

Railpace Photo "Scoring" Matrix: How we select photos for magazine publication

Benefits	Attribute	Detractions
	Newsworthiness	
New subject/topic in Railpace	Hot News!	Overkill. Similar photos previously published
First contribution received on this topic	Promptness	Already Scooped by other contributors
The Railpace coverage area is the Northeast, generally North Carolina to Maine, and west to Ohio/Indiana/WV, and eastern Canada (Ontario and east)	Northeast Region Coverage Area	Outside the Railpace coverage area. Photo would be more suitable in one of the national rail magazines.
	Composition	
Include a location "prop" in your photo— a recognizable station, sign, bridge, milepost, signal, building— to help tell the NEWS story	Location Identity	No sense of "location" Photo could have been taken anywhere in North America
Show as much of the train consist as possible	Train Consist	Don't cut-off the train consist behind the power
An attractive, appealing location is always a plus. Starrucca beats South Plainfield!	Aesthetics – Scenic Quality	Ugly locations, freeway bridges, poles, wires, grafitti, trash, "wedgie" angles all detract
	Technical	
Photo sharp and in-focus	Sharpness	Soft focus, low-resolution
Fast shutter speed to freeze action	Freeze Action	Shutter speed too slow to stop action, blurred (except for "pan" shots)
Correct exposure	Exposure	The only thing worse than a shot in bad weather is a badly underexposed shot in bad weather
	Lighting	
Sunshine trumps	Weather	Bad weather is a minus. Really bad weather is unacceptable.
Shoot with the sun behind you	Correct Side of Light	Wrong side of the light (shadow side) detracts. Get over on the sunlit side and get it right.
Shoot during "sweet light" (early morning/ late afternoon) whenever possible	Overhead Sun Angle	During longer days of the year, strive to avoid the dreaded 11am-3 pm "HA" high overhead sun.
	Drama	
Drama always a plus, such as a well-executed "meet" or over-under shot. Timing can "make" or "break" a photo.	Excitement/ Timing	Sometimes it's just a "nice try" photo. Don't take it personally; you can't hit a home run every time.
	Captioning	
Using the free Railpace Photo Upload site keeps your image, your name, caption info and address all in one place.	Caption Uploaded	Failing to provide a detailed, well-written caption renders your photo useless. Tell our readers why your photo is newsworthy.
Include the DATE your photo was taken.	Date Included	If you forget to include the date your photo was taken, we have to follow up with you for that additional info, which wastes everyone's time
Kindly double-check all your info, including loco models, engine numbers, location where photo was taken, etc.	Information Correct	Put brain in gear before hitting SEND. If you send bogus caption info, your photos may be declined in the future.
	Media	
Properly exposed Digital images provide the highest quality sharpness, color, contrast and dynamic range for magazine publishing	Digital photos	When you Upload, be sure to send your HI RES jpeg, tiff, or RAW file, not a downsampled, compressed, or "preview" version
Well-exposed slides can provide decent photo reproduction in the magazine	Slides	Slides that are over or under exposed, or extremely contrasty, scan poorly.
Prints are generally unacceptable, except in rare instances when no other digital image or slide is available; and then only as a small news photo	Prints	Prints that are soft focus are unacceptable.
	Previous/First Time Contributor	
We value our large contingent of faithful photo contributors and thank you for sharing your work.	Regular	We may occasionally pass over a great shot from a regular contributor in order to give a new contributor a first chance
We take extra time to help our new friends get published	New Contributor	Even with "extra credit" for being a new, first-time contributor, your photo still needs to meet most of the basic criteria listed above.
We take extra time to help young persons get their first photo published. Feel free to ask questions and for suggestions how to improve your photography	Young Contributor	Even with "extra credit" for being young and "learning the ropes" your photo still needs to meet most of the basic criteria listed above. Don't give up, keep shooting!