

1. Introduction	10
1.1. Definition of Microstock	11
1.2. Microstock in Context	11
1.3. A Very Short History of Microstock	12
1.4. Microstock Agency Competition	12
2. Microstock Agency Operations	13
2.1. Media	14
2.1.1. Photos	14
2.1.2. Illustrations	14
2.1.3. Video	14
2.1.4. Audio	15
2.1.5. 3D Photo & Video	15
2.1.6. Others	15
2.2. Pricing and Payment Mechanics	15
2.2.1. Credits	15
2.2.2. Subscriptions	16
2.2.3. Direct Pricing	17
2.2.4. Variable Pricing Models	17
2.2.5. Payment Methods	17
2.2.6. Credit Card Fraud	17
2.3. Royalties	18
2.3.1. Royalty Rates	18
2.3.2. Payout Methods	19
2.3.3. Payout Thresholds	19
2.3.4. Payout Functions & Schedules	19
2.3.5. Payout Currencies	20
2.4. Ingestion	20
2.4.1. Upload Methods	20
2.4.2. Upload Limits	20
2.4.3. Image Lock-in	21
2.4.4. Metadata Import	21
2.4.5. Submission Processes	21
2.4.6. Submission Guidelines	22
2.4.7. New Contributor Tests	23
2.4.8. Keyword Management	23
2.4.9. Managing Unsold Files	24
2.4.10. Agency Portfolio Growth	24
2.4.11. Contributor Age and ID Requirements	25
2.4.12. Contributor Image Removal Functions	26

2.4.13.	<i>Contributor Recruitment</i>	26
2.4.14.	<i>Contributor Marketing</i>	27
2.5.	Reviewing	27
2.5.1.	<i>Review Criteria</i>	27
2.5.2.	<i>Review Resourcing</i>	29
2.5.3.	<i>Reviewing Exceptions</i>	29
2.5.4.	<i>Rating Files at Review</i>	29
2.6.	Exclusivity	29
2.6.1.	<i>Image Exclusivity</i>	29
2.6.2.	<i>RF Exclusivity</i>	30
2.7.	Legal	30
2.7.1.	<i>Licenses</i>	30
2.7.2.	<i>Contributor Agreements</i>	31
2.7.3.	<i>Releases</i>	32
2.7.4.	<i>Warranties</i>	33
2.8.	Image Technology	34
2.8.1.	<i>Thumbnails</i>	34
2.8.2.	<i>Previews</i>	34
2.8.3.	<i>Watermarks</i>	34
2.8.4.	<i>Image Zoom</i>	35
2.8.5.	<i>Photo Color Spaces</i>	35
2.8.6.	<i>File Naming Conventions</i>	36
2.9.	Website Strategies	36
2.9.1.	<i>Page Layout</i>	36
2.9.2.	<i>Content Presentation</i>	37
2.9.3.	<i>Affiliate Landing Pages</i>	38
2.9.4.	<i>Separate Buyer & Seller Sites</i>	38
2.9.5.	<i>Website Page Encryption</i>	38
2.9.6.	<i>Login Pages</i>	38
2.10.	Search	39
2.10.1.	<i>Relevancy Search</i>	39
2.10.2.	<i>Sorting Methods</i>	39
2.10.3.	<i>Advanced Search Options</i>	40
2.10.4.	<i>Relevance Algorithm Metrics</i>	44
2.10.5.	<i>Controlled Vocabularies</i>	44
2.10.6.	<i>Regional Relevance</i>	44
2.10.7.	<i>Categories</i>	45
2.10.8.	<i>Keyword Alerts</i>	45
2.10.9.	<i>Visual Similarity Search</i>	45
2.11.	Lightboxes	45
2.11.1.	<i>Lightbox Uses</i>	45

2.11.2. <i>Lightbox Functionality</i>	46
2.12. APIs	46
2.12.1. <i>How APIs are Used in Microstock</i>	46
2.12.2. <i>Microstock Agency APIs</i>	47
2.12.3. <i>Wishlist for Microstock APIs</i>	47
2.13. Search Engine Optimization	49
2.13.1. <i>Mapping Image Metadata to Page Metadata</i>	49
2.13.2. <i>Google Image Search</i>	50
2.13.3. <i>Other Strategies</i>	50
2.14. Affiliate Programs	51
2.14.1. <i>How Affiliate Programs Work</i>	51
2.14.2. <i>Affiliate Strategies</i>	51
2.14.3. <i>Who Uses Microstock Affiliate Programs</i>	52
2.14.4. <i>Affiliate Tools</i>	52
2.14.5. <i>Affiliate Fraud</i>	52
2.15. Customer Marketing	53
2.15.1. <i>Advertising</i>	53
2.15.2. <i>Social Media Strategies</i>	53
2.15.3. <i>PPC Strategies</i>	54
2.15.4. <i>Email Marketing</i>	55
2.15.5. <i>Agency Boasting</i>	56
2.16. Free Photo Strategies	56
2.16.1. <i>Benefits of Free Photos</i>	56
2.16.2. <i>Free Photo Quantities</i>	56
2.16.3. <i>Acquiring Free Photos</i>	57
2.16.4. <i>Free Photo Delivery Strategies</i>	57
2.17. Internationalization	57
2.17.1. <i>Site Languages</i>	58
2.17.2. <i>Currency</i>	58
2.17.3. <i>Sub-domains & Local Domains</i>	59
2.17.4. <i>Regional Keyword Relevance</i>	59
2.18. Editorial	59
2.18.1. <i>Microstock Agencies Working with Editorial Stock</i>	59
2.18.2. <i>Issues with Editorial Microstock</i>	60
2.19. Events	60
2.19.1. <i>Agency Shooting Events</i>	60
2.19.2. <i>Buyer Conferences</i>	61
2.19.3. <i>Industry Conferences</i>	62
2.20. Contributor Tax Withholding	62
2.21. Corporate Accounts	63

2.22. Community	63
2.22.1. <i>The iStockphoto Community</i>	63
2.22.2. <i>Community Tools</i>	64
2.22.3. <i>Groups within Microstock Communities</i>	65
2.23. Contributor Reporting	66
2.23.1. <i>What Data is Provided</i>	66
2.23.2. <i>No Buyer Data Provided</i>	66
2.23.3. <i>Data Display Methods</i>	67
2.23.4. <i>Earnings Charts</i>	68
2.23.5. <i>Data Download Methods</i>	70
2.23.6. <i>Affiliate Income Reporting</i>	70
2.24. Copyright Infringement Issues	70
2.24.1. <i>Fraudulently Submitted Content</i>	70
2.24.2. <i>Solutions to Detect Fraudulent Submissions</i>	71
2.24.3. <i>Copying and Derivative Works</i>	71
2.24.4. <i>Protected Property</i>	71
2.24.5. <i>Illegal Distribution of Branded Content</i>	71
2.24.6. <i>DMCA Takedown Notices</i>	72
3. Microstock Agency Business	73
3.1. Third Party Services	74
3.1.1. <i>Contributor Services</i>	74
3.1.2. <i>Agency Perspective on Contributor Services</i>	75
3.1.3. <i>Agency Services</i>	76
3.1.4. <i>Buyer Services</i>	77
3.2. The Two-Sided Microstock Market	78
3.2.1. <i>What Usually Happens</i>	79
3.2.2. <i>Denial of the Problem</i>	79
3.2.3. <i>Strategies for Overcoming</i>	79
3.3. Finance	80
3.3.1. <i>Bootstrapped</i>	80
3.3.2. <i>Traditional Agencies Launching Microstock Agencies</i>	80
3.3.3. <i>Capital Raising</i>	80
3.3.4. <i>Buying and Selling Agencies</i>	80
3.4. Distribution	81
3.4.1. <i>Microstock Reseller Programs</i>	81
3.4.2. <i>Microstock in Traditional Stock</i>	82
3.4.3. <i>Traditional stock in Microstock</i>	82
3.5. Buyers	82
3.5.1. <i>Casual Photo Buyers</i>	83
3.5.2. <i>Professional Photo Buyers</i>	83

3.6. Technology	83
3.6.1. <i>Build or Buy</i>	83
3.6.2. <i>Platforms</i>	84
3.6.3. <i>Cloud Services</i>	85
3.6.4. <i>Content Distribution Networks</i>	85
3.7. Specialist Microstock Agencies	85
3.7.1. <i>Illustration Specialists</i>	85
3.7.2. <i>Video Specialists</i>	86
3.7.3. <i>Audio Specialists</i>	86
3.7.4. <i>3D Illustration Specialists</i>	87
3.7.5. <i>Topic Specialists</i>	87
3.7.6. <i>Regional Specialists</i>	87
3.8. Additional Strategy Notes	87
3.8.1. <i>Keywording for Contributors</i>	88
3.8.2. <i>Request Functions</i>	88
3.8.3. <i>Trust & Anonymity</i>	88
3.8.4. <i>Mobile Strategies</i>	88
4. Reference Data	90
4.1. List of Microstock Agencies	91
4.2. Microstock Agency Overviews	92
4.2.1. <i>123RF</i>	92
4.2.2. <i>BigStock</i>	92
4.2.3. <i>CanStockPhoto</i>	92
4.2.4. <i>Crestock</i>	93
4.2.5. <i>Cutcaster</i>	93
4.2.6. <i>Deposit Photos</i>	93
4.2.7. <i>Dreamstime</i>	93
4.2.8. <i>Fotolia</i>	93
4.2.9. <i>iStockphoto</i>	94
4.2.10. <i>Moodboard</i>	94
4.2.11. <i>PantherMedia</i>	94
4.2.12. <i>PhotoDune</i>	94
4.2.13. <i>Pixmac</i>	95
4.2.14. <i>Polylooks</i>	95
4.2.15. <i>Shutterstock</i>	95
4.2.16. <i>SnapVillage</i>	95
4.2.17. <i>StockXpert</i>	96
4.2.18. <i>Veer</i>	96
4.2.19. <i>Vivozoom</i>	96
4.2.20. <i>YAYmicro</i>	96
4.2.21. <i>Zymmetrical</i>	96

4.3. List of Microstock Agency Costs	97
4.4. List of Microstock Agency Functionality	97
4.5. Media Matrix - Who's Selling What	98
4.6. Affiliate Program Guide	99
4.7. List of Microstock Agency Partnerships	99
4.8. List of Common SEO and PPC Keywords	100
4.9. Company Contacts - A Microstock Address Book	100
4.10. Top Non-Exclusive Microstock Contributors	102
4.11. Industry Resources	102
4.11.1. Blogs	103
4.11.2. Forums	103
4.11.3. Books	104
4.12. Microstock Trivia & Gems	104
4.13. Legal Service Providers with Industry Experience	105
4.14. List of Updates	106
4.14.1. Updates in Version 1.1	106
4.14.2. Updates in Version 1.2	106

4.14. List of Updates

4.14.1. Updates in Version 1.1

- [2.2.5 Payment Methods](#) - New section
- [2.2.6 Credit Card Fraud](#) - New section
- [2.3.1 Royalty Rates](#) - Updated with details of iStockphoto's new royalty scheme
- [2.3.2 Payout Methods](#) - Listed agencies using Payoneer
- [2.4.4 Metadata Import](#) - Added metadata stripping strategies
- [2.4.10 Agency Portfolio Growth](#) - Updated chart and events
- [2.4.11 Contributors Age and ID Requirements](#) - New section
- [2.4.12 Contributor Image Removal Functions](#) - New section
- [2.7.3 Releases](#) - Added approval policies and updated requirements
- [2.8.5 Photo Color Spaces](#) - New section
- [2.8.6 File Naming Conventions](#) - New section
- [2.9.5 Website Page Encryption](#) - New section
- [2.10.3 Advanced Search Options](#) - Added new search methods
- [2.10.8 Keyword Alerts](#) - New section
- [2.17.1 Site Languages](#) - Updated with new languages & new sites
- [2.24 Copyright Infringement Issues](#) - New section
- [3.1.3 Agency Services](#) - Added LookStat Agency Analytics service
- [3.6.1 Custom Built or Service Provider](#) - Added Stock Media Engine complete solution
- [3.7 Specialist Microstock Agencies](#) - Listed additional agencies
- [4.7 List of Microstock Agency Partnerships](#) - Added various new partnerships
- [4.13 Legal Service Providers with Industry Experience](#) - New section

4.14.2. Updates in Version 1.2

- [2.1.5 3D Photo & Video](#) - New section
- [2.3.2 Payout Methods](#) - Added details and pricing of PayPal's Mass Payments product
- [2.4.13 Contributor Recruitment](#) - New section
- [2.4.14 Contributor Marketing](#) - New section
- [2.9.1 Page Layout](#) - Added details of infinite scrolling implementations
- [2.9.6 Login Pages](#) - New section
- [2.10.8 Keyword Alerts](#) - Added Shutterstock's new keyword alert function

- [2.10.9 Visual Similarity Search](#) - New section
- [2.12.1 How APIs are Used in Microstock](#) - Added reference to the Fotolia Adobe CS Plugin
- [2.14.5 Affiliate Fraud](#) - New section
- [2.15 Customer Marketing](#) - Renamed from 'Marketing'
- [2.15.2 Social Media Strategies](#) - Added iStockphoto's Facebook eCard app
- [2.16.4 Free Photo Delivery Strategies](#) - Added StockFreelimages and renamed from 'Delivery'
- [2.19.2 Buyer Conferences](#) - Added NAB Show
- [2.19.3 Industry Conferences](#) - Added Microstock Expo
- [2.24.6 DMCA Takedown Notices](#) - Added Dreamstime's new misuse reporting function
- [3.1.1 Contributor Services](#) - Added picWorkflow and noted the closure of LookStat and iStockcharts
- [3.1.2 Agency Perspective on Contributor Services](#) - Added details of the 123RF CAPTCHA implementation
- [3.1.3 Agency Services](#) - Removed LookStat and added Fotolytics, Pixolution, Idee Inc, PicScout and PicItUp
- [3.2 The Two-Sided Microstock Market](#) - Renamed from 'Microstock Catch-22' and expanded
- [3.6.1 Build or Buy](#) - Added Xpoze and CMSaccount platforms and renamed from 'Custom Built or Complete Solution'
- [3.6.4 Content Distribution Networks](#) - Renamed from 'Global Caching and Content Delivery'
- [3.7.4 3D Illustration Specialists](#) - Renamed from '3D Specialists'
- [3.7.6 Regional Specialists](#) - New section
- [3.8.4 Mobile Strategies](#) - New section
- [4.2 Microstock Agency Overviews](#) - Added PhotoDune
- [4.6 Affiliate Program Guide](#) - Updated with details of iStockphoto's new affiliate program
- [4.7 List of Microstock Agency Partnerships](#) - Added various new partnerships
- [4.9 Company Contacts - A Microstock Address Book](#) - Updated contact details and added various new contacts