



## The ProposalGraphics Newsletter

### Architectural Photography on the Internet - FAQ's

Welcome to the ProposalGraphics design newsletter. This month's topic is architectural photography on the internet – a topic of interest to many of my clients. I hope you find it useful, and if you have any questions, please just reply to [rob@proposalgraphics.com](mailto:rob@proposalgraphics.com) to reach my personal inbox.

Note: The information provided in this newsletter is provided for educational purposes only and should not be used in place of legal advice. When using a photograph for commercial purposes you should adhere to the copyright provisions of the photograph.

#### If I photograph a building myself, are there restrictions on how I can use those photographs?

In general, as long as you photograph the building from a public place, you can use the photo without worrying about copyright restrictions. While certain building designs are "copyright protected" (typically this only applies to buildings constructed after December 1, 1990), there is a "photographer's exception" that permits the photography of buildings from public places.

One thing to be careful about is artwork that appears on or near the building. You will usually need permission from the copyright holder if your photograph includes artwork, which is subject to different copyright rules than architectural structures.

#### How do I know if a particular building or structure is copyright protected?

To be completely certain of the copyright status of a particular building or structure, you would need to hire an intellectual property attorney. There are, however, some general rules which may be useful to understand.

First, buildings that were constructed, or whose plans or drawings were published, before December 1, 1990, cannot be copyright protected. This doesn't mean that a particular photograph of a building cannot be copyright protected – only that the building design itself is not protected.

Second, even buildings that are "copyright protected" are subject to the "photographer's exception" mentioned above.

This means that in most cases the copyright status of the building won't matter for purposes of your own photographs. There are certain exceptions – the lighting design on the Eiffel Tower at night, for example, is copyrighted – and you will have to consult with an attorney in order to be 100% certain.

You can also find a partial list of buildings and structures that may be problematic if photographed and used commercially here: <http://www.pacaoffice.org/resources/specialReleases.html>.

#### Where can I go on the internet to find free photographs of buildings and other structures?

Here are a few places where you can find free (or nearly free) architectural photographs: <http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Graphics.shtml> – This site is a list of different government

### Welcome!

In the coming months I will be publishing original articles on design - from client management to printing, production and delivery of products. Everything here is my own opinion and only reflects my thinking, I take full responsibility for it. If you have different opinions or thoughts on any of these topics, I would love to hear from you and may publish your letters to generate discussion.

I would like to get to the point where I am only distributing this via the internet, so if you got this by snail mail and feel like it, please come to my website (or just email me at [robhurst1@gmail.com](mailto:robhurst1@gmail.com)) and register electronically. I will never sell or give away your email address and you can unsubscribe anytime.

If you would like to CONTRIBUTE an article for publication, let me know! As long as it relates to design, I'm open to almost any idea.

### Sites I love

#### [www.photoshopdisasters.blogspot.com](http://www.photoshopdisasters.blogspot.com)

This site is a lot of fun. People send in images of mistakes or omissions designers and retouch artists have done in Photoshop. It serves as a poignant reminder for me always to check and recheck my work. Make sure your clients ALSO check the work; It's a collaborative effort!

#### [www.playingforchange.com](http://www.playingforchange.com)

This is a fantastic site dedicated to world peace through music.

#### [www.shibumi.org/eoti.htm](http://www.shibumi.org/eoti.htm)

Self described last page of the internet.

#### <http://www.donorschoose.org>

This is a site my nephew works for as chief technology officer. It's a wonderful organization dedicated to supporting our public schools.

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entities with links to their photography archives. There is a huge wealth of material there which can be accessed for free with a simple download form.

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/apfoapp?area=apfohome&subject=landing&topic=landing> – The Farm Service Agency has over 10 million topographical and other aerial images of the United States.

<http://www.af.mil/weekinphotos/> – The United States Military Photo website has millions of images of the military taken over several decades. These images are public, but care should be taken when using these images commercially.

<http://www.nasa.com> – NASA's image collection is available for commercial use, with some restrictions.

[http://www.nps.gov/pub\\_aff/imagebase.html](http://www.nps.gov/pub_aff/imagebase.html) – The Park Service has high quality images of ALL their National Parks and the flora and fauna and formations contained in them. There are people pictures as well, available for use with few restrictions.

<http://www.archives.gov/historical-docs/> – The national archive has a database of images of American life, and not just government-related images. The Archival Research Catalog (ARC) is immense and has downloadable material on almost any subject.

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html> – The Library of Congress – American Memory, documents and stores images of American Life by state and topic. It currently holds over 9 million records: "American Memory provides free and open access through the Internet to written and spoken words, sound recordings, still and moving images, prints, maps, and sheet music that document the American experience."

<http://www.flickr.com/commons/>

This is a site started by Flickr and the Library of Congress in 2008. Its purpose is to make available some of the world's great photography to the public in an interactive environment. Users are able to tag photographs with their own comments. The various institutions post photographs which they have "reasonably concluded" are free of copyright restrictions under a new Flickr usage guideline called "no known copyright restrictions."

## Something about ProposalGraphics

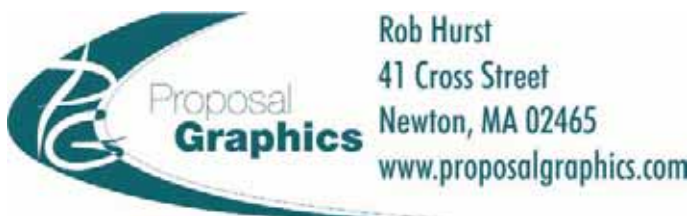
I specialize in design and content development for a select group of clients. I pay meticulous attention to detail and provide complete design services from writing and editing to design, production and printing. I serve a wide variety of clients. Among these are non-profits, developers, financial institutions, architecture and engineering firms. There is a complete list of clients on my website [www.proposalgraphics.com](http://www.proposalgraphics.com).

As the name suggests, I started the firm many years ago, I served the needs of architectural firms who lacked the in-house capacity to produce and prepare winning proposals and presentations to public and private sector clients. During the last five years I have served an increasingly diverse client base.

I am writing this newsletter to better stay in touch with my clients and friends and to introduce myself to those of you who may not have worked with me. Feel free to drop me a line about the content of this newsletter to [rob@proposalgraphics.com](mailto:rob@proposalgraphics.com)

1. The copyright is in the public domain because it has expired;
2. The copyright was injected into the public domain for other reasons, such as failure to adhere to required formalities or conditions;
3. The institution owns the copyright but is not interested in exercising control; or
4. The institution has legal rights sufficient to authorize others to use the work without restrictions.

<http://www.photolib.noaa.gov> – This site carries images from the National Ocean Service, The National Weather Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, and the National Environmental satellite, Data, and information Service. All free with reasonable restrictions. A really excellent resource.



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