

# PHOTO INDUSTRY Reporter

The Imaging Industry's Business Paper

Volume 17, Number 10

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## IN FOCUS

### NEWS

#### Ritz Files Auction Plans for Remaining Stores

Ritz Camera Centers filed documents in federal bankruptcy



court in Delaware to place its remaining 400 stores up for auction or liquidation by the end of July. *Read more on page 3.*

#### Independent Photo Imagers Heat Up 27th Members Meeting

Members from 700 locations attended the IPI's annual meeting, which was highlighted by member-chosen topics, a clear market focus by exhibitors and a genuine sense of opportunity. *See page 5.*



### PRODUCTS

#### Pentax's Adventure-Proof 12.1MP Optio W80

Its most shockproof compact, Pentax's Optio W80 can withstand a fall of 3.3 feet. The dustproof, coldproof camera shoots photos/video in 16 feet of water. *Specs on page 6.*



#### Pioneer Highlights Embroidered Albums & Scrapbooks

Pioneer Photo Albums' scroll embroidered fabric albums, which hold 200 4x6 photos, and its 12x12 scrapbooks are available in three colors to showcase any occasion. *More on page 6.*



#### PMDA Portraits of Love Project to Send 10,000 Free Family Portraits to Soldiers

Photographers Asked to Volunteer Their Time

Old Bridge, NJ—The PhotoImaging Manufacturers and Distributors Association (PMDA) has teamed up with Soldiers' Angels, a grassroots volunteer organization, to help send free family portraits to deployed soldiers.

Called the PMDA/Soldiers' Angels Portraits of Love project, the effort is being spearheaded by the PMDA as a way for the photo industry to give back to our nations' soldiers. The goal is to send 10,000 portraits to soldiers this holiday season.

"The photo industry is in a unique position to band together in an effort to bring a piece of home to our soldiers fighting overseas," said Jerry Grossman, president of the PMDA. "This unprecedented effort will show the power and goodwill of our industry to make a difference in the lives of our soldiers and their families."

The Portraits of Love project will depend on the goodwill of photographers donating their time during the month of September to invite soldiers' families into their studios to take a free portrait. The photographer will then upload the



image to a dedicated website, where the image will be sent directly to the soldiers.

IPI (Independent Photo Imagers) has already declared their support of the program, and it will be participating as photographers for the effort. "We are excited and honored to be a part of this program," *to page 18*

## 2009 PHOTOFINISHER OF THE YEAR

LAKESIDE CAMERA  
photoworks  
share your vision.

Our salute continues  
on page 12



Family-owned and operated, Lakeside Camera was founded in 1972 by Rodney and Susan Guidry (right). Today their son, David (left), runs the company from the main store in Metairie, Louisiana.

## KODACHROME: 1935-2009 A Film Icon Bites the Dust

By Jason Schneider

EVER SINCE IT WAS INTRODUCED IN THE MID-1930S, KODACHROME HAS BEEN MORE THAN JUST ANOTHER FILM. Its unlikely inventors, classical musicians Leopold Mannes and Leopold Godowsky, commented at the time, "Kodachrome was made by God and man."

It's clear from the emotional reaction to Kodak's recent announcement of its demise that countless photographers worldwide still feel exactly the same. Perhaps Paul Simon expressed it best in his tuneful homage that topped the pop music charts back in '73, "Kod-a-chrome. They give us those nice bright colors. They give us the greens of summers. Makes you think all the world's a sunny day." Heck, it's the only film to have an official state park named after it—Kodachrome Basin State Park in Utah.

Indeed, even as Kodachrome sales have plummeted over the past two decades it still holds a special place in our hearts, not just for its distinctive color palette,



*to page 5*

### Strategy Sessions

#### Lakeside Camera Photoworks: Oozing Creativity

Jerry Grossman



WHEN YOU FIRST WALK INTO LAKESIDE CAMERA PHOTOWORKS IN METAIRIE, Louisiana, you can't help but feel a shot of creative adrenaline.

Lakeside Camera, PIR's 2009 Photofinisher of the Year, has reinvented what camera stores of the future should be, because the store is not only about selling hardware, it's about creating a family's legacy through photography.

"We've gone from a transactional business to a consultative business," said David Guidry, Lakeside's president. "When people walk into our store, we want them to understand there are very few things they can't do with their photographs."

Coming off the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, the Guidrys decided that moving boxes was important, but preserving memories was paramount. "People came in after the hurricane, and their pictures were gone," remarked Susan Guidry, the company's founder and David's mom. "It wasn't like a fire, where you could run back into your house and grab the pictures. Some people would come in with their *to page 14*

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## LAKESIDE CAMERA PHOTOWORKS: 2009 PHOTOFINISHER OF THE YEAR

from page 13

phrases: Your worth to Lakeside Camera Photoworks is dependent on how much you help the people around you to get better.

"Indeed, we compensate our employees based not only on their total amount of sales but also on selling services and warranties. They only get the full amount if they meet all three goals. We want our sales-people to really listen to the customer, and they do. When the customer is inspired to have a good time, your store becomes a destination. Yes, revenue is the scoreboard, but what we try to instill in our staff is to really be the best at what we do and to enjoy the experience. That's the future of photography and it's here now.

"Marketing is the real challenge of this business," continues Guidry. "For example, when somebody has a closet full of memories they want to preserve, we have to overcome the trust hurdle to get them to bring or send them in. In short, we're forced to create very efficient execution and delivery models in areas with no roadmaps. Perhaps that's one reason we're vibrant and we don't feel the same as most camera stores.

"We're making a long-term investment in the future that will allow us to monetize every aspect of what we do, and to monetize them over and over again," adds Guidry. "We're focused on raising the average ticket, not in a race to the bottom to see who can make the cheapest 4x6 prints. We charge more than Costco or Wal\*Mart for a 4x6, but it's a better quality

print that has been individually corrected. Why sell an 8x10 machine print for 4 bucks when you can sell a fine art print for \$25. When you show customers the difference, they'll pick the \$25 print every time, especially if they're giving it as a gift."

Perhaps what really sets Lakeside Camera Photoworks apart is its willingness to constantly refine its existing services and the ingenuity and courage to devise new ones. A good example of the latter is its rapidly evolving business-to-business division that provides services ranging from logo design and branding to ads, business cards, flyers and a host of promotional print options.

"We've really put at least one small food service business on the map," notes Guidry, "and we've even printed a special newspaper for a local oil company that they used as a wrapper for serving boiled seafood. Talk about subliminal messaging!"

"In the end, David is succeeding because he never lost sight of his dad's sage advice," says Sue Guidry, beaming with pride and affection. "Put everything you've got into it, build it from scratch and don't settle for anything less than the best."

David Guidry has heeded that advice and run with it, growing the business with hard work and unstinting passion. That is why Lakeside Camera Photoworks is well positioned for the future, and also why we have honored it as *Photo Industry Reporter's* 2009 Photofinisher of the Year. □



Customers are dazzled with an array of creative printout possibilities and subliminal motivational messages throughout the store.

an admirable mixture of competence, hard work and unstinting passion. That is why Lakeside Camera Photoworks is well positioned for the future, and also why we have honored it as *Photo Industry Reporter's* 2009 Photofinisher of the Year. □

### Strategy Sessions Lakeside Camera Photoworks: Oozing Creativity

from page 1

photos and all we could see was the paper backing of a picture, and they would ask if we could do anything to get the picture back. It was heartbreaking," she said.

When we went to visit the store, Susan took Jason Schneider and me through a tour of the Lower Ninth Ward, where the devastation of Katrina was most evident. It was a moving and sobering excursion.

But the success of Lakeside Camera harkens back way before Katrina. LSU sweethearts Susan and Rod Guidry decided to open a camera store because, even as Rod was working as an engineer, their hobby as photographers became more important to them. "Rod was taking a lot of pictures in his job, and he liked that part of it. And, more important, we wanted to do something together," Susan explained. So they rented an 800-square-foot store in the Lakeside area and hung out their shingle. "Honestly, we lived it and we loved it."

David was another story. "He was kind of forced labor for us in the beginning," said Susan. "He would work here in the summers and during school, but it wasn't really in his blood." After attending college at LSU, he moved to Denver, then came home to go to grad school, and he worked part-time in the store. After a short time, David realized that the photography business was calling him a little louder than school was, so he dove into Lakeside Camera and, as they say, the rest is history. David saw early on that there was a creative side of the

family business and that it was destined to be a key element in Lakeside's future. Photofinishing was more of his passion, and it is now one of the main calling cards of the company. The Guidrys invested in an Indigo press to increase their capabilities and added a full-service framing section, where people have their images framed while they wait.

Rod passed away at an early age in 1996, and since then David has become the heart and soul of Lakeside Camera Photoworks. Susan, the matriarch, has taken a backseat but still loves to be part of the action.

Lakeside is all about creativity. There are pictures everywhere (including the bathrooms); from the moment you walk into the store, your first notion is "I can do that?" From DVDs and canvas prints to business cards and brochures, Lakeside is the epitome of full service. Their kiosks are built with an adjacent "playpen" for kids. "We want moms to bring their kids in and not feel pressured," said Susan.

"Our key customer is not really 'Jennifer' . . . it's Jennifer's mom," said David, "because Jennifer's mom has a history of involvement with photography. She understands family archiving. She's seen 35mm slides and 8mm movies. And not only is she raising her kids, but she is also taking care of her parents, which makes her the archivist for three generations."

David sees a great opportunity in the many prints and keepsakes that are stored in a box somewhere in consumers' houses. Stacked on the floor is a display of U.S. Postal boxes, along with an offer to fill the box with prints for digital conversion for \$139. "We offer high-speed scanning now, but we're working on our next big idea. The DVD we burn for them is just the beginning. The key is to scan those photos and turn them into projects we can up sell."

Walking around Lakeside Camera you really don't feel



At Lakeside, there are photos displayed everywhere—even in the bathrooms.



Susan and Rod Guidry made the first sale in their new store in 1972.

like you're in a camera store. It feels more like a creative boutique. The staff is young, energetic and knowledgeable. And their commissions are based not only on hardware sales but also on warranty sales and, more important, extra services. "We reward our salespeople for helping our customers do more with their photographs. It's a win-win," said David.

The Guidrys are also proactive in going out and finding new opportunities. Small business is a major target for them, and they have the capabilities to print brochures, develop logos and help small businesses brand themselves. "Part of what we do is go out and find opportunities. Small business is important to us," said David.

While I was there I also saw a music video that was shot and produced for a local jazz artist. The editing was done right in the store, and the DVD label and packaging was all part of the project. It's all about taking photographs to the next level.

To me, Lakeside Camera Photoworks has succeeded in becoming a "destination." People want to go there. They want to see the imaging possibilities and then get all the help they need to make them a reality. Sure, they might walk in to buy a camera, or accessories, but that's just their first trip to the store. They'll keep coming back.

Susan Guidry is also the living legacy of Lakeside Camera and, more poignantly, a proud mother who has seen her son grow the Guidry dream. "My baby is taking care of my baby," she said. □



PIR's Jerry Grossman with (L-R): Ginger Gauthe, Lakeside Camera Photoworks' general manager; MaryJane Shahine, Product manager/HR/office Jill of All Trades; Sherry Guidry (David's wife); David Guidry; and Susan Guidry.

**LAKESIDE CAMERA PHOTOWORKS: 2009 PHOTOFINISHER OF THE YEAR**

# A Down-Home Family Enterprise, Lakeside Camera Has a Roadmap for the Future

By Jason Schneider

If you want to see what a successful photo specialty and photofinishing center of the future is likely to look like, just mosey down to the Big Easy and step into the amazing retail space created by David Guidry, president of Lakeside Camera Photoworks, and his mom, Susan.

We visited the main branch in a commercial area of Metairie, Louisiana, about a 20-minute drive from New Orleans's famed French Quarter, and the instant we walked in and looked around, it was abundantly clear it is no ordinary camera store. Superbly executed pictures of every imaginable size and type are smartly showcased on every conceivable surface, from kiosk enclosures to the coffee shop style waiting area, to large display partitions and easels, even the walls that frame the see-through printing lab.

Before customers ever interact with the staff, they've already been dazzled with a formidable array of creative printout possibilities and a wealth of subliminal motivational messages: "Your family memories are worth preserving." "We're local and we care deeply about this community and its history." And most important of all, "You can do any of the things you see here and more, and we're here to help you in any way we can."

Despite the plethora of images and services that beckon tantalizingly from every corner, the store conveys an impression of well-organized spaciousness, a world of exciting opportunities that can actually be realized.

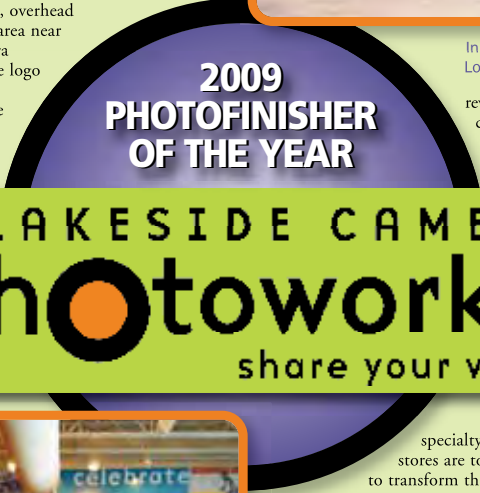
Just in case you didn't get the message in purely visual terms, it's reinforced with a number of prominent signs that communicate the social dimension of photography in the context of specific services. A big, overhead "Share Your Vision" banner greets you at the service area near the main entrance. At the left-hand side of the camera counter is a cheery orange circle emblazoned with the logo "Shop Local Y'all!"

Nearby is an impressive stack of U.S. Postal Service boxes affixed with detailed order forms. The sign above the stack reads "Buy-the-Box. Do you have your memories stored in shoeboxes? Fill this box with prints. We will scan all of the prints in this box for \$139.00."

"Most people understand the value of preserving and storing family heritage images digitally," notes David Guidry, "but they have a hard time taking the first step because they don't know how many pictures they've got. The box



In April 1997, a second store was opened to serve Louisiana's Mandeville and Covington communities.



revolution: preserving memories and migrating the precious reservoir of existing images from analog to digital so they can be shared, thereby generating revenue

streams in printing everything from albums to photo books, calendars, invitations and framed display prints. The list is endless, and Lakeside does it all.

Indeed, adding the word "Photoworks" to the store logo after the post-Katrina rebuild was no idle gesture. Guidry seized on the reconstruction opportunity to bring Lakeside Camera into the future by reinventing it as a multi-channel print factory that happens to be attached to a photo specialty store. As he astutely observes, "If photo specialty stores are to survive and prosper going forward, they will have to transform their business model from one that is transactional to one that is consultative. My goal is to be on the cutting edge of that trend."

**How It All Started**

Lakeside Camera opened its doors on April 29, 1972 as a tiny (800-square-foot) full-service camera store just around the corner from its present location. The company was conceived of and founded by David Guidry's parents, Rodney (Rod) Guidry and Susan (Sue) Guidry, both native to the New Orleans area.

Rod had been a successful engineer for an oil company but was bitten by the photography bug in the course of taking pictures for his job. And he decided to pursue his passion. Under his able stewardship, the camera store, renamed Lakeside Camera

Small business is a major target; Lakeside prints brochures, develop logos and provides promotional materials to help small businesses brand themselves.



The staff is taught to really listen to the customer, and to be the best at what they do, to enhance the customer's experience.

provides customers with something discrete and tangible they can get their minds around, a reasonable cost option that gives them permission to take action. We're going to refine the design of the box and the order form, but this box embodies our business model—presenting easy-to-understand real-world options for letting people get the most out of their images."

It is certainly not lost on a savvy marketing guy like David Guidry that Buy-the-Box exemplifies two key elements of what can be called the digital printout



**LAKESIDE CAMERA PHOTOWORKS: 2009 PHOTOFINISHER OF THE YEAR**

Center, quadrupled in size to 3,200 square feet by 1978. In 1981 it expanded again, moving to its present 6,000-square-foot location and adding on-site photofinishing with one of the first minilabs in the South.

Moving along with the times, the company changed its name to Lakeside Camera & Video in 1985, and it was a pioneer in entering the digital imaging business in 1989. Processing and digital services were steadily expanded through the 1990s. "By 1993 it was appropriate to change our name to Lakeside Camera & Imaging," recalls Sue Guidry, a natural-born people person who still keeps an affectionate guiding hand in the business. "By that point we offered such a comprehensive array of services, it enabled us to do virtually anything with visual images. That is still our core competency today."

In April 1997, a second Lakeside Camera & Imaging was opened to serve Louisiana's Mandeville and Covington communities. Then, after Hurricane Katrina and the resulting rebuild from its devastation, the company emerged as two separate entities, Lakeside Camera Photoworks (privately owned by the Guidry family) and Lakeside Camera Printworks.

"Our list of services is constantly growing as we continue to embrace new technologies," comments David Guidry, "and we pride ourselves on being able to deliver an impressive range of innovative options, all at very high-quality levels. When you expand your customers' concept of what is possible with their images, you exalt their memories and enhance their creativity. In short, you add value to what they do and empower them while enhancing your bottom line. We currently employ over 30 residents of South Louisiana, and I'm pleased to say serve a very loyal consumer and commercial customer base."

Both David and Sue Guidry expressed heartfelt appreciation that much of the growth and success of Lakeside Camera can be attributed to the talent, vision and business acumen of Rodney J. Guidry, who died of lung cancer on July 13, 1996.

Although David is the second generation of the Guidry family to head up Lakeside Camera, it was by no means a foregone conclusion. He was not particularly enchanted with the idea of entering the family business, as he intended to pursue an academic career after graduating from college as a history major. Fortunately for the business, he fell in love with it while working in the store before he was to enter graduate school. He's never looked back, and for the last 14 years he has honed his innate talents for developing marketing strategies grounded in a keen understanding of human psychology. His history background is evident in his willingness to adapt to changing circumstances, and to move calmly and resolutely once he has determined the direction in which the market, and his customers, are moving.

"Photofinishing in all its aspects, from photo books and DVDs to custom prints, is key to our business," says Guidry. "That's why we invested over half a million dollars in an Indigo press and employ a full-time graphics designer. But we're also a box mover; we're the largest independent Nikon and Canon dealer in the state."

"After Katrina, we were without power for a month and the store was a real mess," recalls Guidry. "In fact, we were out of business from August 29 to April 1. Fortunately, other PRO member stores and the PRO organization were immensely helpful and supportive; they even sent paychecks for our employees, and acted like a true brotherhood or sisterhood in every possible way. We were also lucky that the roof came off our second floor, so we could claim non-flood-related water damage as well as flood damage, which had more limited insurance coverage. It was a crisis all right, and we were not immediately sure we wanted to start over again, but we New Orleanians are resilient, and we didn't want to leave the area."

"Actually, a bigger challenge than Katrina was changing with the times. It was moving from a transactional business model based on selling stuff to a consultative business model based on bringing the customer's entire picture-taking experience and output

In addition to a comprehensive array of services that enables customers to do virtually anything with images, Lakeside stocks deep inventory in all imaging areas.



Photofinishing and output options of every conceivable nature are provided. One example is a legacy cookbook made up of family photos and handwritten recipes.



options to a new level based on our expertise and services. I wanted to create a visual image of creative options for any customer walking into the store, to show a mosaic of all the possibilities. The Buy-the-Box you see here is simply a means to promote digitizing the analog legacy.

"This business isn't based solely on offering innovative products and services either," observes Guidry. "Fundamentally, it's about people, and that's why we never let temporary demands cause us to waver from our policy of hiring the best people. We have a little rule about that: One good person is worth three average people, and one great person is worth three good people. An excellent example of a great person is Ginger Gauthier, my right-hand person who's been with us for 23 years. She's also the embodiment of another of our catch

to page 14



Customers can buy U.S. Postal boxes to fill with prints Lakeside will scan into digital files that can be used for up-sell projects.



**IPI Congratulates  
Lakeside Camera  
on Being the  
Photofinisher of the Year**

From all of us at IPI, congratulations on a job well done. Keep up the good work.



# LAKESIDE CAMERA PHOTOWORKS: 2009 PHOTOFINISHER OF THE YEAR



Staff at the Mandeville location (L-R): Laura Bruno; Shelli Butler; Cynthia Varga; and Melvin Box, the store's manager



Michele Tamplain, standing, director of Corporate Sales/Business Awareness advocate, and Mindy Marengo, Lakeside's art director and head designer



Manning the Metairie lab (L-R): Stephanie DeVay, printer; Ginger Gauthé ("small fierce one"), general manager; Shelley Labranche, printer; and Erin Scott, printer



Sales staff at the main Metairie location (L-R): Enjoli Lacour; Scott Simon; Camille Leiteau; and Craig Hanauer



Lakeside's imaging service personnel includes (L-R): Marco Campbell, video editor; Mindy Marengo, designer; Rita Newhouse Villanueva, Fine Art Printing/Graphics; Brian Junod, video editor; and Amy Lombardo, photographer/designer.

# Congratulations!

To Lakeside Photo,

The worldwide family of Fastbind would like to congratulate you on this prestigious award. We are honored that you have chosen our solutions to help you grow your business and offer exceptional Photo Books and Albums to your clients. As our business is the same age as yours and still family owned we realize the tremendous work it has taken for you to achieve and maintain your excellence.

We applaud the entire staff at Lakeside Photo.

*Lauri Hnotari*  
President Mapping Inc

*Kent Dalzell*  
President Fastbind USA



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**photoworks**

share your vision.

3508 21st Street, Metairie • LA 70002 • 504.885.8660  
2121 N. Causeway Blvd. • Mandeville, LA 70471 • 985.626.1776  
[www.lakesidecamera.com](http://www.lakesidecamera.com)