

Producing Single-Projector Slide Shows

Almost every photographer who shoots slide film eventually buys a slide projector and then sits wondering just what to do with it. First he drops a selection of slides into the projector and entertains friends and family with views from the last vacation, and then decides there must be more to slide shows. For those photographers searching for the answer, PhotoGraphic offers solutions.

There are two basic methods for producing single-projector slide shows. The more common method occurs when a photographer already has most of the photographs and then decides to make a slide show from them. The other method is when the slide show is planned and the photography is shot to match. Both methods begin with an idea put on paper called the "treatment."

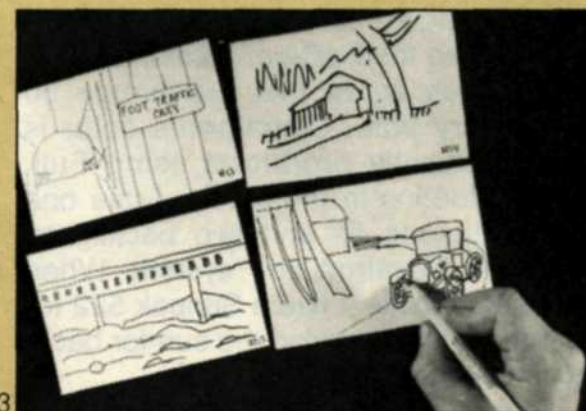
The "treatment" basically defines the purpose of the slide show, desired length and type of audience to which it will be presented. The treatment is used to keep the slide show producer on track throughout the entire process. An example of a treatment: "A single-projector slide show showing the evolution of covered bridges across the United States, the basic reason for covering bridges and a pictorial view of some remaining covered bridges today. The slide show will be approximately ten minutes in length and is designed to be shown to groups from age ten to adults."

PLANNING

Once your slide show idea is defined, proceed with a brainstorming session. Jot down anything that comes into your head that pertains to the treatment. Research your subject and after you are confident that all topics to be covered in the slide show are listed, start to organize these topics into an outline. This outline should be in some type of logical order so the slides have an effective transition from one to the next.

The more involving slide presentations incorporate the use of text to accompany photos and to better tell the story. Work on writing the script for only 2-3 hours at a time, and plan several of these sessions to ensure a quality script. Use a simple narrative style, as though you were actually talking to the audience. Do not use long sentences trying to explain everything you want to say; remember photos tell the story too. Keep referring to the outline to maintain subject continuity.

Make sure the final script is double spaced with no sentences or paragraphs going from one page to the next. This keeps the noise level down when recording the narration. The rule of thumb is every typewritten page of script equals



one minute of narration.

If all the necessary photography exists in your files, start reviewing the photos and arranging them to fit the script or your outline. The best way to keep the slides in order is with plastic slide pages that match each page of the script.

For the more involved slide show, a storyboard may be necessary. This storyboard consists of drawings on 3x5-inch cards illustrating each photo to be used in the slide show.

SHOOTING FOR SHOWS

The camera equipment necessary for slide show production does not have to be extensive. Most slide shows can be photographed with three lenses: wide-angle, normal and telephoto with one of the lenses having macro capabilities. For the photographer with a 35-135mm

1. Here are the basic ingredients of a good single-projector slide show: a projector, a tape recorder, and good planning. Kodak's *Presenting Yourself* (publication No. 148-2686; \$14.95) is an excellent how-to book on planning and presenting effective slide shows.

2. Once you have a script, sort and arrange the slides to match.

3. If your show tells a more complex story, a storyboard may be necessary.

zoom with macro capabilities no lens change would be necessary when photographing an entire slide show.

When photographing for slide shows remember that each photo does *not* have to stand on its own merit as a group of slides is used to tell the story. Instead of showing one slide of the over-

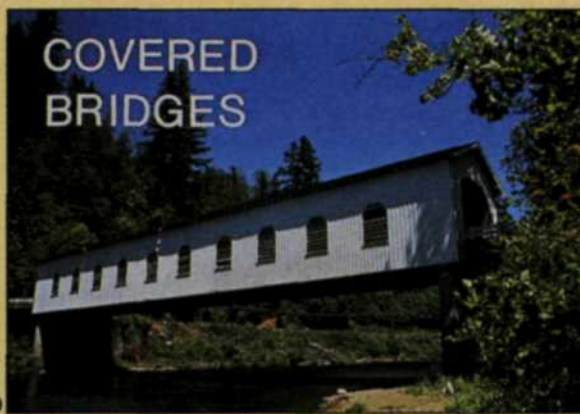
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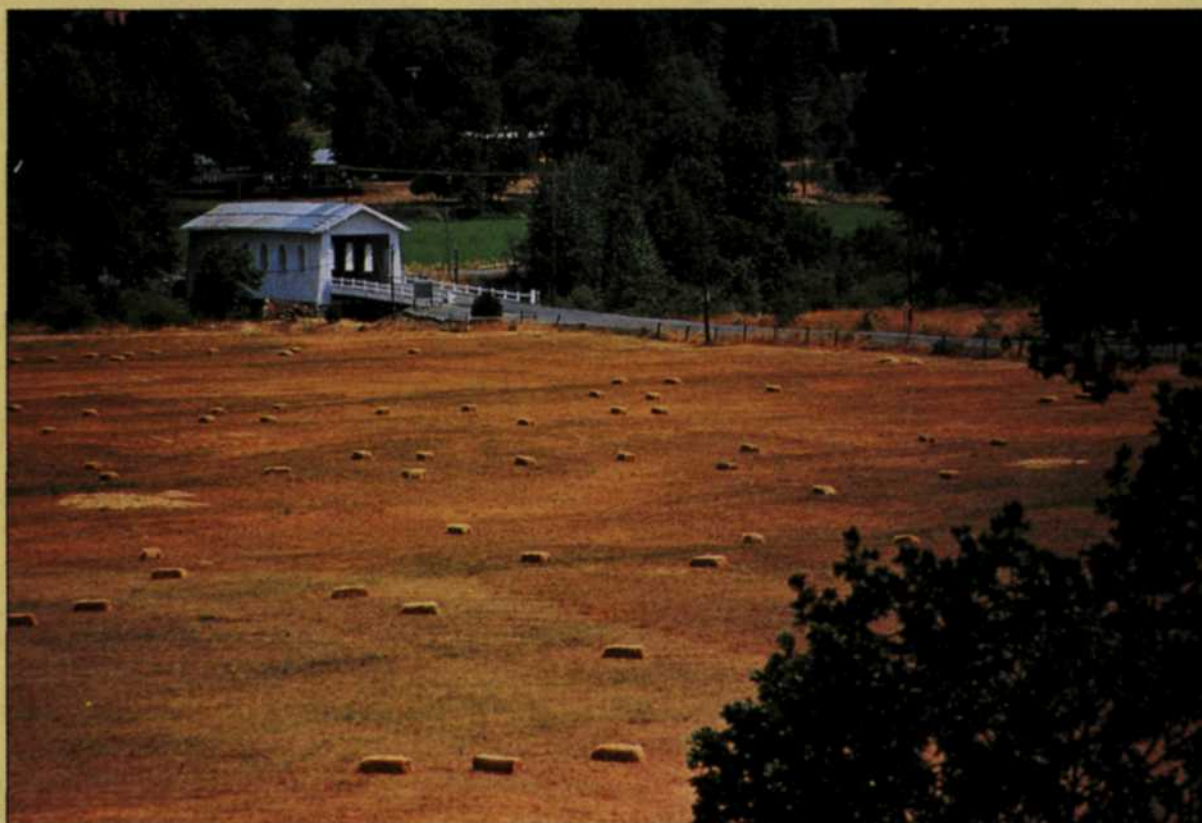


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ALL PHOTOS BY AUTHORS



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4. Good slide shows have a solid idea behind them. Developing a treatment of your subject initially will keep you on track as you put the show together.

5A. & B. Title slides are easy to produce and can give your show a very professional appearance.

6. Use establishing shots, close-ups, and varying camera angles to provide visual variety in your show. All shots should display good composition.

all scene, a series of shots starting from a distance and moving in closer is more effective. Different camera angles such as high, medium and low angles give variety and make the show much more dynamic. One easy way to learn slide show photography technique is to watch television with the sound off. Watch the transitions used to move from one scene to the next. You will notice establishing shots, close-ups, objective scenes

(where the viewer is shown the scene) and subjective scenes (where the viewer is part of the scene).

Good photographic composition portrays high quality in a slide presentation. Keep the shots simple. Watch for tonal mergers, tilting horizons and annoying backgrounds that may distract the viewer from your main subject. Keep referring back to your original outline and/or script to ensure that your photos are on the right track.

Remember to bracket exposures when in doubt, to minimize your re-shoots. If at all possible, use the same type of film (Ektachrome, Kodachrome, Fujichrome, etc.) and processing lab for the entire slide show to keep continuity in color balance. Keep in mind that if you have a color negative of a special event, it can be made inexpensively into a color slide by Kodak and many local color laboratories.

TITLES AND OTHER RAZZLE DAZZLE

One basic difference between amateur and professional slide shows is the use of title slides. Simple title slides can be made in a variety of methods. One method is by purchasing press-on letters, which come in a variety of type-styles, from your local graphic arts store. Use a non-repro blue pencil to draw a line on the white paper to ensure even letter alignment. Carefully use a circular motion with a No. 2 pencil or other burnishing tool as you transfer each letter to the paper.

If you decide to use a typewriter, make sure that you use a carbon ribbon and the largest type style possible. Other methods for title slides include special lettering machines, or you might even consider having your titles typeset. Do not try to crowd too much on one slide. A good rule of thumb is to hold the artwork at a distance ten times the diagonal of the text. If you can't read it, your audience won't be able to either.

After making titles using one of the methods mentioned, you must copy them onto a special black-and-white film called Ektagraphic copy film (36-exposure) or Kodalith (bulk 100-foot rolls). This is accomplished on a copy setup with lights at a 45° angle to the camera and artwork. Rate your film at ISO 3 and process in Kodalith A and B developer as per the instructions with the film and developer. Bracket your exposure in half-stop increments until you have a correct exposure. The resulting image is clear letters on an opaque black background. These slides may then be combined with colored gels.

Many local color labs can also help you in producing high quality special effect slides such as glows, spins, streaks and multi-image slides, and they can even double expose your title onto the

Slide Shows

slide of your choice. You might even explore the possibility of computer-generated text slides, charts, and assorted other razzle-dazzle slides to wow your viewers.

Most viewers are used to seeing single images on the screen at one time. When you can offer them more, you have their interest. Multi-image slides can be created in a variety of ways, but the most common method uses multi-image slide mounts. Duplicate those slides to be used in the multi-image mount, then cut them up and tape them into the mount.

Another method for multi-imaging is from Wess Plastics called the "Grouper." With this device you can copy as many as 16 different images onto one piece of film. (See "Grouper Steals the Show" test report elsewhere in this issue.)

ADDING SOUND

If narration and/or music are to be recorded for the slide show, it is best to wait until all the photography is completed to be sure there are no holes which would necessitate script rewriting.

Record the soundtrack in three stages. The first step is to record the narration. If you do not have a sound studio or cannot afford a professional one, then your living room is the answer. Close all the curtains in the room as they will act as sound buffers. Make your sound recording at a time when the outside noise level is lowest, usually at night.

Most any microphone will do for the narration as long as the narrator does not hold it. Sit on the floor in the middle of the living room and record the narration. When reading the script try to emphasize different parts of the sentences so it does not sound monotone. Don't try to do the whole script in one take. Redo sections until they all sound correct. Number each take and note on the script which was the best to facilitate editing. After recording the narration, edit the tape using a splicing block which can be found at most stereo stores. For the sound system buff, editing from one tape recorder to another by stoping and starting the tape works great, too.

If you are going to have both music and narration you will need to record the narration on the left track of a reel-to-reel tape recorder. In the second step, music background and any special effects sounds are added to the right track. Make sure that the music track is recorded at the same level as the narration track.

Finally, the third step, mix the reel-to-reel tape down to a cassette tape recorder. Adjust the volume levels so the narration is not overpowered by the background music. When the narration



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7A. Press-on lettering is one solution to making title slides. Many brands, styles and sizes are available.

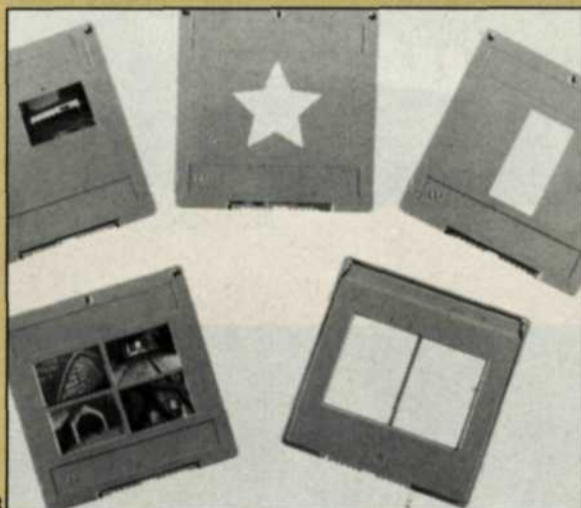
7B. When the title is finished, use a simple copy setup to photograph the title mask. Use Ektagraphic HC or lithographic film, and shoot the title in several positions within the viewfinder to give yourself



maximum layout flexibility.

8. Multi-image slide mounts can be used to give your presentation more impact.

9. A sync tape recorder (there are many models available today) permits you to record sound for your show, including automatic slide changes for complete, accurate repeatability.



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stops or breaks, slowly bring up the music. For the slide show producer using only music background and no narration, the music track could be recorded directly onto cassette.

EDITING AND PRESENTATION

The final phase of producing a slide show requires editing the slides to match the outline or script. Remember to edit any out-of-focus photos, over- and underexposures, as well as photos with poor composition. Many producers refuse to edit slides that are sentimental or took a great deal of effort to make. Try to put yourself in the audiences' position and keep to your original outline.

Make sure the slides flow with the narration, and that one slide is not held on the screen for more than six seconds. An average speed for a slide show is 12-15 slides per minute. Use your long, medium, close-up, and shots with different points of view in those time periods when there is a lot of narration and little subject matter. Organize the slides in plastic pages so that you can listen to the soundtrack and follow the images in the pages.

When you are satisfied that the show



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flows, drop the slides into the tray. Load the slides into the tray holding up the slide, top side up, and turning it upside down and placing it in the tray. After all the slides have been dropped into the tray, go through the script and mark each point where a slide advance is to occur.

Set the projector on slot 1 and start the tape. While watching the script, advance the projector when indicated. When you feel good about the show, you are ready to do the final programming.

There are a variety of cassette tape recorders on the market with slide-sync capabilities. They range in price from about \$200 to several hundred. Each has separate record function for the soundtrack and a special record function that creates an inaudible sync signal that plays back the show automatically.

If you have a tape recorder without a slide sync device but it has two separate tracks, you can purchase a synchronizer from Kodak for about \$125 that turns your tape recorder into a programming tape recorder.

After you have programmed the show,
(Continued on page 71)



when handholding the camera at very close distances. The combination of photographer movement and subject movement (if outdoors) can mean that you and the lens will spend a lot of time refocusing. Low light levels or low-contrast subjects will also cause the autofocus system to do a lot of searching, so you may find that you will use the AF control for rough focusing and then switch to manual for fine focusing.

An accessory that makes the AF 100 macro lens a point-and-shoot macro setup is the Minolta Macro Flash 1200 AF. Specifically designed for Maxxum, this unit has its own tungsten modeling lights activated by a touch of the shutter release button. There is always enough light for the system to focus and, when the Maxxum is used in aperture-priority mode, you merely choose the aperture—camera, lens and flash do the rest automatically and reliably. ■

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Slide Shows

play it back several times to ensure that your message comes across. Obtain several outside critiques before making the final presentation to your group. Be sure to go through the tray one slide at a time to make sure each slide is clean. If it is to be shown many times, we recommend the slides be duplicated to avoid damaging originals.

Many slide show producers today also have their slide shows transferred to video tape for about \$75-\$150 per show depending on length. This is especially nice when transferring single-projector slide shows as the slides are divided into two trays and they blend from one image to the next when copied onto videotape. It is very important to remember that if a video transfer is planned, all slides must be in the horizontal format to conform to the video format.

Once you have mastered the single-projector slide show, get out and present shows in your community, church or camera club. We're sure you'll catch the audio-visual fever and move up to the multi-projector, dissolving slide show. The difference is in the planning of visual transitions, cost, time and equipment expense. Once you've learned the basics, you can move on to two- and even three-projector shows. ■

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