

Imaging services on social media and mobile platforms

Ecce Terram publishes new software solutions

Ecce Terram, the globally operating digital imaging solutions company headquartered in Atlanta, GA, USA and Oldenburg, Germany, has introduced new software solutions that feature outstanding cross-media capabilities. The Version 2 of the company's Photo2lab Online Client software for online photo processing and ordering provides seamless social media integration and fully supports open standards like HTML5. And a brand new photo book app for Facebook enables print services providers to turn the 100+ billion images on the world's most popular social network into output.

Launched just a few weeks after Adobe's announcement to abandon its Flash player for mobile platforms, Version 2 of the Photo2lab Client covers the complete range of photo products – from prints, posters, and canvas right through to photo gifts and personal print products such as photo books, postcards, and photo calendars. Based on an award winning (“PMA Retailer Hot Pick 2010”) software architecture, it supports HTML5, the next-generation open web standard that is currently rapidly reshaping the way content and services are presented online.

“For large retail chains and photo service providers, the launch of our new Photo2lab Online Client sends a clear message,” says Frank Simon, President and CEO of Ecce Terram USA. “They will be able to offer the full range of modern photo products and mobile ease-of-use that today's customers demand. Due to Ecce Terram's strong commitment to HTML5, they will also be able to avoid the costly burden that comes with outdated or highly proprietary mobile technology platforms.”

By 2013, the customer base for photo services and products will have gone mobile, predicts Simon, pointing to recent industry surveys. With the launch of the new Photo2lab Online Client, Ecce Terram joins the ranks of companies – the largest include Apple, Google and Facebook – who see HTML5 as the technology platform that will dominate the way online media are used and interacted with, for years to come.

According to Ecce Terram, recent surveys indicate that 2012 will be year where worldwide sales of smartphones and tablet computers will surpass those of desktop and notebook computers. “You don't want to bet your company's photo business on

Ecce Terram's Facebook app “Share your photostory” makes it easy to create photo books directly from Facebook albums. The app is available as a white label solution for print service provider.

developer solutions that support outdated, or esoteric proprietary platforms,” says Simon. “If you do that – within 18 months, you are likely to reach less than 50 percent of the online users your company should reach.”

Due to the rapid recent shift in the online and mobile technology field, many large providers of photo processing and product services, like drugstore chains and large electronic retailers worry about how to protect their existing investments, while being still able to develop new product lines. Industry analysts familiar with the photo services market like Frank Baillargeon, founder and president of F/22 Consulting, agree with Ecce Terram's assessment: the safest and most cost-efficient solutions will have to fully support the HTML5 standard.

“HTML5 will make it far easier for photo retailers and their service providers to develop and deploy critical cross-platform mobile applications,” says Baillargeon, whose Eagle, Idaho-based firm provides market research and consulting services to the photo industry.

According to Baillargeon, the combination of quality image capture and immediate access to satisfying photo product shopping experiences on mobile devices “can and should represent massive revenue growth opportunities for retailers.”

New photo book app on Facebook

For service providers who want to take the billions of images in social media platforms into output, Ecce Terram has developed the new photo book app “Share your photostory” for Facebook. The white-label application enables members of the social network to create and order photo books from their favorite photo services provider, which are generated directly from a Facebook photo album.

According to photo industry surveys, most of the more than 800 million Facebook members use the social network to store and share digital photos with family members, friends and co-workers, using the platform's “Photo Album” feature. The custom brandable app developed by Ecce Terram now clears the way for large retailers and photo services to generate new photo book orders from a so far under-



developed source. “Facebook has become the premier destination for consumers to share and store their photo memories,” says Frank Simon, President and CEO of Ecce Terram USA. “For retail chains and photo processing services, the white-label version of our photo book app for Facebook could well be the key to unlock the huge potential of this market.”

The new app is backed by Ecce Terram's long-standing experience with large-scale software deployments for the photo industry. Order processing is handled by Ecce Terram's Photo2lab CentralHub middleware. The software facilitates complete solutions from photo ordering to processing in commercial labs, and also supports standard software installations, as well as customized solutions for large photo processing centers.

Ecce Terram positions its photo book app for Facebook as a logical addition to the company's order channel solutions for desktop, online, mobile and kiosk platforms. For large retail chains with the Photo2lab infrastructure already in place, configuration and deployment of the new app to work with their existing order processing system can be completed within a matter of days, the company said. The German version of the photo book app for Facebook has already been successfully tested during the strong start phase of Germany's holiday shopping season.

Facebook members who install the white label version can simply select an album on their Facebook page, choose a background color and pick an image frame. Once they have selected the pictures, they may add short text comments (optional), define the sort order and determine the cover photo. Finally the photo book is ordered – all from within Facebook.

“By offering the new Ecce Terram photo book app, a customer can now enable consumers to create thoughtful, elegant photo book gifts, when and where it's most convenient for them – on Facebook,” Simon added. “For consumers, it allows them to free their photos from the fleeting digital domain, and create lasting gifts. For Ecce Terram customers, we expect it to significantly increase order volumes.”