

For examples, see our web page: www.thesextonco.com

Background

Sexton Photographics has manufactured of custom underwater housings for cameras and other equipment since 1968. We only custom-build housings for cameras and other equipment. We do not keep finished housings in stock, nor do we have standard designs to fit certain cameras. We do not compete with the manufacturers of stock housings. If you can find a stock housing that meets your needs, buy it. The stock manufacturers do a good job making housings to fit certain cameras. The R&D, design, and tooling costs needed to manufacture those products have to be spread over many sales, so they target only a few very popular cameras. A hand-made custom housing from Sexton Photographics will always be more expensive than a mass-produced stock housing.

Sexton Photographics has a different philosophy that complements, rather than competes with stock housings. We only design and build housings for cameras or configurations that the stock manufacturers choose not to address. There are no model numbers in our system.

Why Custom?

A custom housing may be the only way to take a favorite camera underwater. For example, there is no stock housing for the Kodak Stereo camera. We had a customer who needed one, so we designed and built it, letting him explore his unique kind of underwater photography.

A custom housing may provide a configuration that a stock housing cannot provide. For instance, a customer needed a very lightweight housing for a Canon AE-1 for surfing photography. While several stock housings were available for that camera, all were designed for underwater use, making them heavy and unsuitable for holding the camera up out of the water while swimming. We created a light-weight housing, with features like handles on one side and on the bottom, to make the transition from horizontal to vertical format. We clustered the main controls under the handles, and made the housing buoyant.

We have also made housings for scientific instruments, such as data loggers, laser rangefinders, computers, fluorescence meters, telemetry receivers, GPS, and satellite uplinks. Please contact us directly for more information.

Details

All materials are well suited for use in seawater. Housings are made of acrylic or polycarbonate plastic, hardware is stainless steel, and o-ring seals are made of Neoprene. All housings are designed with conservative safety margin for implosion depth. Design is done in CAD and many parts are CNC machined. We test-dive every housing in a pool before shipment. All housings are warranted for one year.

How do we start?

In order to quote a price for a custom housing, we need to do enough of the design to make sure we have covered all of the issues that affect the cost. In order to do that, we need to ask lots of questions. The following questionnaire covers most of the information we need to have. Certain questions apply to almost all housings, while some questions apply only to still cameras, and others apply only to movie and video housings. Fill out what you think is needed. Please fill out a separate copy of this form for each additional housing, such as one for an accompanying strobe.

Name _____ Phone (W) _____ (H) _____
 Company/Institution _____ Fax (W) _____ (H) _____
 Address _____ email (W) _____ (H) _____
 City _____ State/Province _____ Zip/Postal Code _____
 Country _____ Best times and methods to contact you _____
 Referred by (how did you find us?) _____

For all housings:

1. What model camera is this housing for? _____
2. Lens(es):
 - 2.1. What lens or lenses will you use? _____
 - 2.2. Flat _____ or dome _____ lens port? Comments: _____
 - 2.3. Interchangeable _____ or fixed _____ lens port? Comments: _____
3. The following dimensions are needed:
 - 3.1. Overall length of the camera (front to rear, along the lens axis) _____
 - 3.2. Overall width of the camera (including handle, battery, knobs, etc) _____
 - 3.3. Overall height of the camera (including knobs, etc) _____
 - 3.4. Weight of the camera _____
4. What working depth is needed? _____

5. What is the major purpose for this photography/cinematography? _____
6. In what conditions will you be diving/surfing (the North Sea, the tropics, from boats, from rocky cliffs, from sandy beaches, etc)? _____
7. How soon do you need it (normally 4 weeks)? _____
8. How will you store and transport it out of the water? _____
9. Should it float____ or sink____, or be neutral____ in sea water____, or in fresh____ water?
10. Should it have a droppable weight? _____ inflatable float? _____ Comments: _____
11. Is this to be an Underwater housing? _____ or a Surf Housing? _____ Other? _____
12. Do you need a particularly light weight or heavy duty housing? _____
13. Handles:
 - 13.1. None____ Left____, Right____, Pistol Grip____, Special _____
 - 13.2. Plain____, or Contoured _____
 - 13.3. Tilted back____, forward____, straight up____, or other _____
 - 13.4. Clear____, or custom colors _____
 - 13.5. Are your hands particularly large____ or small____? Need handles big enough for use with gloves? _____ Comments: _____
14. For still cameras only:
 - 14.1. What controls are needed? On/Off____, Shutter Release____, Focus____, Aperture____, Shutter speed____, Advance____, Other _____
 - 14.2. Manual advance____, Auto advance____, Add-on motor drive____, or winder____?
 - 14.3. Is external strobe or flash needed? _____
 - 14.4. What model strobe or flash? _____
 - 14.5. Does it have separate remote sensor? _____, or dedicated____ (internal to camera)?
 - 14.6. Should strobe be permanently wired to camera housing____ or connectorized____?
 - 14.7. Preferred connector? _____
15. For movie/video cameras only:
 - 15.1. What controls are needed? On/Off____, Record____, Focus____, Zoom____, Macro____, White balance____, Other _____
 - 15.2. Do you need a light____, or two____, or none____?
 - 15.3. If so, how bright, how much on-time? _____ minutes
 - 15.4. Do you want it permanently wired to the main housing____, or connectorized____?
 - 15.5. Preferred connector? _____
 - 15.6. Rechargeable battery pack____, or D-cells____?
 - 15.7. Belt pack____, mounted on scuba tank____, or mounted on the camera____?
 - 15.8. Swing-out viewer in extended position? _____ Separate viewer or TV monitor? _____
 - 15.9. Do you need a hydrophone____, preamp____, or other audio? _____
16. Other considerations (feel free to add any other information or questions) _____

If we need other information or clarifications, we will contact you.

- After we get this information, we will offer a budgetary estimate, possibly with options.
- If you want to proceed, a flat Non-Refundable Engineering (NRE) fee of \$100 is charged to complete the design. This fee is lost if you do not complete a purchase with us, or credited to the final price if you do. You will receive a CAD drawing of the design, as well as a detailed proposal with the final price, with appropriate options, as well as warranty information. There is an opportunity to negotiate features, details, and costs.
- When we agree on the features and final price, you will send the camera, lens(es), and accessories along with a down payment of 50% of the final price to Sexton Photographics.
- Ship date is about four weeks from receipt of your camera, accessories, and 50% down.
- Faster delivery can usually be made for a premium price, depending on our schedule at time of order.
- Note: The ship date clock remains on hold until we receive your camera, accessories, and the 50% down payment.
- We will return the housing with the camera installed to you on or before the ship date.
- The balance will be due on receipt of the housing and your testing. You will have two weeks from receipt of the housing to test the housing to your satisfaction before sending the balance due minus the NRE.
- Warranty typically one year – details with proposal and on web site.
- We can accept VISA, MC, Discover, and personal or institutional checks, but not purchase orders.
- You are encouraged to obtain flood insurance for your housing and its contents. Check with your homeowner's or renter's insurance agent, add an all-risk rider to an existing policy, purchase a separate inland-marine policy, or see DEPP (www.equipmentprotection.com/programs/depp.html) or DAN/H2O (www.h2oinsurance.com/) for dive equipment-specific coverage.