SmugMug

How SmugMug and Flickr seamlessly collaborate and cut email QA time by 50% using ProofJump

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For over 20 years

For over twenty years, leading photography platforms **SmugMug** and **Flickr** have been helping photographers build their businesses and engage with a global community in a visual conversation about their passion.

50%
Reduction in time spent on QA

16
Emails sent per month

1M+
Email subscribers

SmugMug provides a platform to help photographers manage their photography and run their businesses, which includes online galleries and printing services along with secure storage and general photo management with their various subscription tiers. Emails are used for outgoing communications to prospective customers, current customers, as well as previous customers with win back campaigns.

Flickr offers an online community for photography enthusiasts and is home to tens of billions of photos that can be viewed, shared, and stored. At Flickr, emails are sent to millions of subscribers for a variety of reasons, including upsells to their Flickr Pro subscription service.

Mike Rodewald, Senior Lifecycle Marketing Manager at SmugMug and Flickr, is responsible for strategizing and implementing a communication plan that delivers the right message to the right users at the right time through the right channels. With roughly 16 emails sent per month to millions of subscribers, Mike and his team need to make sure the messages they send are well-written, well-designed, and meticulously proofread.

Thanks to **ProofJump**, the team at SmugMug and Flickr have a seamless process for collaboration that allows them to get valuable emails into millions of inboxes. This helps them build their brands, improve customer retention, and ultimately reduce churn and drive revenue for the business.

Asynchronous campaign reviews amidst frequent version updates

Both SmugMug and Flickr rely on email as a primary communication channel. SmugMug sends 2-4 emails per month to hundreds of thousands per send and Flickr sends 8-12 per month to millions per send.

> *"We had to communicate about each and every email and we had to be able to work asynchronously. We couldn't walk over to someone's desk and look at the same screen."*

Mike's team is relatively small, so it was challenging to create and proof the high volume of emails. Additionally, the team was remote and spread across time zones, which required them to have a process that would work asynchronously.

The team used a checklist within Google Docs to proof and review emails– they would send out test emails from Iterable, their email service provider, and review together in the shared Doc. Even so, it was very difficult to keep track of versions.

"We'd send out the first email and everything would make sense," said Mike. *"But then we'd send out another round, and we were no longer confident that people were looking at the correct email."*

Efficient workflow for email proofing

Gmail, the company's email host, would also collapse text or change the text to purple if the content had remained the same. Mike found himself explaining over and over again that the text was not actually purple, but that this was a quirk of reviewing multiple versions of the same email.

Not only that, but it was difficult for the team to explain exactly what they wanted changed in the Google Doc. *"It was always hard to understand what comments meant,"* said Mike. *"Sometimes people would take screenshots which was a bit more helpful, but we still struggled to decipher what editors intended."*

"Our process for reviewing emails was cumbersome. It took a lot of time and effort to keep everything straight and no one liked the process. As a result, mistakes would happen because people avoided QAing."
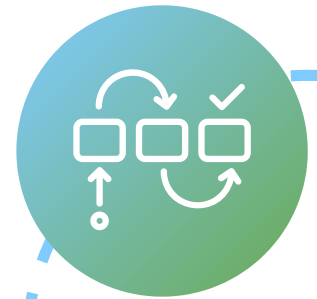
An email proofing platform with seamless integration of comments, approvals, and version tracking

Although Mike and his team were frustrated by the proofing process, they didn't realize there was a better option. *"I didn't realize there was a better solution out there,"* said Mike. *"I'd been working in email since 2014 and had always proofed emails in the same way, even though the process was flawed."*

Mike found out about ProofJump through the **Email Geeks Slack channel**– someone mentioned that ProofJump had worked well for them. Mike took a look at the tool and signed up immediately once he understood the offering.

There were three benefits that really impressed Mike:

✓ **Easy commenting** - Mike liked that comments could be left directly on the email– the email would be loaded into ProofJump and comments would be right there. It was abundantly clear which section was being commented on.

✓ **Clear versions** - He also liked the versioning part. *"When you upload a new version into ProofJump, it makes it very clear what the latest version is,"* said Mike. *"Everyone is looking at the same thing."*

✓ **Approval process** - The approval process within ProofJump made it much easier to see who had approved emails. *"Having the approval functionality was a massive improvement from our previous system,"* he said.

"I loved ProofJump from the start. It was obvious that it was exactly what we needed, so there wasn't a lengthy decision-making process. It was immediately clear that it was a massive upgrade over what we were previously doing."
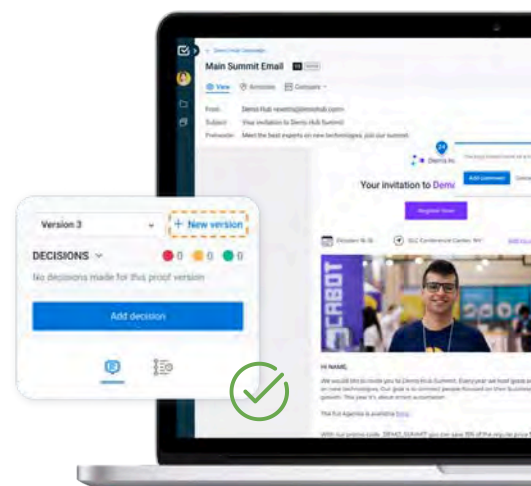
A seamless workflow, 50% reduction in QA time, and a happier team

Seamless workflow for asynchronous teams

Mike found that ProofJump was an incredible solution for his remote and asynchronous team. *"We are always able to share the latest version in ProofJump, so versions don't get buried in inboxes,"* he said. The company uses Slack to communicate, and is able to share a link to the up to date proof directly in Slack.

Cut 50% of time in the QA process

Shortly after the team implemented ProofJump, they measured how it affected the QA process. They found that it cut the QA time in half for each campaign, resulting in substantial time that could be used on other business-building activities.

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"We are always able to share the latest version in ProofJump, so versions don't get buried in inboxes,"

V1   V2

Easy solution for campaigns

SmugMug and Flickr do a lot of email campaigns that contain multiple messages. *"We didn't realize how challenging it was to proof campaigns using our inboxes,"* said Mike. *"The fact that ProofJump allows us to group campaigns has helped us catch a lot of issues with consistency in campaigns as it's much easier to see them all in one view."*
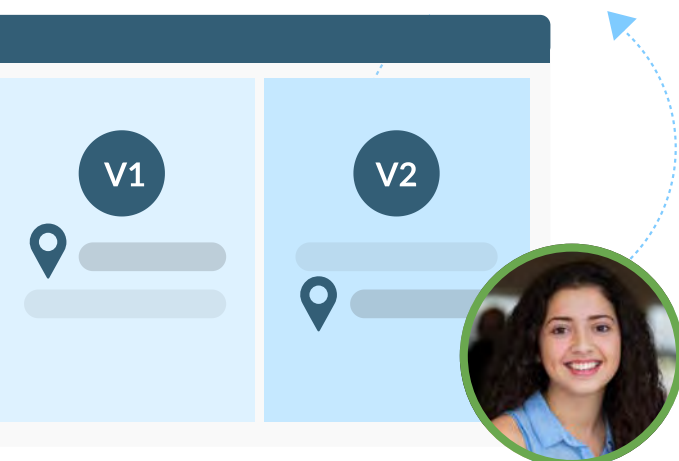
A happier, more engaged team

The team absolutely loves using ProofJump as it is much easier for them to proof emails. Before using ProofJump, the team would avoid doing QA. *"It greatly increased participation in the process."* said Mike.

"Now that we have ProofJump, everybody does the QA that they're supposed to do, and we have a record of people signing off on things,"

16
Proofs with changes requested

12
Proofs approved with changes

76
Proofs approved

Get started with a FREE 21 day trial

ProofJump will drastically reduce your email proofing and approval times. To help you get started, book a demo or sign up for a free trial.

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