

# infoimaging

## *Sync Cords Be Gone! Digital Wireless Freedom Is Here*

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**W**e've discovered, as many photographers have, that the digital evolution means more than just replacing silver halide with CCD arrays.

It means the opportunity to streamline every element of our workflow, from more efficient lighting setups to our "painless" color management system.

In the hustle to meet—dare I say, exceed—my clients' needs for digital technology, we overlooked another important element to our photographic workflow: strobe triggering. Yep, just like our dark-room gear and that huge Polaroid bill on our camera store statement, good ole low-tech sync cords are being retired from our toy box—and not a moment too soon.

How many times have you had a sync cord with a mind of its own? One that would only work in the studio during a gear check, but never on a real job? Or have you ever set up a large-scale set using the built-in white light slaves on your strobes only to find that they didn't fire on half of the exposures you made? Then read on. . .

### **NO-KIDDING RELIABILITY**

We've all been there—and we ain't goin' back. There are plenty of wireless triggering devices out there, but I want to let you know about one that has made a real impact in our workflow. We went with the PocketWizard MultiMAX system, which allows us to transmit a "digitally coded" radio signal from our camera to other PocketWizards connected to our strobes with no-kidding reliability.

In addition, we have the plug-in transmitter module (only \$25 when purchased with a Sekonic L-608 or L-358 meter) in all our Sekonic meters that triggers the strobes right from the meter's measure button. All wirelessly—all day.

### **MEET MULTIMAX**

The gear is tough, easy to use, and a joy to travel with because the MultiMAX is actually a transceiver with a three-position power switch with one setting for transmit, one for receive, and one for off.

This means you don't have to buy transmitters and receivers separately. With a flip of the master switch, you can trigger a strobe or camera in transmit mode or set it to receive the radio signal and connect it to your remote camera or strobe.

With the Relay mode you can even fire a camera remotely and the MultiMAX on the camera will trigger your remote strobes all wirelessly.

### **MORE FROM MultiMAX**

There are a few other features I really like too. One is the ability to wirelessly select which strobes I want to fire and which ones I want turned off (Quad Triggering). Another is the trigger counter. Working in a factory environment, say, can be hectic enough without worrying if all seven strobes have fired on every frame.

The MultiMAX counts the number of times it has been triggered and how many times it has received a trigger, so after the shoot my assistant reads the counters on both the MultiMAX on my camera (set to Transmit mode) and the MultiMAX's connected to my strobes (set to receive mode) just to be sure they all read the same number. I find that very comforting, especially on big jobs.

As I was writing this article, the Wizard guys at Mamiya America informed me that a new cable called a Confirmation Sensor is now available. This sensor attaches to the strobe reflector or softbox and reports back to the Transmitter seating on your camera if the strobe fired. A cool little icon shows up on the MultiMAX screen next to each strobe zone (A,B,C, or D) that triggered. Finally, we have wireless peace of mind!

### **DIGITAL WIRELESS FREEDOM**

All photographers concerned with efficiency can benefit from PocketWizard's "Digital Wireless Freedom" system, too. What is Digital Wireless Freedom? It's a new communication standard that's being incorporated into professional photographic products that's redefining the concepts of wireless triggering of camera/electronic flash and

remote control.

This new and exciting technology offers the advantage of digital radio communication between exposure meters, flash units, cameras, and PocketWizard digital radio triggering systems. The PocketWizard guys call it "Digital Wireless Freedom," but we're calling it a "Wireless Revolution."

Why is Why is Digital Wireless Freedom important? Photographers can work smarter, not harder. Imagine a studio or on-location shoot where unreliable PC cords are a thing of the past. Where a light meter wirelessly triggers all or only selected electronic flash units and measures the light simultaneously, and can even trigger a camera. A wireless system that can trigger cameras, flash units or both simultaneously from behind a camera or from a remote location, and all this equipment protected from high sync voltage.

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Now imagine all this wireless technology built into your photo equipment, ready for you to control remotely. That's the essence of Digital Wireless Freedom.

A few years ago it would have been inconceivable to envision various photographic equipment manufactures incorporating a communication system or link between one type of photo gear with another. Now it's a reality with PocketWizard. Similar in concept to "Intel inside," this system of professional photographic products, which incorporate a PocketWizard radio inside, eliminates the need for PC sync and shutter release cables.

This system currently includes the Sekonic L-608 and L-358 exposure meters, Profoto Acute2R studio flash generators, the New Profoto D4 commercial studio flash generator, Nikon D1 series digital cameras (Aftermarket Modification), Lumedyne portable flash systems, Balcar studio strobes,

PocketWizard digital radio triggering units and coming soon Mamiya 645AFD and Dyna-lite with PocketWizard inside.

#### WHAT THIS MEANS FOR US

Who cares about this stuff? Take photographer Marc Hauser ([www.marchauser.com](http://www.marchauser.com)), for example.

Hauser was admiring how my staff seems to breeze right through our sometimes-complex lighting setups, maintaining lighting and exposure accuracy without multiple test shots and numerous histograms. We can trigger each individual strobe in a multi-strobe setup right from the flash meter. Then make one change in the meter's menu to trigger all the strobes on the set at the same time in a matter of seconds. This is done by using the "sub channels" feature (Quad Triggering) that the MultiMAX offers.

Hauser was convinced in about three seconds that this was the way to go. He even took it a step further with a system that offers PocketWizards



built into his Profoto packs. The "r" option on the Profoto Acute2r packs designates the radio receiver inside. So now Hauser triggers his strobe during light checks with the transmitter inside his flash meter, then shoots the job by triggering the strobes with the MultiMAX mounted in his camera's hot shoe.

Slick stuff. The advantage of all this is simple: Completely no wires or batteries to deal with because the technology is all built in.

Future photographers won't know the limits of a wired world, why should you? To learn more about Digital Wireless Freedom, check out [www.pocketwizard.com](http://www.pocketwizard.com), [www.sekonic.com](http://www.sekonic.com), or [www.profoto.com](http://www.profoto.com). ❖

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