

REVEALED: THE FACE OF THE UK PHOTOGRAPHY INDUSTRY TODAY AND TOMORROW

This investigation into the future of photography in the UK is brought to you by Currys PC World and Canon. Key findings suggest that:

- *As of 2020, there are 83,000 photographers and audio-visual & broadcasting equipment operators in the UK*
- *96% of photographers saw a decrease in bookings over the past year'*
- *The global photographic services market is expected to decline from \$36.9 billion in 2019 to \$36.1 billion in 2020*
- *Wedding photography duo Glenn and Lauren say, "The biggest changes moving forward are probably going to be photographers diversifying their income."*

SUMMARY

- As of 2020, there are over 8,000 photography businesses in the UK
- 96% of photographers saw a decrease in bookings over the past year'
- Although the sector has suffered this year, the photographic services market is expected to recover and reach \$41 billion in 2023
- Four professional photographers gave their expert insight into the future of their industry

Photography is a multifaceted industry comprising a multitude of specialisms from travel and events to food and portraits. Plus, with technology constantly evolving, the industry continues to transform and adapt. A new exploration into the [photography industry today and tomorrow](#) investigates the challenges the industry has faced in 2020 and what the future might have in store for the sector, with insights from professionals in food, travel, and wedding photography.

The most profitable and 'in-demand' photography niches

- The average salary for a UK photographer is £42,212 a year
- Wedding photographers charge the highest day-rate, averaging £600 for a day's work
- The most hashtagged type of photography on Instagram is #travelphotography (133.5m), followed by #foodphotography (65.5m) and #portraitphotography (47.6m)

With so many paths to go down within the photography industry, which niches are the most in-demand, and which will make the most money? In terms of day-rate, the most lucrative route to go down is wedding photography (avg. £600 a day), followed by landscape and travel photography (both avg. £250 a day). This said, most photographers working in these niches do so on a freelance basis, and earnings are reliant on finding regular work.

Based on Google Trends data, January is the most popular month that people search for a wedding photographer, suggesting this could be a good time for those in the industry to focus on marketing their services.

Food photographer, Robin Goodlad says, “Instagram is a great way of getting specifically targeted images to the right audiences.” Food photography is the second most hashtagged type of photography on Instagram (after travel), making the platform an effective marketing tool for photographers in the food industry.

Below are other seasonal search trends:

<u>Photography niche</u>	<u>Most Popular Search Month</u>
Wedding	January
Portrait	December
Sports	September
Family	September
Landscape	October
Food	September
Animal/Wildlife	October
Travel	August
Fashion	February

The photography industry in 2020

- 96% of photographers saw a decrease in bookings over the past year'
- Nearly a fifth of photographers are considering a change of career due to their loss of income in 2020
- The sectors hit the hardest by a loss of income are newborn baby, family and wedding photography

It's been a tough year for a lot of industries, and with many areas of photography relying on events and human interaction, the photography industry has felt the impact. While socially distanced photoshoots have become the norm for some, many photographers have suffered from cancelled or rescheduled bookings.

Travel photographer Annapurna Mellor says, “Travel has been severely affected by the pandemic, and therefore my work as a travel photographer has been hugely impacted. As a result, I'm thinking of how I can expand my work and skills and diversify into other areas of photography and visual media.”

Wedding photographers Glenn and Lauren have also found 2020 a tough year: “We lost about 85% of our income for the year. But it has also impacted our 2021 income a huge amount (positively), because of all the weddings that have been postponed from this year to next.”

How to break into professional photography

- As of 2020, there are 83,000 photographers and audio-visual & broadcasting equipment operators in the UK, up from 71,000 in 2019
- A photography degree can cost £27,000+, however, there are other courses available such as a diploma (approx. £350) or professional diploma (approx. £450)
- Many photographers go down the self-taught route

There are a few routes to choose from when it comes to breaking into professional photography. While some feel that formal training sets them up with all the appropriate skills and guidance for a career in the industry, others are happier teaching themselves, and experimenting with their own style and techniques. No formal qualifications are required to be a professional photographer, so it really is down to the individual.

Food photographer Robin Goodlad says, “The beauty of photography is that you can build your portfolio as your qualification. I went down the self-taught route, but also attended some workshops in areas that were of interest and utilised the numerous online resources available today.”

In terms of building a career, many photographers work on a freelance basis, though there are also fixed employment opportunities within businesses. As of 2020, the largest number of in-house photography jobs are in Creative & Design, and PR, Advertising & Marketing.

The future of the photography industry

- As of 2020, there are over 8,000 photography businesses in the UK
- The global photographic services market is expected to decline from \$36.9 billion in 2019 to \$36.1 billion in 2020, but the market is then expected to recover and reach \$41 billion in 2023
- Improved AI (artificial intelligence) technology and 3D imagery is on the horizon

With 2020 driving changes in the photography industry, and camera technology constantly evolving, what does the future of photography hold? While the sector has suffered this year, it is expected to make a full recovery and see growth over the next couple of years.

Wedding photography duo Glenn and Lauren say, “The biggest changes moving forward are probably going to be photographers diversifying their income.” While finding a specialism is an effective way to refine skills and build a reputation in the sector,

having all your eggs in one basket can be risky in times like these. Versatility can offer more security and flexibility going forward.

When it comes to the future of technology, food photographer Robin Goodlad says, “I would like to think that, despite mobile phones, cameras will begin to have a resurgence as people demand better quality imagery.”

Pioneering mirrorless camera technology is currently big in the industry, capable of capturing images quicker and quieter than DSLRs. This said, DSLRs continue to be widely used by professionals, thanks to its a wider range of lenses and an optical viewfinder that offers clarity and lag-free viewing. Developments in photography technology are now focusing on improved video quality (6k and 8k resolution), better AI functionality, and advanced immersive 3D photography. Exciting times are about to come into frame!

Get further insights in the full report here:

<https://techtalk.currys.co.uk/photography/dslr-csc-cameras/the-face-of-photography-today-and-tomorrow/>