

Mike Ekern

Full-stack photographer taking a passion for using technology to speed delivery, automate processes, and serve clients into the cloud infrastructure and DevOps world.

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EXPERIENCE

University of St. Thomas — Director of Photography and Visual Media

July 2007 - PRESENT

Supervise two staff photographers and five student employees with a commitment to helping them find meaningful work that serves the business.

Establish policy and procedures for creation and use of visual imagery at St. Thomas including workflow development, usage policies, and model release procedures.

Manage client expectations, set realistic project timelines, and synthesize viewpoints from multiple stakeholders into a final visual concept.

Serve as department technical liaison and manager for WordPress-based institutional news site. Develop permissioning system, manage caching and CDN system, roll out timely updates, point of first contact for user technical questions.

Developed online assignment request and routing system using Zendesk, reducing request routing times by 80%.

Asset Bank - Digital Asset Management System

Initiated DAM replacement project resulting in a system that houses more than 100,000 still and video assets and has more than 200 users. New system reduced image retrieval time from hours to seconds, saving nearly 1700 staff hours per year.

Analyzed existing digital asset management system, identifying end-user pain points through interviews and workflow analysis.

Developed updated system concept and researched vendor products. Presented chosen product and implementation plan to users, financial stakeholders, and technical infrastructure team.

Configured and deployed chosen system on premises in collaboration with infrastructure team.

Developed 500-keyword taxonomy and tagging system to boost search capabilities.

Developed self-service video training modules for new users.

Supervised system transition to vendor-hosted cloud in 2018.

Monitor system, manage new-user onboarding and permissions, provide end-user technical support, serve as primary vendor contact, test updates, and authorize maintenance windows.

CERTIFICATIONS AND AWARDS

FAA Part 107 Commercial Drone License

AWS Certified Solutions Architect - Associate
(estimated completion May 2018)

2017 CASE National Excellence in Photography Platinum Award Winner

VOLUNTEER

Meals on Wheels
Feed My Starving Children
Habitat for Humanity
St. Thomas Photo Club Advisor

ABOUT

I'm dedicated to continuous education, meaningful work, building relationships with co-workers, and finding opportunities for servant leadership.

As I seek a transition from the world of photography to the world of IT, I will carry with me a creativity born of making compelling visuals day after day, and the empathy I've developed from making people feel comfortable in front of a camera.

Rapid Photo Filing System

Researched and customized a system for rapid transmission of digital images from a professional camera to an editing desk.

Wifi-based transmission from camera to cell phone to FTP server puts images online within 30 seconds of capture.

Used to cover two NCAA Division III national championships, allowing St. Thomas to publish images on multiple social media and web channels before other outlets.

University of St. Thomas — *Staff Photographer*

Dec. 2003 - June 2007

Use photography and video to document the story of St. Thomas for print and online marketing materials.

Hang out of helicopters, dive in Lake Superior, globetrot.

Freelance Photographer

July 2001 - Nov. 2003

Photographed editorial assignments throughout Minnesota for the Associated Press and Getty Images.

EDUCATION

University of St. Thomas — *M.S. Software Engineering*

Feb. 2017 - May 2020 (estimated)

Topics Covered: Java, Git, AWS, Linux, Bash Scripting, SQL databases, software project management, DevOps, Security

University of St. Thomas — *B.A. Print Journalism*

Sept. 1998 - May 2002

Summa cum laude