Do we still need photo metadata?

What suppliers say

IPTC Photo Metadata Conference 2019

Michael Steidl, Lead Photo Metadata group

6 June 2019, Paris (France)
IPTC Photo Metadata (PMD) …

- … is a set of fields bound to an image (file):
  - primarily by embedding
  - can be used with a DAM/MAM system
  - can be used for inline HTML metadata (keyword “schema.org”)
- … fields focus on describing the content of the image, setting rights data and providing administrative data – NO technical data (covered by Exif)

IPTC Photo Metadata exist:

- Since 1995 as feature of Adobe Photoshop, then of other image software
- Since 2005 as Photo Metadata Standard defining use of fields publicly
- Since 2008 the set of fields is extended by user requirements
Who takes care of IPTC Photo Metadata

IPTC’s Photo Metadata Working Group

- **Objectives:**
  * The goal of this WG is to act as a special interest group regarding all photo metadata issues of the IPTC.

... a group of persons nominated by IPTC members – current regulars are

Sarah Saunders, CEPIC  David Ricks, PLUS  Karl Csoknyay, Keystone-SDA  Brendan Quinn, IPTC MD

Michael Steidl, IPTC (Lead)  Annette Feldman, AP  Linda Burman, LB Assoc
IPTC ran a survey among photo suppliers in spring 2019. CEPI*C* strongly supported it in Europe, BVPA* in Germany and DMLA in the USA. (*CEPIC and BVPA are IPTC members*)

135 persons started to fill in, about 100 completed it.
(We did a similar survey in 2010: 80 started it …)

Two types of suppliers participated:
- Companies (55%)
- Individual photographers (45%)
Suppliers submitting a survey are from … (%)
What kinds of images are supplied

- Stock Images
- News Photos
- Video Footage
- Cultural Heritage
- PR

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IPTC wanted to learn …

a) How relevant is IPTC Photo Metadata for your business
b) What metadata fields do you use in practice
c) How has your use changed over the past 3 to 5 years
d) What drives decisions to use IPTC Photo Metadata

… and more in other presentations
How relevant is IPTC Photo Metadata for...

... these business purposes in your company: (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>High Relevance</th>
<th>Medium Relevance</th>
<th>Low Relevance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support of user searches</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of images</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business use (accounting, fees ...)</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentation of rights</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

... these business purposes for you as photographer: (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<th>Low Relevance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support of user searches</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of images</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business use (accounting, fees ...)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentation of rights</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusions a): purposes for using IPTC PMD

Supplier companies rated all business purposes for using metadata as being of High Relevance – and ranked the purposes:

1. The description of the content
2. The support of users searches
3. The documentation of rights

Also photographers rated all business purposes for using metadata as being of High Relevance – and ranked the purposes:

1. The documentation of rights
2. The description of the content
3. The support of users searches
What kinds of fields are used ...

By companies

- Administration data: 44, 53, 67
- Licensing data: 26, 30, 44
- Rights data: 23, 25, 30
- Things shown: 16, 19, 65
- Free text description: 2, 4, 65

By photographers

- Administration data: 32, 40, 65
- Licensing data: 18, 18, 65
- Rights data: 13, 19, 79
- Things shown: 11, 16, 73
- Free text description: 5, 10, 85
Conclusions b): ranked use of fields

The use of fields is ranked as

1. Free text description of the content (Description/caption, Keywords, Headline)
2. Rights data (Creator, Copyright Notice, Credit, Copyright Owner …)
3. Things shown (locations, persons, objects …)
4. Licensing data (Usage Terms, Web links to rights document, Licensor …)
5. Administrative data (Date Created, Instructions, Job ID, …)

… the same ranking was expressed by companies and photographers, with slightly different rates.
Are fields shared with customers?

What is not shared

Companies: internal administration (accounting, fees, licensing rule), info about the source

Photographers: internal administration data, GPS data and other technical details, “depending on user requirements”
Did the metadata use change in the past years?

**At companies**

- **Free text descriptions**
  - Increased: 29%
  - About the same: 68%
  - Decreased: 2%

- **Things shown**
  - Increased: 31%
  - About the same: 67%
  - Decreased: 2%

- **Rights data**
  - Increased: 41%
  - About the same: 56%
  - Decreased: 2%

- **Licensing data**
  - Increased: 28%
  - About the same: 58%
  - Decreased: 2%

- **Administration data**
  - Increased: 33%
  - About the same: 58%
  - Decreased: 10%

**At photographers**

- **Free text descriptions**
  - Increased: 31%
  - About the same: 69%
  - Decreased: 0%

- **Things shown**
  - Increased: 21%
  - About the same: 75%
  - Decreased: 4%

- **Rights data**
  - Increased: 43%
  - About the same: 57%
  - Decreased: 0%

- **Licensing data**
  - Increased: 37%
  - About the same: 61%
  - Decreased: 2%

- **Administration data**
  - Increased: 18%
  - About the same: 80%
  - Decreased: 2%
Conclusions c): sharing fields and change over time

• 2 out of 3 fields are shared with customers, 1 out of 3 is held back.
• The use of IPTC Photo Metadata is highly stable over time
• Increased use of metadata is a trend
• This trend is lead by an increase of about 40% of rights metadata

This was expressed by companies and photographers.
What drives decisions …

… at companies

- Free text descriptions
- Things shown
- Rights data
- Licensing data
- Administration data

Internal business requirements (%)
Legal requirements (%)
Customer requirements (%)
What drives decisions …

… at photographers

- Free text descriptions
- Things shown
- Rights data
- Licensing data
- Administration data

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Conclusions d): what drives decisions

- To use free text descriptions and/or things shown is driven by 1. business requirements, 2. customer requirements
- To use rights data is driven by legal requirements & business requirements
- To use licensing data is driven by 1. business requirements, 2. legal requirements
- To use administration data (by companies) is driven by 1. customer requirements, 2. legal requirements
- To use administration data (by photographers) is driven by 1. business requirements, 2. legal requirements
Dear supplier companies and photographers

Thank you for sharing your use of IPTC Photo Metadata