

Photography Q&A

Some common questions regarding Rosco photography.

Q: What camera format do you recommend?

A: 4" x 5" or 8" x 10" transparencies are good. However, we really like the Fuji GX617 camera. The 6cm x 17cm (2.25" x 7") format is excellent for backdrops, and the use of 120 or 220 roll film makes the shoot go much more smoothly.

Q: Transparencies? Don't translight guys usually shoot negatives?

A: Back in the last century, yes. However, since Rosco has always produced their drops digitally, we prefer transparencies. They yield much more information to the scanner.

Q: So what kind of film do you suggest?

A: We generally shoot Kodak Ektachrome E100 VS. The grain structure is good, and the highly saturated colors look great. We find it is easier to remove saturation in the Mac than to add it – you sometimes get some strange effects showing up if you have to boost saturation.

Q: Can I take my own photographs?

A: Absolutely! We can fax you over a list of instructions.

Q: Will there be any extra charge for that?

A: Generally, no. However, be advised that the use of photographers unfamiliar with day/night drops can lead to extra retouching charges if they don't follow the instructions.

Q: I know a really good professional photographer we can use. He's a real artist.

A: They are often the worst. Find a competent technician instead.

Q: So what makes for a good Day/Night shot?

A: Shoot early and shoot often. If possible, try to get the morning "Golden Hour" shot. That way you have a good "Shadow Neutral" shot, regardless of how sunny the day gets. Make sure to get your tilt-ups and other peripheral shots in as shadowless conditions as possible. Then point the camera at the main image of interest, and lock it off for the rest of the day. Don't even change the aperture.

Q: You mean don't move it?

A: Especially don't move it! Bring a good book – you are there for the duration.

Q: Couldn't you just shoot the evening Magic Hour?

A: Yes, but starting early offers the opportunity to capture maybe five different "daylight" looks. Plus, if you make a mistake you still have the evening as a fall back.

Q: Why is it so important to lock off the camera?

A: Because that way it is so much easier to align the day and night images, eliminating costly overruns on retouching time.

Q: So how much do you charge to shoot these things?

A: The price for a shoot where Rosco gets to keep the imagery is \$1000 per day, plus \$250 per camera per day. We pay for film and processing, and agree not to re-use the images while your show is still in production. The production company pays for transportation, accommodation, per diem, and other expenses.

Q: Suppose we want exclusive rights to the images?

A: Then the fee is \$2000.00 per day and you pay for film and processing.

Q: So presumably you have a large stock of images available?

A: Yes. We generally charge \$500 usage fee per drop for stock images (even if we use more than one to make the drop).

Q: How come all this seems so much cheaper than the other guys?

A: Because we charge less than they do.