
BrightQube: Raising The Standard For Online Stock Photography With Pageless Image Search & Retrieval

Image retrieval systems – computer-based browsing, searching, and retrieving images from a large database of digital pictures – have been around for more than 20 years. The application of this technology for creative professionals to select and purchase stock photography online has existed for more than a decade.

Yet, until now, no advances have been made in the digital picture exchange marketplace that accurately reflect the ways in which current (and future) users are demanding. Namely – easy, flexible, fast, and, above all, personalized.

Enter BrightQube®. The combined picture image retrieval, eCommerce and Web 2.0 platform for images were formed to do nothing less than revolutionize the way the world finds images.

To learn how, read on.

How It Was: Stock Photography Goes Digital, Opening A Whole New World

The first microcomputer-based image data retrieval system was developed in the 1980s at MIT. Nearly a decade later, licensed stock photography emerged on the web with Getty Images in 1995. Other online image resources followed, shifting an entire industry onto the Internet. Professional creatives now had access to literally millions of digital images from sources around the world. Stock photography became easier than ever to incorporate into traditional and online media.

The old axiom “a picture is worth a thousands words” not only stayed alive and well in the new digital age, it flourished. Online imagery found its way into every type of communication, from fast-breaking news stories to the latest best sellers to today’s hottest e-zines. Enthusiasts and prosumers soon added into the mix, as the web created ever-expanding outlets for creative development such as soft publishing. Such unabated enthusiasm for all manner of electronic creative expression has caused the market for online images to explode into a 2.5 billion dollar industry, and growing.

Yet for all the interest in digital images, virtually no major changes to the technology of picture search and retrieval have been made since images first came online.

Trouble In Paradise: Too Much of A Good Thing

While more people than ever are seeking to buy images online, the process of finding these images is increasingly unsatisfactory. This is true whether you are an enthusiast looking for the perfect picture to accent your family web page or a consummate professional looking for a dynamic shot to capture the essence of your article on the Sudan.

The reason? The same principle that made online imagery so appealing in its infancy – the availability of worldwide stock photography on line – has now become a liability.

Inexperienced online searchers who are limited to inputting textual “guesses” or ticking boxes of general categories quickly become impatient having to wade through virtually raw results. Consider that typing “soccer” on a standard search engine yields 180 million images that arrive in page after page of un-prioritized results.

Even creative professionals who may be more experienced with ascertaining the best keywords find the process of locating usable online photography exasperating – and potentially quite costly. Many design professionals work in an atmosphere of increasing productivity costs, where the loss of valuable creative development time spent searching for the perfect image cannot be easily absorbed.

In essence, standard online search and retrieval processes have not kept up with the new market realities brought about by the Internet. As defined in his 2006 book *The Long Tail: Why the Future of Business is Selling More of Less*, author Chris Anderson describes an entirely new business model that the new electronic age has ushered in, one based on the economics of abundance rather than the economics of scarcity. This editor-in-chief of Wired Magazine coined the term “long tail” to describe how the Internet is making the world available to everyone, changing entire markets as a result.

The developers at BrightQube have designed a unique image search and retrieval process unlike anything that the online imaging marketplace has seen before. The team steeped in Internet development and photographic/design industries embraces – and accelerates – Anderson’s “long tail” model of supply and demand with standards and technologies developed for the web and applied to the search for online images.

Relevant Detail on Demand: New Keys To The Digital Imaging Kingdom

In the digital world, retrieval results are only as good as the metadata associated with the images being searched. The more well structured, the better the results. BrightQube’s patent-pending metadata process allows users to search exactly for the images they need with the application of more than 40 million title key words and over a hundred million key word searches – and growing.



The BrightQube Dynamic Mosaic™ elevates the browsing/filtering experience to an entirely new level as well. Its dynamic interface presents the equivalent of up to 60 pages of images simultaneously in a single view. Interactive filters further refine picture search results with intuitive controls available right on screen. These easy-to-use sliders give users the unheard of ability to refine results by price, resolution size or other criteria.

“With BrightQube, the user is the editor, no longer pre-filtered by someone else’s guidelines.” [Click to view the interactive demo](http://www.brightqube.com/media), (<http://www.brightqube.com/media>)

Other easy user interface controls allow users to see the images faster than ever before. Users can move an image around the Mosaic by simply clicking and dragging it. Unlike the conventional processes of the past where users click through thumbnails to view the larger images, BrightQube interactive controls reside on the right of the screen, allowing users to zoom in and out and pan their results further enhancing the selection process.

While in the Mosaic, users can easily access BrightQube's lightbox feature. This feature allows users to create and name multiple lightboxes or, if they don't want to interrupt their creative search, they can let the system automatically create the lightboxes for them.

Art directors, editors, graphic designers and researchers may come from many sectors of the professional creative community – publishing to advertising and design – but they share a common need: to find the perfect image quickly. The team at BrightQube has created a seamless search and retrieval system around the ways in which these professional creatives want to search, evaluate, select and retrieve images, not the other way around

Web 2.0 Enabled: Deep Internet & Industry Experience Applied to Picture Exchange

Not surprisingly, the team developed the concept as a website, not an application. BrightQube expertise encompasses some of the world's leading technology-based companies such as Kodak, Hewlett Packard as well as Internet giants like Yahoo! The depth of experience also extends to the stock photography industry with leaders like Corbis. [For all principal profiles click here.](http://www.cjcstrategists.com/resources/docs/BrightQube_Bios.PDF) (http://www.cjcstrategists.com/resources/docs/BrightQube_Bios.PDF)

Due to this breadth of experience, the BrightQube team was able to harness the collection of open source software embraced by the Internet community. Moreover, the BrightQube developers were able to take the user-centric standards developed for other applications, and apply them to the picture exchange space. For example, they leveraged the immersive, interactive concept akin to that of Google Maps and applied that interaction metaphor to the view of a massive light table. Image results arrive center-weighted, with the most relevant results in the middle. The developers also adopted the reductive filtering techniques of using simple sliders as found on a site such as Kayak.com for user control of the presentation layer. They adapted the power and flexibility of a Flash-based interface but built it in ActionScript. As a result, the BrightQube interface is a spry lightweight performer for responsive search and retrieval. In addition, BrightQube employs the latest buyer/seller marketplace relationship tools so that image purchases can be made in a straightforward e-commerce transaction via credit card or via PayPal. Membership is free; users can simply log onto the BrightQube site, free of charge, and begin purchasing images with no further obligations.

Unleashing A Huge Inventory: Professional and Everyday in One Destination

This wholly unique image exchange experience adds to the richness with which potential buyers approach today's vast online image inventory. They still have the ability to sort through images individually or by collection, comparing collection styles and images with collection overviews posted for review. An extensive file is available for each picture as well, encompassing description, attributes, price and other information.

BrightQube's innovative approach makes all the difference. Users may now see all image results in a single view, and easily locate the perfect picture with interactive controls. The BrightQube library represents the most varied inventory in any single destination. It features over two million images in 37 collections from 22 leading stock photography agencies as well as microstock and independent work.

At the same time BrightQube changes digital imaging for buyers, it represents a milestone for those looking to sell images. The *Dynamic Mosaic* literally unleashes a huge creative inventory that previously went almost unseen by archaic aggregated search results that required dogged perusal of page after page, and eroded productivity with countless results that may or may not have yielded the right image.

To Date The List Of Leading BrightQube Partners Includes:

40260.com, Bananastock, bilderlounge, Blend, Brand X Pictures, Comstock, Comstock Premium, Corbis RF, Creatas, Dreamstime, Dynamic Graphics, Eyecandy, Glow Images, goodshoot, Gulf Images, i love images, image100, InsideOutPix, imageshop, Image Source, Juice Images, Latin Stock, Liquid Library Value, moodboard, No Strings, OJO, PhotoAlto, PhotosIndia, Pixland Collection, Pictal, Polka Dot, Purestock, Red Chopsticks, Sugar and Gold, ThinkStock, Upper Cut Images, Westend61, zefa royalty-free, ZenShui. [To read more click here: \(http://www.brightqube.com/brandagencies\)](http://www.brightqube.com/brandagencies)

A Fantastic Future: Ongoing User-Centric Commitment

BrightQube has done nothing short of changing the entire picture exchange landscape. As the first fully combined picture retrieval, e-commerce and Web 2.0 platform for images, BrightQube both reflects and leads the ways in which the two billion dollar online image market is growing, including the trends driven by "long tail" supply and demand dictates.

BrightQube is committed to adding to the collections and ongoing innovation of the site. Its ever-increasing picture collection will expand in January 2008 when independent photographers will have the ability to post their collections for sale on the site. BrightQube also will continue to enrich the picture exchange experience, adding increasing user-centric functionality over time. The ability to select images by color and other nuances for "more like this" selection options, for example, will soon be available.

For more information, go to www.brightqube.com

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