Describing and Discovering Art through Social Tagging

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Social Tagging

- “tagging” is the process of choosing and assigning terms
- “folksonomy,” is a conflation of folk and taxonomy, and is the collective vocabulary that results from tagging
- “social tagging” is the socio-technical context within which tagging takes place, tags that are supplied and shared by the general public in a common on-line environment
usa, hongkong, london, beach
autumn or fall, night
blue, green, red
cameraphone, canon, Nikon
music

video
dance

of

the
Delicious “Explore Everyone’s Tags”
Delicious search on tags: santafe newmexico
Flicker search on tags: santafe newmexico
Comments and faves

🌟 coal.photography, Norby, victoriabernal, Ellyl, and 37 other people added this photo to their favorites.

coal.photography (42 months ago)
I love the spiral in there -- stunning HDR :) The colours are very natural!

Sellinstix pro (42 months ago)
Gorgeous shot--subtle HDR--and I love the gradient in the sky!

Glen's Pics pro (42 months ago)
Beautiful shot.

Norby pro (42 months ago)
The blue really makes it. All my favorite NM colors in one shot.
-N

victoriabernal pro (42 months ago)
amazing! the blue spiral with the reflection in the windows makes this a beautiful shot.
Flickr geotagging: bridges scotland
Flickr geotagging [http://www.flickr.com/map/]: bridges scotland
Welcome to the Steve Project

Steve is a collaboration of museum professionals and others who believe that social tagging may provide profound new ways to describe and access cultural heritage collections and encourage visitor engagement with collection objects. Our activities include researching social tagging and museum collections; developing open source software tools for tagging collections and managing tags; and engaging in discussion and outreach with members of the community who are interested in implementing social tagging for their own collections.

Steve as Research

The project team is engaged in systematic research into how social tagging can best serve the museum community and its visitors. Our current research project, “T3: Text, Tags, Trust,” a partnership with the University of Maryland’s School, is funded, in part, by a National Leadership Grant for Research from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services. Results of a recently-completed IMLS research project, “Researching Social Tagging and Folksonomy in the Art Museum,” are presented in the Research section of this website. Data collected at http://tagger.steve.museum provides a testbed for researching our hypotheses about social tagging.

Steve as Software

To support our research, the steve team has developed a suite of open source tagging tools. The current version of the steve tagger tool is available at the project’s SourceForge site, and members of the community are encouraged to download and install the tool. At its core, the tagger is a php web application that can publish a basic online collection and record tags. The project has issued a rich API that allows the integration of the tagger tool with existing tools and supports new development efforts. By itself, tagging is not technically difficult, but it is our intention to provide a easily-deployed common platform to allow users to share the costs of future tool development.

Steve in Action

The steve tagger has been implemented in a number of places in a variety of ways. The “Steve in Action” section of the site describes our 2008 National Leadership Grant for Advancing Digital Resources from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services. The goal of this ongoing project is to enhance the functionality of the steve software tools, to encourage the use of social tagging methods in museums of all sizes and types, to develop innovative, “next-generation” tagging interfaces, and to explore cross-collection searching and browsing via the aggregation of tags. The section also showcases some individual deployments of the steve tagger software, and provides links and information.
No Tags, No Metadata

Trant, Jennifer. *Tagging, Folksonomy and Art Museums: Results of steve.museum’s research.*
Don Loper, O Loper, 1906-1972
Woman's Evening Dress and Coat, circa 1958
Silk faille: 1) Center back of dress: 64 1/2 in. (163.7 cm); 2) Center back of coat: 47 1/2 in. (120.6 cm)
Gift of Mrs. Susan Quinn Keck, AC1993.121.1-2
Los Angeles County Museum of Art
Tags for this work:
Cape, Gloves, Red, balloon sleeves, black, black velvet dress, blouson sleeve cape, bracelet, elegant, empire waist, evening, fashion, formal dress, formal silk cape, full length gloves, mannequin, opera, pointy slippers, red cape, style
Don Loper, O Loper, 1906-1972
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“Effects of Background Information and Social Interaction on Image Tagging”

- Group 1 – images with no information
- Group 2 – images plus a short, descriptive title
- Group 3 – images, title, and a URL to the page where the image appeared online
- Stage 1 – none of the participants saw tags from other participants
- Stage 2 – everyone saw the other tags assigned and were encouraged to interact with each other in assigning more
• Objects seen by an individual with no context solicited the least useful tags
• Background information allowed for more specific identification
• Combined knowledge of a group that interacts can help overcome the lack of context
Welcome to Google Image Labeler, a feature of Google Search that allows you to label images and help improve the quality of Google’s image search results.

How does it work?

You’ll be randomly paired with a partner who’s online and using the feature. Over a two-minute period, you and your partner will:

- View the same set of images.
- Provide as many labels as possible to describe each image you see.
- Receive points when your label matches your partner’s label. The number of points will depend on how specific your label is.
- See more images until time runs out.

After time expires, you can explore the images you’ve seen and the websites where those images were found. And we’ll show you the points you’ve earned throughout the session.

Tips:

- You may click the "pass" button if you can’t think of any more labels for an image. If you and your partner both click "pass," you’ll see the next image but receive no points for the passed image.
- You’ll receive more points for matches with more descriptive labels. For example, this image can be described by the labels: sky (50 points), bird (60 points), soaring (120 points), or frigate bird (150 points).

What do you need to participate?

Just an interest in helping Google improve the relevance of image search for users like yourself. If you log in to your Google account, we will keep track of your points for you. You may also enter a nickname, but we do not require either a nickname or a login to participate.

Playing as guest

Start labeling

Today’s Top Pairs
1. MW - guest 16
2. TypesWithHooves - guest 16
3. JBL - guest 15
4. Ana Coppola - guest 15
5. guest - guest 15

All-time Top Contributors
1. DeSoto 123 456789
2. PS 399999
3. Zippy 335784
4. MW 296292
5. FrankD 266666
How does/can social tagging work with traditional controlled vocabulary?

• “Controlled vocabulary can be used to supplement natural language tagging, and natural language tags supplied by users can be used to enrich and extend controlled vocabulary. For example, when a user bookmarks ski resorts with the tag *ski*, the LCSH descriptor *Dry slope skiing* could be added to disambiguate the natural language tag and allow future users to evaluate the appropriateness of the resource” (“Perspectives on Social Tagging,” p. 2392).
Evolving Conversation/Evolving Practice

• Conundrum - natural language keywords can impede discovery
  – Following the tag stream of trusted taggers
  – Pre-defined tags
    • subverting the “wisdom of the crowds”? 

• Stabilizing of vocabulary vs. serendipity of discovery
Selected Sources


