

Ask professional wedding photographers how they use their equipment to capture the big day, and there will be plenty of discussion about megapixels, color rendition, and proper lighting. But delve a little deeper, and you'll find that the pros aren't just mesmerized by their gear's bells and whistles: They want an imaging system that is so ergonomically friendly and intuitive (in addition to providing the high quality they demand) that their cameras and accessories become an extension of their creative selves. With the Nikon D200, the D2x, and the other standout players that comprise the Nikon Total Imaging System, wedding photographers have discovered the perfect marriage of superior picture quality, remarkable speed, and a system that lets them effortlessly shoot in their own unique styles.

PERFECT

The New D200 Joins the Nikon

Cameras are often described as superfast, sharp, or rugged—but how many are said to be truly intelligent?

Enter the new Nikon D200™ digital SLR, a high-performance wedding wonder that will bring a new spark to every candle ceremony, a welcome perspective to each conga line on the dance floor, and an ease of use that will make you wonder how you ever documented an “I do” without it. It's smarter, faster, stronger—think of it as the Bionic Man of digital cameras.

Smarter...

What makes this camera a candidate for matrimonial Mensa? For starters, since it's equipped with Nikon's exclusive 1,005-pixel 3D Matrix Metering II, the D200 is able to find ideal exposures even in the least ideal lighting conditions (including dimly lit churches and poorly illuminated reception halls). This advanced system employs further improved algorithms for even better evaluation of large-area highlight and shadow detail.

The 10.2-effective-megapixel image sensor on the D200 incorporates a high-speed four-channel data output and a new Optical Low Pass Filter that significantly reduces any incidence of moire, as well as color fringing and shifting. This four-channel output allows the camera to inherit the advanced image-processing engine of the Nikon D2x™ professional digital SLR, combining color-independent preconditioning prior to A/D conversion with advanced digital image processing algorithms to deliver fine color gradations with smooth, consistent transitions.

The D200's 11-area AF system, convertible to a seven-wide area AF system, is based on Nikon's advanced Multi-Cam 1000 AF Sensor Module. Not only does this AF system support the photographer with fast and precise auto focus under a variety of shooting conditions, but it also offers an array of functions for greater flexibility.

Faster...

You don't want to miss a single expressive glance or furtive flower-girl antic, and the D200's responsiveness ensures you'll get every shot. The D200 can shoot continuously at up to five frames per second, capturing up to 37 JPEG images (when using select high-performance CompactFlash cards capable of and certified for this performance specification) or up to 22 NEF (RAW) images, making it ideal for the big day.

With an industry-leading power-up time of 0.15 seconds, the D200 is ready to shoot as soon as you're ready. Its reduced shutter release time lag of 50 milliseconds is nearly undetectable, and when shooting in the continuous burst mode of five frames per second, its shortened viewfinder blackout time (between each successive shot) of just 105 milliseconds proves especially useful in keeping an eye on a moving subject—whether it's Uncle James on the dance floor or the ringbearer showing off his new juggling skills.

Stronger...

Just like the couples you're photographing on their special day, you and your gear are in it for the long haul. The D200 is designed with long-term durability, ruggedness, and precision in mind. Built on a magnesium alloy chassis and body cover, the D200 combines light weight with high-level durability. It also features an enhanced environmental sealing system that helps protect exterior seams from potentially damaging moisture and dust. The D200's double-bladed shutter unit is tested to well over 100,000 cycles, ensuring highly reliable performance year after year.

You won't have to worry about running out of power in the middle of the ceremony with the D200. With a capacity of up to 1,800 shots per charge, the D200 also features an intelligent power management Fuel Gauge that constantly monitors the battery's precise remaining power in 1% increments. It also displays the total number of shots taken on each charge, as well as overall life of the battery, so photographers can easily tell when to replace a battery.

Like the D2x before it, the D200 features Nikon's advanced i-TTL wireless Speedlight control

UNION

Total Imaging System

built right into the camera, as well as wireless image transfer over a Wi-Fi network built into the optional WT-3 Wireless Transmitter (available later this year). The camera's powerful built-in Speedlight, capable of coverage for lenses as wide as 18mm, features a Commander Mode that can wirelessly control up to three separate groups of an unlimited number of i-TTL Speedlights such as the SB-800, SB-600, and the SB-R200. The Commander Mode in the D200 can adjust flash compensation settings for each of the two groups on the fly, making light output control from Speedlights placed in hard-to-reach locations simple and effortless.

Add in a large 2.5-inch viewing LCD with a 170-degree viewing angle, visually enhanced user menus, and compatibility with the rest of the Nikon Total Imaging System (including Nikon's DX Nikkor lenses, designed exclusively for Nikon DSLRs), and you'll see why the D200 is ready to become the next wedding workhorse in your special-events stable.



NIKON SB-800

Total Imaging System

The D200 joins Nikon's stellar family of professional imaging equipment. The Nikon Total Imaging System continues to wed tradition with technology: From the tried-and-true D2x, the flagship F6™ film camera, exclusive Nikkor VR (Vibration Reduction) and DX lenses, and the i-TTL Wireless Speedlight system, the lineup helps you implement an effortless workflow and achieve the creativity you're looking for in the limo, at the altar, and on the dance floor.



NIKON D200



NIKON D2x

Next-Generation Capture Software

To help you in your post-production endeavors, Capture NX is Nikon's all-new image processing and editing software that inherits the robust RAW (NEF) processing capabilities from Nikon Capture™ 4.4, and combines these with brand-new features such as Nik Software, Inc.'s revolutionary, patented U Point technology (which enables edits to portions of an image or the entire image without requiring the photographer to manually outline or mask the editable area), seamless image-browsing, advanced batch-processing capabilities, superior color management control, and comprehensive system compatibility with Nikon's Digital Imaging System.

With its wide-ranging features, user-friendly interface, and powerful performance, Capture NX makes image editing visually intuitive, allowing you to immediately see the effects as they are applied. The software is scheduled for delivery this spring.



NIKON F6

For more information on the groundbreaking Nikon D200 and other Nikon products, go to nikondigital.com.

I Second That Emotion

A bride will never feel the stress of the day if Kevin Kubota has any say—and his Nikon D2x and D200 capture those relaxed moments for all time.

While documenting the details of the intricately designed gown and the icing peaks on the multi-tiered cake are important, it's the peak of emotions that Kevin Kubota is after when he's shooting a wedding. "What I go for are those intimate, precise moments," says the Bend, Oregon, wedding photographer. "I often look for more of the joyful, emotional moments, more so than just the real dramatic ones."

Kevin achieves this trademark style by building up trust with his tried-and-true lineup of Nikon digital cameras: the Nikon D70, D2x and the D200.

The powerful D2x has stood by Kevin for many of the emotional "I do's," and it hasn't let him down yet. "The D2x's main advantage is that it tends to focus extremely fast, especially if you're shooting quick sequences of images," he says. "Plus, the autofocus system and low-light capability is great on the D2x. If you're a real fast shooter, or you shoot a lot of moving subjects, the D2x has the ultimate advantage."

It's the new D200, though, that has Kevin clamoring to capture the exchange of vows at the altar and the antics on the dance floor. "I've used the D200 almost exclusively on my last two weddings, and I love it," he says. "The noise levels are much improved at higher ISOs, and the shadows are really smooth. It's a very nice camera for low-light work."

The D200's color rendition is stellar as well. "It's probably a little more punchy than previous cameras, which I really like," says Kevin. "I shoot RAW, so I can customize how I want the colors to look when I process the images. But I find the colors are very true with the D200—I don't have to do very much adjustment to get them to look right."

One of the features of the D200 that has come in especially handy for Kevin is the full ISO feature. "Basically, I use the auto ISO to the lowest setting; then, in custom settings, I can indicate the lowest shutter speed I'm going to allow the camera to go to for hand-holding, and the highest ISO I want the camera to pick," he explains. "That way I can leave it at the lowest ISO. When I move into a darker room, the camera automatically bumps the ISO up just enough to give me the proper exposure; it goes up or down as needed, without me having to think about it. If I'm shooting at 800 inside a church and then run



© Kevin Kubota

"The full ISO feature hadn't been perfected until the D200—now, when I move into a darker room, the camera automatically bumps the ISO up just enough to give me the proper exposure, without me having to think about it."

—KEVIN KUBOTA



© Kevin Kubota

to take some pictures outside, I don't have to worry about forgetting to switch it back down and about getting unnecessarily high-ISO images outside (which I've done before in the past!). That's a great feature. It hasn't been perfected until now in the D200."

The camera's light weight takes some of the physical burden off Kevin as he's chasing after those fleeting matrimonial moments. "The D200 is definitely lighter and easier on your arm," he says. "There's also a vertical grip for the camera that I really like."

Kevin keeps his lighting simple, sticking to natural light whenever possible. "Sometimes I use a pop-up reflector and a diffuser to diffuse the sunlight," he says. "If I'm shooting in a situation where I have to light it up, such as inside a church, I'll just use the flash on-camera pretty much."

Lens Lineup

You'll always find a stockpile of Nikon lenses in Kevin Kubota's wedding workbag, including the 12-24mm, the 85mm f/1.4, the 50mm f/1.4, and the 70-200mm. "I have a couple of others I throw in there, too, like the fisheye lens," he says. "If I could take only one or two lenses, I'd pick the 12-24mm and the 70-200mm. My philosophy is to stay away from the middle range lenses—to me, that's more typical of what most amateur photographers shoot with. You can set your images apart that way from amateur photographers—of course, hopefully your image quality is better, too!"



It's the trust he builds with his clients, however, that most works in tandem with his trusty Nikon gear. "Setting them at ease, from our initial meetings when they come into the studio to the way we deal with them on their big day, is paramount," he says. "We give them the impression there's nothing they can do wrong—we're not going to get stressed out if they're late. If things aren't going right we don't give them the impression that we're stressed out or it's a problem. They're already stressed out as it is. I've seen a lot of photographers get stressed out, and that doesn't help anyone. My wife, who works with me, is the same way. She reminds the clients that everything will be fine, even if things are completely haywire!"

This feeling of trust ultimately helps Kevin pull out the emotions he wants. "Timing and knowing what to watch for is so important," he says. "Being able to anticipate what's going to happen—a lot of that comes from experience in shooting weddings. I've seen a lot of cool imagery, which I love, but to me, if your photos touch your client, then you've really done something special." §



To see more of Kevin Kubota's work, go to www.kkphoto-design.com.



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More Than a Feeling

Claudia Kronenberg uses her D2x and her new D200 to re-create the essence of the big day.

Part historian, part artist, and part technician: This is how Nantucket Island wedding photographer Claudia Kronenberg sees herself when she steps behind the camera. "I really try to translate my vision of the bride and groom's day into the medium of photography," she says. "I want to re-create that ambiance—it's not just about the visual for me. It's about that feeling the bride has when she walks into her tent at dusk with the candlelight glowing—I want her to get those goosebumps she first got when she walked into the room."

Claudia's wedding workhorse is the Nikon D2x, which she first used on a bridal fashion shoot about a year ago. "I love the fast response focus of the D2x—it blows away any camera I've ever used," she says. "And the large LCD is one of the biggest I've ever seen."

Other features of the camera she particularly enjoys: battery longevity ("the camera doesn't eat away batteries—I can go through an 8- to 10-hour day and only use one-and-a-half battery charges"); the vertical shutter release ("I can just tuck my elbows in and it really helps save my shoulders"); and the camera's handy highlight warning (also featured on the new D200). "You can put the warning on so that when your preview comes up after you take a shot, it will flash the highlight warning if you've overexposed—it's perfect for bridal gowns," she says. "I can look at my preview in a split second and see if I've overexposed my highlights."

In the end, though, it's simply the D2x's instinctual interface that helps Claudia get the shots she needs. "I shoot on manual, and I change my ISO and white balance for almost every scene," she says. "When you're shooting a wedding, you're constantly running into a church, coming out of a tent, running to the beach. You have to really know intuitively where all your settings are. The D2x allows me to shoot without having to think about

"The D2x allows me to shoot without having to think about what I'm doing. I just dial it in, and I intuitively feel where I need to be. The D2x nails every exposure."

—CLAUDIA KRONENBERG



© Claudia Kronenberg



© Claudia Kronenberg

what I'm doing. I just dial it in, and I intuitively feel where I need to be. The D2x nails every exposure."

Claudia recently had the chance to try out Nikon's new D200, and she can already envision what place that camera will hold in her wedding workflow. "The D100 was my first digital camera—the D200 feels like a perfected version of the D100," she says. "It's very quiet, it has a nice-sized LCD, and the focusing system is tight and fast as well. We shoot a lot of black-and-white in our studio, and it will be great to have the D200 as our designated black-and-white camera. That way, when we upload our images and brides are viewing them, we don't have to convert anything to black-and-white."

A full set of Nikon lenses accompanies her to every wedding, including the 17-55mm, the 28-70mm, the 70-200mm VR, and one of her all-time favorites, the 105mm macro. "I was never a zoom lens person until these lenses came out," she says. "But another photographer turned me onto the 70-200mm, and it was amazing. It was so versatile and perfect for my shooting style."

Ambient light illuminates Claudia's glowing brides, with a little help from her Nikon SB-800 Speedlight. "I like to use an SB-800 and dial it down for a light touch of flash so the natural light doesn't look overly filled. "For instance, when I'm shooting people on the dance floor, I'll put my ISO to 800, open all the way, put my shutter speed down, and balance a little bit of that with the SB-800 and it's gorgeous. You get all that warm, soft ambient light, but you freeze the action."

With her Nikon system, Claudia is able to successfully document that ethereal realm newlyweds enter on the big day. "Brides always say to me 'I don't feel like this is real.' That's my job as a photographer—to re-create that essence for her." §



To see more of Claudia Kronenberg's work, go to www.claudiakronenberg.com.

The Cult of Personality

Cliff Mautner's images look real, because the moments are real—and they're all achievable with his Nikon F6, D2x and D200 cameras.

says. "The autofocus is extremely decisive, and it locks beautifully."

Never one to pass up a challenge, Cliff was also recently able to test-drive the new Nikon D200, even though Mother Nature was not as cooperative that February weekend. "It was the big blizzard of 2006," he laughs. "I took the camera and the couple out in the snow, in the middle of Broad Street in Philadelphia. It was light, mobile, and easy to carry."

He was impressed with the D200's image quality as well. "When I do high-end weddings, room and décor shots are very important," he explains. "There's an allure to the creaminess of the files I get with the D200—I just love the color rendition."

Audible and ISO noise are significantly reduced in the new D200. "I can see myself using the D200 for ceremonies, it's so unintrusive and quiet," Cliff says. "I also believe it's got a lower noise level in terms of ISO noise. When I need to shoot in lower light, the D200 is going to be my camera of choice."

The camera's light weight also lends itself to a full day of nuptials shooting. "The D200 can always be on my shoulder for a grab

"When I do high-end weddings, room and décor shots are very important. There's an allure to the creaminess of the files I get with the D200—I just love the color rendition."

—CLIFF MAUTNER

shot—it's so convenient," he says. "The lighter weight will keep me fresher; I'm not going to be as tired after the wedding."

Cliff's Nikon F6 continues to play an important role in his wedding work, along with the newer digital gear in his arsenal. "I still love the look of black-and-white film, and I still love the look of color film for family portraits—I really enjoy the skin tones," he says. "The F6 really is the most incredible 35mm film camera that I've ever had in my hands. It's amazing."

Also in Cliff's gear bag: his supply of Nikon lenses (usually the 28mm f/1.4, the 50mm f/1.4, and the 85mm f/1.4). "I haven't used a third-party lens in 24 years," he says. "I don't remember the last time I had a lens in the shop."

Three SB-800 Speedlights also help cast a special glow. "One of the things that's most distinctive about my style is how I incorporate light into my images," he says. "There are times I'll go wireless and just use an SB-800 on my camera to set off another SB-800 as my main light, to just give me the look of the light coming from a different direction, to add a little bit of drama and texture."

It's the drama of the day that Cliff's ultimately out to capture. "I'm there to capture the essence of that couple, not just what that couple looks like," he says. "I want their personalities to come forth." §



© Cliff Mautner

Philadelphia wedding photographer Cliff Mautner has plenty of photojournalism experience—but he hesitates to label his shooting style as strictly "photojournalistic." "I like to achieve an artistic interpretation of the day, taking some of the best of photojournalism with the traditional aspects of wedding photography mixed in," he says.

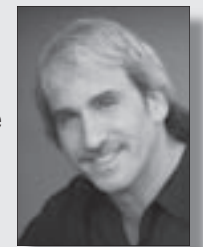
Cliff's M.O. for his natural-looking imagery: to bring out his subjects' true personalities. "The images look real, because the moments are real," he says. "I try to put people in the best lighting situations and the best compositional scenarios, and just allow them to interact with one another."

Using the Nikon D2x has proven a formidable factor in creating his matrimonial montages. "There isn't a better-handling DSLR on the market," he says. "Coming from a strong film background, it was a natural transition for me to go to the D2x. It fits right in with the instinctive factor of shooting—my mind's eye doesn't have to change just because I changed cameras."

Besides the camera's superior 12.2-megapixel capabilities, Cliff is a fan of the D2x's AF acumen. "The autofocus on the D2x is far superior to anything that I've ever encountered—it doesn't miss," he



© Cliff Mautner



To see more of Cliff Mautner's work, go to www.cmphotography.com.

Classic Nuptials

Joe Buissink embraces technology by dabbling in digital with his D2x and D200—and taps into tradition with his F6.

From the time he started shooting weddings, Beverly Hills photographer Joe Buissink knew he wanted to create his own signature style. "From day one, I was trying for that 1930s-1940s feel, that LIFE magazine quality: Henri Cartier-Bresson, Robert Frank, all the masters," he says. "I wanted to bring that to people, for my images to look like timeless scenes from the '30s and '40s."

Joe's D2x has helped him easily transition this classic film shooting style to the digital realm. "The D2x is seamless," he explains. "I shoot the D2x like I would a film camera. It felt exactly the same as my F6 when I first picked it up—it had the same functionality, the quickness, the accuracy of the meter, all the same things the F6 has."

The D2x comes through for Joe in some of his most challenging shooting situations. "I'll use the D2x when I need faster focusing in lower-light situations," he says. "Plus the D2x battery lasts through 1,500 images—I love the ability to shoot the entire wedding without worrying about the battery dying on me."

His recent forays with the new D200 offered Joe some nice surprises. "In mixed lighting situations, the D200 was right on," he says. "That for me was the biggest deal. I can shoot this camera in available light or mixed lighting, and the images are always beautiful."

What Joe witnessed on his D200's LCD was, simply put, "awesome." "The color balance is very accurate," he says. "I originally started shooting RAW, because I didn't necessarily like the capture of digital in the beginning in terms of color. I didn't have time to do the custom white balance, since I shoot very fast. I'd shoot in RAW so I could fix things in post-production. I don't have to worry about that with the D200; there's not a whole lot of post-prod needed in terms of white balance—it's right on the money."

The D200 has also proven to be an ergonomic blessing. "It's really simple to carry around, and it feels good in the hand," he says. "Plus it works with the SB-800 Speedlight like an amazing little trooper."

Lighting is critical in his wedding work, and Joe is always looking to



© Joe Buissink

"There's not a whole lot of post-production needed when shooting with the D200—it's right on the money."

—JOE BUISSINK

capitalize on available light. "I shoot with fast films, and my film gets processed by inspection, a long-lost art. While it's in the developer, my guy will take the film out and look under a green light to see how much further it has to be processed before it gets pulled out of the developer. That way, it's right where it needs to be. The grain is very fine, and it's got beautiful contrast to it. I can get away with shooting at 3200 and 6400 without having my photos be underexposed or muddy-looking."

Joe's F6 is still a core part of his wedding work. "I feel the F6 is probably one of Nikon's flagship cameras—it is my favorite camera," he says. In fact, he's recently handed over digital responsibilities to his other shooter so he can return to his roots. "He shoots all digital, all the formal stuff in color, while I concentrate on the film, all black-and-white. I get to do my thing, hanging from the rafters with the long lens—all my artsy stuff!" §



To see more of Joe Buissink's work, go to www.joebuissink.com



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