



TARMO

Commercial Photographer

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Tarmo Tulit Commercial Photographer

Tarmo is a professional photographer based in Limerick City, Ireland, with main focus in portraiture and commercial photography. He specializes in creative photography in the area of conceptual editorial and advertorial, but also in beauty, fashion and artistic nude.

Characteristics of his style lie within the lighting, working with and bringing out the interesting element in his subjects' character while using colour, texture and tone as the means of visual expression.

While based in Limerick, Ireland, he also works internationally, with previous projects in the UK, Spain, Estonia, South Africa & South East Asia. He is always open for new and interesting projects in any corner of the world.

Food & Products

Food and Product Photography brings your brands story to life. Images create a dialogue between you and your customer, they don't say a picture is worth a thousand words for no reason. Each client has a special story to tell and Tarmo will work with you to tell your story with a creative flare that is unique to your business.





Spaces

Being able to visual a space makes a potential customer feel relaxed and they will enjoy their experience more. You cannot tell someone how it looks - you show them! Tarmos job is to create a solution to this by capturing the atmosphere and ambience of an interior.





Business Portraiture

Putting a face to a name is the best personal branding in business, how you portray yourself in the first contact with a client is important to furthering your relationship, and as good relationships are key to good business. Putting your best self forward only drives results.





Fashion & Editorial

Tarmo Tulit is the lead photographer for Fusion Magazine, a creative magazine that showcases creative and contemporary Ireland. Tarmo also shoots for brand editorial features, which have been featured in, The Guardian, The Irish Times Magazine, The Irish Examiner, Cara Magazine, CEO Magazine, Irish Tatler, RSVP, Image and The Limerick Magazine to name but a few. He is also a multi award winning fashion photographer, winning the alternative visionary award for creative editorial series and the L'oreal Colour Trophy for The Peter Mark Group.





Why You Should Hire a Commercial Photographer

Most people will go through life without ever having to hire a professional photographer. Unless we are talking about wedding photographers, or portrait photographers who photograph our kids for school, most folks just never have a need for a commercial photographer.

Commercial photographers usually deal with other businesses, a B2B approach that makes Graphic Designers, Ad Agencies, Magazines and Corporate Communications their main points of contact for work. Those entities are usually working on behalf of another company that is needing photography to promote their business, product, service or craft.

However, increasingly people are in need of a photographer who shows the detailed quality of their work. Perhaps they are starting a website, or have opened a service business and need images for a brochure and website. Interior photography, staff portraits or food and drink images to showcase their own unique contribution and brand to the market. Having a consistent image for a business is becoming more important as personal branding draws in customers. Gone are the days of taking stock images as people want a more personalised experience – hence a reason why social media is important.

If you are one of these folks, and are thinking that you maybe need a professional photographer, here are some things to think about as you make your decision.

1. You are not hiring an "Artist", you are hiring a "visual solution provider" Yes, I know that sounds kind of strange, but that is what commercial photographers do. Every product has challenges to making it look great. Every service has challenges in bringing that service to a photograph. Professional commercial photographers are uniquely prepared to meet those challenges and provide solutions that make images that work for you. Most commercial photographers consider themselves problem solvers first... and that is good for you.

2. Don't look for "your photograph" in their portfolios Photographers always have portfolios of images they have taken for someone else. Those images solved that client's problems, and provided the unique visual solution that had been worked out with that with them. Your needs and challenges will most likely be different than theirs, and the photographer will work with you to find the best solutions to your unique visual challenges.

3. All Photographers are not the same The wonderful photographer who photographed your friend's wedding, may not be a commercial photographer, nor have the skills needed to provide that work. (In fairness, they may also be commercial shooters... ask for a client list.)

4. If you need a people shot, you should look for someone who does that well. If you have a product, make sure the photographer can shoot products. Remember that their portfolio, while not having the exact shot you are looking for, will definitely let you know if they are capable of shooting products, people, locations and studio work. (Tip – look at their skills of lighting the person, product or room)

5. Discuss your budget honestly Most professional photographers are decent, honest people and want to work with you. They can take your budget and find the best way to get what you need done. If your budget will not be enough for a studio rental, they will find a way to shoot it on location. If you only have a specific amount of money to spend on the photography, most photographers will find a way to make sure you get the absolute best work possible.

And for sure, different photographers have different ways of getting things done. It is certainly OK to look at different photographers and compare their quality and bids. (Tip – it is considered rude to haggle a price with a professional photographer, would you haggle the price of your food in a restaurant? No! When you are asked for your budget this is for them to help you not for them to try to get more money out of you. It sets a bad start to a project if you try to squeeze a few cents from them. Honesty is key.)

6. Hire a photographer that understands your needs How can you tell if they understand your needs? They ask questions. Lots and lots of questions. They will want to see what you consider your competition, they may want to scout your location, or meet with you for a pre-production discussion. They may ask to do test shots before the actual shoot to make sure they can solve the challenges in the best way possible. They will want to know exactly what you want to do with the images so they can prepare them for the best presentation possible.

7. Great photography is not a cost item, it's a profit center! Good photography sells more product. It makes your service look better. It takes your business and shows it in the best light (no pun... seriously). Look at the premium brands for the truth. They spend tens of thousands, even hundreds of thousands of euro on their imagery. Why? Because they KNOW it works. In side by side comparisons, consumers and purchasers choose brands with great photography over products with bad, boring or mediocre imagery. In short... better photography sells more stuff to the clients you want to serve.

8. A warning... you may have heard of some very inexpensive images, even free, to be found on the internet. We call them "stock" photography. And there are indeed some places in your marketing where good stock photography can be used, but remember that those same images can be used by everyone. Even your competitors – (Now THAT would be embarrassing.)

9. Hiring a professional photographer should not be difficult or cause angst or pain. It is an important business decision, and should be considered with deliberate thoughtfulness. Choosing the wrong photographer, or making visual decisions that are not in keeping with your brand and the goals of your business can have long reaching consequences. Choosing the right photographer can bring more to the bottom line of your business than you even imagined.

List of questions to ask when hiring a commercial photographer:

Are you insured?

What's your background and credentials?

Can you provide references and may I see your portfolio?

What is your photographic style?

How many jobs like this do you photograph in a year?

What does your fee include and what's the delivery timeline?

Do you require a written contract?

What is the commercial licence on these images?

What can I do to help capture the right images?

Your brand is an important investment. As Meryl Streep once said, "How you first meet the public is how the industry sees you. You cannot argue with them. That's their perception." Once you are ready for custom imagery, hiring the right commercial photographer to illustrate that brand can be overwhelming. An experienced professional photographer will be able to walk you through the process and assess possible challenges, but knowing what to expect and what kinds of questions to ask can make the experience less complicated.

About Tarmo Tulit

How did you become a photographer?

For most of my adult life I had been pursuing a career in Food and Beverage industry as I had always been fascinated with everything food and drink related, and the behind the scenes side of things in that particular business as well. I went to study it on a professional level and obtained a diploma and a qualification, after which I started participating at national competitions and further learning of the craft. Soon after I started pursuing a career in F&B management and ended up running different bars and managing nightclubs. Only when I reached my 30s did I realise that my interests had changed and I needed to try my hand in something more creative. This is where the photography came in. Once I took it on more seriously I was hooked, this is what I love to do and plan to continue doing. The best part of it is that I can still work within the area that I was passionate about in my 20s with food and drink photography – that, together with the interiors/exterior of restaurants is one of my favourite things to shoot.

What inspires you?

Initially it is beauty that inspires me, in any form, but mainly visual – be it a beautiful person, someone's kind eyes or contagious smile, an interesting dish made with love and passion, incredible architecture or interior design, things like that. What really makes it tick for me is the light. Whatever it is I am shooting, or just observing without the intention of shooting it, if there's a rare moment of beautiful lighting, whether naturally occurring or premeditated studio lighting, it sends tingles up my spine every single time.

How does each client vary?

Absolutely every client varies, everyone is different and so are their needs. There are very few shoots I can remember which I can say were very similar. But that is absolutely OK with me – I prefer it that way because that is what makes my job interesting. I like problem solving, I like finding a solution to a challenge, especially if I get to approach it creatively. There is a possible downside though which I very rarely face, which can make things very difficult, and that is an uncooperative client, a client who hasn't bothered to think what is it they want to get out of the shoot. It is in the client's own interest to work with the expert as closely as possible and make sure to communicate clearly what is it they need and want out of the shoot, because at the end of the day it is their business, and their brand that will be affected by those photos, so clients really need to put some thought into it from that perspective. The photos will be most likely still done professionally and well but whether the style suits your brand, adds value to it, and communicates your vision is a different story. So my advice would be to work with the photographer at the initial consultation stage as openly and in detail as possible, preparing a well explained brief, and you are guaranteed to get the best possible results for your money.

What makes a good picture stand out from the average?

This one is a bit tricky to answer as the requirements are different in different areas of photography. How long is a piece of string? There are many variables and they can be different in different areas of photography, fine art photography for example pays very little if any attention at all to the technical side of things, street photography for example is all about that one single decisive moment, but when it comes to commercial photography then in my opinion what matters most is professionalism, great technical execution, unique approach yet staying true to the brief and guidelines, and added value from the image for the client's business. A commercial photographer needs to understand the brief well, follow the guidelines clearly, offer the best possible solution within those guidelines, and execute it well. A good commercial photo is only good when it adds value to your business.

What is the influence of digital technology on your photography?

I love working digitally, always have. Even though I do like to grab my old film camera and work with whatever unveils in front of me, my main interest lies with the digital. I don't consider myself as a photographer in its purist sense, I rather consider myself an image maker. Digital offers some great solutions, and comes very handy in cutting down time and production costs. For example, to create a single technically great and well lit image of a luxury hotel room with a film camera can make you face some impossible tasks, a whole team of people, tons of gear, and most part of a full day to create, whereas with digital technology I can create as good of an image by myself and in few hours, plus then some time in post process. It is still a fairly complicated procedure but you can achieve great results in shorter times if you have mastered the specific craft. There are as many different opinions about that approach to digital photography as there are different photographers, but as long as I'm giving my client exactly what they want for cheaper and way quicker, then it's a win-win situation in my books for sure. But by no means have I intended to devalue analogue photography, there are some subtle elements that you just cannot create in digital, but I would believe it to be the least relevant to the area of commercial photography.

Can you walk us through the process of an actual commercial shoot?

There is no one answer to this as every shoot is different; they can be complete night and day from one another. But in general, after the initial inquire I usually try to meet face to face with the client. Depending on the brief it usually takes between half an hour and hour to narrow down and agree on most of the details of the shoot, like the shot list, the style, the times and dates, locations, specific requirements, turnover times etc. Once all that is agreed I usually either give them a list of prep work required from their side or mail it to them later. That prep work is important both for me and my client, more they can prep from their side, less time it takes for me to shoot it, less it is going to cost them. For example if it is an interior shoot, the room should be cleaned to the tiniest detail before I arrive there, no dust or rubbish, no unnecessary elements (e.g. no room service menus in hotel rooms or other brochures/labels/things that do not add anything to the image and just clutter it), have everything you want to showcase ready and prepared, be it a breakfast tray or a chess table, whatever it is, no need to go looking for it when I'm already set up and ready to go. If dealing with food, do not cook anything before the photographer is ready to go, once the dish is plated it only has about 10 minutes of shooting time in it, after that it dries out, all sorts of juices and sauces mix together, and everything goes bland or just soggy. Or if it is a professional headshots you are after then there's a whole other list of things to prep altogether. Be patient, things take time to get done right.. Most professional shoots vary between half a day and a full day to shoot depending on an assignment, but sometimes it can take few days as well.

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Commercial Photographer

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