

February 2024 - Issues With Number of Themes In Competitions

- **Current individual CAPA member survey (478 responses received):**
 - A. Too many themes in a competition / 2 respondents**
 - B. Competitions are too focused on appealing to a mass of entrants so almost anything as it will fit in one of the many themes / 3 respondents**
- **Past individual CAPA member survey (138 responses received):**
- **Current CAPA Camera Club survey (48 responses received):**
- **Past CAPA Camera Club survey (8 responses received):**

Response: Thank you for these suggestions, and we appreciate the opportunity to address each which are included in the responses below:

A. Too many themes in a competition / 2 respondents

My response – From our competition cycles spanning October 2014 to May 2014, we have witnessed a notable surge in popularity. In the initial cycle of 2024-2015, there were 11 distinct competitions, drawing in 461 participants who collectively submitted, 2,148 images.

The momentum of our competitions continued during the 1017-2028 cycle, with Fine art (663 images), Open Theme (718 images), and Canada: My Country (855 images) competitions attracting a substantial number of submissions. However, a hurdle emerged as our online competition system encountered limitations in downloading more than 660 images per competition. Faced with the absence of ongoing support for system enhancements, we had to devise an alternative strategy.

After extensive testing, the most effective solution proved to be introducing multiple themes within each competition, thereby avoiding the 660-image upper limit per theme. The primary advantage of incorporating multiple themes was evident as it not only stimulated greater photographer participation but also elevated the profile of CAPA and our competitions.

Over the subsequent two competition cycles:

- 2020-2021- witnessed 14 competitions with 8,516 submitted images from 2,138 entrants.
- 2021-2022 – featured 14 competitions, garnering 7,971 submitted images from 1,980 entrants.

Notably 2 or 3 competitions in each cycle exceeded 1,000 submitted image but the 660 limitation was an issue as a result of having multiple themes in each of these competitions.

To address any possible future limitations, it was decided to reduce the maximum submissions for CAPA individual members from 4 to 3. These individual submissions constitute approximately 70 to 75% of all images submitted, ensuring smooth competition operations without encountering system constraints.

In 2023, a CAPA committee was established to explore potential replacement systems meeting our current and future needs. Despite evaluating various online photo competitions, the committee concluded that our existing online system uniquely fulfilled our requirements.

B. Competitions are too focused on appealing to a mass of entrants so almost anything as it will fit in one of the many themes / 3 respondents

My Response: As outlined in our CAPA Constitution's Organization Objective it states as follows:

The objective of the Association, as set forth in the Corporation's "Supplementary Letter Patent", are as follows:

1-To promote the art and science of photography in all its forms throughout Canada and the world and to further public interest therein.

2-To encourage and promote participation by its members in photographic exhibitions, circuits, competitions and like endeavors on regional, national and international level.

The incorporation of multiple themes within each competition serves to fulfill the two aforementioned Association objectives.

A compelling illustration of the benefits of utilizing multiple themes is evident in our annual Nature/Wildlife competitions. Traditionally, competition winners were predominately centered around bird and wild animal images, with minimal representation in areas such as botanical, insect, and landscape photography.

By introducing themes like botanical insect, landscape, nature, and wildlife into this competition, the top three images in each them now receive merit awards. The entrant with the three highest aggregate score across themes is awarded CAPA medals.

The introduction of multiple themes in this competition has not altered the total number of submitted images; however, it has diversified the pool of winning images to now include botanical, insect, and landscape images.

The table below provides a three-year average of images submitted into the five nature/wildlife themes:

Botanical	10.6%
Insect/Reptile	12.7%
Landscape	17.3%
Nature	15.6%
Wildlife	43.8%

Considering the aforementioned benefits, CAPA is committed to maintaining the practice of incorporating multiple themes in all our competitions. This approach aims to foster greater participation, encouraging a diverse range of photographers to submit their images and undergo evaluation by our judging teams.