a chance to see, and share, your best work. Every Snap is a behind the scenes look at your process and your energy.

Above all else, being active on social media (aka “the internet”) is a chance for your current and future clients to see how much you love making them happy with your photos.



WHY SOCIAL MEDIA MATTERS TO PHOTOGRAPHERS

The photography business is so much more than a transaction of money for images. Your ideal fans, the ones who become repeat clients, learn to love you for your process, attitude, friendship and attention. This is what gets them to read what you write, share what you post, and most importantly, tell their friends.

You could spend 5 hours a day managing your Snapchat, Instagram, Pinterest, Facebook, Twitter, etc. but YOU HAVE WORK TO DO.

You are a photographer, not a professional social media poster. You need to find a way to make social media work for you. In the following pages, you'll find the tactics, strategies, and tools to make that happen.

“Make stuff you love and talk about stuff you love and you’ll attract people who love that kind of stuff. It’s that simple.”

— Austin Kleon

NEVER WASTE TIME ON SOCIAL MEDIA AGAIN

The immediate and intimate connection that social media allows is incredible, but the overwhelm of needing to constantly update them is very real. I don't want you to be distracted when you need to be editing photos for a client because you haven't updated your Facebook page today.

You have so many priorities and are already overwhelmed so let's stop the madness.

Start scheduling some of your posts in advance so you can focus on what you do best: photography.

NEVER WASTE TIME ON SOCIAL MEDIA AGAIN

Plan out what you'll be doing this week ahead of time (I like to block it out in my Google Calendar), events you'll be attending, places you'll be for work/fun, and shoots you've been booked for.

For example, if I know ahead of time that I'm shooting a wedding next weekend, then here's what I might schedule for the Monday before:

8:00am – Rise and shine! Can't wait to start editing photos from [@brendanhufford](#)'s wedding last Saturday. [@GPHhotel](#) was such an amazing venue!

12:00pm – Can't wait for the next #CDP meetup. Who else is going? <http://www.meetup.com/Chicago-Digital-Photo/>

5:00pm – Quick break from editing for some dinner. Look at this amazing shot from last weekend!

7:00pm – SO EXCITED to be photographing [@susankagy](#)'s wedding this Saturday. [@ChathanBarsInn](#) is one of my favorite places to shoot.

By scheduling these ahead of time, you're engaging with your current clients and your future clients are seeing how much you care about the people you take pictures of. All of the pressure to interrupt your normal workflow is gone. The best part is, you can still update on the fly whenever you want.

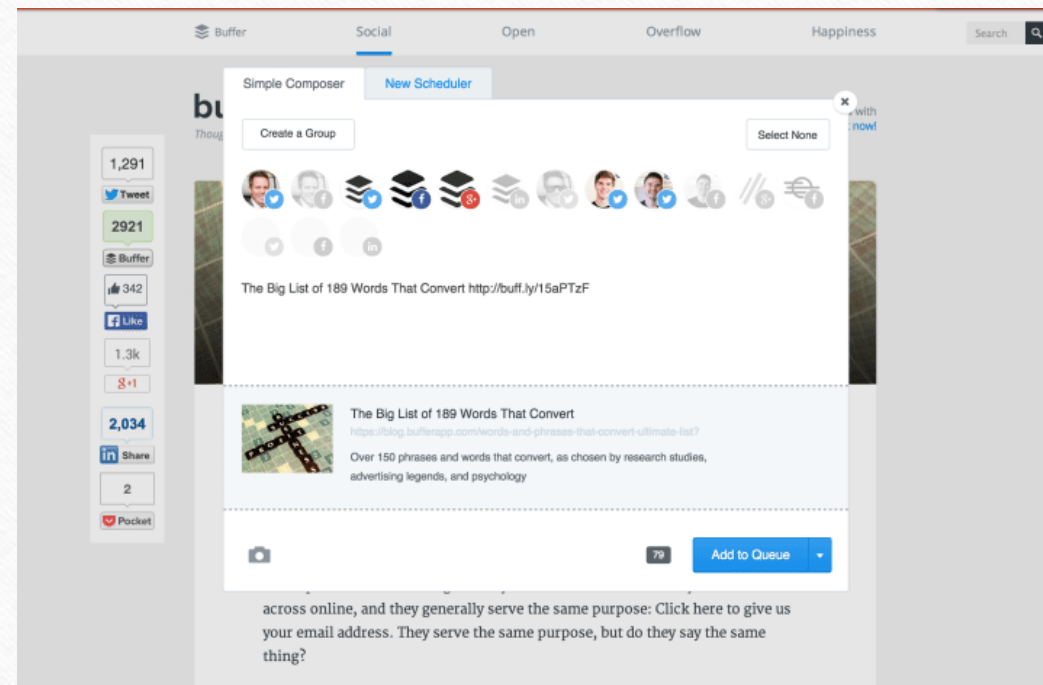
NEVER WASTE TIME ON SOCIAL MEDIA AGAIN

1. Buffer – My favorite social media scheduler.

Buffer's clean interface and great (free) add-ons make it my go-to choice for scheduling social media posts.

I love that I can quickly analyze my popular posts and share them (or similar posts) again in the future.

Link: [Buffer.Com](https://buffer.com)

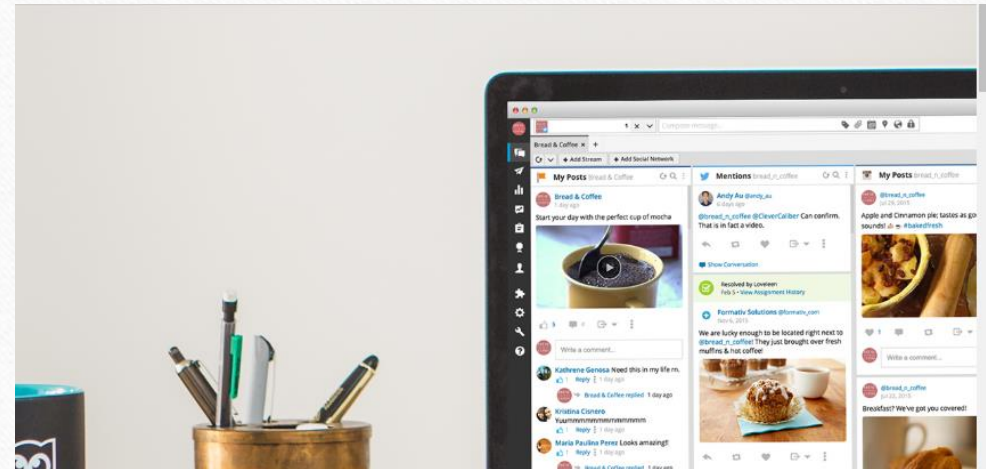


NEVER WASTE TIME ON SOCIAL MEDIA AGAIN

2. Hootsuite – Another fantastic social media scheduler.

In addition to all of the services that Buffer integrates with, Hootsuite also integrates with Foursquare. I don't prefer the interface, but they allow more social profiles than Buffer on their free plan.

Link: [Hootsuite.com](https://hootsuite.com)



KNOW WHEN AND WHERE TO POST

Although I prefer Buffer, Hootsuite is also fantastic so it's really matter of personal preference (see also: Canon vs. Nikon). BUT, with either, **you'll still need to decide when is best to schedule your posts.** You want to make sure you're posting when the most people are checking their feeds. (Yet another reason that I love Buffer is that this feature is built in.)

Again, you're a professional photographer and not professional social media poster so don't stress this once you have it set up. There are two tools that follow that will help you break down the data of when your fans/followers are online, but you can also use some of your own insights into when they're checking social media. Does your target market work during the day? Are they most likely to check before work, during lunch, and after work? OR does your target market have access to social all day as a part of their job because they're an agency creative director?

KNOW WHEN AND WHERE TO POST

After you've considered what you already know about your ideal client / target market, start to dive into a bit of data about when they're online so you can optimize your reach. Here's one of the best for Twitter:

3. Tweriod helps you figure out when your followers are most active. It's free version is awesome but the paid version is even better (and great if you're heavily involved with Twitter).

Link: [Tweriod](#)



Tweriod

Start Tweeting When Others Listen

Tweriod gives you the best times to tweet. We analyse both your tweets and your followers' tweets. So you can start tweeting when it makes most sense to reach others.

[Sign Up With Twitter](#)

[Go to](#)

General Stats | **Hourly Graphs** | @replies

Most exposure when tweeted between

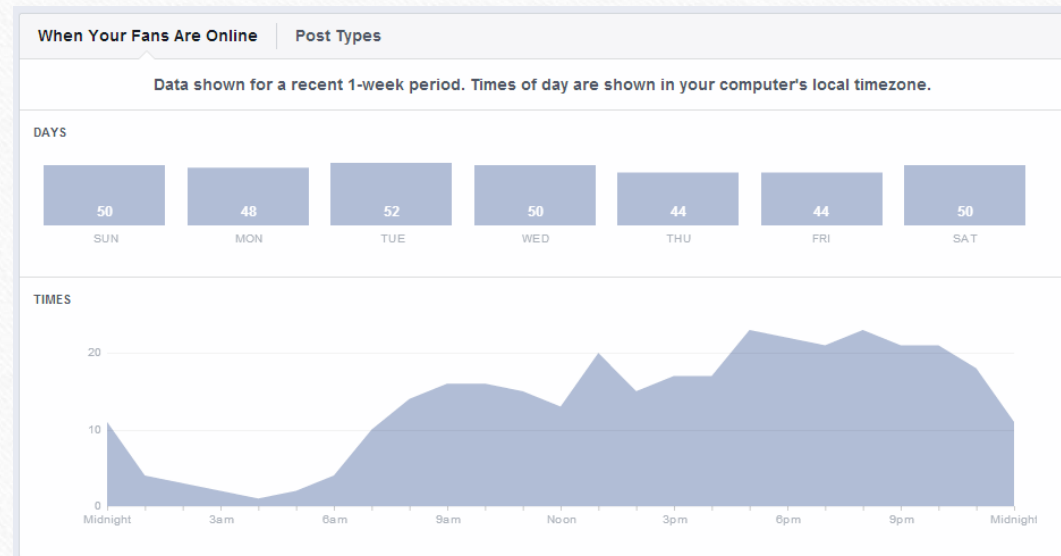
[Weekends](#) | [Sundays](#) | [Mondays](#) | [Weekdays](#)

3 pm and 4 pm
7 pm and 8 pm
9 pm and 10 pm

KNOW WHEN AND WHERE TO POST

4. **Facebook Insights** allows you to see how many of your fans saw each of your posts, and it's free as a part of your Facebook Page. One of the best parts is that now you can see when the majority of your fans are online. Typically there will be two peaks during the day and those are the perfect times to schedule your posts.

Just like photo editing, take some time on a regular basis to tweak and improve your process.



#HASHTAG MASTERY

Hashtags are still one of the most under-used parts of social media. People use them effectively to be discovered, but are you using them to listen? That's the key.

It's an awesome way to see ahead of time what people are saying about an event you'll be attending, but it also gives you a chance to easily join the conversation.

For example, if you're at the Chicago Bridal Expo and they're using the hashtag #CBExpo2016, here's how to rock it:

#HASHTAG MASTERY

The day before, you see that a blogger or news outlet is attending the event. You invite her to stop by your booth to see your work during the event.

During the event, you see a tweet asking “Does anyone know who the best videographer at #CBExpo2016 is?” You can respond that your friend, who also has a booth at the event is awesome: “@CBGuy I think that my man @ethanpainter is the best videographer here today. Check him out at booth 72. Then stop by and see us so I can say hey!”

Once the event is over, you can search the event on Instagram and Twitter for pictures from the event and make sure to connect the people who were there. If you were active using the hashtag, you’ll likely see people you connected with.

Ninja Tip: If you aren’t attending an event, check out the hashtags around the event to see if it’d be worth attending. If the social media around an event is dead, it might not be your jam.

#HASHTAG MASTERY

5. **Hashtagify.me** is a free tool to explore Twitter hashtags and their relationships. The analysis is based on a 1% sampling of all tweets – the maximum that Twitter gives for free.

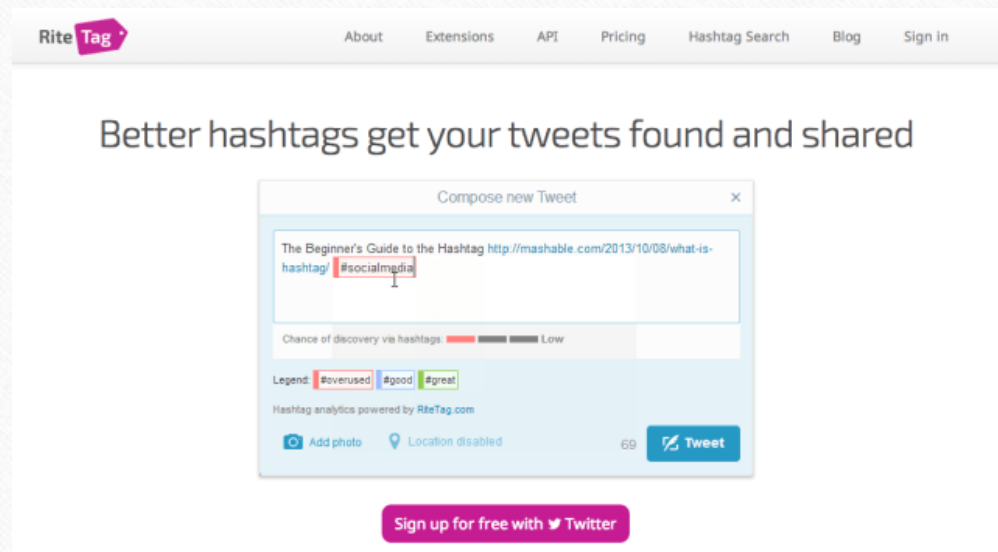
Link: [Hashtagify.me](https://hashtagify.me)



#HASHTAG MASTERY

6. **RiteTag** streamlines the process of finding the best tags to go with content to be shared, embracing the unique tagging constraints of numerous important content-sharing networks, including Twitter, Youtube, Instagram, Flickr... and many more.

Link: [RiteTag](#)



A Little Real Talk...

The goal of this guide is to REDUCE your overwhelm, not increase it. You're a photographer first, and social media is just the best way to engage with clients and network with other professionals. I think the best way to use what I've given you here* is to simply implement one thing at a time. Start with Buffer and scheduling your posts and then look into Hashtags on Twitter.

You don't need to be on every social media channel. Heck, the most powerful social channel for Photographers (Snapchat) isn't even covered in here because it needs it's own guide.

A few keys before you dive into the rest of this guide:

- Have fun on social.
- Educate, empower, and engage with everybody.
- Show your work and your process as often as possible.
- Don't be afraid to share other things that are on-brand for you. It'll help build the personal bond between you and the people who love your work / hire you.

** Just wait until you get to the next slide.*

But wait, there's more!

It means the world to me that you've take the time to read through this guide and I know that if you use the tools I've mentioned already, your business will grow.

BUT, if you really want to take your business to the next level, I have 9 MORE free tools that are essential to building a professional photography business.

Enjoy!



BUILD A MASSIVE MAILING LIST

Mailchimp – My email list provider

Social media is great but there's still no better way to communicate with people than through email. Mailchimp has great deliverability and allows you to build a massive list, all for free. You don't get an autoresponder unless you pay for it, but just send out an engaging email once per week and you'll have great success.

Link: [Mailchimp.com](https://mailchimp.com)



SCHEDULE ALL OF YOUR APPOINTMENTS

Calendly – How I let people book my time

This might be less of a concern right when you're starting, but eventually, people will want to meet with you and booking appointments can involve a ton of emails back and forth. With Calendly, I can set the times I have available and they can pick one. It also syncs with my Google Calendar so I don't get double-booked.

Link: [Calendly.com](https://calendly.com)



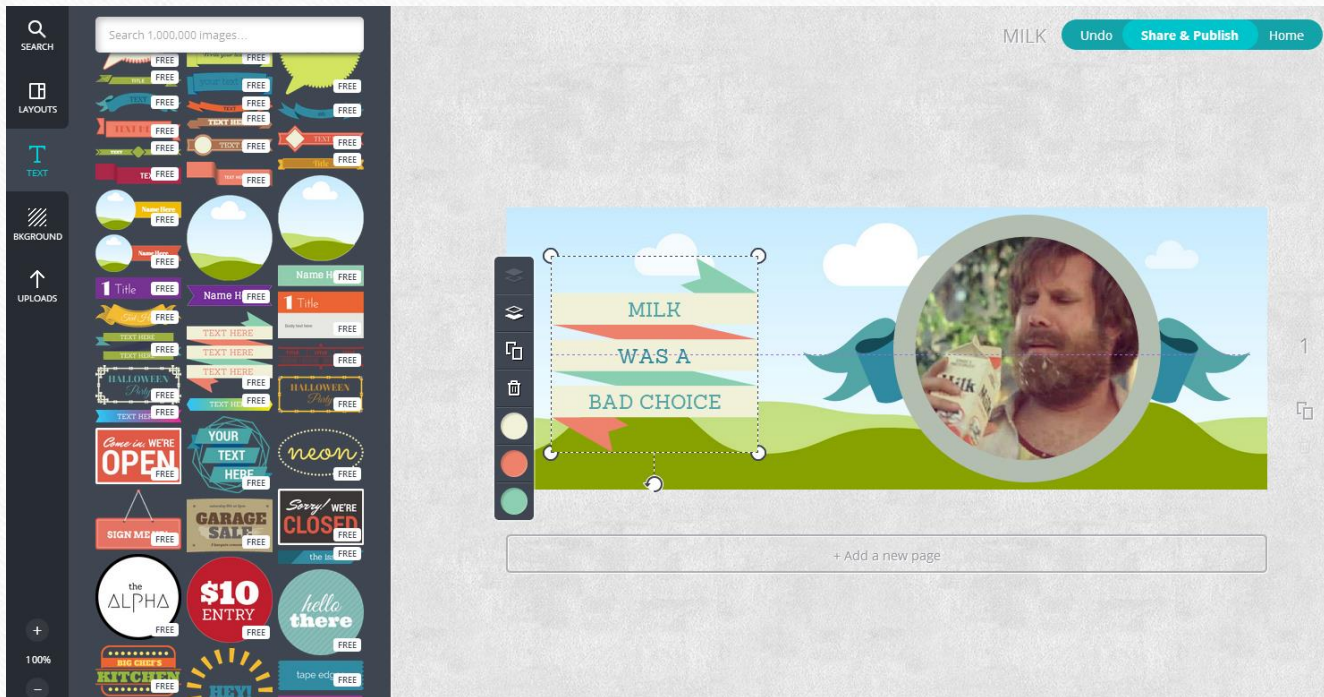
MAKE GRAPHICS LIKE A PRO

Canva – How I make my images.

Stunning images on your blog posts, podcast, and social media means more engagement and a better perception of your content and brand.

Canva is doing a darn good job of democratizing design. The beautiful typography is already in there and you just fill in your words and put your own image in the background. No expertise needed.

Link: [Canva.com](https://www.canva.com)



SURVEY YOUR CUSTOMERS

Survey Monkey – Easy to use survey tool

When you're building your business, the best way to get feedback is directly from your fans and your customers. I've found a free Survey Monkey account is the best way to get this done. Ask them things like "What do you wish we'd make next?" and watch your business grow.

Link: [SurveyMonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com)



YOUR BRAIN... ONLINE

Evernote – When I have to keep track of ideas, brainstorm, websites I want to view later, and really anything else in my life, Evernote is my travelling notebook.

In fact, if you **use the link below**, they'll hook you up with Evernote Premium, which is really awesome.

Link: Evernote.com



TRANSFER, SHARE, AND STORE FILES

Dropbox – secure cloud storage

I use Dropbox for sending large files easily and securely. It's also a great space to share folders with people who are working on a project with you.

I also use it to send and receive files with my coaching clients.

Once you progress to needing the paid version with more space, your business will be able to afford it.

Link: [Dropbox.com](https://www.dropbox.com)



BUILD HABITS YOU NEVER THOUGHT YOU COULD

Coach.Me – Habit building app

I never thought I could be as focused, mindful, grateful, and productive as I am now.

I've been using this free app for the past year and it's great not only to build your habits by checking in on them every day, but also to look back and find trends that cause you to lose focus on what's important in your life.

Link: [Coach.me](https://coach.me)



NEVER LOSE YOUR TO DO LIST

- ToDoIst – My ‘to do’ list on every device
- I love lists. I love checking things off and getting stuff done, but I was always losing my lists. This app let’s me have them on every device. I’ve never had any issues with dropped tasks and when I think of something, I put it in and then I can focus more on the task at hand instead of trying to remember what I wanted to get done later.
- Link: [ToDoIst.com](https://todoist.com)



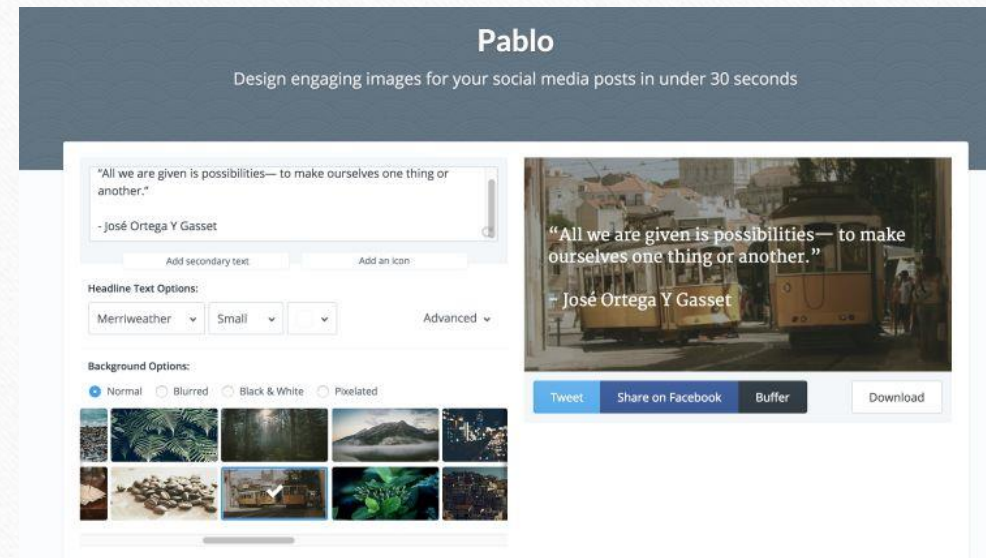
Graphics Even Faster Than Canva!

Pablo – 30 seconds graphics

Canva is much more robust for creating great work, but if you use Buffer and need something fast (which you should, and you do), Pablo is great.

Graphics always get more engagement than just text and if you are posting a lot, Pablo will save you tons of time over Canva.

Link: [Pablo](#)



WANT MORE THAN JUST TOOLS?

When I was a kid my dad and I built a picture frame.

The first time I walked into my dad's workshop, I saw hundreds of tools.

But if he wasn't there to show me how to use all of them, I never would've been able to use them all together to make something beautiful.

The same is true of the tools in this guide. They don't build your photography business *for* you.

So I want to help you more than just giving you a few tools. This is how I've built my business and allowed my wife to quit her job, and I'd love to see you go full-time and grow your photography business as well.

I want to answer YOUR questions, but instead of just answering them on Twitter, Facebook and in email, I want to answer them where everybody can learn and get value.

To make this as awesome as humanly possible, I'd love to hear what YOUR burning questions are via the form below so I can make sure they're answered.

[Click here to launch the survey.](#)