

# Twelve Helpful Notes on Getting the Most from Chromatics

(or any commercial pro-lab)

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- One** – Understand the difference in types of labs. Chromatics is a commercial pro-lab and primarily serves other businesses. They include professional photographers and many other types of businesses like ad agencies, display houses, hospitals and record companies. At a good pro-lab you can expect personal attention and a very broad range of custom digital and traditional services but don't look for consumer-oriented promotions with el-cheapo prices. Chromatics sells a broad range of capability and expertise with the focus on overall value. While price is important, quality and consistent dependability are even more important. We typically have long-term relationships with customers who treat us as partners in meeting their needs.
- Two** – The old adage of garbage in equals garbage out applies in bucket fulls. Every order we complete is a custom effort for you and we'll always do our best with whatever you've provided to work with but be sure you have realistic expectations from your original materials. No order can be returned, put back on the shelf and sold to someone else. Don't confuse us with a shoe store.
- Three** – If your quality and service needs and can be satisfied by a provider offering lower prices then use it. Use a commercial pro-lab like Chromatics for those projects that truly require our additional expertise and capabilities. However, don't make assumptions without asking, either. We are often both the best as well as the least expensive choice.
- Four** – Time your visits for our slow times of day. Sometimes you'd think a bus had unloaded into our lobby between 11:00 and 2:00 because so many people say, "Oh, I'll have lunch and go to Chromatics." We may otherwise go for hours with very few people in the lobby. The fewer people, the more relaxed the transactions and the more time we can spend with you.
- Five** – Until you have experience with our services, simply tell us what end result you need and let the Customer Service person guide you to the right choice of services. Remember that we're constantly updating processes and capabilities with new and better techniques.
- Six** – Organize your originals and come prepared. We value the opportunity to give personal service but don't expect our front counter staff spend time choosing which images to print or deciding where to crop your pictures. These are decisions you should already have made. Let them focus their attention on the part you can't do, like guiding you to the right service choices. Do what you can to make transactions time efficient. To have a Customer Service person keep other people waiting and spend 20 minutes walking you through a \$9.00 order is not cost effective but they're much too polite to say "come back when you're better organized so I can actually help you".
- Seven** – Dedicate some time to looking through our web-site. It's still a work in progress but has a lot of useful information. If nothing else, it should help you have good questions. I also welcome suggestions to improve it.
- Eight** – Treat the lab as your partner. Get to know the staff whenever possible. If you don't get the result you expect on a particular order, ask about it and take time to understand why. Don't go away in a huff assuming that no one cares. They care very much but some services, like printing, require the technicians to make subjective decisions on your behalf and they can make the best decisions if they have a chance to get to know you and your work.
- Nine** – Don't expect every Customer Service person to have all the answers to every question. No one can because there are just too many subtleties to our capabilities. Sometimes the production technicians have to be consulted for the more complete info.
- Ten** – Let me know what you like about our services and, even more importantly, what you don't like. Be as clear as possible. If we can make a change that benefits everyone we're anxious to make it.
- Eleven** – Learn your craft and the correct terminologies. Then you'll be able to communicate most effectively with our staff for the best possible results.
- Twelve** – Call me with questions anytime. I have a wealth of experience and knowledge gained over 33 years as a professional commercial photographer and lab owner and I share all of it freely and willingly.