

Alamy pulls Rank

Alamy is testing a new search technology, AlamyRank, which will favour the image suppliers identified by customer search behaviour as the best.

The company has applied for patents for key technologies, is testing AlamyRank on a customer sample and is developing tools to help contributors improve their position in the new hierarchy.

The search engine will favour images which are chosen more, and those which are best captioned and keyworded. Mediocre images, or those with inappropriate keywords, will fall down the ranking.

“We think this is a huge breakthrough in terms of developing a market driven search engine that rewards talent and delivers high-quality images to the customer”, says James West, adding that this is the first of

several search engine improvements planned for the near future.

AlamyRank creates a hierarchy of image suppliers based on the search activity of customers. Alamy records the number of times customers view larger previews and license images relative to the number of times the images have appeared in search results. A second software package, Diversity Algorithm will ensure that no individual supplier dominates any particular search. The Algorithm will disperse the images of even the highest-ranked suppliers so that image buyers see work from other sources before seeing more images from the top-ranked suppliers. West said photographers eventually will be able to tweak their image collections to get the most out of the new system.

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