

trip_pics

a software for building presentations of travel photos as personal maps



Above is a screen shot from the TripPics Flash demo, which takes the viewer step-by-step through the construction and presentation of a typical travel map. In the demo, explanatory texts on-screen describe the interface elements and workflow. Only major interaction and interface elements are illustrated; more elaborate design has been kept for future work.

The following page outlines key design concepts.

TripPics: Key Concepts

Target Group Considerations

The software is intended to be used by mainstream digital camera owners, not professional designers or photographers. The interface concept thus has more of an intuitive game-like feel than a typical production software. Furthermore, a balance between automated tasks and user freedom is necessary to allow an unexperienced user to produce sophisticated presentations without excessive restrictions on creative freedom.

Haptic Interface

In order to provide an intuitive interface and a joyful experience in using the software, all elements of the user interface have been designed to provide visual feedback when used and to behave “naturally”.

Transparency

Movable objects cast a slight shadow to indicate their physicality. Informal objects are drawn slightly transparent.

Relative Indicators

No numerical indicators for quantities like file numbers or sizes have been used. Quantities are indicated in a relative manner, i.e. by the size of a circle surrounding a place as an indicator of the number of photos stored there, readable in relation to the circles surrounding other places.

Automatic Data Usage

The software could use the date stamps of the digital files to calculate the time periods spent in certain places. In future versions, an automatic mapping could be generated by GPS data stored in the headers of the image files. At this time, the journey map is laid out manually, by placing spots (pins) on a map. Map images would be provided with the software as a collection covering the entire world. Also, custom maps could be imported. These are adapted with an automatic filter to a certain pre-defined look.

Interface Elements

“PhotoMaps”

Photos taken on journeys represent a personal link to the places visited. The software provides means to use these places as a way to organize photo collections and to present them to other viewers.

“Tabs”

Tools and tabs behave contextually: they fade or move away when not needed in a certain context. There are various ways of bringing them on screen, like approaching the screen-edges, clicking the mouse, or pressing the space bar or tab key.

“PetalBrowser”

The PetalBrowser is our concept of a fast way of browsing a collection of images. A collection is represented on screen by an icon. When the mouse approaches the icon, a “flower” opens with small icons of the images in the collection arranged in a circle. Moving the mouse around this circle of icons enlarges them to a size that allows a preview. This way, a hundred or more images can be presented by small dots. More images could be displayed if a spiral form is used. To allow a fast evaluation and orientation, a few icons are shown bigger than the dots. The demo illustrates the dynamic behavior of the PetalBrowser.