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## CDI helps The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam rebuild it's photography program

The Rijksmuseum is currently undergoing an unprecedented renovation project involving a complete overhaul of the physical building as well as the entire organization of exhibitions and management structure. As part of this project, CDI has been working with the museum to completely overhaul the photographic operation from the ground up.

While the museum has had an exceptional traditional photography program for many years, the early adoption of digital technology presented many new challenges to the existing infrastructure.

Initially CDI was brought in to make a survey of the situation, and deliver a plan to move forward. Working with museum management we developed a strategy that focused on establishing consistent image quality and standards-based capture methods.



The museum's goal is to photograph several thousand objects that have been selected to populate the new galleries scheduled to open in 2009

The project has involved much more than establishing capture methods as hardware was only one part of a much larger project scope.



At the project outset, the department had no direct manager. Working with human resources, we were able to create a unique job description for a manager and additional photography staff

The museum had traditionally relied on a folder-based file system on a centralized server to store and distribute images. We set out to bring in a best-of-class Digital Asset Management (DAM) system to allow for higher productivity and access control for internal and external users.

As with many digital studios, the staff wasted time on post production, burning CD ROMs, converting color spaces, and making derivatives. One of our criteria for the DAM system was that it needed to include server-based conversions on the fly.

In addition to the implementation of a DAM system, we also found that the order request system and collaboration between departments and users of images was inadequate. For example: a curator requesting photography would not be aware of the schedule of the artwork restoration or art handlers required to move the art from storage to the studio. Another pre-requisite for the solution was a collaborative scheduling or shared workspace capability where all users could interact with a project as it unfolds.

In many ways, this project is unique in that the museum and studio are still functioning as we implement these fundamental changes. Changes have been made to equipment, systems, staff, and management, beginning with image creation, and moving forward towards the ultimate integrated solution.

Currently, all cameras and lighting have been upgraded, a new manager has been hired, additional photographers have been selected, and with the involvement of the entire staff and representatives from museum management, the stylization and standardization of images has been established.

Seven enterprise level DAM systems have been evaluated and narrowed to two via a series of vendor demonstrations, onsite evaluations and remote performance testing. Products such as Documentum, Artesia, MediaBin, and MediaBeacon have been evaluated.

This ongoing project encompasses the entire imaging process for a large enterprise, and highlights the unique skills of CDI. From training photography staff to working with museum management and IT, our beginning to end involvement has helped keep this project on schedule while meeting objectives.



**Project Details:**

- Evaluation of existing and new digital cameras and lighting
- Implementation of standard capture methods and ICC color calibration
- Upgrade and revised workflow for dedicated document scanning
- Definition of manager and staff job descriptions for Human Resources
- Involvement in interviews of staff candidates
- Definition of standardization of photographic stylization
- Staff lighting workshops and training
- Definition of metadata protocols
- Definition of museum-wide imaging workflow
- DAM selection process and evaluation
- Development of a complete RFP for the DAM system
- Project management