

Returning to the source

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In a flurry (fit?) of energetic determination to figure out where to take my social media presence, I got to thinking about different possibilities (Mostly woodworking videos and blog? More of my writing? Continue as an admixture of things that interest me, for no particular audience beyond a few friends?). I also had to consider what resources I would need in order to stride confidently down whatever path I choose.

(Okay, full disclosure and my friends already know this, my life progress has less to do with any defined path than with an apparently aimless meander through a welter of interests based on whatever shiny penny has most recently caught my eye. Fair hit, to which I reply: So?)

Among the resources I might need, should I decide to turn this into largely a woodworking site, is a good camera and some straightforward editing software. I could use a mega search engine and read what the gurus, camera companies and uninvited (and not necessarily reliable) wiki-worlders have to say. And I admit to having done some of that. But I realized early in the process that my search methods were bringing me information that had as much to do with advocacy as data. I was becoming more, rather than less, confused and considered just continuing to use my cell phone – effective enough but probably won't go where I want to head.

Enter my connection through an old friend to her brother-in-law Frank, who is a phenomenal photographer and spent many years working in a camera shop. I wished I'd thought of Frank sooner, because as he demonstrated when we chatted, his experience has equipped him with two precious capabilities. He has unquestioned expertise in the field of photography. And he understands how and what to explain to a nub such as moi who just needs a decent setup that works well and doesn't require a bonafide photography geek to understand (geek being a loving, not a pejorative term; I am myself geeky on writing, woodworking, being a dad, ...).

In fifteen minutes, ol' Frank had dispelled my misconceptions, confirmed what I did understand and opened up my dream of entering the woodworking video world to the realm of the possible. Yes, he answered my questions, but more important, he exposed me to the questions I should have asked but didn't know I should. Questions such as what 'field of view' I will need. I would never have thought to consider field of view (sound of Frank, Toni, Naomi and others chuckling in the background) but after talking to Frank, yes, of course it is an important consideration.

Anyhoo, my point is this: There is a wide array of 'experts' available through the internet ready to 'guide' me to their preference du jour. And an even wider field of numbskulls and miscreants in the wiki world ready and willing to give advice based on questionable (or zero) verifiable data or their own philosophical bent. Instead, I went to a primary source, got the information I need and now I can make the choice that's right for me based on actual, you know, facts. And if another critical question bobs to the surface, a quick call to Frank or Toni or Naomi and I'm on my way.

Primary sources. What a concept. A concept of core value to the seeker of knowledge. The horse's mouth approach to ensuring that what we know is really so.

I won't get political or sociological here but I think we all know where this is headed. Lots of challenges face us these days and we need reliable information to make decisions. I'm becoming more and more leery of purveyors of 'information' that may be tinged with agendas. Or even well-meaning folks in my social group who will tell me the truth as they know it but already being friends, open the door to conformation bias. Might be a good idea to seek out some primary sources in fields other than videography.

You think?