

Automating Lightroom: Part One – Import & Export

Lightroom can be semi-automated to make fast work of your imaging workflows. Lightroom can make use of custom 'User Presets' to fast track the Import, Develop and Export aspects of your workflow. I have made a range of Free Lightroom Presets available to download from my website. Just go to

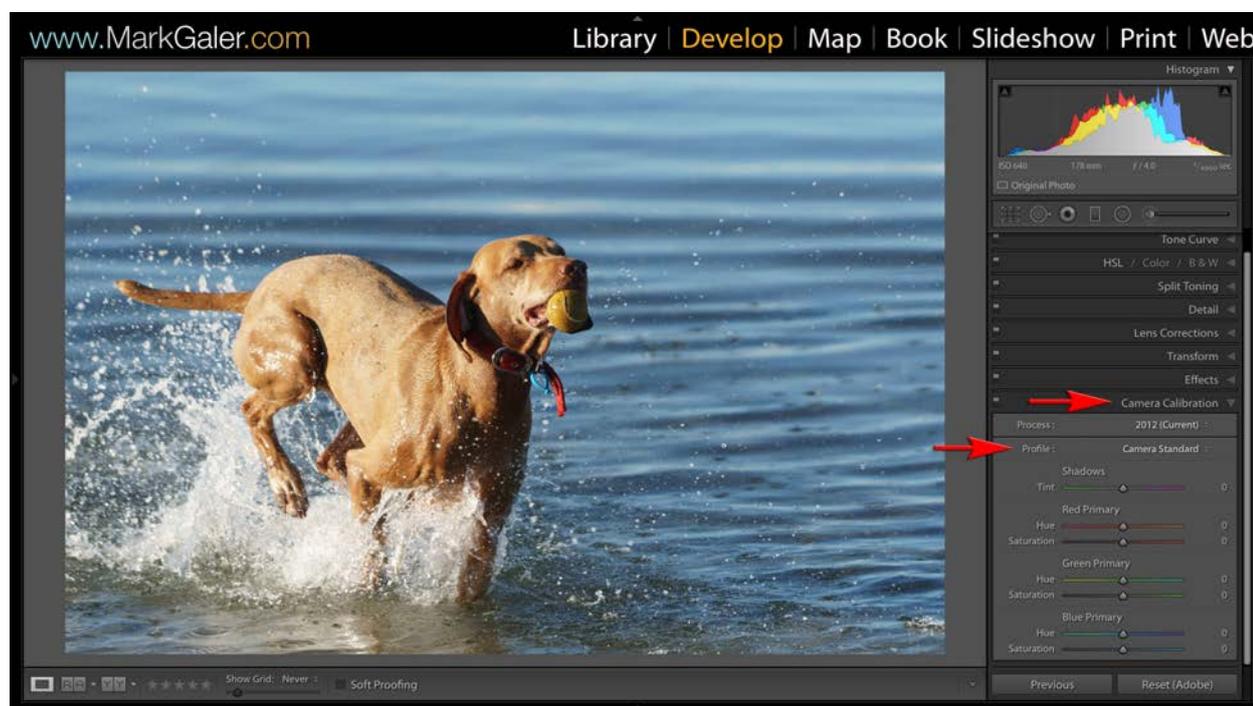
<http://www.markgaler.com/product-category/lightroom-presets>

New Default

Lightroom can be set up so that images are automatically optimised as they are imported into your Catalog. Lightroom's 'Develop Default Settings' can be modified so that the appearance of your image is set up the way you want them to appear from the start, i.e. images will be imported and have your preferred settings applied by default. If you hold down the Alt/Option key in the Develop Module you will see the Reset button in the bottom right-hand corner change to 'Set Default'. Before you change Adobe's default, however, you should ensure that the image you have open in the Develop module has been 'Reset', so there are no modifications to the visual appearance at this stage. In the Camera Calibration tab you can now select an alternative camera profile to the Adobe Standard. Changing to one of your camera profiles may provide your images with a little more 'pop'. It is also possible to create a custom camera profile using tools provided by companies such as xRite and Spyder (see links below).

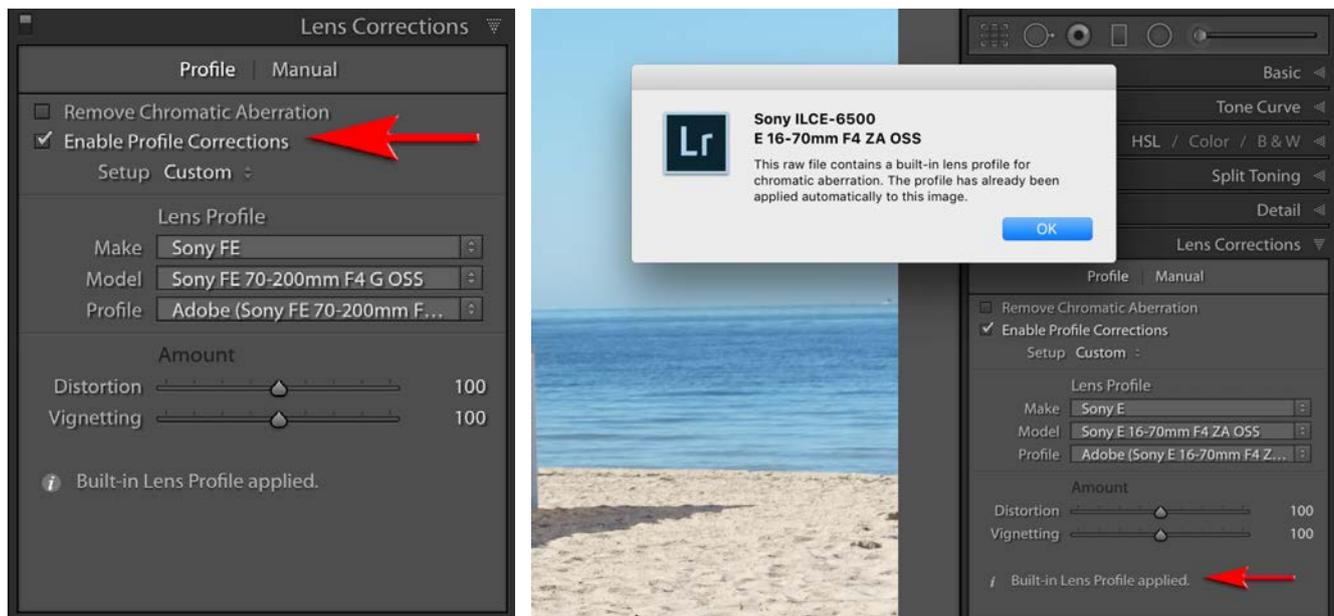
<http://xritephoto.com/colorchecker-passport-photo>

<http://spyder.datacolor.com/portfolio-view/spydercheckr-24/>

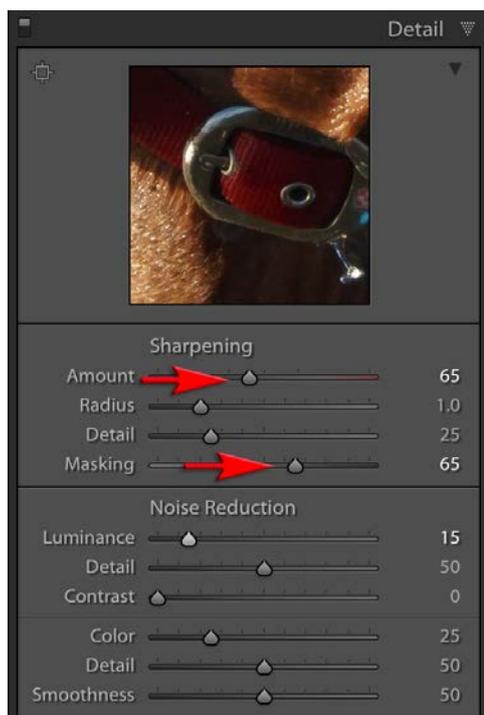


Try selecting an alternative profile in the Camera Calibration panel

As well as exploring alternative Profiles in the Camera Calibration panel, I also recommend choosing appropriate settings in the Detail and Lens Corrections panels prior to creating a New Default.

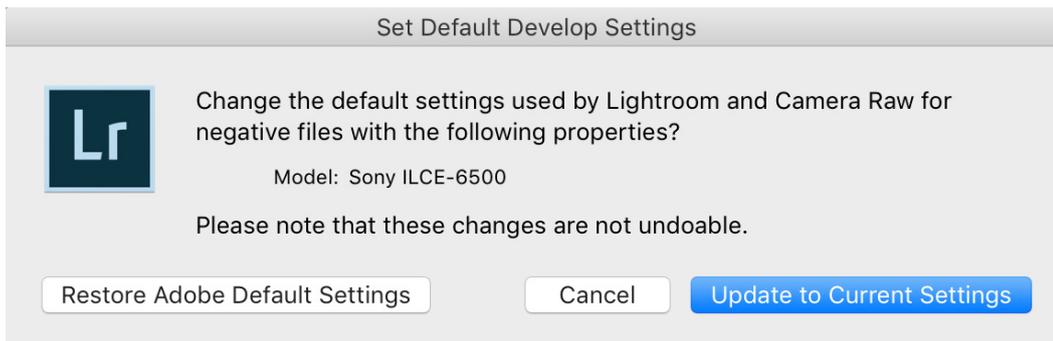


As a Raw shooter I choose to select the 'Enable Profile Correction' option in the Lens Corrections Panel. It is worth, however, checking that your camera is not making these changes to the Raw files in-camera. Notice in the illustration above that my Sony camera is correcting the chromatic aberration for me, so there is no need for me to check the Remove Chromatic Aberration checkbox for this camera in Lightroom.

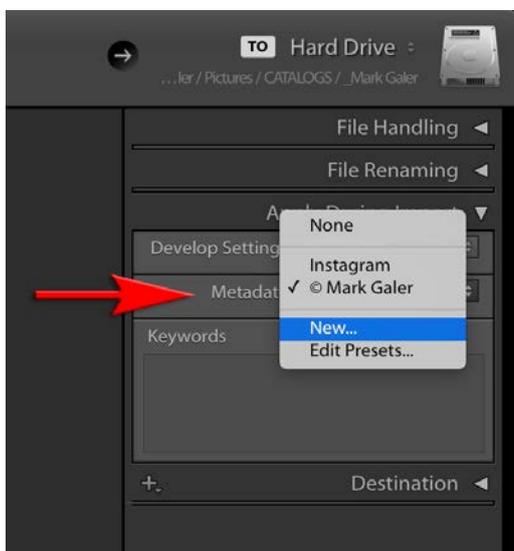


I like a slightly higher amount of sharpening applied to my images than currently applied by Adobe's default, so I have raised the Sharpening and Masking sliders to 65. The Masking will shield any areas of smooth continuous tone from the sharpening process. I also choose to raise the Luminance slider in the Noise Reduction section to 15. This will ensure areas of smooth tone are free from noise when images are zoomed to 100% or printed very large. I have found this beneficial for even low ISO images.

Note > I personally do not recommend this, but you are free to modify settings in the Basic or Tone Curve panel, e.g. add Vibrance and/or Clarity. Just remember that all images, however, will have these settings applied on import so consider these options carefully.



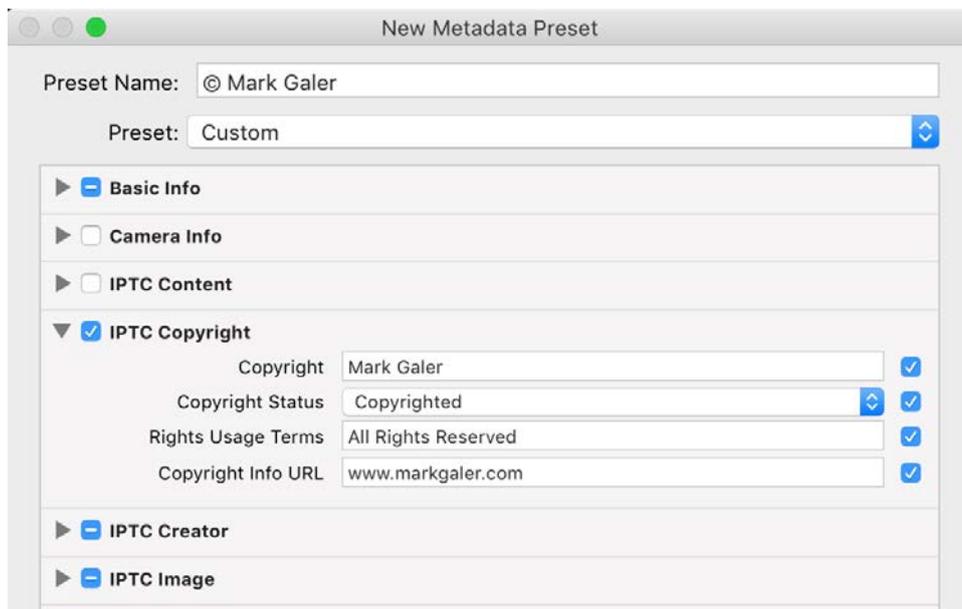
Now that you have considered all of the setting that you want to become your New Default settings, simply hold down the Alt key (PC) or Option key (Mac) and click on the Set Default in the bottom right-hand corner of the Lightroom window. You will notice in the dialog box that opens that the new Default for the Develop Settings is only for this camera. You may also notice a sentence that reads '*Please note that these changes are not undoable*'. This is not as alarming as it sounds. It simply means that when you hit the reset button in the Develop or Library modules the image will default to these new settings. You can however restore Adobe's Default settings at any time. If you decide to revert to Adobe's Default Settings just return to this dialog and click on the Restore Adobe Default Settings button. Now when you hit the Reset button the image will return to Adobe's defaults rather than the one you had created.



Metadata templates can be accessed from the Metadata panel in the Library Module or the Apply During Import panel in the Import Dialog

Another way of modifying images on import is to create a new Metadata Preset. Metadata Presets can be used to add a range of useful metadata to your images on Import, including your copyright information. This will ensure that any images you later export or upload to the web will contain your copyright information and personal URL (web page). You can create a new Metadata Preset by selecting the option in the 'Apply During Import' panel in the Import Dialog.

Note > Some Social Media sites, including Facebook, will strip this metadata from the image. Other services including Google+, Flickr, 500px etc. will retain this information.

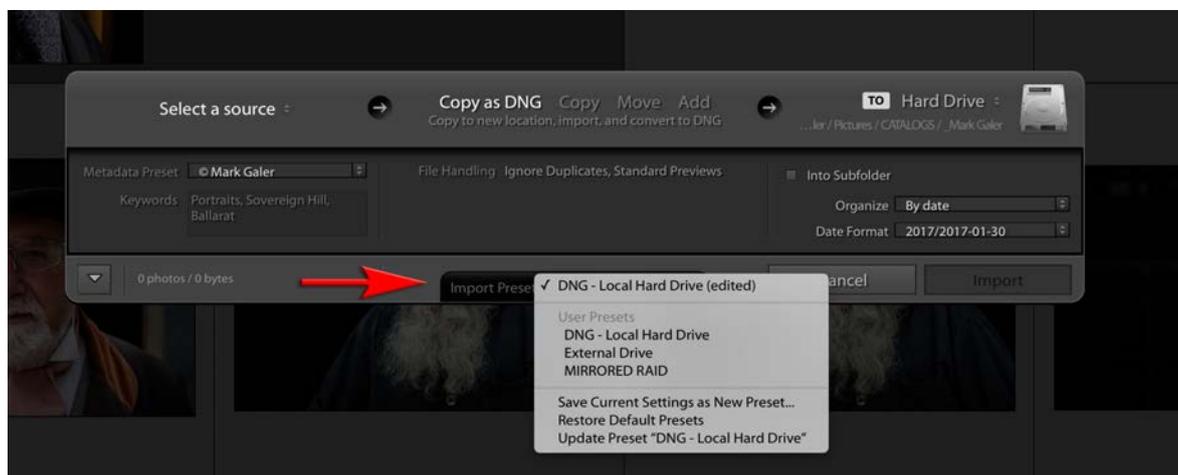


IPTC Copyright – embed your copyright details on Import

There are many sections in the New Metadata Preset dialog where you can choose to add metadata. The most important is the IPTC Copyright section. I typically write 'All Rights Reserved' in the 'Rights Usage Terms' to differentiate it from the 'Attribution' and 'Public Domain' copyright variations that allow other users limited use. Hold down the Option key on a Mac while you type the letter 'G' to add the copyright symbol. Hold down the ALT key and type the numbers 0169 on a PC to add the copyright symbol.

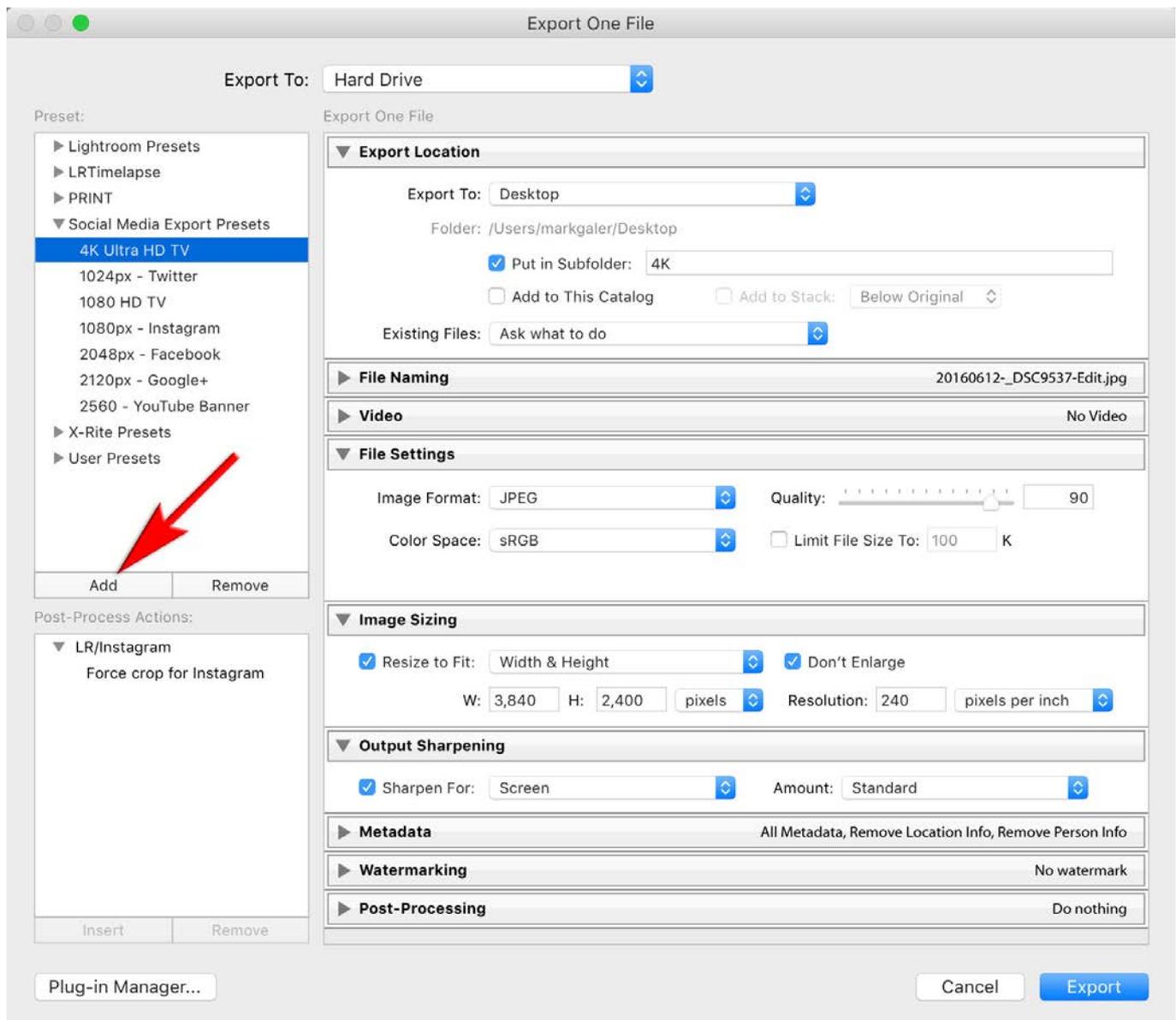
Import Presets

One of the most daunting dialogs in Lightroom is the Import Dialog. Once you have chosen all of your settings, however, you can record all of these as an Import Preset. Make sure you have selected your copyright Preset in the Apply During Import and do not add any keywords prior to making a New Import Preset. Once the Preset has been made you can click the arrow in the bottom left-hand corner of the dialog and collapse the dialog to a much more 'sensible' size – safe in the knowledge that all of your preferred import settings are being honoured. There is even a window where you can add keywords on import.



The user-friendly version of the Import Dialog (courtesy of using an Import Preset)

Here is a tutorial movie that looks at my Import settings: <https://youtu.be/Omxd-B5U900>

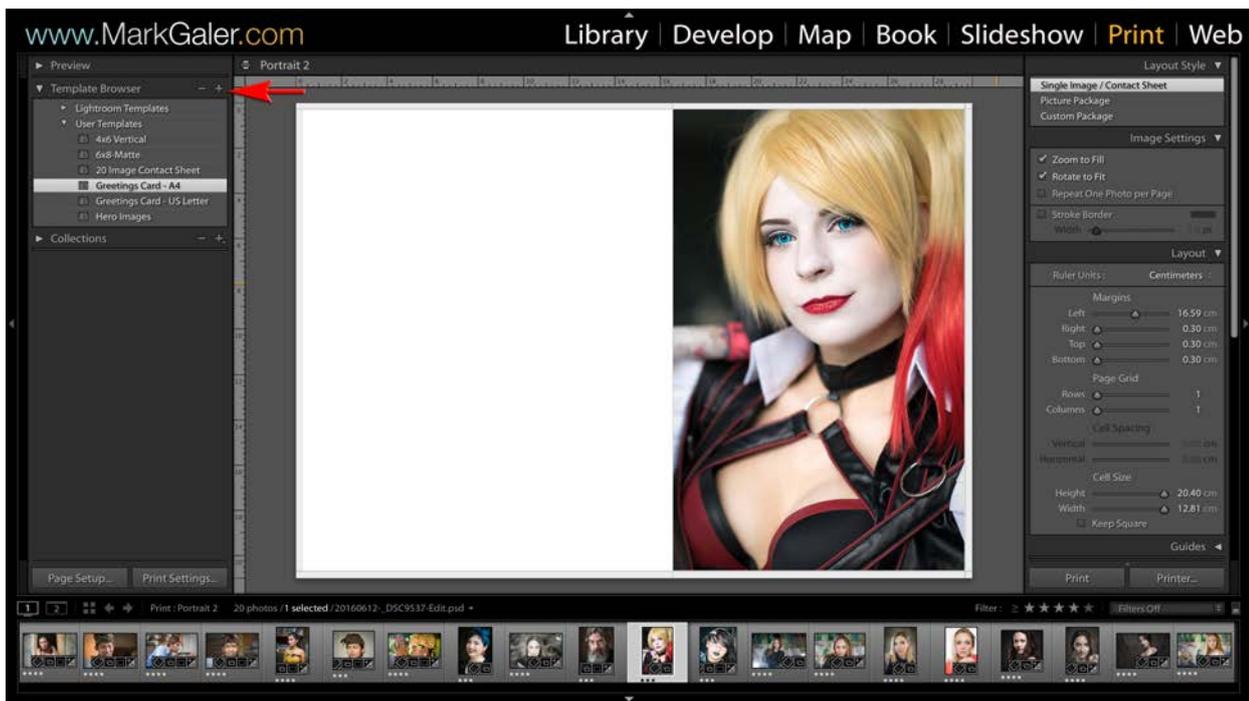


There is a supporting movie to show you how to create optimal Export Presets that can be viewed here:
<https://youtu.be/zzYPH44HspY>

Export Presets

The Export Dialog is almost as intimidating as the Import Dialog, but once you have saved your most used settings as Presets, it is a simple matter of clicking on the name of the Preset and then selecting Export. You don't even have to enter this dialog because when you right-click on an image in the Library or Develop modules you will find your Export Presets in the context menu that opens. If your next Export is the same as the previous one you can use the following keyboard shortcut: Command + Option + Shift + E (Mac) or Ctrl + Alt + Shift + E (PC). If you have many varied export criteria settings you need to meet you can group Export Presets into folders to make the interface manageable. I recommend that you check the 'Sharpen For' option for all Presets except export full size. It is also important to not that images destined for screen viewing do not need a value to be entered ion the Resolution field.

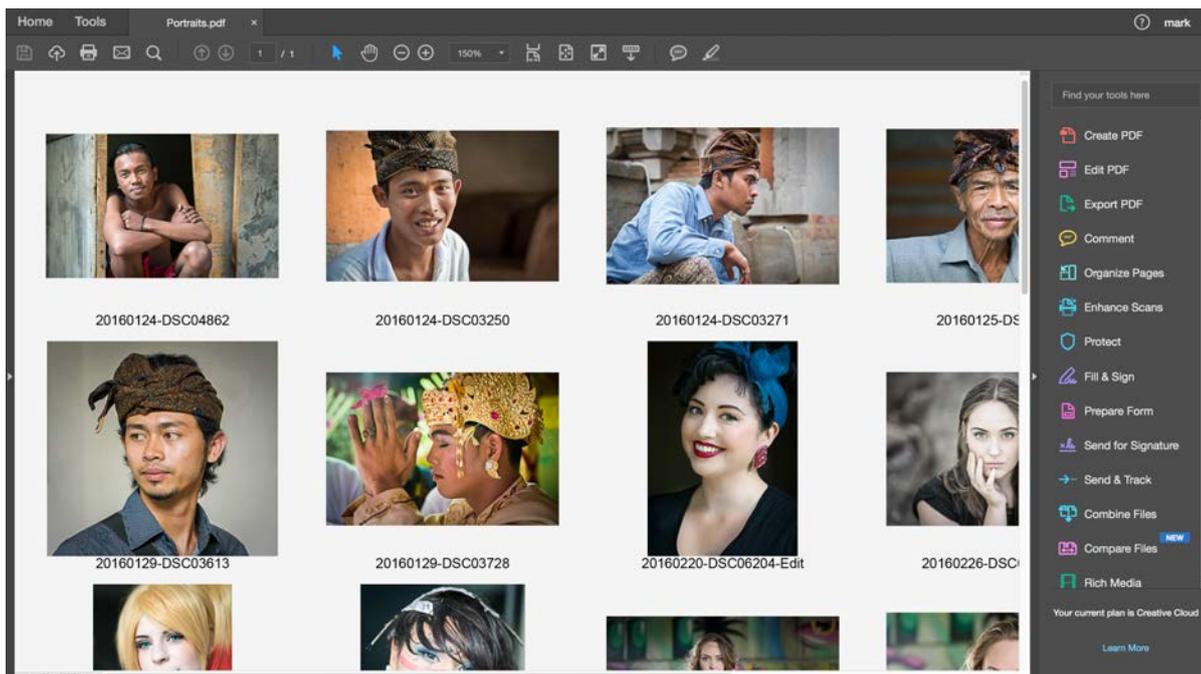
I have made my favourite Social Media Export Presets available for free on my website. Go to:
<http://www.markgaler.com/product/social-media-lr-presets>



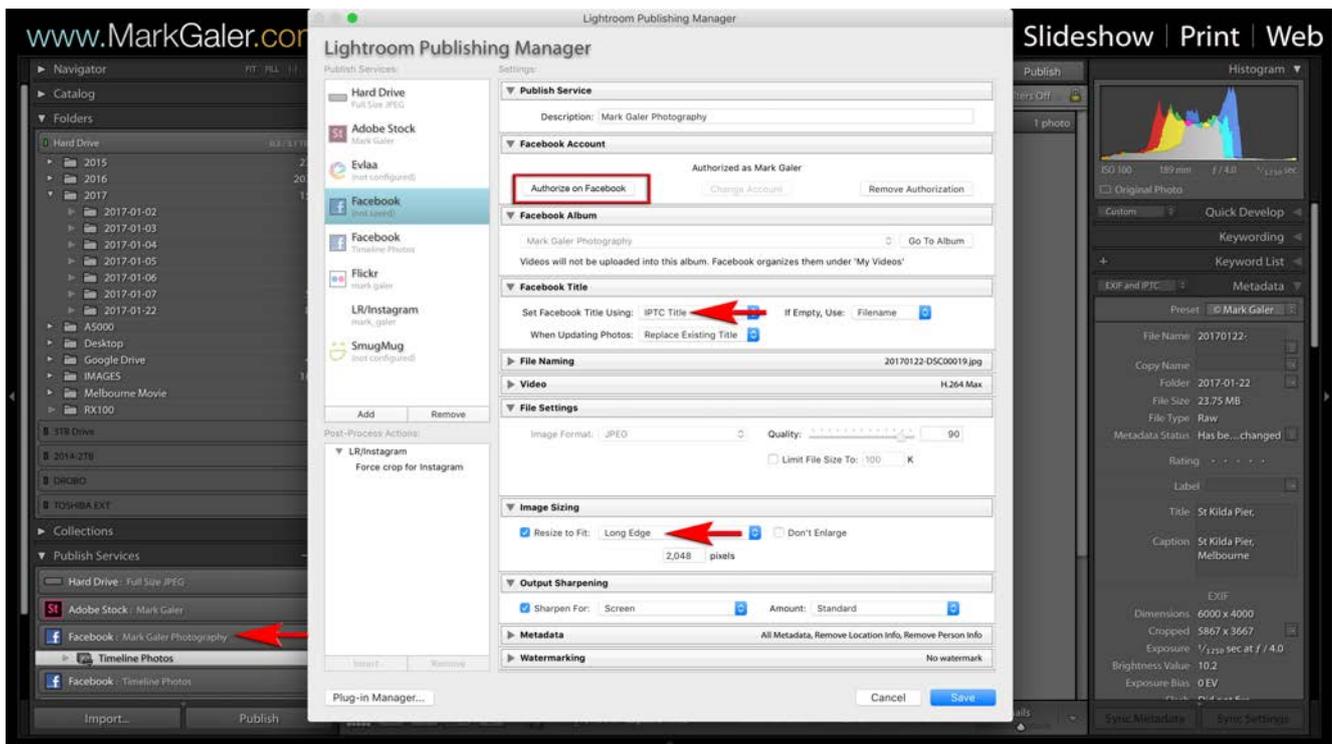
Greeting Card templates can be downloaded from: <http://www.markgaler.com/product/free-lightroom-print-templates>

Print Templates

Adobe ships a broad range of Print Templates in the Print Module but you may want to fine-tune some for your own printing needs. Although there is already a Greetings Card template I have chosen to make my own User Templates for both US Letter and A4 paper sizes. These allow me to print an image on the right half of the paper so that all I need to do is fold the printing paper in half and pop it into an appropriately sized envelope. I also found it useful to set up a Printing Template for Printing Contact sheets to PDF. The template remembers that I want to print to PDF rather than paper and remembers to use the Photo Quality setting to ensure the viewer can zoom into a small thumbnail image and not have the image pixelate prematurely.



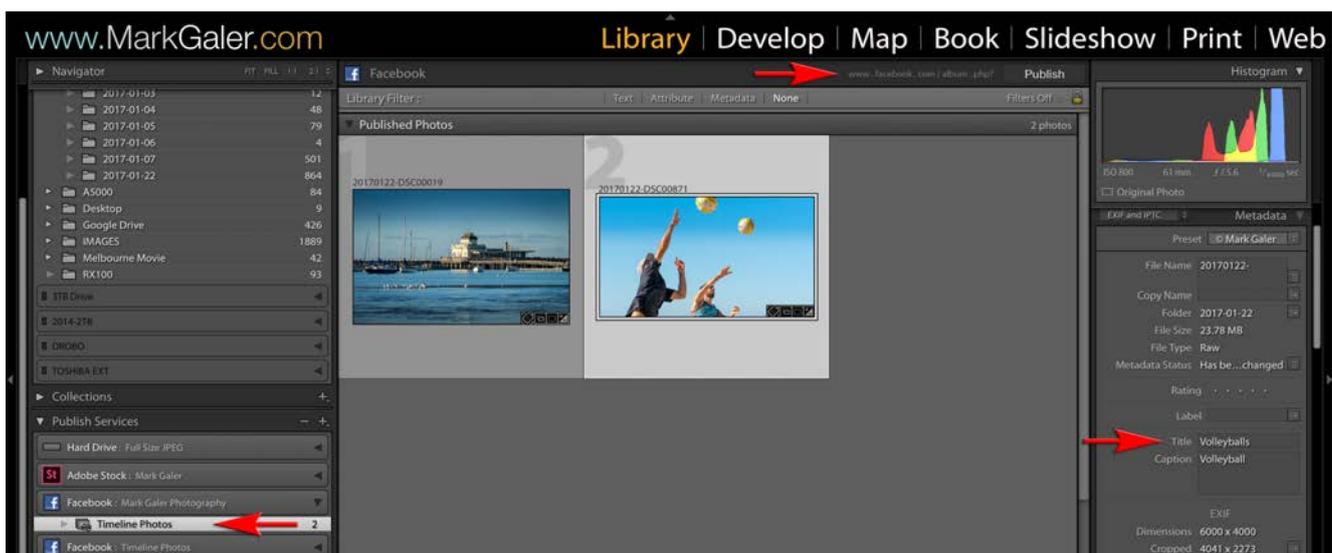
Print Templates can be used to print to PDF as well as paper



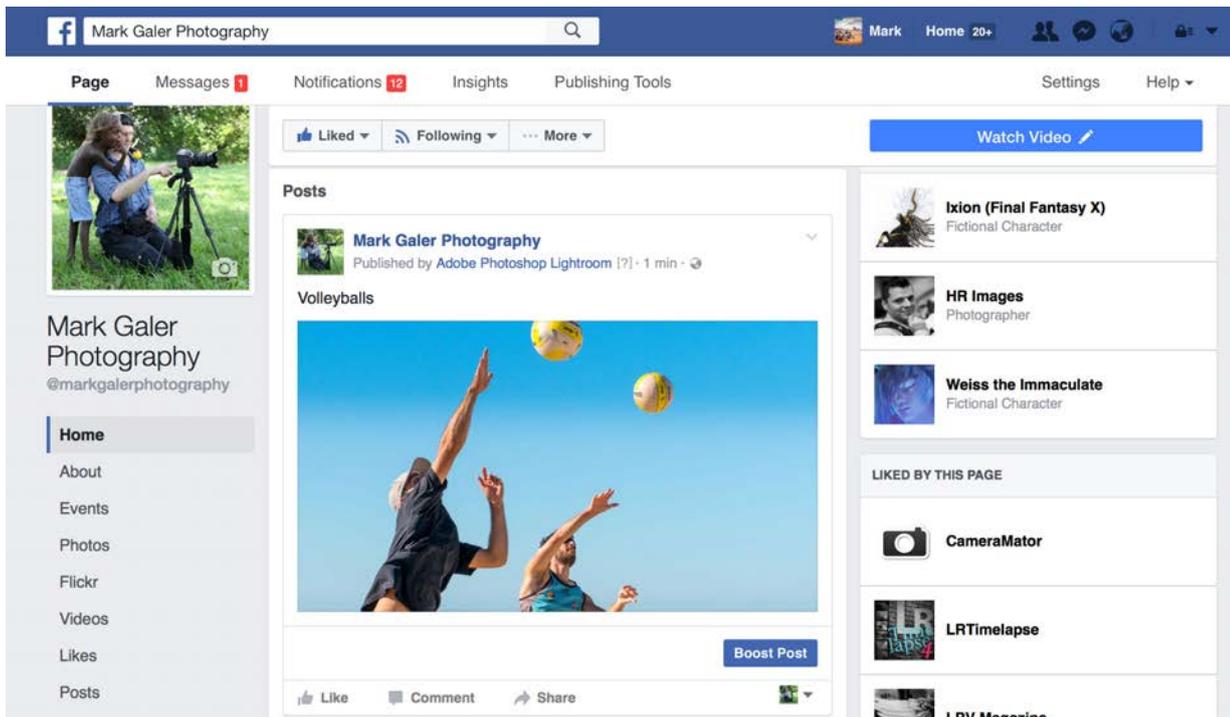
Lightroom's Publish Services provide a fast and efficient way of uploading an image to social media

Publish Services

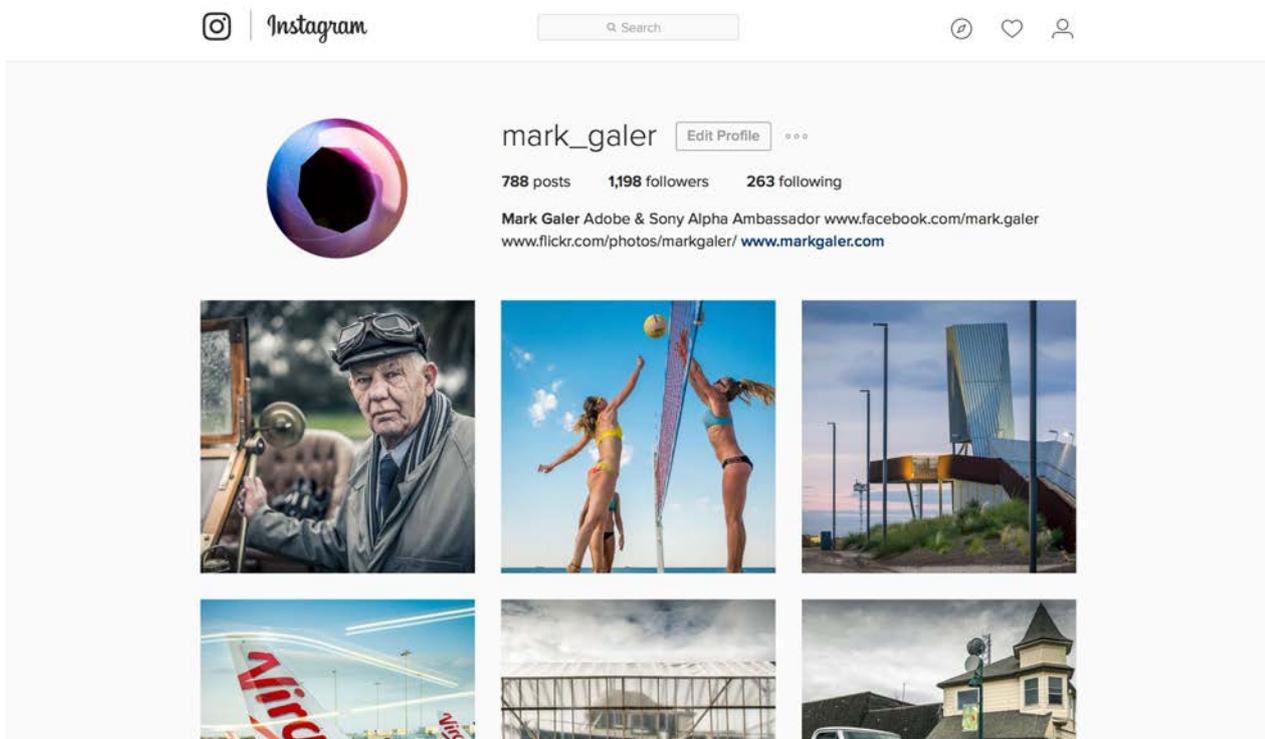
It is possible to publish directly to your Social Media platforms without first exporting the image. The advantage to this is that there is no intermediary file that needs to be disposed of later, you do not need to open your web browser to upload the file, any comments relating the image can be read and responded to via the Comments panel in Lightroom. Lightroom comes pre-installed with Facebook and Flickr but is possible to add 'plugins' that will increase the number of Publishing services available. Before you can use the service you will need to set up the upload settings and click on the 'Authorize on Facebook' button.



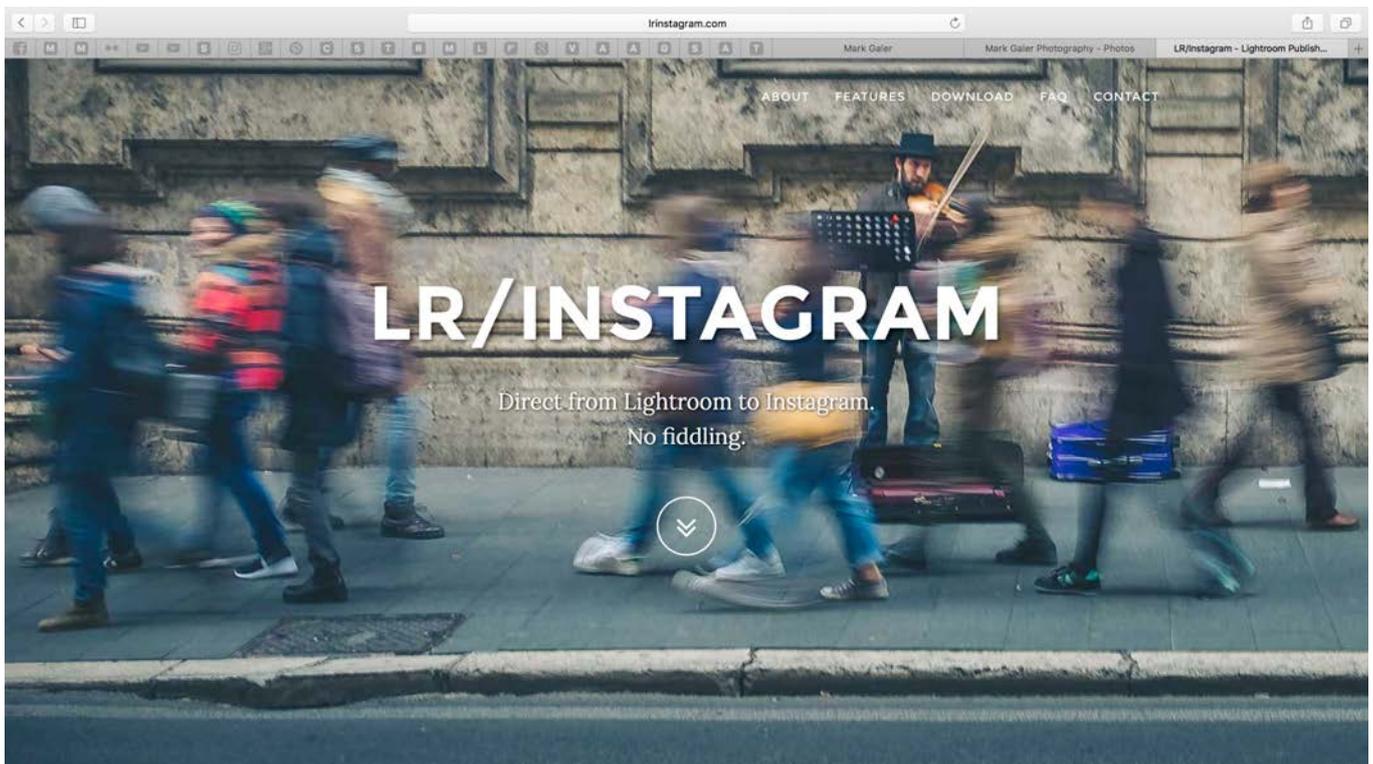
In the Set up dialog I have asked Lightroom to use the image's 'Title' rather than its file number for the image name that will appear on Facebook. Images can then be dragged to the Publish Service and when you click on the Publish button at the top of the screen the image will be uploaded to Facebook. A URL/Link will appear next to the publish button when the image has been published.



It is possible to create multiple Publishing Services for the same Social Media platform, e.g. you can create different publish services to upload your images to your Timeline, a Page or a Folder of images.

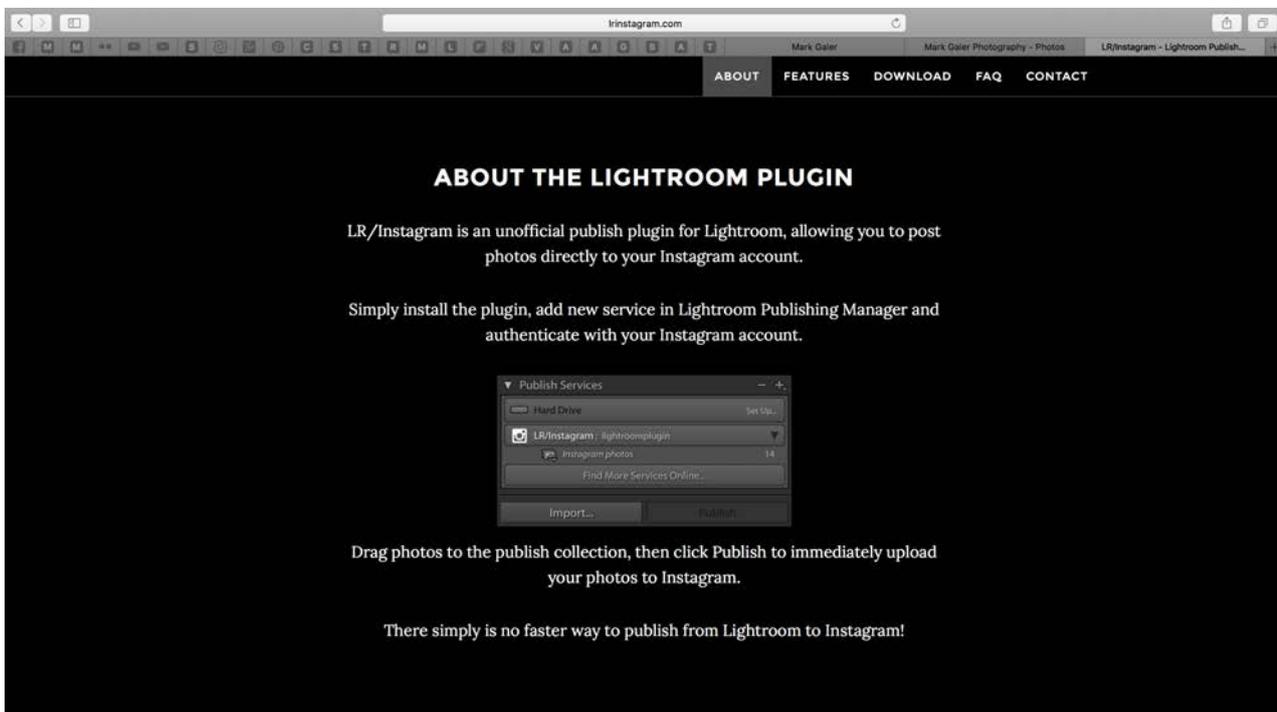


It is now possible to publish images directly to Instagram from Lightroom using a Desktop computer. You can even add hash tags in Lightroom that will appear in the Instagram post after the file has been uploaded



Plugins

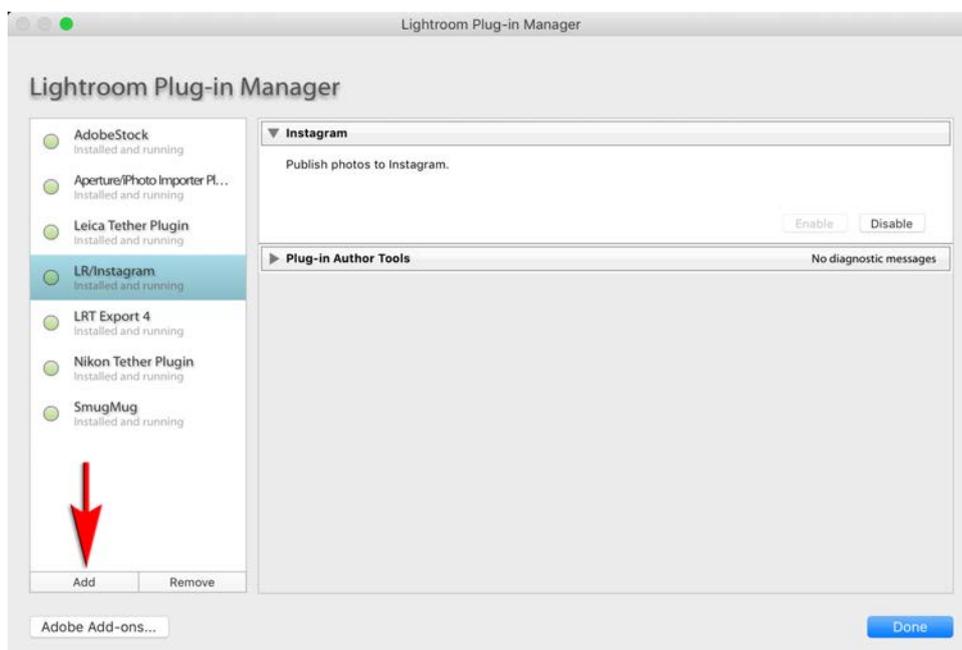
Lightroom Plugins are used for a variety of functions in Lightroom. They can enable your camera to shoot tethered to Lightroom (so that images are directly imported in the Lightroom Catalog rather than save to the memory card in the camera). I have plugins that support my time-lapse workflows and also for additional publishing services such as Instagram. To download the LR/Instagram plugin go to: <https://www.lristagram.com>



The Instagram plugin will work without payment but it is suggested you give the developer US \$10.00 for their effort



After downloading the plugin it is recommended that you place it somewhere memorable before adding it to Lightroom. Lightroom keeps its plugins in a Folder called Modules that lives in the Presets Folder. After you have found a home for plugin go to File > Plugin Manager.



Click on the 'Add' button and browse to the location of your new plugin. Some plugins may ask you to register or activate the plugin before you can proceed.

Mark Galer is an Adobe Imaging Ambassador for the Asia Pacific region (APAC) and he has a wealth of knowledge and skills to share.

A full range of Mark's Lightroom Tutorial movies can be viewed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLWC-IgKORdDEeu0ywKmpomkf86UtOzeeD>

Mark's blog can be viewed here: <http://www.markgaler.com/blog>

Mark gives free live eSeminars for Adobe (APAC) that can be accessed here:

<https://apacevents.adobe.com/photography>