

The Mechanics of Keywording

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NANPA breakout – February 2009

Notes from Janet:

There is no industry standard for keywording!

Keywording is very subjective.

How you keyword varies depending on who your client is or what market you are catering to.

Other factors that have an effect on your keywording:

Your mood

Did you get enough sleep?

Did you drink too much coffee?or not enough?

Keywords are split into two categories:

Facts: who, what, where, when, why, how

Concepts: Be very selective with these keywords!

Use them when they really apply but keep in mind, not every image you take can be described as beautiful or tranquil.

There is no set number of keywords that are ideal.

As long as they are accurate and relevant, you can have as many keywords as you like.

Try to use Single keywords unless it is a proper name.

- Theodore Roosevelt National Park is one keyword
- African buffalo at campsite by night is **NOT**

SPELLING:

-make sure that your spelling is correct!

-think international:

color/colour

hyena/hyaena

grey/gray

-alternate spellings:

Great Smoky Mountains

Great Smokey Mountains

Ruby-throated Hummingbird
Ruby Throated Hummingbird
Rubythroated Hummingbird

Acadia National Park
Acadia NP

Mt. Kilimanjaro
Mount Kilimanjaro

COMMON MISNOMERS:

-make sure to keyword common misnomers – not everyone searching your images is an animal expert!

Peafowl/Peacock
American Bison/Buffalo
Cattle/Cow

SEARCH LOGS:

-Website developers can produce a search log of everything that is searched for on your website. This report is a great tool. Use it to your advantage! You will be able to see exactly what keywords your clients are using, how they are searching and what searches aren't working. Then adjust your keywording so that the results are that much more successful next time.

Below is an excerpt of a typical search log:

flying fox
dolphin pair
Fiddlehead
monarch migrating
Animal
Cowgirl
howler monkey
Goosefish
Puffin
Bird
swallowtail pupa
fish fossil
venus flytrap insect
colorful school fish
soaptree yucca
actias luna
Peanut

microscopic but not plant but not animal
game bird but not turkey but not pheasant but not grouse
Songbird
young tawny owl
Orangutan
Baboon
occupation and animal
pig but not wild boar
trapdoor spider
Bird Of Paradise
plumed basilisk
Atelopus
crested toad
Gnat
Cheatgrass
zebra mussels
bear but not black bear but not brown bear but not polar
bear
PRESQUE
presque isle
Presque Isle State Park
myrmicinae acromyrmex

OUTSOURCING:

-whether you plan to outsource to someone in this country or overseas, make sure to recheck their work thoroughly!

Finding the right fit with an outsourced company is very important.

Where will the material end up? Is this particular company better at conceptual keywording as opposed to fact-based?

If you are with an agency, ask them who they would suggest for outsourced keywording. They may have a list of recommended companies.

Keywording is an ongoing process.

Revisit images that you have already worked on. Do the keywords still apply?

There is a very fine line between effective keywording and over-keywording.

DON'T GET CAUGHT UP IN THE MINUTAE!

Ask yourself, is it important to the image?

Clients will not have much patience with search results that are incorrect.

ONLINE RESOURCES:

IPTC Photo Metadata White Paper:

http://www.iptc.org/std/photometadata/0.0/documentation/IPTC-PhotoMetadataWhitePaper2007_11.pdf

Controlled Vocabulary:

<http://www.controlledvocabulary.com/>

UPDIG Metadata Information:

http://www.updig.org/guidelines/ph_metadata.html

Stock Artists Alliance:

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

Integrated Taxonomic Information System

<http://www.itis.gov/>

The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species

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

Notes from Bob

Overview: A discussion and demonstration of effective keywording techniques for the nature photographer. Whether keywording for your own purposes or for a stock agency, effective keywording is an effective retrieval / search tool for digital images. Other metadata, including copyright and contact information is also relevant.

Definitions:

EXIF – Exposure information from a digital camera file (Exchangeable image file format)

XMP – Extensible Metadata Platform

IPTC – International Press Telecommunications Council

Why Keyword?

Keywording is a key to your archival strategy

Required for stock agency submissions

Keywords contain facts and concepts that describe the content of each image

Resources:

Controlled Vocabulary by David Riecks

<http://www.controlledvocabulary.com/metalogging/keywording.html>

Stock Artists Alliance

<http://www.stockartistsalliance.org>

University of Michigan Museum of Zoology

<http://www.animaldiversity.org> (Latin names)

Steps in Keywording:

- 1) Have a descriptive title
- 2) Write a caption – use your keywords in a way that’s interesting to read
- 3) Include a comprehensive list of keywords – include names of subjects in the image, colors, shapes, action, location
- 4) Use a thesaurus or lexicon
- 5) Look at what the opposition is doing! – you’ll get new ideas / phrases
- 6) Save what you do so you don’t have to do it again! (Structured keyword lists)
- 7) Remember to answer the questions of: who, what, when, where, how, why

Recommended software (not inclusive!)

Adobe PhotoShop / Bridge

Adobe Lightroom

Apple Aperture (Mac only)

Camera Bits Photo Mechanic

Hindsight LTD METAmachine (Mac only)

BreezeSystems BreezeBrowser Pro (PC only)

Microsoft Expressions

Extensis Portfolio

How to choose keywording software:

- 1) Determine how many images you need to process at a time – speed counts!

- 2) Do you want one do-it-all software for browsing, keywording, editing, and database? Or specialized software by function?
- 3) Are you shooting jpeg or raw format? (Recompressing jpeg images is a bad thing!)
- 4) Does the software support IPTC4XMP metadata? – support current standards
- 5) Does the software support uploading images to your web site or portal? (FTP included)
- 6) Example:

The screenshot displays the 'IPTC Stationery Pad' window, which is used for editing IPTC metadata. The interface is organized into two main columns of fields, each with a checked checkbox on the left. The left column includes fields for Caption, Caption Writers, Headline, Keywords, Object Name, Transmission Ref, Edit Status, Category, Supp Cat 1, and Supp Cat 2. The right column includes fields for City, Location, State, Country, Code, Date, Photographer, Title, Credit, Source, Copyright, Copyright URL, Contact Address, Contact City, and Contact Country. At the bottom of the window, there are several buttons: 'Clear', 'Load...', 'Save...', 'Variables...', 'Apply Stationery to Selected', and 'Close Stationery'. The metadata for the selected image is as follows:

| Field | Value |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| City | Yellowstone National Park |
| Location | Fishing Bridge |
| State | Wyoming |
| Country | United States |
| Code | USA |
| Date | 10/07/2008 |
| Photographer | C. Robert Smith |
| Title | |
| Credit | C. Robert Smith |
| Source | {model} |
| Copyright | ©2008 Bob Smith All Rights Reserved |
| Copyright URL | http://www.elkmeadowimages.com |
| Contact Address | 4215 Balsam |
| Contact City | Jackson |
| Contact Country | WY |