

# Silver Camera



In 2007 Google became an official partner of the Moscow House of Photography and "Silver Camera" contest. We created a contest website, fully integrated with Picasa.

**Goals:** Moscow House of Photography (MHP) together with Google held an annual contest, "Silver Camera 2007", for the best photo story about Moscow. The contest was established by Moscow government and Moscow Culture Committee and supported by Moscow mayor Yuri Luzhkov. It needed a large website with convenient interface and unlimited photo storage capabilities.

**Task:** Reduce photo hosting expenditure. Create an interactive contest platform with an easy contest entry process. Let visitors rate the published entries. Attract new participants and make the contest more accessible.

**Solution:** for this website we created a platform based on Drupal 5.3. The project required non-standard functionality so we needed to develop some additional modules of our own. The most challenging task for our Drupal developer was the Google Picasa integration.

We linked website galleries to the Picasaweb service. Contest participants uploaded their photographs to [picasaweb.google.com](http://picasaweb.google.com) using standard Google application, and listed the address of the resulting album. Then, the pictures uploaded to Picasaweb became available on the Silver Camera website. This turned out to be a clever and convenient solution.

Any large photo contest requires an immense amount of disk space plus a database for picture management. In our case, photo hosting is free, we hold only user profiles, comments and picture ratings — all of which takes up only a little space. We can do the same thing with Youtube for user video galleries. This allows our clients to implement projects otherwise very costly in terms of hosting.

We didn't have to develop a new interface for photo upload — users interacted with the familiar Picasa interface. This is an important point: the easier the interface is, the larger audience can take part in the contest. At the same time, pictures appeared on the Silver Camera website with full rack of options: you could rate them, comment, show on your "friend" page (the website had a social system implemented, where you could add users as "friends" and track their new contest entries).



Meanwhile, a user had full freedom in his Picasaweb album; integration with Silver Camera website didn't hamper his Picasa activities at all.

The absence of a dedicated database helped cut everyday work expenses. In the end, we had a website that was managed by a single person during the contest — it was an MHP representative. He moderated the published entries and the forum.

**Results:** contest participants created more than a thousand pages with their works. The solution developed for this website shows the unique qualifications in Google API integration works of our team (Sterno.ru). The Picasaweb integration idea is in high demand and attracts a lot of customer interest. We have already repeated its implementation in several projects, and open-sourced the Drupal module for the community. We receive continued correspondence from all over the world requesting help in similar Picasa API usage.