

Photo Gallery Options for Websites

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December 9, 2007

It seems like almost all professional websites can use a photo gallery for a reason or another. For example, my interior designer client wants a photo gallery to showcase photos of her projects, my children boutique client wants a photo gallery to display pictures of some of her products, my non-profit organization wants a photo gallery to show pictures of events and members to give their website a more friendly look and my city club wants a photo gallery to show pictures of their facility and dining offerings.

So, how can you create a photo gallery for a website?

There are many different options. And the best option might be different for each website depending on the requirements. For example, for the non-profit group I used Flickr while for the children boutique I used CoffeeCup.

This article provides a review of 8 different photo gallery options and gives a comparison of some of their functionalities and features. The article is not a how-to create the photo gallery with these tools, since the process in most cases is straightforward and is documented elsewhere.

1. Photoshop

Description: Creating a Web Photo Gallery is one of Photoshop automated tasks. You'll need to load all the images that you like to add to one folder and specify another as the destination. Several gallery styles are available including a couple of slideshows. Photoshop will produce several HTML pages, including an HTML page for each photo as well as a thumbnail page. To add caption to each photo, you'll need to access the corresponding HTML page and change the code.

The raw photo gallery that Photoshop produces is very basic. However, since all the images are displayed in HTML files, you can use CSS to improve the look.

Cost: \$649 for Photoshop CS3

URL: <http://www.adobe.com/products/photoshop/index.html>

Demo:

<http://funkymonkeysc.com/photogallery/Photoshop%20Photo%20Gallery%20for%20Funky%20Monkey/index.htm>

Admin: No.

Albums: No.

Animation: yes, with the Slide Show styles.

Music: No.

Technical Support: Adobe (provider of Photoshop) has great product support and extensive online and offline documentations.

2. Dreamweaver

Description: Dreamweaver can automat the task of creating a photo album. For details on how to use Dreamweaver to create a Web Photo Album, see:

<http://webdesign.about.com/b/2007/11/27/you-have-lots-of-options-for-web-photo-albums.htm#gB3>. As with Photoshop, Dreamweaver creates several HTML pages including one for each image and one for the index images, which are displayed as thumbnails in a table. As with Photoshop photo gallery, the look can be improved using CSS.

Cost: \$399

URL: <http://www.adobe.com/products/dreamweaver/>

Demo:

<http://funkymonkeysc.com/photogallery/Dreamweaver%20Photo%20Gallery%20for%20Funky%20Monkey/index.htm>

Admin: No.

Albums: No.

Animation: No.

Music: No.

Technical Support: Adobe (provider of Dreamweaver) has great products support and extensive online and offline documentations.

3. CoffeeCup Flash Photo Gallery 5.6

Description: This is a desktop software. It's easy to install. Has a very elegant user interface. Very intuitive to use: Did not need to read any documentation to be able to create the albums and add the photos. Took 5 minutes to download, install and start creating albums. The slideshow it creates is very elegant and easily customizable- it even allows adding background music and sound effect for the slideshow transition (five options available including: Fade In, Scroll from Top/bottom/left/Right). The software even allows uploading the album directly to a Web server. The company website is very informative and customer service is highly accessible providing phone numbers and email forms. The gallery can be uploaded as stand-alone HTML pages or can be incorporated into existing website's pages.

Cost: \$34.00. Free trial available for 21 days.

URL: <http://www.coffeecup.com/photo-gallery/>

Demo:

<http://funkymonkeysc.com/photogallery/CoffeeCup%20Flash%20Photo%20Gallery/funkymonkey.html>

Admin: yes.

Albums: yes.

Animation: yes.

Music: yes.

Technical Support: Toll Free, Sales Hotline, Fax, Office Hours, Contact Form.

4. PhotoFlow by FlashLoaded

Description: This is a Flash extension (or component) that creates a photo gallery, which displays multiple images with a stack effect, perspective and reflection. The images can be flipped by clicking on a specific image in the stack, using the supplied skinnable

scrollbar, or scrolling the mousewheel. Images can be added or changed directly in the Component Inspector, through ActionScript or using an external XML file.

Cost: AS2 version: \$59.95. AS2 & AS3 version: \$79.95. No Free Trial version.

URL: http://www.flashloaded.com/flashcomponents/photoflow/?id2=kirupa_photoflow

Demo: http://www.flashloaded.com/flashcomponents/photoflow/?id2=kirupa_photoflow

Albums: No.

Admin: No

Animation: Yes.

Music: No.

Technical Support: No contact information provided. Only “support forum” that requires registration.

5. Flash Photo Gallery (for Dreamweaver) by Alvena.

Description: Flash Photo Gallery is a Dreamweaver extension that creates a Flash photo gallery in a customizable table; you can set number of rows and columns and adjust measurements and appearance of the cells.

Cost: \$24.75. No free trial version.

URL: <http://www.alvena.de/ext/gridgallery.html>

Demo: <http://www.alvena.de/ext/gridgallery.html>

Admin: No.

Albums: No.

Animation: Yes

Music: No.

Technical Support: Phone, Email, Support, and contact form.

6. SimpleViewer by Airtight

Description: SimpleViewer is a server-side PHP application that creates a Flash photo gallery. For administration features allowing adding and removing photos and customizing the gallery, you can use SimpleViewerAdmin. This option requires installing the application on the hosting server, which might require the involvement of a technical support member of the hosting service provider.

Cost: Free.

URL: <http://www.airtightinteractive.com/simpleviewer/>

Demo: <http://kjainteriors.com/simpleviewer/index.php>

Admin: Yes using SimpleViewerAdmin

<http://www.redsplash.de/projects/simplevieweradmin/>

Animation: Yes

Music: No

Technical Support: (for SimpleViewerAdmin): No. (Developer no longer support this tool.)

7. Coppermine

Description: Similar to SimpleViewer, Coppermine is a server-side PHP application that requires installation on the hosting server. It allows the viewer to change the theme and add comments for each photo.

Cost: Free.

URL: <http://coppermine-gallery.net/>

Demo: <http://coppermine-gallery.net/>

Admin: Yes.

Albums: Yes.

Animation: Yes.

Music: No.

Technical Support: No contact information. Support Forum with registration.

8. Flickr

Description: Flickr is a photo publishing and sharing tool provided by Yahoo!. It is a good option for non-profit groups and organizations as well as for individual use; however, flickr's tem of use does not permit it for commercial purposes, as such it is not a valid option for most websites. Photo galleries created using Flickr are stored and viewed on the Flickr server and cannot be integrated with website pages.

Cost: Free

URL: <http://www.flickr.com>

Demo: <http://www.flickr.com>

Admin: Yes.

Albums: Yes.

Animation: Yes.

Music: No.

Technical Support: Yes.

Appendix A

Gallery	Cost	Free Trial	Admin	Albums	Animation	Music	Support
Photoshop CS3	\$649	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Dreamweaver CS3	\$399	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
CoffeeCup	\$34	21 days	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PhotoFlow	\$59.9-\$79.95	No	No	No	Yes	No	Forum only
Flash Photo Gallery	\$24.75	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
SimpleViewer	Free	N/A	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Coppermine	Free	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Forum only
Flickr	Free	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes