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[Alamy Releases Contributor Event Video](#)

Posted December 3rd, 2008 by Jim Pickerell

Alamy has released a [video of its recent contributor event](#), which was held in London on Nov. 7. The event included a report by CEO James West on the company's plans for 2009 and a question-and-answer session that lasted more than two hours.

Alamy has grown about 13% since the third quarter of 2007. However, for the first time in its history, revenues declined 3% from the second to the third quarter of 2008.

Currently, the U.S. represents about 30% of Alamy's business, but sales support has always been provided from London. In a move to expand U.S. sales, the company has rented office space capable of supporting a staff of about 20 in Brooklyn, New York, and hired the first four sales staff. Alamy expects to open the office in January.

West apologized for lack of progress in selling to the commercial market and emphasized that commercial sales would be a major focus of Alamy efforts in 2009. The first planned step is to segment out the portion of the Alamy collection that is aimed at the commercial market and that offers adequate model and property releases for every image. Initially, participation will be by invitation only on a per-contributor basis. Alamy has already identified a sufficient number contributors that have contractually guaranteed the availability of needed releases and made available between 1.5 million and 2 million images.

Alamy expects to launch the collection in January. At that point, the company will move to expand the collection in stages, when other contributors can provide evidence of robust model and property releases. Eventually, Alamy will require releases to be uploaded onto its Web site as digital files.

In August 2007, Alamy introduced an annotation schema and asked contributors to prioritize keyword information by degree of importance. In a little more than a year, the company has collected information on the following numbers of images:

- Essential keywords – 6,285,559
- Main keywords – 6,174,386
- Comprehensive keywords – 11,584,489
- Captions – 13,509,137
- Descriptions – 5,069,925

West said: "Now is the time to start putting some of this information online and giving you the benefit of having annotated your pictures using this new schema." A new version of the search engine that will change the weightings of the fields in Alamy Rank is expected in early 2009. The new ranking system will elevate the importance of essential keywords, while demoting and possibly eliminating the sensitivity of the descriptions.

Also planned for 2009 is a new home page that will enable customers to narrow their searches using various parameters, such as date, location, illustration or photography and the number of people in the picture. The annotation schema has identified 3,866,148 images without people and 1,759,829 images with the number of people ranging from 1 to over 5.

The first quarter of 2009 will also see the launch of Annotation 2.0, an upgrade to Alamy's annotation software. It will allow contributors to search by pseudonym and show all images that have sold, all images with a certain number of people in them, or all images with a particular keyword. This will make batch adjustments possible and is expected to make the entire process of keywording a lot easier.

Finally, Alamy is planning to introduce a way for photographers with images that are only appropriate for editorial use to supply them in a variety of file sizes and not be expected to rez every image up to 48 megabytes. The average file size currently being delivered is about 20 megabytes.

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