The IPTC Photo Metadata (PMD) Interoperability Tests

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What’s interoperability?
What is it good for?
The Metadata Sea and its Photo Metadata Bay

We explore the bay frequently 😊
The Islands in the Photo Metadata Bay

Homebase
Photographer & Company

Publishers

Agencies & Suppliers

Viewers
Photo (Metadata) flow

Homebase
Photographer & Company

Agencies & Suppliers

Publishers

Viewers
Goal of a PMD flow across islands

No PMD values get lost!
The IPTC Photo Metadata Standards stands for …

• If you record Joan Darcy as the Creator of the image you can expect a party receiving the image is able to get „Joan Darcy is the Creator of the image“

• If you read the value of Date Created you can be sure this is the date of the day (and time) when the image was taken.

The IPTC standard provides means to properly communicate between different parties in a workflow. To make this happen the parties and the software have to follow the standard!
Warning

Our discussion about accessibility fields was assuming this workflow:
- A photographer or photo agency writes and embeds an Alt Text value into an image file.
- A software generating web pages reads the Alt Text from the image file and embeds it into the HTML

Unfortunately this does not work in all cases!

... software generating web pages may not find an embedded Alt Text.
The role of software in the PMD flow

The Challenge software faces:
- Is ABC able to embed PMD as standardized, giving EFG a chance to read it?
- Is EFG able to read standardized PMD?
- Is KLM able to keep PMD fields alive it does not know (yet)?

Is RST or XYZ making image files slim for a fast web delivery…
… and it removes PMD without further ado??
IPTC claims: software must be interoperable

Software interoperability means:

• Reading embedded PMD must comply with IPTC (and Exif) specifications
• Read values should be shown with labels aligning with the IPTC definition
• Writing (= embedding) added or edited PMD must comply with the IPTC (and Exif) specs.
• If read metadata property values have not been edited: the values must not be changed or removed by software – this includes keeping “unknown” properties untouched.

Interoperability = proper communication
IPTC claims what should be the case.

How to check what is the case with your software?
IPTC PMD Interoperability Tests

To verify if a software is interoperable IPTC
- has defined 3 tests and
- with a rich documentation
  including step-by-step guides for running the tests.
- and has just launched a web site for running 2 tests online.

The tests:
• Test #1: Do field labels align to the IPTC definition of its use?
• Test #2: Does the software read and write embedded metadata correctly?
• Test #3: Which IPTC fields are supported by the software – and which not?
Offline Test #1

1. Load the IPTC Reference Image into the to-be-tested software
2. Compare the labels of the fields with what is shown as value: the IPTC name of the field

There may be:
- Labels being ok
- Labels not telling exactly the same
- Labels completely different (= bad)
- Old IIM fields not supported by IPTC anymore since 2004 (may be misleading)
Online Test #2 & #3 on this brand new site ...

IPTC Photo Metadata Interoperability Tests

Read about what you can discover with the tests. See this page for detailed explanations and step-by-step guides for each test.

Upload your image file and get it checked

Select your local test image file

Select the test:
- Test #2: Are edited properties saved correctly? Check which properties you have edited below.
- Test #3: Which IPTC metadata properties are filled by your software?

For Test #2 only: Which properties are edited?
- The Description, also named Caption
- The Keywords
- The Web Statement of Rights, also named Copyright URL
- The Location Created
- The Image Creator
- The Rights Usage Terms

Test the Photo Metadata of the Local Image

* For a full list of all the potential IPTC Photo Metadata that can be embedded into an image go to Get IPTC Photo Metadata

This service was developed by NewsIT-M.W.Steidl

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... and

Get IPTC Photo Metadata ('21) ...

Option A: ... embedded into an image on the web

Enter the URL of the image file:

Image URL

(If this field is left empty the metadata of the IPTC reference image of the Photo Metadata Standard 2019.1 is shown. This image file comprises all metadata fields defined by that standard.)

Select how the IPTC Photo Metadata fields are shown:

- **As single list**, sorted by names
- **Grouped by common topics** (General content, persons, locations, ..., rights, licence, administrative issues)
- **Selected fields** relevant for photos shown as result by search engines
- **Grouped by the technical formats** used in the image files (IIM, XMP and Exif)

An IPTC field is shown ... **only if it has a value** or **if it has a value or no value**

Shown field names: **IPTC Photo Metadata Standard** names **Field IDs of XMP, IIM, Exif** - only with “Grouped by the technical formats ...”

Get Photo Metadata of Web Image

Option B: ... embedded into an image uploaded from your computer

Select local image file