



DIY MARKETING TIPS

How to photograph your vehicles

WORK TRUCK SOLUTIONS

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WHEN TO PHOTOGRAPH

- When taking photos outdoors, the time of day can make a huge difference! Direct sunlight can lead to glare, unwanted shadows, or washed-out colors.
- Plan to take your photos as either the first thing you do each morning or the last thing you do before going home each evening. The lighting Just after sunrise and just before sunset is the most even and balanced.
- Avoid shooting in the midday sun. Midday sunlight produces harsh lighting that creates undesirable results.

WHAT IS THE GOLDEN HOUR?

The golden hour, sometimes called the “magic hour,” is roughly the first hour of light after sunrise, and the last hour of light before sunset, although the exact duration varies between seasons. During these times, the sun is low in the sky, producing a soft, diffused light that is far more balanced than the harsh midday sun.

Time of day				
Dawn	Sunrise	Midday	Sunset	Dusk
				
Light color				
Cool / blue	Warm / orange	Neutral	Warm / orange	Cool / blue
Light quality				
Very soft	A bit soft	Harsh	A bit soft	Very soft
				
Light direction				
None	Low (East to West)	High	Low (West to East)	None

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LIGHTING & LOCATION

- Choose a location where you can consistently shoot your vehicles. Seasons and weather may impact lighting changes, but do your best to pick a spot with even lighting on an average day.
- Be aware of your shadows! A hard shadow can kill your photo and make the color of the vehicle appear different.
- Be mindful of lighting direction. If you take a photo from the front driver's side, and it's well-lit, the front passenger's side may be shadowed. If needed, rotate the vehicle so that your light is hitting the side or panel you're photographing.
- Choose a neutral location to take your photos. This location should have no distracting elements in the background, including other vehicles. If you're walking down the line snapping photos, pull the vehicle out of the parking spot and away from other vehicles.
- Try to avoid seasonal indicators such as snow. If the vehicle ages, shoppers may notice the photo from last season, which can be a deterrent.
- Your location can be indoors or outdoors, depending on what's available. Either way, the area should have even, reliable lighting.

As you can see, the light source is illuminating the passenger side of the truck, which is the focal point of the photograph.



Here, the light source is not properly illuminating the truck, making it difficult to see. Fix this by repositioning the truck.



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UNDERSTANDING COLOR TEMPERATURE

Have you ever taken a photo with your iPhone where the color doesn't look quite right? Maybe you've ended up with a photo that has an unsightly orange, yellow or blue tint?

When an entire photo is tinted with a certain color, this is called "color cast." Color casts are caused by the type of light that you're shooting in.

The color of light is known as "color temperature." When we talk about color temperature and color casts, we're referring to the relative "warmness" or "coolness" of a color. For instance, orange is a warm color, and blue is a cold color.



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FRAMING

- Frame all of your photos the same way. Keep your vehicle centered in your image. For interior photos, keep the feature you're trying to showcase centered in the picture to highlight it as the focal point.
- Make your list of angles/features and work down the list for every vehicle. Start at the front driver's side quarter panel and work your way around the vehicle, getting every angle and the features inside. You can't take too many photos.
- Low angles are better angles! Take your photos at eye level with the headlights, and stay at the height for all exterior images.
- Stand far enough away from the vehicle to prevent any areas of the vehicle from being cut off. Doing this also provides more flexibility when cropping the images for use on various websites, such as your Work Truck Solutions website and social media platforms.
- Using a grid can help assist in the composition.



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(DSLR) ADVANCED CAMERA SETTINGS

- We recommend investing in a DSLR camera! The quality of your images and the control you have over your images when using a DSLR are unbeatable.
- If you can use a DSLR, learning to shoot in manual mode will give you the most control over your final image.
- Set your image output setting to JPG + RAW. RAW images hold the most data, which is useful if your JPG isn't quite right, and you can go back in and edit your RAW file if need be.
- Learn your cameras settings—understanding principles like aperture, ISO, and shutter speed will further benefit your efforts.
- Be mindful of your white balance. If your photo is balanced too warm, your image will appear very orange. If your photo is balanced too cold, your image will appear very blue. This can alter what color your vehicle appears to be. Imagine a white truck, with a white balance that is too cold. The white truck is now appearing blue.



FINAL TIPS

- Don't over edit your photos. Avoid major photo manipulation. Only edit as needed for minor lighting adjustments.
- Have a designated person to do all of your inventory photos. This will help maintain consistency.
- Use a tripod or a monopod as needed for camera and image stability. This prevents camera shake and ensures a sharp photo.
- Remember that your photo is like your first impression with the customer!