PUBLISH
SERVICES

by A.J. WOOD

T HE MODERN PHOTOGRAPHER IS ALWAYS LOOK-ING FOR WAYS TO IMPROVE HIS OR HER WORK-FLOW. WHETHER IT'S NEW TECHNIQUES, GEAR, OR SOFTWARE IMPROVEMENTS, STEPS TO INCREASE EFFICIENCY ARE ALWAYS APPRECIATED.

For many photographers, a popular Lightroom workflow is to organize images in the Library module, choose the best images from a folder, and add them to a collection. That collection is then accessed from the Develop module, as well as the output modules. Collections can also be exported for clients or handed off to a digital lab. While exporting images is still necessary for some tasks, it's important to understand that *Lightroom cannot manage images once they've been exported.* Therefore, the Publish Services panel is a better choice to have a live connection between Lightroom and an online service.

This issue, we'll take a look at how to best use the Publish Services panel for posting to websites such as Facebook and Flickr. You'll quickly realize the advantage of having a two-way connection between Lightroom and the Internet.

LAYOUT DESIGN BY EDUARDO LOWE + ALL IMAGES BY A.J. WOOD

ARE YOU CONNECTED?

Before we can begin, we must create the initial service connection in the Publish Services panel located at the bottom left of the Library module. For the purpose of this article, we'll focus on creating Facebook and Flickr connections.

STEP ONE: If you don't have an existing Facebook or Flickr connection established, click Set Up next to the service icon in the Publish Services panel. If you have an existing connection, click the New Published Collection icon (+) at the right side of the Publish Services panel header and choose Go to Publishing Manager. In the Lightroom Publishing Manager dialog, the settings will look very similar to those used in the Export dialog. Choose the service you wish to configure. Facebook and Flickr have similar setups.
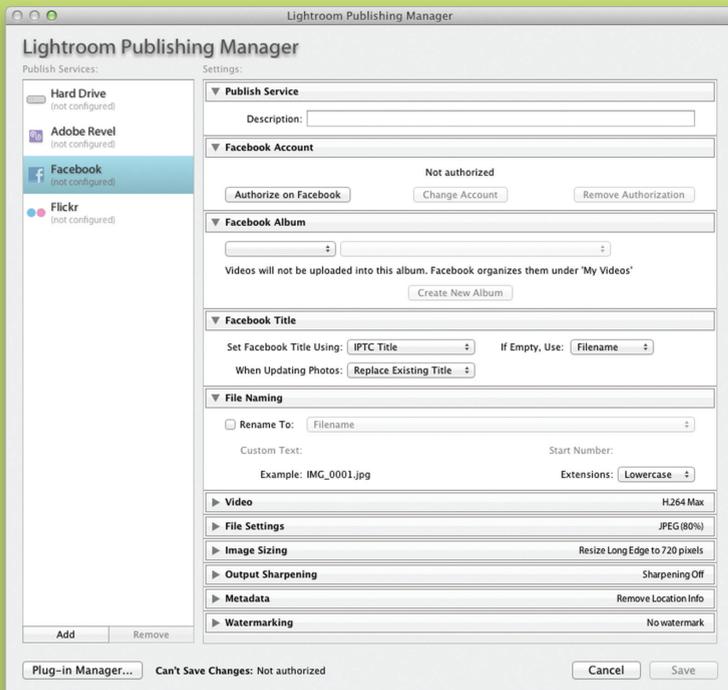
STEP TWO: Both websites require authorization before Lightroom can publish images. (It's best to already have a Web browser open, and be logged in prior to clicking the Authorize button.) In the Lightroom Publishing Manager dialog, add a Description then click the Authorize on button. Follow the prompts for authorization, then continue down the panel. The remaining fields are as they appear in the Export dialog, and let you choose the best options for file size, sharpening, watermarking, etc. (*Note:* Both websites now allow for video uploads, and Facebook now allows for larger images, so you're not limited to publishing photos that are only 640 pixels wide.) When you're done, click Save.

The Facebook connection is tied to the Facebook album specified in the Lightroom Publishing Manager dialog. You can create additional connections bound to existing Facebook albums, or create new Facebook albums. To do this, Right-click on the connection you'd like to add an album to, and select Create Collection. You can publish to your Facebook profile, but not to your Facebook Page.

The Flickr connection is tied to your Flickr Photostream. The Flickr connection allows you to create new Photosets for publishing, but you cannot attach to existing Photosets already associated with your Flickr account.

ADDING PHOTOS

It's best to use Publish Services the same way you use collections. There's no need to add images to a collection first and then copy the same images over to the Facebook or Flickr connection. To publish photos, select them from the Filmstrip or Grid view (G), then click-and-drag them to the album or collection in the Publish Services panel where you want them to appear. All the images added to your service connection show up in a queue labeled New Photos to Publish.

Both websites can use the IPTC Title from your images (found in the Metadata panel). Facebook will use the IPTC Title in its description field, while Flickr will use the IPTC Title in its title field. In addition, Flickr uses the IPTC Caption in its description field.

Consider making virtual copies of images for posting to Facebook or Flickr. The benefit is you can size or crop the images to those specific services without sacrificing the high-resolution version you might use for print. You might also post a larger image to Flickr versus Facebook, which just recently changed the maximum image size.
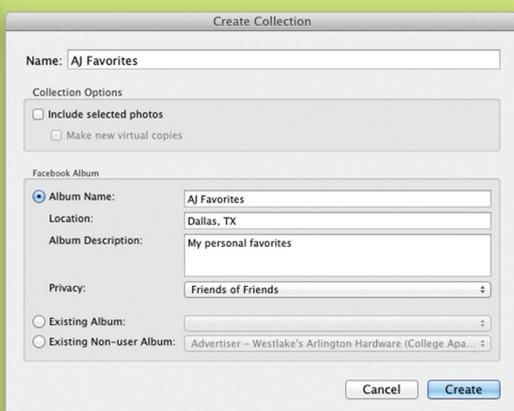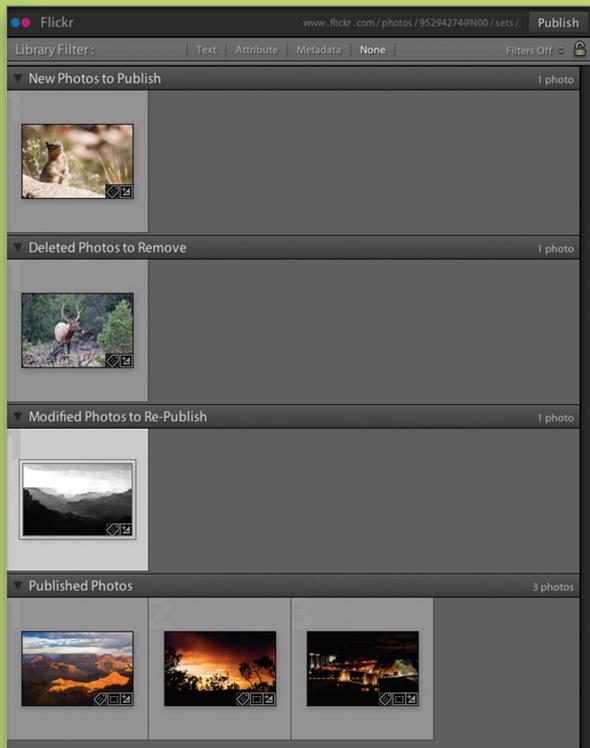
Tip: To automate the task of adding images to Facebook or Flickr, click the New Published Collection icon in the Publish Services panel header and choose Create Smart Collection for Facebook, or Create Smart Photoset for Flickr. Simply specify the criteria, and watch the service's smart collection populate on its own.

Note: You may have noticed the Publish Services panel doesn't appear in the Develop module; however, selecting the service connection will load the images into the Lightroom Filmstrip, which you can access when moving to the Develop module.

PUBLISHING STATES

The Publish Services panel displays up to four states for your images: New Photos to Publish, Deleted Photos to Remove, Modified Photos to Re-Publish, and Published Photos. As mentioned, you can select a service connection and jump into the Develop module to edit your images. When finished editing in the Develop module, return to the Library module to publish. Make sure the service connection is selected in the Publish Services panel, and click the Publish button at the top right of the preview area. Your images will upload, and the status will change from New Photos to Publish to Published Photos. After your images have been published, Facebook and Flickr vary slightly in how they handle the service connection.

Simply hitting the Delete (PC: Backspace) key on a highlighted image will place it under the header Deleted Photos to Remove. If you edit an image, it will show up under Modified Photos to Re-Publish. At any time, you can see the status of all your images in a service connection.

Note: Facebook will only allow you to publish new images, despite Lightroom listing the four options mentioned above. If you want to delete an image from Facebook, it has to be done directly from the website. If you try to republish an edited image, Facebook will add it as a new image without deleting the original. Lightroom warns you of these behaviors the first time you try to delete or republish an image to Facebook. Flickr allows Lightroom more control of your images; you're free to publish, delete, and republish images.

Lightroom also allows you to see and respond to comments attached to your Facebook and Flickr images. This can be done from the Comments panel found in the bottom right of the Library module. Just select your Published Photos and click the Refresh Comments icon (curved arrow) at the top left of the Comments panel.

The Publish Services panel is a powerful tool to help you manage your images online while staying connected to your audience through Facebook and Flickr. It's just another reason Lightroom 4 is the photographer's choice for digital workflow. ■