



PHOTO RESOLUTION

Photos can add a spice of life to any publication or web site. Besides breaking up text, they can give identity to your members and illustrate a story, column or feature. A low-resolution picture in an article can destroy a publication just as a high-resolution photo on a web page can turn your prospective audience away with taking too long to load.

Many union communicators must wear a host of hats which could include: writer, editor, webmaster or photographer. Not many locals will or can afford to purchase photos, so therefore it is up to you or those people providing you photos to ensure they meet the specifications required.

Remember, a good photo editing program might help to mend some bad photos, but in many cases you can't fix the unfixable. The resolution of your photos is extremely important.

There are two important definitions to be aware of:

- Hi-resolution refers to images that are usually 266 dpi or higher.
- Lo-resolution refers to images that are usually in the lower range around 72 dpi.

For newsletters or publications, “dpi”, refers to the dots per inch, which is the resolution of an output device such as an ink jet or laser printer or image setter. A standard ink jet printer prints about 150 dpi; standard office laser printer prints around 300 dpi. A standard image setter (used by companies for professional printing) prints about 2,540 dpi.

It can leave you looking good or a little blurred

For web sites, “ppi”, we are refers to the pixels per inch, the standard resolution on a computer monitor.

Whether pictures are being taken for a newsletter or web site, photos should always be taken at the highest resolution possible, or 300 dpi. Any photo can be scaled down to a size or resolution required after it is taken.

A photo that is taken at a higher resolution can be resized or cropped to the desired size or resaved to a lower resolution.

Just remember, an action photo or the picture of some unsuspecting volunteer will do wonders to enhance an article. A staged picture like the one below of a few members of the USW Communication Department has little value to add to an article - no matter how attractive the people may be.

And lastly, take as many pictures as possible to get the “right” photo for the “right” article.