



TECHNOLOGY

PhotoMesa: A Zoomable Image Browser

OVERVIEW

PhotoMesa is a zoomable image browser. It allows the user to view multiple directories of images in a zoomable environment, and uses a set of simple navigation mechanisms to move through the space of images. It also supports grouping of images by metadata available from the file system. It requires only a set of images on disk, and does not require the user to add any metadata, or manipulate the images at all before browsing, thus making it easy to get started with existing images.

While many image management systems have focused on annotating and searching, PhotoMesa concentrates on browsing. The interface lets you concentrate on the images, without having to manage scrollbars, menus, or pop-up windows. It also lets you group images by available metadata, such as directory location, image creation date, and words in the filename. We have built it intending it to be useful in informal situations, such as looking at photos together among family members. Others have found it useful as a way of finding what is on their hard disk.

PhotoMesa introduces two new layout algorithms - Quantum Treemaps and BubbleMaps to layout the images on the screen, using space efficiently while showing the groups the images are in. Both the PhotoMesa application and the layout algorithms are available for download. See <http://www.cs.umd.edu/hcil/photomesa/>

For more information contact the University of Maryland, College Park, Office of Technology Commercialization, 301 405 3947 Or email otc@umd.edu.

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IS-2001-053