

RAILPACE 101:

09: Location Identity in photo composition

"Location Identity" in your photo composition helps tell the "News" story

Recently we've been deluged with photos of motive power and trains, but many of these are tight "roster shots" or views of trains "somewhere in the woods" with little or no "location identity"

Most photos that *don't* get published are for this reason alone... but fret not, because it's so easy to improve upon!

Railpace is a "NEWS" magazine, and the best photos are those with "WOW" factor that catch your attention and begin to tell the story even before you even get to the caption.

Composing your photos to include some "**location identity**" is usually fairly simple, all that is needed is a "prop" or subject which helps show **WHERE** the photo is taken. Oftentimes, the "news value" of a photo is the location, such as seeing a BNSF unit in the East, a carnival train or circus train, or a passenger train on unusual trackage, or a locomotive enroute to a new home at an unusual place.

"PROPS" can include, but are not limited to,

Stations and structures

Signs

Mileposts

Railroad Bridges/ Tunnels

RR Crossings/ Interlockings/ Towers

Signals/ signal bridges

Older overpasses/ bridges (but preferably not unattractive modern freeway bridges)

Cityscapes/ skylines

Recognizable buildings and familiar landmarks

"VISTA" scenes, which they may contain no special landmark, offer more than just a tight roster view.

ELEVATION often enhances a train photo, allowing some of the background features/ scenery to show, instead of being completely blocked by the locomotive/train when you stand trackside to get a 'wedge' shot. An overhead bridge, embankment, hillside, top deck of a public parking garage, open window of a building, etc. can be good photo vantage points.

INCLUDE THE ENTIRE TRAIN in your photo composition— **don't crop off the consist to focus on the locomotives**, unless the lead engine is rare or really unusual. Dash-9 widecabs, etc., are generally NOT rare or unusual!

You want to see your photos in print, and we need your contributions!

So **put some thought into composition** the next time you're trackside, and make "**location...location...location**" help tell the news story!

Thanks for your support of Railpace Newsmagazine.

If you have questions or suggestions, kindly e-mail us at: railpace@ptd.net