

Building Flickr Applications with PHP



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Flickr Features

Flickr is truly the Swiss Army Knife of photo-sharing sites. You can use it in so many ways that all of the features might seem overwhelming to a first-time user. In this chapter we will walk through the basics of using Flickr and focus on the core functionality. Our goal is to take a wide view of all the ways that you might want to use Flickr for your own photos and to survey the possibilities.

Hello, Aloha, G'day, Namaste, Hoi, Hala, Hola

Before you can use Flickr, you will first need to create an account with Yahoo!, Flickr's parent company. To do this, simply point your browser to <http://www.flickr.com> and click the red "Sign up!" button on the right-hand side of the screen. You will be asked to fill out a few basic pieces of information and to agree to the terms of service.

Once you've created your account and you first log on to Flickr, you will be greeted by a headline that says "hi" in one of many languages, reflecting the global nature of the Flickr site and its users (Figure 2-1).

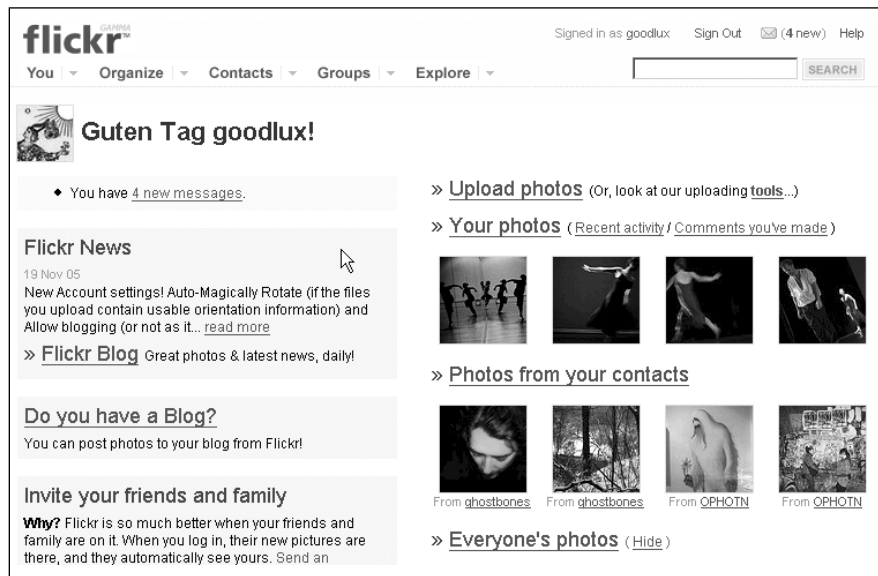


Figure 2-1. Flickr home page

Next to the greeting you see your own icon, which by default is a stodgy, humdrum, blocky face (Figure 2-2).



Figure 2-2. *Stodgy icon*

You'll probably want to change that to something more representative right away. Perhaps a photo of yourself or an image of something you hold close to your heart. Doing this is simple. Hover your cursor over your buddy icon, open the context menu using the arrow that appears, and click the Your Buddy Icon link. You will be taken to the screen shown in Figure 2-3.

Figure 2-3. *Editing your buddy icon*

Next you'll need an image to use. Flickr will resize any image you give it to 48×48 pixels, so you don't have to fret if your image isn't cropped to the right size, but you'll want to pick an image that is pretty much square in shape. You have four options as far as where the actual image comes from. If you've already uploaded some photos, you can pick an image from your photostream (more on photostreams in the Photostreams and Syndication Feeds section). Otherwise, you can provide Flickr with a URL of an image that is out on the web somewhere, you can choose an image on your computer, or you can just click Browse and select a ready-made 48×48 image on your computer. Once you've done this, you will notice that the gray blockhead is gone and has been replaced with your new image.

Now that your account has a little more personality, you might want to go and have a look at some of your account options. To do so, click on You ► Your Account link at the top of the page. The "Your account" page is the central control panel for all of the settings on your account (Figure 2-4).

From here you can make adjustments to the way your photos are displayed, who's allowed to see them, and how they are licensed. You can also set up a blog or blogs that you will be sending photos to and get an email address to use for photo uploads. You can use the privacy settings to control how your personal information is displayed and add more information about yourself to your profile. We'll explore these options in greater detail, but for the moment, let's flip back to your home page by clicking the You link in the upper-left corner of the page.

Your account

You have a Flickr **Pro Account**. It expires on **2nd February, 2009**.
You can [extend your Pro Account here](#), or [view your order history](#).

Photo Settings

- **Uploading Tools**
We have a number of uploading tools that you can install on your computer to do batch photo uploads.
- **Uploading by email**
Did you know you can email your pictures directly into your photostream in Flickr? Or post directly to your moblog by email?
- **Default Photo Privacy**
Specify who can see your photos at a default level. This will apply to all the photos you upload to Flickr.
- **Allowing Downloads**
Configure who can see the option to download larger versions of your photos.

Privacy Settings

- **Notifications from Flickr**
You can control how and when you receive email notifications from Flickr.
- **Your privacy**
You can control how much of your profile information shows to people who use Flickr.

Personal Information

- **Your profile**
Tell people a little (or a lot) about yourself.
(Or, [view your profile page as it looks to everyone else](#).)
- **Your Yahoo! preferences**
This is just a handy link for Yahoo! peeps to get to your Y! preferences

Figure 2-4. Your account settings

Adding Photos

Now that you've customized your account, you will want to upload some photos. The most straightforward way to do this is by clicking You ► Upload Photos. This will take you to the "Upload photos to Flickr" page (Figure 2-5).

Upload photos to Flickr

You have used

0%

of your upload capacity for this month.

(You have a limit of 2 GB per month.)

Your upload limit is measured in bandwidth, or "throughput", not actual storage space.
[More information...](#)

Uploading tools

We provide tools for Mac and Windows to make it easy to upload a batch of photos all at once.

Find the image(s) you want on your computer

1. [Browse...](#)
2. [Browse...](#)
3. [Browse...](#)
4. [Browse...](#)
5. [Browse...](#)
6. [Browse...](#)

Add tags for ALL these images [?]

Choose the privacy settings [?]

☐ Private
☐ Visible to Friends
☐ Visible to Family
☒ Public

UPLOAD

Or, [cancel and return to your photos](#).

Figure 2-5. Individual upload screen

Click the Browse button and select an image file from your computer to upload. You can repeat this several times if you have a few files that you want to upload. You can also tag these photos by writing in a few descriptive words to categorize the photos. (We'll look at tagging in greater detail in the "Tagging Photos" section later in this chapter.) Once you've located your photos, click UPLOAD to begin sending your photos to Flickr.

You are probably going to want to upload more than just a few photos at a time. Fortunately, Flickr offers an array of third-party tools for managing your uploads from different platforms. If you are using a Mac or Windows, you can use Uploadr (Figure 2-6).



Figure 2-6. *Uploading with Uploadr*

Uploadr allows you to drag and drop photos directly from your file system or iPhoto to a window for uploading. You also have the option of tagging the photos that you are uploading, setting permissions (more on that in the "Sharing Your Photos" section), and resizing the photos on the fly.

Also available for the Windows XP platform is a shell extension that allows you to simply right-click the photo in the Windows Explorer to upload it. You can download this extension and Uploadr from the download tools page at <http://www.flickr.com/tools/>.

If you are using a Mac, in addition to Uploadr, you can use an application called "1001" or a plug-in for iPhoto to manage your uploads. If you are using a recent Nokia camera phone, you can post to Flickr via Lifeblog. You simply enter a few details into your phone and you are ready to go.

A final cross-platform option for uploading is to upload by email. Flickr gives each person a customized email address that they can send photos to. This means any operating system or camera phone that supports emails can also be used to send photos to Flickr. You can get an upload email address at <http://www.flickr.com/account/uploadbyemail/>. Again, more information on all of these upload options can be found on the Flickr website at <http://www.flickr.com/tools/>.

Photostreams and Syndication Feeds

If you are on the home page, and you click your browser's Reload button, you will notice that the photos displayed under Everyone's Photos change with each reload. At first glance this might appear to be a random sampling of some of the photos stored in the Flickr site. What you are actually seeing, though, is a window into the photos that were currently being uploaded to Flickr at the very moment you clicked Reload. In other words, you are looking at the latest photos in the Flickr photostream.

Flickr revolves around the concept of the photostream. Each time you upload an image it is added to your own personal photostream in the order it is uploaded. Additionally, your image will appear in the global photostream, instantly visible to users all over the world. See for yourself—upload a photo, then click on the Everyone's Photos link from the home page. If you look through the images, you will see the image you just uploaded, along with photos from everyone else, in the order they were added to the site.

In addition to the pages you see in your browser on the Flickr site, photostreams are also published to the web using standardized syndication formats. Really Simple Syndication (RSS) is probably the most well known of these syndication formats. RSS is a machine-readable XML format that can be used to publish all kinds of information to the web, such as weblogs, news sites, and even podcasts. When information is published using a syndication standard, such as RSS, it is called a feed. So a photostream is also a feed.

If you want an idea of what a feed actually looks like, click the You link. If you scroll all the way to the bottom of the page, you will see a link that reads “Feed.” If you click this, you will see the XML file that makes up an RSS feed (Figure 2-7).

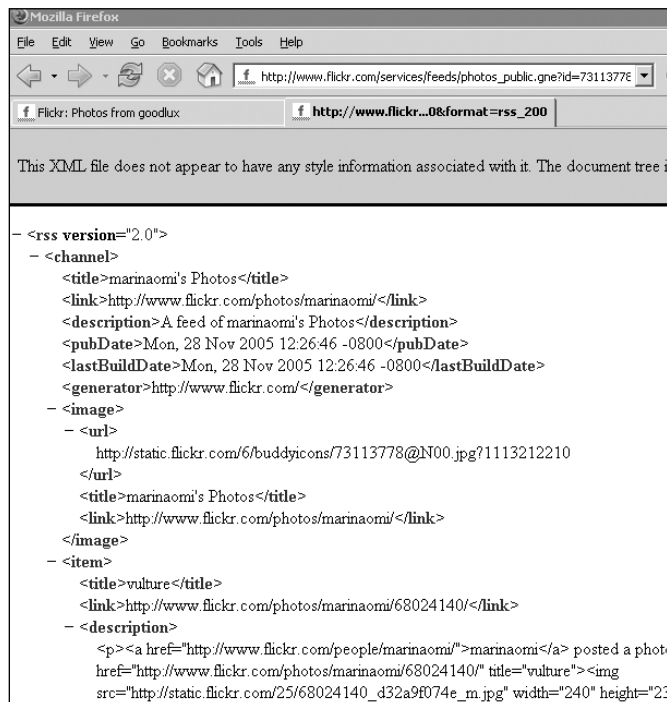


Figure 2-7. An RSS feed viewed in the browser

To make use of feeds you use an application called an aggregator. Aggregators allow you to select different feeds from the web and have them all available in one place. You can subscribe to your favorite newspapers, blogs, and photostreams; easily browse through them; and be notified the minute something new is posted. This is a great way to view the latest photos from your Flickr friends and contacts, and to see them the minute they are posted. If you are using Windows, RSS Bandit (<http://www.rssbandit.org>) or SharpReader (<http://www.sharpreader.net>) are good choices for free aggregators. Try them out.

Note We'll see more on feeds in Chapters 8 and 9.

Sharing Your Photos

Flickr is all about sharing photos. If you want to make your photos accessible to anyone and everyone in the world, it's very easy. You can do this while you are uploading photos: simply select Public from the privacy options, and your photos will be available to others all over the world the moment they upload. If your photo is particularly fetching, it's not uncommon for people to leave their comments about the photo seconds after you have uploaded it. Flickr is definitely the way to go if you want a massive audience for your photos.

Perhaps you aren't that much of an exhibitionist and you want to fine-tune your exposure a bit. Flickr gives you another choice: making your photos private. When you make your photos private, you get a finer degree of control over who can view the images. First of all, you have the option of making the photos completely private, so no one at all can see them except yourself. This is a good choice if you are uploading a bunch of photos, some of which you would like to be public and others you would like to keep away from the general population. After uploading you can selectively make your images public. A second privacy option is to make the photos semiprivate. You have the option of sharing your private photos with an inner circle of friends, your family, or both.

In order to take advantage of the friends and family options, you will need to invite them to check out your photostream, and they will need to join Flickr. To do this, you can click the Contacts ► Invite your Friends link. Enter the names and email addresses of the people you'd like to invite, and check off whether they are friends or family (or just a contact).

When they receive your email and check out your photos, they will automatically be listed on your contacts page. You can get to this page by clicking the Contacts link.

Annotating Photos

Whoever said a picture is worth a thousand words surely never had to find one particular image in a database of millions. Sometimes a single word connected to a photo can be much more valuable than all the photos in a shoebox.

Flickr gives you lots of ways that you can add text to your photos to describe them and make them searchable. Let's look at these options now.

Titles and Descriptions

When you upload a photo, its default title is the original file name of the image. You probably want to come up with a more flavorful title than something like DCIM_0921. Changing the title is very straightforward. Click on the thumbnail of the photos you want to edit to go to the individual photo page. Click on the title, type in your new title, and click the SAVE button. Adding a description is equally easy. Just click on the area under the photo, write a little more about your photo, and click SAVE. You can also add a comment here.

You'll notice that there is an area on the page to enter tags. We will look at tags in more detail a little further on in this chapter, but for now, feel free to enter a few words to describe or categorize the photo: perhaps a friend's name, an event, or the camera you used to take the picture.

If you have a lot of photos that you want to title and describe but you don't feel like clicking through each photo individually, you can edit the photos as a batch. Click the You link near the top of the page. This will bring you to the "Your photos" page, where you can see the latest view of your photostream. Here you can click on and edit the titles and descriptions as you could in an individual photo's page. You can't, however, add comments. Make the changes you want, and don't forget to click SAVE for each photo you edit.

Notes

Now that you've given titles and descriptions to some photos, let's take a look at another way you can add information to your photos: using notes. Arguably one of the coolest interface features of Flickr is the ability to select a portion of the photo and attach a note to it. Click on any photo thumbnail to go to the individual photo page. Along the top of the photo, just under the title, you will see a selection of icons. Click the ADD NOTE icon (Figure 2-8).

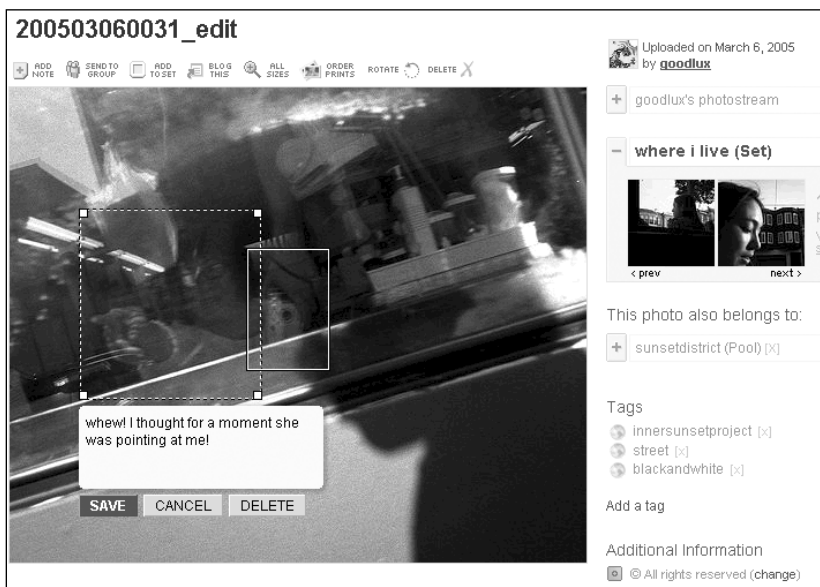


Figure 2-8. *Adding a note to an image*

A small box and area to write a note appears. Use the corners of the box to select a portion of your photo, then type your note into the text area. When you've finished, click **SAVE**, and there you have it, your new note. Now when someone else looks at your photo, they will be able to see the note and the area of the photo that you've drawn their attention to.

Unlike titles and descriptions, which only you can edit, photos are a collaborative feature, so others can leave notes on your images if you allow it. By default, your contacts, friends, and family are allowed to leave notes. If you want to change this setting, you can do so from the **You ► Your Account ► Default Photo Privacy** page.

Comments

Another collaborative feature for annotating photos is the comments feature. Using comments, you can keep a running commentary on your photos, and let others in on what you think of their work. If you scroll down to the bottom of any individual photo page, you will see an area to add comments. Most people love to get response from the work they've posted, so don't be timid; if you see something you like, be sure to take a moment to let the photographer know you like their work.

Favorites

In addition to writing a glowing review of a photo in the comments, another way you can let someone know that you love their work is by making it a favorite. To do this, you click the **ADD TO FAVES** star icon above that perfect photo.

When clicked, the star changes from clear to pink (Figure 2-9) and is now one of your favorites. To see all of your favorites grouped together, click the **You ► Your Favorites** link. After you've been out picking your favorite images for a while, you might be surprised at what a stunning collection you've put together. It's a very good way to learn something about yourself.



Figure 2-9. *The favorites icon*

You can also view other people's favorite photos. This is great way to get to know the tastes of other users, as well as to locate some of the best images that Flickr has to offer. To get to another user's favorites, click on the hyperlink of the user's name. This will take you to a page that is almost exactly the same as the "Your photos" page except that it is the other user's photos. At the top, you will see the Favorites link. Click that to see all of the other person's favorite photos.

Recent Activity

If you want to see the comments, notes, and tags that people have left on your own photos, as well as your images that have been added to someone's favorites, click the **Activity ► On Your Photos** link at the bottom of the page. From the "Recent activity on your photos" page you can select a time frame and see all of the latest activity on your work (Figure 2-10).

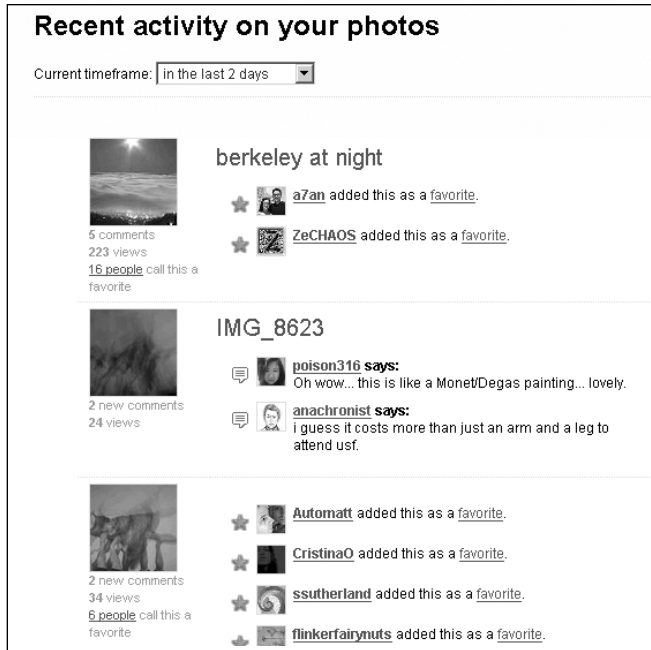


Figure 2-10. *Recent activity on your photos*

Categorizing Photos

In addition to making your photos searchable by adding titles and text, Flickr also has several ways to categorize and to group them.

Tagging Photos

Tagging is one of the most useful features that Flickr has to offer. Tagging photos is a way of categorizing photos using descriptive words. To tag a photo, click on the “Add a tag” link on the photo’s page, then write the tag or tags that describe the photo. Say you want to take all the images you have of your friends, and you want to be able to look at the photos of each friend individually. You could go through each of your photos and tag them as *friend* but also tag them with the name of each individual friend in the photo. So you would have photos tagged as *dan*, *bill*, *susan*, and so on. You can also batch-tag photos as you upload them with Uploadr. Simply set the tags that you want to apply to all the photos, and every photo you upload will be tagged appropriately.

Once you’ve tagged your photos, retrieving them is a piece of cake. Type the following URL into a browser, replacing your user ID and whatever tag you want to look up: `http://www.flickr.com/photos/your_user_id/tags/your_tag/`. For example, `http://www.flickr.com/photos/41258641@N00/tags/beth/`.

The result will look something like Figure 2-11.

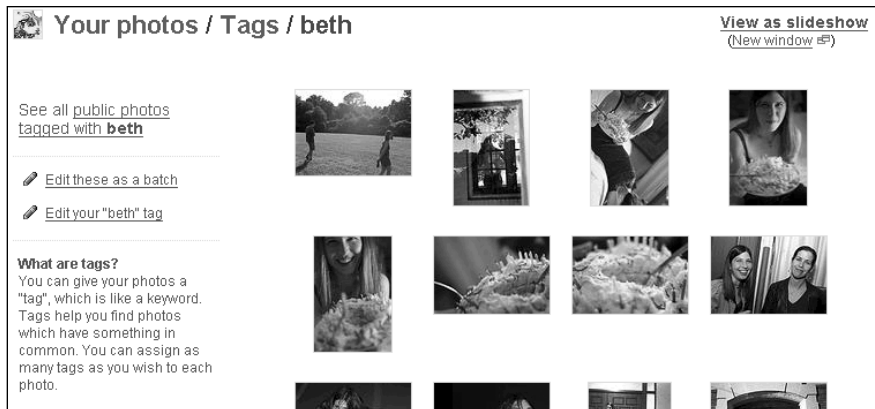


Figure 2-11. Viewing a tag page

You can watch a slideshow of these particular images by clicking the “View as slideshow” link in the upper right-hand corner of the page.

Note If you want to dispense with the user ID section of the URL, you can select a more meaningful path for your photos. Go to You ► Your Account ► Set up your URL. You can then, for example, assign your screen name as part of the URL instead of your user ID. So `http://www.flickr.com/photos/41258641@N00/tags/beth/` would become `http://www.flickr.com/photos/goodlux/tags/beth/`.

You can also get to your tags by clicking the You ► Your Tags link. This will show the top 150 of your tags on the screen in different sizes (Figure 2-12). The larger the tag, the more times you have used it.

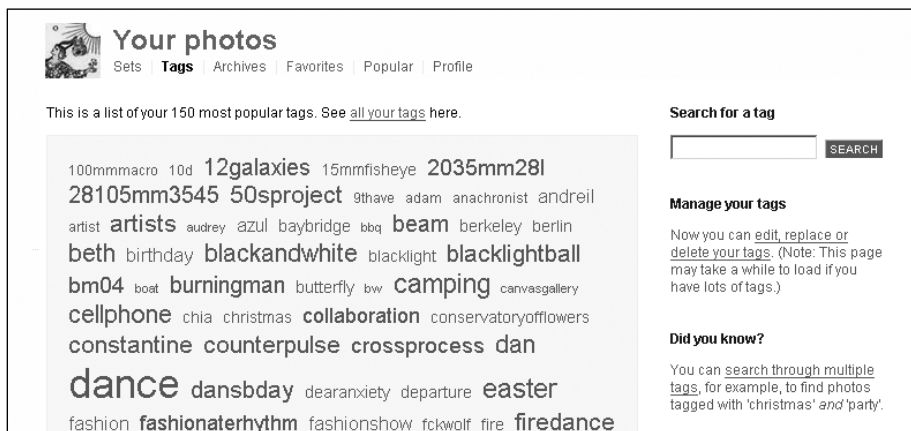


Figure 2-12. Top 150 tags

An interesting feature of tags is that they can be searched globally. While each individual user has their own tags, tags also have a larger role in the group pool. Instead of looking at just your own photos, you can look at everyone's photos for a particular tag. This has some interesting results, because the same words mean different things to different people.

For instance, searching on the tag *downtown* will bring up urban images from cities all over the world. Searching on a name such as *Dave* brings up a sampling of the many faces of Dave. It's quite interesting to see what a particular word means to the world.

To search using tags, use the search box at the top of the page. Type the word you are interested in searching for and click SEARCH. An alternate way to get to the same place is by typing in the following URL, replacing *tag_to_search* with whatever tag you want to look up: http://www.flickr.com/photos/tags/tag_to_search/. You can also click on Explore ► Popular Tags. This takes you to the Tags page, where you can see the most popular tags for the past day, week, and of all time.

There are two features on an individual tag page that are noteworthy. First, if you scroll down to the bottom of the page, you will see a list of tags that are related to the tag that you searched for. So if you are looking at the tag *barcelona*, related tags are *sunset*, *graffiti*, and *roof*. There are also “see also” tags, which in the case of Barcelona are *sabatlló*, *metro*, *batllo*, *music*, *sign*, and *boqueria*. Second, on the Tags page there is the clustering feature, represented by a link on the left-hand side of the tag's page.

Clusters are groups of words that have an affinity for each other. For instance, when you tag your own photos, you might find that when you tag a photo with *birthday*, you often also tag it with *party*. The same thing happens globally. In fact, if you look at the *birthday* tag, you will see that *party*, *cake*, *friends*, *family*, *candles*, and *food* are all part of the same cluster.

Tags and clustering are extremely interesting and incredibly useful features. So much so that we've devoted a whole chapter to the subject. For more information on how you can put tags to use, take a look at Chapter 7.

Sets

In addition to tagging, another option for categorizing is to use sets. Sets allow you to group your photos by a common theme and make them easily accessible from your main photo page or from your sets page. Unlike tags, sets allow you to select a main photo to represent the whole set and to add a description for the entire set.

To create a new set, go to the main page for the photo you want to add to the set. From the icons above the photo, click the ADD TO SET icon. If you haven't created a set before, you will be asked to create a new set. If you've done this before, you can click the “create a new set” link if none of your existing sets fits the bill (Figure 2-13).

Enter a title and description for the set in the text areas that appear, and your set is created. You will notice that when you click the ADD TO SET icon in the future, your new set appears on the list. Next time you want add a photo, it's as easy as clicking the drop-down menu and picking the set.



Figure 2-13. *Creating a new set*

To view your new set, go to your main page by clicking the You ► Your Sets link, which takes you to your sets page (Figure 2-14). Here you will see all of the sets that you’ve created. You have the option of editing any particular set, which allows you to easily remove photos, tag them, or change their privacy settings.

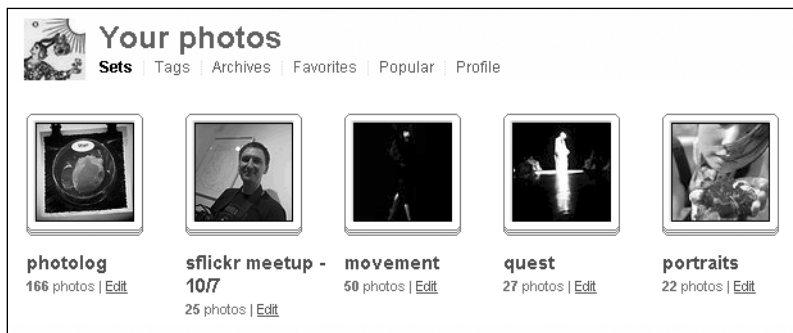


Figure 2-14. *Main set page*

Groups

Sets are really useful when categorizing your own photos, but what if you want to have a collaborative effort where you create a set of images with other people? One way to do this would be to use a special tag. For instance, if you want to gather together all of the images from a wedding, you can have all of the photographers upload their photos and use a special tag, say *janeand-joeswedding*. When you search for this tag, all of the images from the wedding will come up. The problem with this is that any Flickr user can add any tag to a photo. So it would be possible for some other user to use the same tag, and their photos would also appear in the tag search.

Groups solve this problem. They allow users to make collaborative efforts but still maintain control over the images that are added to the group. They also allow for a group discussion about whatever topics the group members care to talk about.

Flickr has existing groups for pretty much every kind of photo that you can think of. There are groups for photos of Waffle Houses, UFOs, and belly buttons. Before starting a new group, you might want to check first to be sure that there isn't already a group out there with the same kinds of images.

If you do manage to come up with a group idea that no one else has come up with, you can create your own group and invite others, and they can add their own photos to the group. The result is a collection of photos, called a pool.

Setting up a group is easy, but first you will have to decide who you want to be allowed to join the group. You have three options here. First, you can make the group private, where only the people you invite are allowed to add and view photos. This is useful when you want to share photos with your friends and family, but you don't really want to make those images public to everyone. Second, you can make the group semipublic, where anyone can view the photos, but only the people you invite can add material. This comes in handy when you want to have a lot of control over the content that is added to the group, but you want to have the photos visible to the world. Third, you can make the group completely public, where anyone can join and add images to the group, and anyone can see the images. This is the best option for projects that require input from a lot of people.

To set up your group, click on the Groups link at the top of any page. This takes you to the "Your groups" page, where you can see the groups that you administer, the groups that you belong to, and the groups that you've been invited to join. From here you can create a new group by clicking the "Create your own group" link. Next, choose who you want to be allowed to join the group. You then enter a name for the group, a description, and what you want to call the members and administrators of the group. Once complete, your group is created, and you will be taken to the administration page of the group. You can change the role names for members and administrators. For instance, if you had a group for concert photos, you might want to call the members "fans" and the administrators "security." You get the idea. You can also set the URL for the group. This is a web page that will display the group page when you visit <http://www.flickr.com/groups/alias/>, where *alias* is the custom name you choose for this URL. To see the group image pool, you can go to <http://www.flickr.com/groups/alias/pool/>.

Now that you've created your group, you will want to invite others. To do this, click on the Invite link from the main group page. You can invite your existing contacts or someone who has never used Flickr before by giving their email address.

Next, you'll want to put some photos in your group. This is as easy as adding a photo to a set. Go to any of your individual photo pages, then from the icons across the top of the photo click the SEND TO GROUP icon. A drop-down menu with all the groups you belong to appears. Select the group you want to add your photo to, and you're done. The photo will now appear in the group pool.

Since you created the group, you are by default an administrator of the group. As an administrator, you have some special powers that you should be aware of. In addition to being able to change the group icon and other metadata about the group, you also have control over the group privacy level. These settings allow you to control who can see the group photo pool and discussion. These sections can be made public or private at your discretion. You also have the power to "kick" users or "ban" them from the group. Kicking a user temporarily removes them from the group, and they can rejoin at any time. This is a good way to warn a user that

their content or comments are not wanted. Banning a user removes a user from the group, and they cannot rejoin the group until you choose to remove the ban. This is a good tactic to use if a member of your group has repeatedly posted unwanted content to the group.

To kick a user or ban them from a group, first go to the group's main page. Click the group's name, and you will see a link that says "Administration." Now click on the Members link, and you will find the options for kicking and banning users. Use judiciously!

Using Organizr

By now you might be wondering what that conspicuous Organize link at the top of every page is. At this point we've detailed annotating, categorizing, grouping, and editing. What haven't we covered in the organization arena?

When you click the Organize link, you are taken to the Organizr application. Organizr is a Flash-based application that's built into the Flickr site. It allows you to do all of the basic organizing functions in a more user-friendly manner. The only drawback to using it is that it can be a little slower than the main Flickr website, especially if you have a slow network connection or an aging laptop.

Browsing with Organizr

When using Organizr, you are first presented with the Batch Organize window. You can now drag photos into the Batch Organize window to work with them. Alternatively, you can use the "Jump to date" link to select images from a particular time period. If you want to use the date taken instead of the date uploaded to review your photos, you can check the More options ► Date Taken radio button.

The photos you've selected will show up in the main Batch Organize window (Figure 2-15).

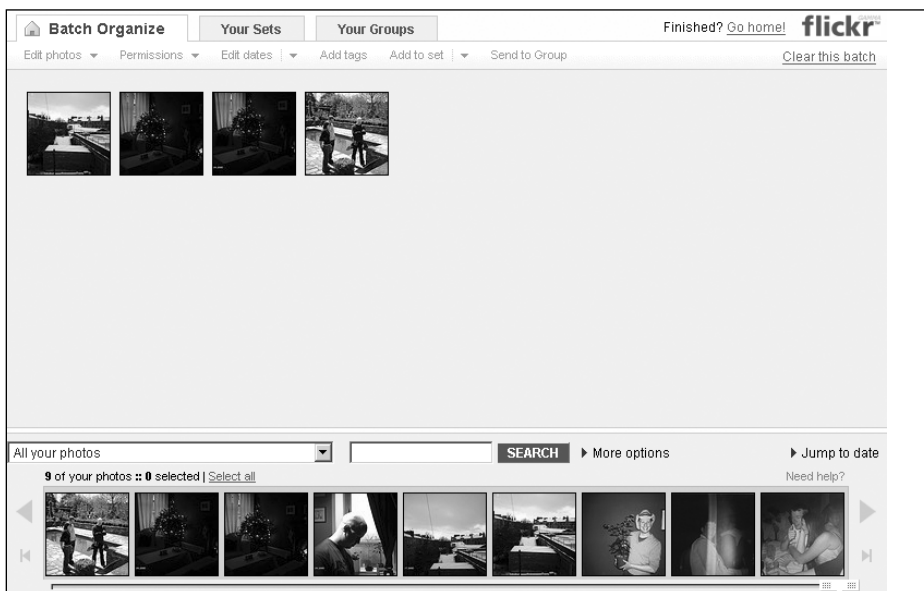


Figure 2-15. Batch Organize window of Organizr

When you double-click on any particular image, a new window in the Organizer will open, dedicated to just that photo (Figure 2-16).



Figure 2-16. *Individual photo page in Organizer*

This individual photo page gives you a place to change the title, description, and tags for the photo. You can also adjust the privacy settings. Remember to click **SAVE** to preserve any changes you've made.

Searching and Batch Operations with Organizer

You can also use Organizer to find photos. You can type in the tags or words that you want to search for in the search box at the bottom of the page. Click **SEARCH**, and photos matching your criteria will appear in the search window.

Notice the row of buttons at the top of the Batch Organizer window. Clicking these will allow you to perform the appropriate operations on the photos that you have just retrieved: adding them to a set, adding a tag or tags to them, changing permissions on them, or even deleting them.

Working with Sets in Organizer

At the top of Organizer, you will notice there is a tab called **Your Sets**. If you click that tab and then double-click on one of the sets, photos from the set will start loading into the page (as shown in Figure 2-17). Double-clicking any of the photos will load the individual photo in a new window.

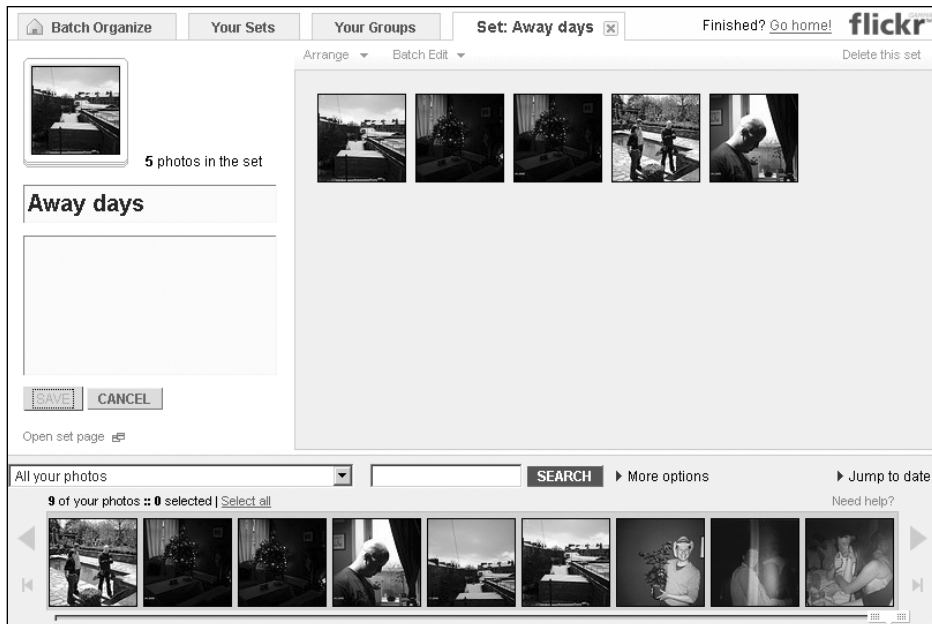


Figure 2-17. Working with sets in Organizer

Also, if you click a photo in the set, you'll notice that you can move the photo to a different location in the set. This will change the order of the images in the set. You can also drag an image to the lower pane of the Organizer if you want to remove it from the set, but this does not delete the image. (The photo bar will be replaced with the text "Drop a photo here to remove it from the set.") You can also drag new images from the main photo bar into the set, which is much easier than going through each photo individually.

You can also speed up adding photos to sets by holding down the **A** key (for add), and clicking the photo. This is useful when you are adding a bunch of photos to the set. Similarly, you can use the **R** key with a click to quickly remove a photo from a set. Using the Batch Edit button at the top of the set's page, you can easily add tags to all the photos in a group, change permissions of the photos, or change the date the images were taken.

Working with groups in Organizer is similar to working with sets, but there are some differences. When you click on the Your Groups tab, you will see a list of all the groups that you have permission to add images to. Click on the "Open group page" link to see thumbnails of all the images in the group. As with sets, you can drag new images into the group. However, you can remove images from the group only if you are an administrator of the group. This should be done with caution, as you could be removing someone else's photo. You can remove photos only from a group's page and not in Organizer.

Blogging with Flickr

Flickr makes a great back end for storing images for your blog. Through the Flickr web interface, it's easy to take any of the photos that you have uploaded and to post them to your blog. You'll need to do a little setup first.

Go to your account settings page by clicking the **You ► Your Account** link. From there, select the “Your blogs” link. This takes you to the administration page for your blogs (Figure 2-18). Click “Set up your blog.”



Figure 2-18. *Blog administration page*

Select the type of blog you use from the drop-down menu, whether it be Blogger, Movable Type, WordPress, or one of the others. Click next and enter the API endpoint (this is the URL that Flickr uses to communicate with your blog), and your blog username and password. That's all you need to do, and you can now post directly from Flickr to your blog.

Once you've set up your blog, it's easy to add images. Go to the main photo page for the image that you want to add to the blog, then click the **BLOG THIS** icon just above the photo (Figure 2-19).

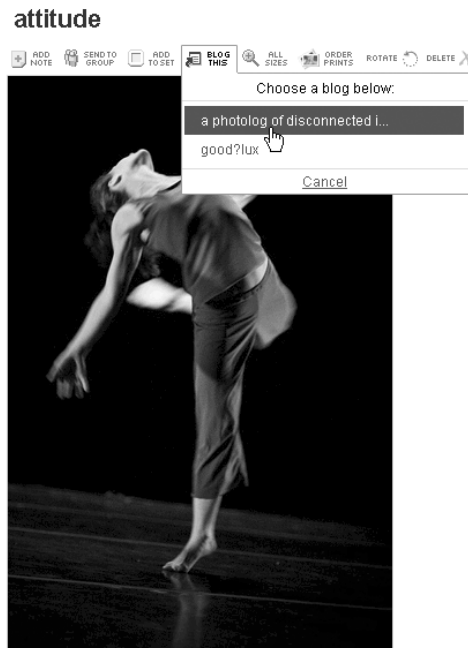


Figure 2-19. *Adding an image to your blog*

If you've configured more than one blog to use with Flickr, you will see each one listed on the drop-down menu. Click the blog you want to post to, then type the comments you want to show up in the entry. Click Post, and your image will appear in your blog with a reference back to the original photo page in Flickr (Figure 2-20).

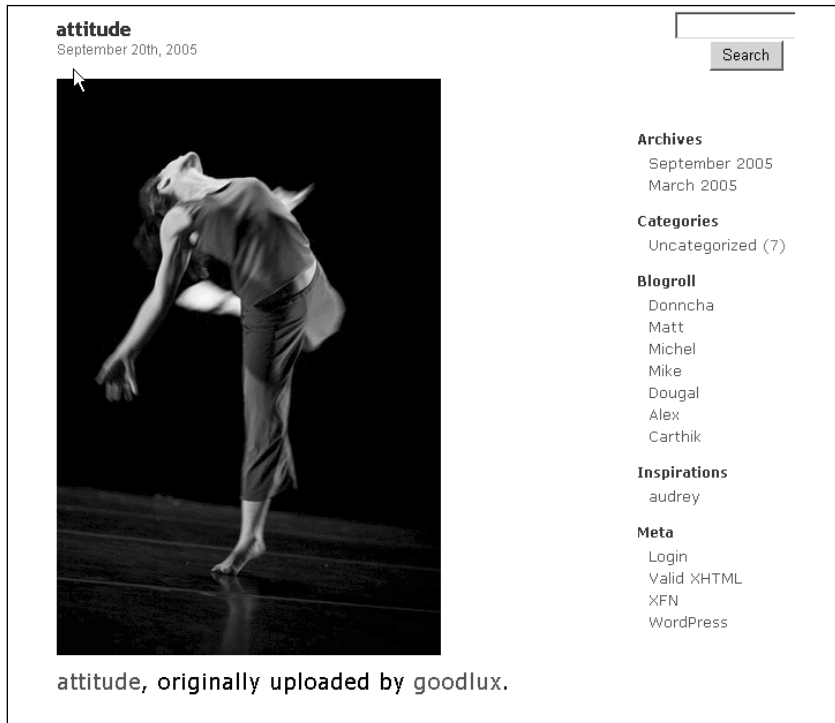


Figure 2-20. *The new image in your blog*

You can also set up Flickr to work as a moblog, or mobile blog, where images from your phone go directly to the web.

Programming with the Flickr API

In addition to all of the great features we've looked at in the chapter, there is one core functionality of Flickr that makes it stand out by far from the other photo sites on the web: it's programmable. Flickr uses an open application programming interface (API), which allows third parties to create applications that directly access the images and information stored on Flickr.

The rest of this book is dedicated to teaching you how to use PHP 5 to access Flickr. It is important to note, however, that PHP 5 is not the only language you can use to do this kind of programming. Far from it: Flickr has an API for all the popular languages, including Java, Flash ActionScript, .NET, Perl, and Python, as well as others. You can learn more about the API as well as see some of the third-party applications that have already been created at <http://www.flickr.com/services/>.

Summary

In this chapter we took a look at the core functionality provided through the Flickr website. We looked at uploading and editing photos, using grouping and categorization, and integrating Flickr photos into your blog. In the next chapter we will take a whirlwind tour of the PHP language as a whole. Those of you who are unfamiliar with PHP can learn to recognize features in the PHP language that will be needed to follow the examples presented later in the book.

