



February 13th, 2012

## How Do I Get the Most Out of Working With a Consultant?

*Published on Agency Access: The Creative Lab*

*By Louisa J. Curtis*

### **Question: How can I get the best value out of working with a consultant?**

#### **Do Your Research**

Much like a client, before working with a consultant, you need to do your research. Not every consultant will necessarily fit your needs or match your personality. After perhaps narrowing it down to a few, you need to speak with each one, if possible, and decide which shoe fits. Whenever I have a new inquiry, I usually set up a 10- to 15-minute phone call so we can get a feel for one another and determine if I can indeed provide whatever it is he or she might require. The worst thing you can do is talk for too long, otherwise it starts to become a free consultation! So remember, our time is valuable, just as your work has value.

I also suggest artists look at a consultant's website and read some of the consultant's client testimonials. These give you a sense of how each consultant works, and whom he or she has worked with. After that, you could also contact some of those clients directly and ask them for feedback. A personal referral is always nice!

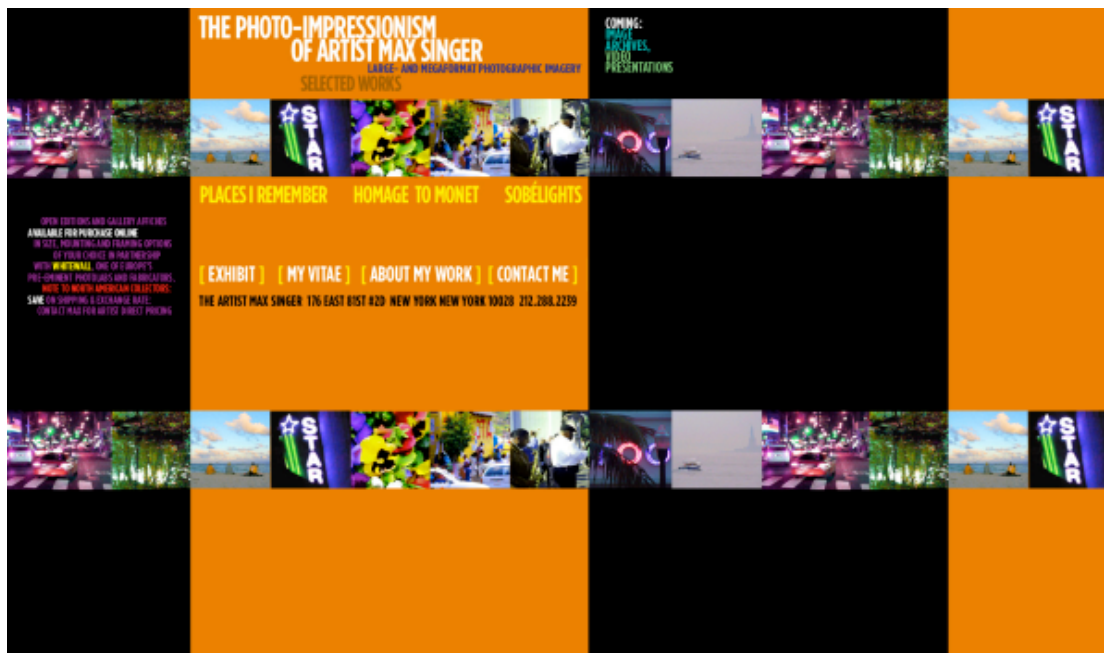
#### **Prepare a List of What You Want to Achieve and Ask Questions**

Okay, you've made your choice as to which consultant you might like to work with. Now really think about what it is you need to accomplish with this consultant. What do you actually need help with? Some of you may respond "Everything!" But it may be more specific than that, so put some time and thought as to where you may need the most help and feedback. Write a list of questions and topics you want to cover, and consider your budget as well. Perhaps you need help with editing? For me, it has to start there, with the work, and then your website and overall presentation. Or perhaps it's the marketing you're unsure about ... consultants can help you with all of this.

#### **Trust Your Consultant and "Keep the Faith"**

Trust your consultant – much like a rep, your consultant does have some idea of what he or she is talking about. If your consultant suggests removing your favorite image from the edit, don't take it personally – it simply may not be right for this particular purpose. None of this is "personal," in that sense. A good consultant looks at your work, your presentation and your edit, and makes the best possible judgment based on his or her expertise, instincts, and experience. (As the great Harry Benson said, "It's really very simple – it's either a good photo, or a bad photo." And he's right.)

## OLD WEBSITE



When I worked with photo-illustrator [Max Singer](#), we focused not only on editing his work down into fewer and smaller portfolios, but also on creating a brand-new website presentation and newsletter that looked clean and fresh, even though it was content-heavy. The notion of “less is more” doesn't always come easily to Max, but after a little convincing on my part and a lot of hard work on his, it was all worth it. (To see what Max had to say about this entire process, please check out this [link](#))

## NEW WEBSITE



## NEW PORTFOLIOS


■ FEATURED ■ **PORTFOLIOS** ■ NEWSLETTERS ■ VIDEOS & BOOKS + ■ MAX ON ISSUU.COM ■ ABOUT ■ CONTACT ■ FACEBOOK

# MAX SINGER

the **NEW LOOK** of PHOTOGRAPHY

PHOTOGRAPH-BASED DIGITAL IMAGERY **IMPRESSIONISTIC GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIVE**

**PORTFOLIOS** | [my top 20 hits](#) | [the big easy](#) | [new york new york](#) | [ports of call](#) | [after dark](#) | [peoplewatching](#) | [details & fragments](#) | [in the natural world](#) |



COMPOSITION WITH GREEN BATHING SUIT  
[from PORTS OF CALL]  
SOUTH BEACH ©2004



HE'S NO EINSTEIN  
[from NEW YORK NEW YORK]  
TIMES SQUARE ©2004

**IDYLIC**

**LITERAL**

PORTFOLIO OF THIS GALLERY (PDF)

© MAX SINGER  
170 EAST 87TH ST  
NEW YORK, NY 10028  
1-718-298-2704  
MAXONMAXSINGER.COM

So keep the faith, and remember: Consultants can help you to the best of their ability, but they're never the total solution – just part of the process. There are no guarantees in life. Keep things in perspective, be open to change and always maintain a positive attitude!