

Success Story: MoMA New York

The Museum of Modern Art Makes Managing Digital Assets a Masterpiece

MoMA

The Museum of Modern Art

NetXposure's Image Portal helps MoMA create a centralized image repository, preserve its legacy database investment and increase productivity across departments

Founded in 1929, The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York City is the foremost museum of modern art in the world, establishing, preserving and documenting a permanent collection of modern and contemporary art.

MoMA's collection includes more than 150,000 paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints, photographs, architectural models and drawings, and design objects. MoMA also owns over 22,000 films, videos, and media works, as well as film stills, scripts, posters and historical documents.

Maintaining an organized digital record of these assets is paramount to MoMA's standing as one of the world's most reputable education and research centers for modern and contemporary art.

Digital Assets – Fundamental to Achieving MoMA's Mission
Information about MoMA's collection has traditionally been archived in a Museum Collections Management System. The museum archives hold approximately two terabytes of historical and legal documentation on various CDs and hard drives, as well as a digital archive of tens of thousands of photographs, including installation views of exhibitions and images of the Museum's building and grounds.

The archives, and specifically the digital images archives, have grown in numbers and significance over the years. Not only are the images critical to the documentation and preservation of the Museum's collection, but they also play a fundamental role in helping MoMA promote the enjoyment, appreciation, study, and understanding of contemporary art to a wide and growing audience.

"Founded in 1929 as an educational institution, MoMA's mission is to encourage a deep understanding and enjoyment of modern and contemporary art," said Ramona Bronkar Bannayan, Director Collection Management and Exhibition Registration at MoMA. "The documentation and distribution of digital photographs and prints of original artwork to education, research and media partners, as well as for replication for posters, cards and other retail and educational offerings, is essential to this goal."

Challenges – Outgrown Legacy System

As MoMA's collection grew, it realized it had outgrown the image management capabilities of its legacy collections database. MoMA needed a more robust and sophisticated management tool for handling digital images, documents and rich media files. The lack of a modern and centralized image repository created several challenges:

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• **Difficulty Locating Assets.** Staff members from all departments — from curators to marketing and PR to website development and merchandise support — need to access images and media files for projects. With files stored on CDs and hard drives in diverse locations, MoMA estimates that organization-wide their employees were spending upwards of ten percent of their time looking for images, causing noticeable productivity lags.

• **Cumbersome, Manual Process for Managing Asset Creation and Delivery.** Repurposing images within the legacy system and collaboration among staffers and partners was difficult at best. Many projects required high-resolution image formats that bogged down the system or simply were not supported. Further, the legacy system did not support the Macintosh platform, making it hard for many of MoMA's Mac-based staff members and designers to collaborate efficiently.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Industry: Museum / Non-profit

Organizational Profile:

Founded in 1929, MoMA in New York City is the foremost museum of modern and contemporary art in the world with a collection of more than 150,000 pieces and over 22,000 film and media works.

Challenges:

As MoMA's collection grew, it realized it had outgrown the image management capabilities of its legacy collections database, requiring a more sophisticated management tool for handling digital images, documents and rich media files.

Solution:

- NetXposure Digital Asset Management
- Mac OS X server.
- Apple Xserve RAID

Benefits:

- Easy access to images
- Extends value of legacy system
- Saves about \$200,000 annually in production costs

• **Image Needs Growing at a Fast Rate.** Since the completion of its \$425 million renovation in 2004 which doubled the museum space, MoMA's collection and exhibitions are growing rapidly. The Museum's website has also experienced an increase in visitors and current projects are underway to deliver information and rich media to museum patrons through kiosks and podcasts.

"The bottom line is that our technology strategy is to grow our digital asset collection and to leverage it to better achieve the Museum's mission. With digital assets core to this strategy, we rely heavily on the technology that manages these assets. Image Portal is a fundamental piece to this."

Steve Peltzman, CIO at MoMA

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To address these challenges, MoMA's IT department recognized it needed a digital asset management system (DAM) that would enable it to improve the storage, retrieval and delivery of images and files, and also integrate with its Museum Collections Management System.

Solution – NetXposure

After careful evaluation of several different solutions, MoMA selected NetXposure, a web-based digital asset management solution for managing large libraries of images, documents and rich media files.

One of the most important factors in MoMA's selection was NetXposure's ability to seamlessly integrate with MoMA's existing applications and workflow while delivering powerful workgroup collaboration through a single repository. NetXposure is based on open standard technologies. Its Web Services components and built-in integration with Adobe's imaging technology ensure that the product can tie directly into almost any application. Additionally, features including auto-tasking, check in / check out, versioning, and saved searches enable NetXposure to operate with work-in-progress projects or other custom workflows.

While NetXposure offers solutions on all major platforms including Windows, Solaris, Mac OS X and Linux, one major factor to MoMA's selection was NetXposure's compatibility with the Macintosh platform. Leveraging core Apple Tiger technologies, it is optimized for Open LDAP, WebDAV, Apache Tomcat, and Apache Axis, making it the perfect fit for Mac OS X. Performance and storage capability can be enhanced by running the software on an Apple Xserve or an Xserve RAID.



Museum of Modern Art
in New York

NetXposure's low cost was also significant to MoMA's decision. According to Steve Peltzman, CIO at MoMA, NetXposure delivers similar functionality and features as other solutions on the market but is priced more competitively.

"NetXposure delivers excellent value for the price. In fact, you'd have to pay four times as much for similar capabilities in other products. It's powerful enough to meet our growing image management needs yet isn't front-loaded with unnecessary bells and whistles. Further, NetXposure's willingness to customize the solution to meet our unique workflow was unmatched," says Peltzman.

Benefits – Blending of Old and New Systems to Reduce Costs and Create Value

• **Easy Access to Images.** The centralized repository links images, photos and rich media files with important data that is stored in the Museum Collections Management System, allowing museum staff to quickly and easily find valuable assets.

• **Extends Value of Legacy System.** Linking NetXposure with the Collections Management System makes the legacy database more useful, preserving MoMA's original investment.

• **Increased Productivity.** Web-based collaboration allows departments to create, store, search, and share images more efficiently and effectively.

• **Cost and Time Savings.** Automation of workflow and increased control of assets helps reduce costly re-creation of images and significantly reduce the amount of time departments spend looking for assets. MoMA estimates saving about \$200,000 annually due to the reduction of search and retrieval time for unorganized assets stored in disparate locations.

Looking Ahead – MoMA Expands the Use of NetXposure

With NetXposure serving as the Museum's centralized repository of images, photos and rich media files, MoMA is able to expand the use of its digital assets across multiple channels in the museum and online.

MoMA is in the processes of linking its online collection – an area of the organization's website that receives the most visitors – to the central repository powered by NetXposure. In addition, website development and support teams leverage NetXposure for continual and easy access to images and files, enabling them to expand the use of its online collection and continue to attract users.

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The Museum also plans to leverage NetXposure for its podcast and kiosk programs. The Museum is installing kiosks on the museum floor that will deliver content about exhibits to patrons. NetXposure will manage the organization and delivery of photos, audio and video to these applications.

"The bottom line is that our technology strategy is to grow our digital asset collection and to leverage it to better achieve the Museum's mission," said Steve Peltzman. "With digital assets core to this strategy, we rely heavily on the technology that manages these assets. NetXposure is a fundamental piece to this."

About NetXposure

NetXposure makes software products that empower organizations to efficiently create, manage, distribute, and market digital content. Founded in 1995, NetXposure is headquartered in Portland, Oregon with offices in Tokyo, Japan and Bangalore, India. For more information visit NetXposure's website: www.netx.net or call 503.499.4342.