

METADATA: A Stock Photographer's View

Metadata

A Stock Photographer's View

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Sponsored by the Stock Artists Alliance



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METADATA: A Stock Photographer's View

The stock photography industry

- **Distinctive segment of Commercial Photo Industry**
- **Images are Licensed Not Sold**
- **Has become a Multi-Billion Dollar Industry**

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METADATA:

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Stock images are at Risk

Images are vulnerable to loss & misuse

Large Number of Images

Images are Disseminated online:

- multiple distributors
- multiple licensees
- multiple end-users

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METADATA:

A Stock Photographer's View

Stock images are at Risk

Images are vulnerable to loss & misuse

- Creator has No Control over Metadata once files are circulated
- Distributors May Omit (or Alter) Metadata from online or distributed images
- Licensors and End Users may not be Metadata Savvy

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Stock images are at Risk

- “Orphan Works” changes to copyright law will increase risk

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“Working Towards a Seamless Photo Workflow”

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What IS Seamless now?

- PhotoShop Web Photo Gallery (saves metadata in thumbnails and previews)
- IPTC Core with TIF and Jpeg
- Guidelines for How to Apply IPTC Core Schema
- Interoperable IPTC Metadata Templates (iView shares existing Photoshop XMP templates)

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What IS NOT Seamless now?

- Proprietary RAW files
- Non Unicode IIM/IRB style IPTC when dealing cross platform (Mac/Win)
- Character Limits with IIM/IRB style IPTC metadata
- "Save for web" in PhotoShop strips metadata without warning

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What IS NOT Seamless now?

- Smaller number of fields with IIM/IRB style IPTC vs. IPTC Core
- Adobe Camera RAW doesn't pass all IPTC Core Values from annotation apps that don't use sidecars
- Applications that do not write properly formatted XMP (MS Photo Info)

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Avoid the Culture of blame

- Finger Pointing Solves Nothing
- Real Solutions are More Complex

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Avoid the Culture of blame

What Do We need?

- Individuals, Standards Bodies, and Companies who are willing to step forward and tackle these problems (today is a good start)

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Avoid the Culture of blame

• What Do We Need?: Checklist

- We need industry-wide commitment
- We need to embrace metadata standards and best practices that have a consistent world-view approach.
- We need technology that makes it easy to embed metadata, preserve it, and facilitate tracking and rights management.

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What Can Stock Photogs Do Today?

- Ensure images are properly and permanently identified
- Ensure that creator contact and descriptive information is added at earliest opportunity
- Question Distributors to find if Metadata remains with image

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Obstacles to Adoption

- **Images treated as commodities**
 - Distributors provide images to Multiple sub-licensors (“hungry databases”)

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Obstacles to Adoption

- **Distributors May Remove Original Metadata**
 - Inadvertently
 - Due to untested workflow
 - Due to legacy or proprietary software

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Obstacles to Adoption

- **Distributors May Remove Original Metadata**
 - Intentionally
 - Rewrite copyright field to include their name
 - Append to photographers name
 - Replace photographers name
 - Overwrite to match internal system

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Obstacles to Adoption

- **Distributors May Instruct photographers to misuse metadata**
 - The Market Leader does not follow industry standards

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METADATA:

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Obstacles to Adoption

- **The Market Leader does not follow industry standards**
 - Put "Caption" in the "Headline" field?
 - Put other data into the "Description" field?
 - Results in making it more difficult to find images in the future.

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Obstacles to Adoption

- **The Market Leader doesn't following industry standards**
 - Custom Metadata Templates embed metadata in the image, but in a specific way
 - Less likely to work properly when cataloged with other image databases.
 - Information is only accessible within Photoshop.

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Where Stock Photogs are now*

- **Distributor / Self Marketer Split**
 - 3/4 use stock distributors
 - 1/3 are self-marketing now
(another 1/3 are interested)

*results from 2006 SAA member survey of over 400 stock photographers

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Where Stock Photogs are now*

- **Photographers have shifted to digital**
 - Majority of SAA members capture Images Digitally (over half and growing fast)
 - Nearly 1/3 use both digital and film

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Where Stock Photogs are now*

- **Stock Photographers Prefer RAW**
 - 85 percent of members capture images using their camera manufacturers' proprietary RAW format
 - This has major implications for interoperability of IPTC metadata with RAW

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Where Stock Photogs are now*

- **Stock Photogs are Using Metadata More**
 - Nearly two thirds of SAA members are submitting images with embedded metadata (IPTC/File Info)

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METADATA:

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Where Stock Photogs are now*

- **Stock Photogs are Using Metadata More**
 - As requested by Distributors
 - No existing standards for submissions
 - Requires extra work by photographers
 - To get metadata into images for the photographers' own archive.

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Where Stock Photogs are now*

- **What Metadata Do Stock Photographers Include?**
 - copyright notice
 - creator contact info
 - caption
 - keywords
 - title (such as image filename)

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Where Stock Photogs are now*

- **What Applications do Stock Photographers Use for Embedding Metadata?**
 - Perennial favorites
 - Adobe Photoshop or Bridge dominates
 - iView MediaPro/Expression Media
(distant runner up)

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METADATA:

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Where Stock Photogs are now*

- **What Applications do Stock Photographers Use for Embedding Metadata?**
 - Other Notables
 - Extensis Portfolio
 - Image Info Toolkit
 - Photo Mechanic

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Where Stock Photogs are now*

- **Metadata Outsourcing Issues**
 - Increased Outsourcing of Keywords and other Metadata tasks:
 - Majority of photographers let stock distributor handle keywording
 - Self Marketers handle own keywording or outsource

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Where Stock Photogs are now*

- **Metadata Outsourcing issues**
 - **Most outsourcing firms return keywords in text files**
 - o Metadata holds the key to easily moving annotations from sample files to originals
 - o Improvement in this workflow is needed
 - o Embed metadata into sample files
 - o Provide How-To Guides to DIY

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What Needs to Happen?

- **Photographer Entered Metadata needs to be Ubiquitous**
 - Metadata Education is the Key
 - (SAA is leading the field)

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What Needs to Happen?

- **Distributors Need to Preserve Metadata**
 - Examine Workflow from Creator to Distributor
 - Make sure Delivered Images have Metadata

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What Needs to Happen?

- **MetaData Can Make Buyers' Lives Easier**
 - o (here to talk about photographers, but would be remiss if we didn't talk about the buyer)

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METADATA:

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What Needs to Happen?

- **MetaData Can Make Buyers' Lives Easier**
 - Increased Need for Descriptive Information
 - Editorial vs. Commercial Stock
(Difference between types and amount of descriptive information)

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METADATA:

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What Needs to Happen?

- **MetaData Can Make Buyers' Lives Easier**
 - For Editorial stock, photographers need to get better at adding description information
 - For commercial stock, photographers need to work at adding keywords
(If working with a distributor this may differ, but distributor needs to make sure that photographer submitted keywords are considered)

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METADATA:

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What Needs to Happen?

- **MetaData Can Make Buyers' Lives Easier**
 - Making buyers' lives easier
 - PACA conference, "What Buyers Want"
 - **better captions**
 - **embedded captions and keywords**
 - in downloaded images
 - (most don't use lightboxes)

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The Future

- **Recommendations of the Photo Metadata Working Group**
 - Proposal for extensive set of new fields that will make the IPTC Core more useful within the stock photography and commercial photography sectors

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METADATA:

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The Future

- **Recommendations of the Photo Metadata Working Group**
 - Date format
 - year only
 - year/month
 - Model releases
 - Licensor/sub-licensor contact info

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The Future

- **In-Camera Annotation**
 - Need more options
 - Make cameras Bluetooth, wireless, or infrared enabled
 - (add info to images in camera at time of capture)
 - Voice annotations can help, but requires transcribing later

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The Future

- **Build in Ability to Capture GPS**
 - Should be added to images at the time of capture (in camera)
 - Current systems are limited and require synchronizing

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What Needs to Happen

- Stock Distributors need to ensure that photographer submitted metadata is retained (not overwritten) by their systems
- Industry-wide adherence to standards

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What Needs to Happen

- Technology solutions need to support metadata use and preservation
- Metadata must be incorporated into the workflow at all phases of image production, distribution and use

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Steps to Getting There

- We need industry wide commitment to use metadata
- We need to embrace metadata standards and best practices that have a consistent world-view approach
- We need technology that makes it easy to embed metadata, preserve it, and facilitate tracking and rights management

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Thanks again to SAA!



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<http://www.stockartistsalliance.org/>

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Questions?

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