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It is really hard to imagine a technology that had more impact on 20th century life than photography. It is truly the most pervasive. Photography changed the way we remember things. It offers spontaneity and has the ability to capture actual events, a slice of reality. Roland Barthes, a preeminent theorist of photography, said that photograph is the "sovereign contingency," meaning it is dependent on something else happening.

To imagine a social world before photography, we would have to think of a world without picture IDs; without portraits of ordinary people; one without pictures as souvenirs of travel; one without celebrity pictures; one without advertising photographs; one without X-rays or views of outer space; a world without views of foreign and exotic peoples; one without pictures of sports, wars, and disasters; and one in which the great masses of people had no way to visually record the important events of their lives.

Such a world is unbelievable to us now, and we have photography to thank for all these things: visual souvenirs, portraits of common folk as well as the famous, advertising pictures that have created desire in the public and educated them about all the products the new consumer culture has on offer, medical diagnostic tools, incredible views of exotic places and even of outer space, pictures of the world's news, and most important, pictures of the events and intimate moments of one's own life.

The technology of photography is part chemical, part optical, and dates from 1839. Soon after its simultaneous invention by William Henry Fox Talbot in England and Louis Jacques Mand  Daguerre in France, photography was used to document foreign places of interest such as India, the Holy Land, and the American West. It was also used for portraits with photographs taken of kings, statesman, and theater or literary personalities.

Advertising Photography

Even as Kodak was using advertising to create a market for its cameras, films, and papers, the advertising industry itself turned increasingly to photography during the 20th century. Newspapers as well as the great number of popular magazines (especially in the pre-TV era) were the carriers of most of this print advertising.

The purpose of using high resolution images for advertising was and is to create a desire for the new consumer products available to the public, and then, of course, to sell the products. Although drawings and painted illustrations were featured predominantly in ads during the early part of the century, gradually photography took over, and by the end of the 20th century virtually all visual advertising was photographic. Today, in the 21st century, digital photography has introduced the kinds of fantastic effects impossible in straight photography, further enriching the possibilities of advertising photography and especially Indian pictures.

While half-tone reproductions of photographs had been possible since the 1880s, and magazines and newspapers constantly used them in their editorial pages, before World War I advertisers seldom did. The great shift happened in the 1920s and 1930s. By the mid-1930s photographs at least equaled hand-drawn illustrations in print advertising, and have only gained greater dominance since then.

Photography has a great impact on advertising and marketing materials and can make or break

your first impression with a potential customer. You know the old saying, "A picture says 1000 words"? Well that has never been truer than it is today. We are all tech-heads, and we want everything this second! if we have to wait, we become irritated and move on.

Using great photography and high resolution images is a great way to get your message across quickly and say your 1000 words without actually saying any words. It immediately fascinates your audience, and a fascinated audience is more likely to read more of your message.

A concrete impact of photography has been the number of people employed in the industry, particularly after the introduction of 35mm film in the 1920s by the Kodak Company. Photography also meant new employment opportunities as photo reporters and editors, and in photographic agencies and libraries.

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