

IPIC 2014: 'You had to be there'

July 1, 2014

IPIC IPIC, the International Print + Imaging Conference, held last week in Las Vegas by IPI, garnered an overwhelmingly positive response from Australian delegates – several of whom were also involved in presentation sessions.



(Pic courtesy of IPI.)

In addition to Independent Photo Supplies executives and staff from Australia and New Zealand, there were 10 Australian delegates: Phil Gresham (Fotofast, Brisbane); Elly Griffiths (Raleru); Matt Hourigan (Camera House Bendigo); Jon Paterson (Camera House director, Lismore Camera House); Paul Maietta (Fitzgerald Imaging, Perth) Peter and Carly Michael (Michaels CVD, Melbourne); Geoff Temple (store manager, Gerry Gibbs Camera House, Perth); Diran and Virginia Vaharatian (Spectrum Camera House, Brookvale).

Phil Gresham, Paul Maietta and Peter Michael doubled as presenters during the week.

'I would have liked to see about 300 more Australian and New Zealanders here,' said Independent Photo Supplies (IPS) director, Stuart Holmes, IPS is the IPI Australia/New Zealand affiliate). 'Because that's about how many photo specialty stores there are in total, and in reality every one of them should be here because if you aren't investing in your own business, then where are you?'

'That's what these guys here are doing – they've travelled a long way, most of these Americans, and they've all got businesses and they are all family businesses – there's no chains here. And they've all made the commitment.

'It behoves us (IPS) to be doing all we can to get as many Australians and New Zealanders over here.

'You go to one show and you think, well that was really great – but year on year it's just better and better. The stand-out of the week for me was Managed Marketing Services, because we'll be doing that in Australia as well.'

Photo Counter asked most of the Australian retailer attendees to volunteer their impressions, whether there were any stand-out sessions or impressions, and whether it was worth the expense of the trip and the opportunity cost of a week away from their businesses. This is what they had to say:

Phil Gresham (*Fotofast*): If you can't go to any other event, you should go to this one. There was no single stand-out presentation for me, but a lot of little things. Lots of achievable ideas. The great thing here is that what's presented is so current and achievable now.

All the people here are looking forward, not backwards.

Matt Hourigan (*Camera House Bendigo*). – *Matt is another*



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relative newcomer to photo retailing, having taken over from Don Papes at the Bendigo Camera House store): 'It was absolutely a worthwhile investment. I'd certainly come again.

I'm a first-time attendee with no history in the industry so it's a bit like being a kid in a candy store. I didn't come with any preconceptions. With so much to learn, I'm a bit like a sponge soaking up as much as I can. It's been fantastic meeting so many new people, building relationships with them.

The stand-outs for me were the social networking potentials (the launch of the Managed Marketing Services Program) – I'm very impressed with just how much work is being done by IPI in leveraging that potential.

I also liked the iPhonography presentations – the notion that we should not be afraid of that as cannibalising camera sales, but in fact seeing it as potentially another part of camera sales picture.

Smartphone photography is going to augment rather than detract from our business.

Being here reinforced to me that with so much innovation going on, there's an exciting future.

The challenge for me will be to focus down on one or two of the best ideas and initiate them.

Jon Paterson (*Camera House director, Lismore Camera House*): It's been highly-professionally organised. The presentations were all on target, on subject and concise, and it's been an extremely friendly and embracing environment.

Stand-outs for me were the iPhonography course and related accessory sales.

It has shaken me out of my resistance to embracing what is the largest and fastest-growing photography segment – the email to Camera House has already been sent!

It's really time to open our arms to those mobile phone photographers we've previously been disconnected from because we didn't sell the capture device.

My frame of thinking during the presentation was that I was one of those guys that said I won't sell digital cameras when they began to replace film. In 2003/4 I had mentors telling me to say no to digital cameras because they would be the end of the industry. This is another of those paradigm shifts.

For Camera House members nationally the timing is perfect because it follows on from the roll-out of the Dakis print solution, enabling print from phone in a way we haven't had previously.

Paul Maietta (*Fitzgerald Imaging, Perth*): The cost of the trip was paid for on the first half of the first day. It helped define for me where I want to take my business. Then on the last day it paid for itself again! This is the second IPIC I've attended and since the first I've been telling my colleagues in the prolab segment that they should be here.



Carly Michael (*Michaels CVD, Melbourne*): It's been fantastic. I'm very inspired. It's amazing how we are encouraged to share all our knowledge and experience, and I found it extremely valuable. Even at the level of the day-to-day workings of our business. I've had so many small questions and I've been able to meet the right people to answer those questions, which I think alone would have been almost impossible otherwise.

A stand-out for me was the iPhonography sessions – I'm really impressed with how we were actually taken through the course and encouraged to tailor it – that's really very valuable.

I was also impressed with the Dakis courses and how changes which were suggested or asked for were immediately factored in to the actual system where possible. To be able to talk directly to the actual programmers is pretty impressive.



Geoff Temple (*store manager, Gerry Gibbs Camera House, Perth*). It's definitely been worth it. I've got a lot out of these sessions – more so than others I've attended. Then also there's talking to different retailers from other countries with ideas I've never considered. All in all it's been a great networking experience.



One session I really enjoyed was on colour management, run by Konica Minolta ('Managing Colour in Digital Printing Workflows'). It clarified a few things to have someone far more experienced than me explain some of the processes and methods, and now I'm more confident of my understanding of the technicalities of colour management.

There was no one stand-out, but I took something from each of the sessions. Ideas I can implement in store.

I've been in the industry 20 years and I've been to numerous talks and information sessions but I found this one to be the most fruitful. And the networking was a great influence on the ideas that I'll be taking home.



ONE THOUGHT ON "IPIC 2014: 'YOU HAD TO BE THERE'"



Frank Distefano on [July 1, 2014 at 2:07 pm](#) said:

Thanks to all that came to IPIC. It was a great event and made richer by the folks Downunder and our neighbors to the North. I hope that y'all come back next year and please spend time on the Forum. The Forum has the ability to extend the knowledge and excitement of IPIC through out the year. Thanks again!

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