



The porn industry is big business. It has larger revenues than Microsoft, Google, Amazon, eBay, Yahoo, Apple and Netflix combined and achieved \$97.06bn worldwide in 2006, according to market research company TopTenReviews. There are 4.2 million pornographic websites, 12% of the total number of sites online.

So what, unless you're a fan? Quite a lot, for any working photographer. The porn industry has lead the way in new media technology, and the shift it's experienced from print to online is now kicking in everywhere else. Worryingly for photographers, video has also comprehensively taken over the porn industry - in 1988, US companies (which have by far the biggest share of the market) released 1300 hardcore video titles; in 2005 they released 13,588. Also worrying for professionals is the rise of amateurs - as Dian Hanson, queen of porn, puts it this week (Interview, p28-31), amateur footage is universally popular but it can't be used commercially. In fact it just undermines professionals. 'Now, as in the music industry, photographers are expected to do interesting work for free,' she says. 'Which of course doesn't really happen.'

Taking the porn view

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It makes for gloomy reading, and the future looks little better. With 3D football matches and Oscar-nominated films already appearing you can be sure that 3D porn and 3D everything else, will follow soon. But if you're willing to be flexible, it could be an opportunity. A few magazine publishers are combining high-quality print with 3D and video footage for augmented reality specials, and I predict many other publishers, in both porn and non-porn markets, will find it hard to resist. If you're into multimedia, you could be in for an interesting ride.

Diane Smyth, Deputy editor.

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