

Freeze Frame

By Timothy L. Hale/Army Reserve Public Affairs

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Playing in the stock market

I am not turning this monthly column into an exploration of dabbling with the ever-volatile world financial markets.

Instead, what I am referring to is the world of stock photography and how it relates to what we do with our military photojournalism.

One of the best 46Qs that I've seen in the last five years who understands the importance of stock military photojournalism is Sgt. 1st Class Mark Bell, currently with the 200th Military Police Command Public Affairs at Fort Meade, Md.

Bell has a keen eye to capture those images that make up military life. Many of his images have been featured in Army.mil stories as well as the landing pages of the AKO portal.



(Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Mark Bell, Fort McCoy, Wis., 2009)

The image of these helmets was used in 2011 in an Army.mil article to illustrate changes in the Army Combat Helmet.

What is stock photography?

In the commercial world, stock photography is a photo that helps illustrate an idea or an event.

In military photojournalism, stock photography can be virtually anything the photographer sees.

A close-up of a helmet, a hand filling out a form, parts of a military vehicle, badges, ribbons, or detail images of a weapon system are considered stock. The possibilities are endless and totally up to the photographer.

The great thing about stock military photojournalism is when it comes time to lay out your publication you may need a particular image to illustrate a theme or concept. If you have been compiling a stock library, all you have to do is search for the image and you'll be set.

The other advantage of building a stock library is many of organizations outside of public affairs seek us out for imagery to illustrate their own themes and messages. The images can be used for safety posters, law enforcement programs, and training aids. Again, endless possibilities.

This past year while shopping at the PX on Fort Meade, I discovered an AAFES tactical gear catalog with one of my photographs I took two years ago being used as the front cover. You never know how or where your images may be used!

The Key to Organization

Organization is the key and the key to being organized is using keywords in your metadata. Having good keyword structure will speed up your search. Software programs such as Bridge, Lightroom, and Photo Mechanic have keyword search capability to help you.

The more specific your keywords are, the better your searches will

(Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Mark Bell, Camp Atterbury, Ind., 2008)

The image of this boot resting on top of a car damaged from a tornado could be used to illustrate how natural disasters affect Soldiers and their Families.



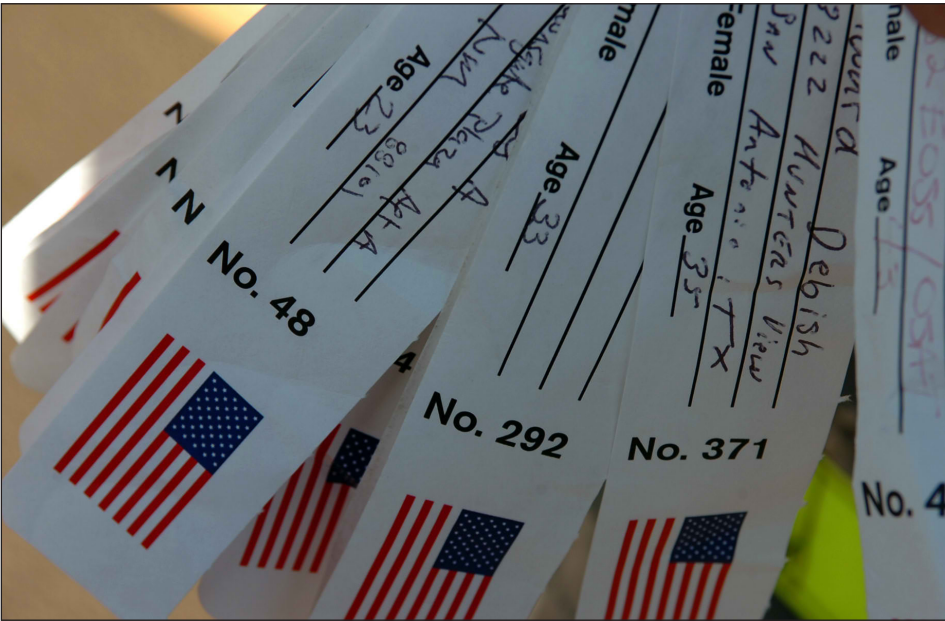
(Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Mark Bell, Fort McCoy, Wis., 2009)

This stunning image could be used to illustrate any number of concepts to include training, weapons qualification and range safety.



(Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Mark Bell, Balad, Iraq, Jan., 2007)

This image illustrates concepts such as deployment preparations and logistics.



(Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Mark Bell, LSA Anaconda, Iraq, Oct., 2006)

This image of tags from a running event at LSA Anaconda can illustrate any number of sports related concepts such as health, well-being, exercise and physical fitness.

be. There are some good examples on page 42 of the DoD Captioning Style Guide, released Oct. 27, 2011. They categorize keywords by: Concepts (religion, cultural awareness, morale, safety, security, agriculture and logistics); Activities (recreation, community outreach, demolition, medical aid, construction, humanitarian aid, weapons training and airdrop). Other categories include Events, People, Places, and Weapons & Vehicles.

Look over the examples of Bell's work to get your own creative ideas flowing.

Now get out there and start playing in the military photojournalism stock market!

It's a safe investment in the future of your career and your print and on-line publications.

Timothy L. Hale is an award-winning photojournalist for the Warrior-Citizen magazine at the U.S. Army Reserve Command Public Affairs Office at Fort Bragg, N.C. He is a member of Nikon Professional Services, National Press Photographers Association and National Association of Photoshop Professionals. When he isn't on assignment for the Army Reserve he owns a photojournalism and graphic design service and he also freelances for an international photo wire service. He has been shooting professionally since 1981.