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Making Web 2.0 more fun than a barrel of sock monkeys

Alex Welch

Darren Crystal
Co-founders
[Photobucket.com](#)

You might have heard some of this “Web. 2.0” buzz. While it’s supposed to be everywhere these days, even the technorati sometimes have a hard time coming up with a concise definition – usually they murmur something nebulous about “Web sites behaving like applications.” According to [Wikipedia](#), “Web 2.0 generally refers to a second generation of services available on the World Wide Web that lets people collaborate and share information online...” *Yawn!*



Maybe Wikipedia should just post a link to this week’s Publisher Spotlight instead. The best way to explain Web 2.0 is by example and Photobucket is a great place to start. It’s a Web service that allows you to upload, store and publish visual digital media – such as photos and video – to any site. It’s like having your own image database, server and media publishing software without the expense or the learning curve. In fact, the image at left was uploaded, resized, stored and published using my own Photobucket account. It took about 37 seconds.



Alex Welch, 29, and Darren Crystal, 35, a pair of engineering gear heads out of the Internet backbone sector, started Photobucket back in 2003 and have spent most of the last three years fine tuning it while watching it grow exponentially. The company now boasts 35 employees and, with 15 million members and with 50 billion image requests monthly, was awarded “Fastest Growing Site” by Nielsen / Netratings in 2005.

Advertising – along with premium subscription services – is key to helping Photobucket be as successful in the boardroom as it is with its users, and Alex and Darren consider contextual advertising an important part of the company’s long-term strategy. They’ve taken advantage of our Network’s Ad Targeting ability, as well as our customer support, to implement Photobucket’s ad serving solution.

Pioneering efforts like Alex and Darren’s are transforming the Web from what for a long time seemed like a giant product brochure into a truly useful, fluid and personal new medium that promises to bring people together, help them communicate, create, collaborate and do business in new and exciting ways – and for less investment than ever before. That’s what Web 2.0 is really about, and contextual advertising is playing a major role in helping its pioneers achieve success.

I wonder what folks like Alex and Darren have in mind for Web 3.0?

– *Michael Mattis, Blog Editor*

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