Formatting images
for internal Club competitions.

General thoughts

❋ We all have ways we've become comfortable with when working on an image for submission to Club competitions. Whatever your process, establishing a consistent workflow is important.

❋ Each of our computers are jammed with folders and files, both on our desktop and in its hidden depths. Staying organized in all this clutter is a challenge.

❋ However you keep track of your photos, it helps to create a dedicated folder (preferably on your desktop for visibility) **to hold the images you're working on for a specific competition**. Once you have an image just the way you want it, move a copy to this dedicated folder. Then there's only one place to look when you're ready to format the image for submission.

❋ The skillset you develop for getting images ready for PTCC competition will transfer to all other contests or salons you'll enter in the future.

❋ If you do not use Adobe products to process your images, please let your group's filter know. We'll help you through these steps in the other software too.

The format elements detailed here are described on our website's MEMBER RESOURCES section. See: https://padretrailscc.org/members-only/image-prep.html

The HELP files provided on the website are program specific (Photoshop, Lightroom, Elements) but are taken from earlier versions of these programs. They may not look exactly like what is displayed by your system, but the functions described are valid.

Step by step:

Submit JPEG (.jpg) files only. Your camera might be set to capture jpegs, but it could also capture RAW files. Often, the editing tools we use save our files as TIFF, or perhaps even GIF formats. If you're working in Lightroom, the JPEG format is selected in the file EXPORT settings box that displays when you're sending a copy of the file. If you're working in Photoshop, the JPEG format can be set in the SAVE AS settings box that displays when you save the file. If you don't see JPEG as an available option, be sure to check the image's bit depth in the IMAGE/MODE pulldown in Photoshop. Reset to 8 Bits and standard JPEG will appear. Also, if the edited image has layers applied, you'll need to FLATTEN the image before you can save it as a JPEG.

Submit images with sRGB color profile (also called color space). You'll see it also listed as sRGB IEC61966-2.1. It's the same thing. Your camera may capture images in a variety of color profiles. It could create with Adobe RGB, Apple RGB, Display P3, or some other variation. Using sRGB color provides a common profile for the images being judged. If your camera captures in a profile other than sRGB, you'll need to change that before editing in post, and before submission. If you're working in Lightroom, the EXPORT dialogue box allows you to do that. If you're working in Photoshop, it can be set in the EDIT/ASSIGN PROFILE pulldown. Changing a color setting to sRGB <u>after</u> you've edited the image will require additional work to bring it up to where you want it to be. Setting it <u>prior</u> to editing makes your job easier.

Submit images at 300 ppi resolution. Here again, this means that the judges will see the images at a common resolution. Lower resolution images won't hold up as well if the judge enlarges them for study. A lower resolution puts your images at a disadvantage. As with other parameters outlined here, in Lightroom the setting is made in the EXPORT box. In Photoshop, it's set in the IMAGE SIZE pulldown dialogue. The sequence of events is important when using Photoshop. Set your resolution (and check the CONSTRAIN PROPORTIONS box) <u>before</u> you set the width and/or height of the image. The maximum pixel size for submission is 2400 pixels. Here again, submitting smaller images will put your submissions at a disadvantage during judging. Be sure to ATTACH the images to the submitting email. Embedding them in the body of the email may reduce both physical size and ppi resolution. More about this later.

Submit images with your name, correctly capitalized, in the file's METADATA. It's very important that your name appears in the metadata of submitted images just as you would sign it on an official document. Correct capitalization is important because your name, as entered in the metadata, appears on the displayed file during the returns presentation, on the website, and in the newsletter. Eg. First Last, NOT first last, or firkstlast, or firstLast.

Both Lightroom and Photoshop, (as well as Bridge which we'll talk about later) allow you to enter your name. In Lightroom's Library mode, the file's METADATA is found in the right side panel. Your name should be entered in the CREATOR field. In Photoshop, this information is found in the FILE/FILE INFO field and is entered in the AUTHOR field.

Submit images with proper descriptive filenames. Think of the filename as the image's TITLE. It's easy to be focused on the image itself, as we should be, but be aware of the filenames of the images you're considering submitting. An image's filename describes it for the judge, appears during returns, on our website, and in the newsletter. Pay attention to capitalization. Do not submit images having camera-generated or other automated filenames. For example, images have been submitted in the past with filenames such as DSC07720 copy.jpg, DSC_0723_resize.JPG, and IMG_3414 copy.jpg, which make it hard to discern the photographer's intent for the image. These interim filenames may help the photographer keep track of things during the preparation process, but should not remain with the image when submitted. Descriptive filenames can be any reasonable length necessary to tell the story of the image. A final note, filenames of images submitted to our monthly competition must not contain your name. There may be exceptions for Popups and Group Shoots, but our regular competition submissions must remain anonymous.

Using Adobe Bridge. Adobe Bridge is free and an excellent tool for seeing all these format elements of your submission images in one place. By selecting Metadata, Bridge shows you if you've set everything correctly and are ready to submit. It's also a handy platform from which to copy filenames to your submitting email.

Creating your submission email. We all send and receive hundreds of emails every week. Often, the process is quick and informal. However, special care should be taken when creating the email that will send your images to your group's email box. The submission email for your group should <u>only</u> be used to send your submissions, never for general correspondence or to ask questions. These boxes are <u>only</u> accessed by your group's image checkers <u>after</u> the submission deadline. The SUBJECT line should include only **your name, the competition description, and the submission due date.** Eg. First Last - Creative B&W - June 30th. The BODY of the email should include only your name and the filenames of your submitted images. **Do not EMBED** your images in the body of the email. Instead **ATTACH** the images you're submitting to the email. Embedding the images within the email risks reducing both its physical size and ppi resolution. Both put your image at a sever disadvantage during judging.

Here's an example of a properly set up email:
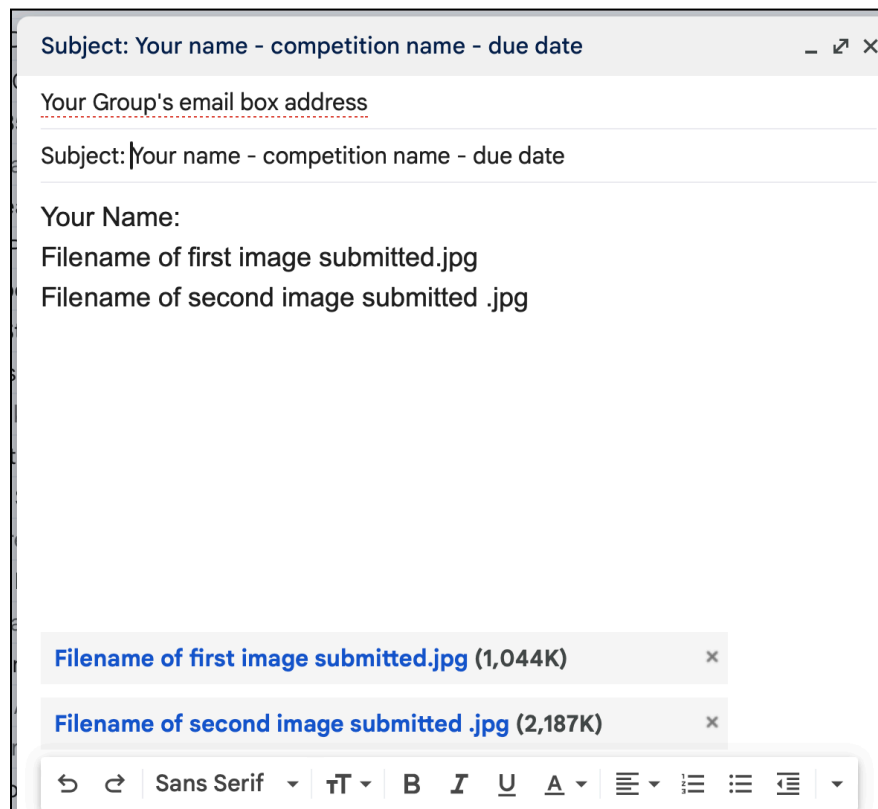
Don't hesitate to ask if you have any questions about submissions.