

Photo Calendars

April 14, 2017

Agenda:

Why make a photo calendar?

Three different ways to make a calendar

Demo:

How to use the JK Calendar Kit files

Why make a calendar?

We are awash in photos. Make good use of them!

Calendars are a way to use a group of photos, a way that can make kids and grandkids appearing in the photos smile for a full year.

A custom calendar is a ***unique handicraft***, not sold in stores.

A custom calendar can be ***personalized*** with family birthdays, anniversaries, holidays, and school calendar items such as teacher workdays, spring break, and winter break.

Three different ways to make a custom photo calendar

- Many **web sites** offer calendar design and printing services. Most such sites are photo-oriented: Shutterfly for instance. Even Walmart offers a service.
- **Buy software:** Print Shop, Print Master Plus, Photoshop Elements, other photo editors. Select from canned designs.
- **Do It Yourself** with PowerPoint or LibreOffice / OpenOffice Impress (freeware emulating Powerpoint)

Calendar design methods compared

Method:	Web sites	Buy software	Do It Yourself	DIY design + commercial printing service
COST:	Very Costly: Unit cost, Minimum Quantity, Shipping cost	Software cost + binding equipment	Software cost + binding equipment	Print + assembly
YOUR TIME:	Design only	Design, print, assemble *	Design, print, assemble	Design only
DELAY:	Weeks to deliver	none*	none	Hours or days to print and assemble
DESIGN:				
Font choices:	Minimal	Modest	Whatever you have	Whatever you have
Layout choices:	Minimal	Modest	Maximum flexibility	Maximum flexibility
Borderless photos:	No	No	Yes if your printer can do it	Depends on commercial printer
Photo Quality:	Matte print	Up to you	Up to you	Depends on commercial printer

I used a web site for my first calendar

- Designed in September/October 2009 for calendar year 2010
- Minimum quantity was far more than I needed
- Very costly
- Printed on card stock (heavy paper), matte finish
- Took several weeks to deliver, forces design relatively early

In early 2010, I bought and tried PC software

- **Print Shop**, familiar from the Commodore 64 days
- **Print Master Plus**, a competitor, strives to outdo Print Shop
- I also have owned several versions of **Adobe Photoshop Elements**; currently I use version 11.

All impose some severe design constraints: canned cluttered designs, little or no font control.

I elected to Do It Yourself

- Already had a good photo quality ink jet printer (HP Photosmart 8450 at the time, now HP Officejet 7110)
- Bought a \$90 comb binding machine. It does two things:
 - Punches a row of holes along one edge of the calendar pages
 - Inserts a plastic comb spine into the holes
- The plastic comb spines cost about 14 cents each in quantity 100
- Modified a 3 hole punch to drill just a center hole

Paper for calendars

- For my 2011 through 2015 calendars, I used 110 lb card stock paper. Print quality was matte. Some photos looked good, some did not.
- For my 2016 calendar, I tried an expensive and time consuming alternative: print photos on glossy photo paper (50 cents per sheet), and calendar pages on plain paper. Took longer to assemble (26 sheets instead of 13). Cost almost as much per copy as a web service calendar, but photos looked SO MUCH BETTER.
- For my 2017 calendar, I tried **HP glossy brochure paper**, printable on both sides, 16 cents per sheet. Not as good for image quality as photo paper, but much better than card stock. Also easier to punch and assemble than card stock or photo paper.

Borderless photo

Photo caption

Full page Month table

Month and Year, Script font, large size

Mini Month Tables, fit in Day cells



How to design a calendar grid

- I use **Impress**. It is freeware and provides all familiar PowerPoint behaviors including text boxes, photos, and tables.
- **Tables** are the basis for displays of consecutive weeks in a grid arrangement in my calendars.
- In 2014, I developed **generic full page templates of months**, each 31 days long and starting on a different day of the week, to help me create the month pages quickly.

How to design a mini month

- I created **generic mini tables** of 31 days, each with day 1 on different day of the week.
- Mini table is sized to fit inside a day cell of the full page Month table.

Economics of Do It Yourself

- Using HP Officejet 7110 printer
- Printing 13 two-sided pages, including cover
- \$2.06 per calendar for HP glossy brochure paper (15.7 cents per page)
- 14 cents per calendar for plastic comb spine
- Roughly \$8 per calendar for color ink, printing 13 borderless photos (buy high capacity ink cartridges if those are available: slightly more expensive but a lot more ink compared to regular cartridges)

The Hybrid Approach and PDF

- Design yourself, record as PDF file, take to printing company for print and assembly services.
- **Why not a PowerPoint file?** If you use fonts, chances are very good that the printing company won't have the same fonts on their computer.
- The PDF file creation process turns everything, even fonts, into bitmaps. The printing company can definitely print whatever you design if you provide it to the company as a PDF file.

The JK Calendar Kit files

- I have released two Kit files, one for Impress and one for Powerpoint.
- Each file contains seven generic full page Month pages, and seven Mini Month pages.
- I tested the PowerPoint version of the Kit file using both Powerpoint 2007 and Powerpoint 2013.
- You can also download an extensive documentation PDF and a sample calendar.
- I have created a demo video and will post it on YouTube.

Calendar Kit URLs

Documentation:

<http://bit.ly/2mvrGgo>

Sample Calendar:

<http://bit.ly/2mRnRVj>

Impress Kit:

<http://bit.ly/2mRr2MK>

PowerPoint Kit:

<http://bit.ly/2nuyETA>