

Photographer wins \$135k settlement for unauthorized use of Hotel pic

A [Dallas photographer](#) who discovered an image of his being used by a travel website (and then 1400 other websites, naturally) sued [the parties involved](#) for copyright infringement. After a year and \$55,000 in legal fees, they settled and he got \$135,000. That's \$80,000 for the use of ONE photo of the exterior of a hotel.

Interesting to note the importance of registering photos with the copyright office *before* publication. Also interesting to (once again and allegedly) see a corporation ignoring complaints or otherwise not taking the claimant seriously.... only to end up on the expense end of a settlement.

Seems pretty clear that the use of the image on 1400 travel websites (affiliates?) played a large role in the determination of the settlement amount.

BTW archive.org shows [the Bradford website](#) has changed the photo used, but the Harness image can still be found in various places (like [here](#) [here](#) and [here](#))

NOTE DISCLAIMER: I have no idea if these are properly authorized uses of Mr. Harness' image or not).

Isn't it scary that it might be more cost effective to pursue such infringement claims than actually work hard at your job, thanks to the Internet!