

ALAMY-LIGHTROOM BRIDGE MANUAL



Upload and manage your Alamy photo collection
directly from Adobe Lightroom.

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INTRODUCTION

The Alamy-Lightroom Bridge plugin is a collection of tools that will help you manage any photos you have submitted to Alamy, directly from within Adobe Lightroom. You're still perfectly free to use Alamy's online tools, or a mixture of the two, but hopefully this will remove a few steps and make things easier for you.

I am assuming that you already have an Alamy account, and some photographs already on sale with them. If not, you should go and take a look at their "Contributors" section at <http://www.alamy.com/contributor/>.

REQUIREMENTS

- Lightroom 3 or newer, including CC versions.
- Mac or PC.
- An account with Alamy Images is also required.

This manual won't try to explain how to use Lightroom, or how Alamy's submissions procedure works. It will, hopefully, give you enough information to be able to go ahead and start tracking your images in a new way.

CONTACT AND SUPPORT

You can get support or ask questions in the support desk. Please check the FAQ before contacting support, many common questions are already answered here.

<http://www.lightroom-plugins.com/support/index.php?/Lightroom/Troubleshooter/List>

<http://www.lightroom-plugins.com/faq.php>

LEGAL STUFF

This plug-in is not specifically endorsed by either Adobe Inc.® or Alamy Ltd™. The use of the Alamy logo in the software is purely for clarity, and does not imply any affiliation between the author of the software and Alamy Images.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

NEW MODULES

The most important features of the plugin are provided as Export modules for Lightroom, even though one of them technically isn't an export. In brief, they are:

UPLOAD TO ALAMY

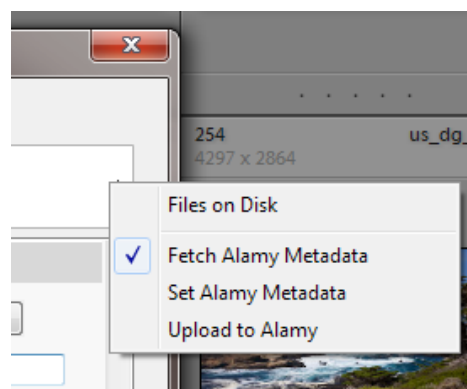
This takes any images you have selected in Lightroom and uploads them to Alamy if they have not already been uploaded, or if a previous upload is known to have been rejected by Alamy QC.

FETCH ALAMY METADATA

Allows you to get any metadata from Alamy, including their own special data, and tries to match it to the images in your Lightroom catalog.

SET ALAMY METADATA

Takes any metadata you have set locally, including Alamy's special data, and uploads it to their servers.



NEW COMMANDS

Several extra commands have been added to the “Library” menu in Lightroom:

CLEAR ALAMY STATUS

This removes the Status field, which is not normally editable, and optionally removes all Alamy metadata from any selected images.

MARK AS UPLOADED COPY

If you keep the JPEG files that are actually uploaded to Alamy, this command can mark any of these as duplicates if they are not already marked. This helps avoid duplicated information when downloading Alamy metadata.

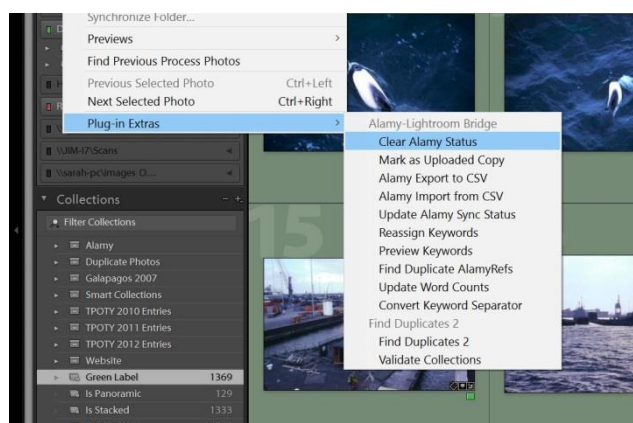
ALAMY EXPORT TO CSV

Creates a CSV file containing all Alamy metadata for any selected images.

ALAMY IMPORT FROM CSV

Read a CSV file and replace the caption and keywords on existing photos.

UPDATE ALAMY SYNC STATUS



Scans the entire database and checks to see which images have had their metadata changed locally since they were last Set or Fetched from Alamy.

REASSIGN KEYWORDS

Recreate Alamy's "Main" and "Comprehensive" keyword fields based on the Lightroom keyword hierarchy. Keywording is a complex subject and is covered in full Keyword Ordering.

PREVIEW KEYWORDS

Show a box containing the keywords that would be set with the previous command, or when using the Set Metadata exporter when no keywords are set.

FIND DUPLICATE ALAMYREFS

Identify photos where more than one has had the same AlamyRef assigned. Since this is the main item that is used when fetching and setting metadata, it is important that only the correct photo has this value assigned.

NEW SMART COLLECTIONS

To make it easier to find your images, there are several new Smart Collections provided. Smart Collections automatically find images in your catalog without having to be manually refreshed when something changes.

The Smart Collections are created automatically by the plugin the first time it is used, under a new "Alamy" collection set.

ALL UPLOADED

Shows all images which Alamy have stored, which can be matched in Lightroom.

HAS SOLD

All submitted images which have a non-zero sales total.

HAS UNSET DATA

One or more of the fields that Alamy consider important are unset.

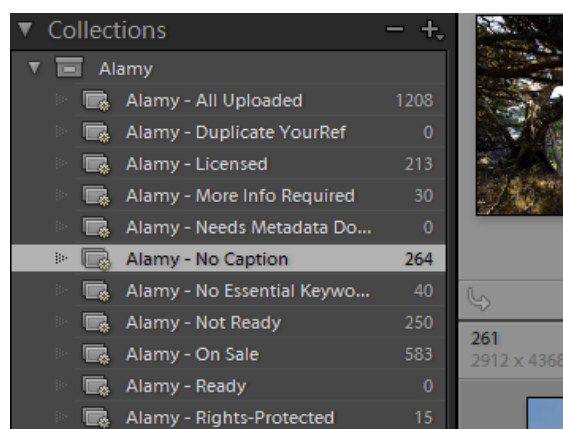
MORE INFO REQUIRED

Images which are on sale but for which Alamy needs more information.

NO CAPTION

Images which have an Alamy Reference but have no IPTC Caption set.

NO SUPERTAGS



Images which have an Alamy Reference but have no Alamy Supertags set. Please note that this collection no longer updates automatically. It will be updated whenever you fetch or update metadata, or you can update yourself using the “**Plugin Extras->Update Word Counts**” menu item.

NO TAGS

Images which have an Alamy Reference but have no Alamy Tags set. Please note that this collection no longer updates automatically. It will be updated whenever you fetch or update metadata, or you can update yourself using the “**Plugin Extras->Update Word Counts**” menu item.

NOT READY

All images which have been accepted by Alamy but are awaiting essential metadata before they can go on sale.

ON SALE

All images which Alamy report are on sale.

READY

All images which Alamy report are ready for sale, but which are making their way through Alamy's systems.

RELEASES UNSET

The Property Release or Model Release fields have not been set.

LICENSED

Images which have a licence type of 'licensed'.

RIGHTS-MANAGED

Images which have a licence type of 'Rights-Managed'.

RIGHTS-MANAGED EXCLUSIVE

Images which have a licence type of 'Rights-Managed Exclusive'.

ROYALTY-FREE

Images which have a licence type of 'Royalty-Free'.

SUBMITTED (ALL)

Images which have been uploaded using Lightroom but which are still awaiting QC or rejected.

SUBMITTED (COPY)

If you have chosen to store the actual JPEG copies uploaded to Alamy, they are listed here.

SUBMITTED (ORIGINAL)

The original images that were used to create JPEGs uploaded to Alamy, but which do not yet have an Alamy reference number.

INSTALLATION

This plug-in adds some new fields to your Lightroom database. These are used to store the Alamy-specific metadata such as licensing, model releases etc. This is a standard operation which is fully supported by Lightroom.

BEFORE YOU INSTALL THIS, YOU SHOULD MAKE SURE YOU HAVE A BACKUP OF YOUR LIGHTROOM CATALOG. If you do not already have automatic backups enabled, you can perform a single backup by going to “**Edit→Catalog Settings...**” and changing the “**Back up catalog**” list to “**When Lightroom next exits**” and restarting Lightroom.

WINDOWS

AUTOMATIC INSTALLATION

The easiest way to install on Windows is to use the MSI installer. Simply double-click and run through the prompts that appear.

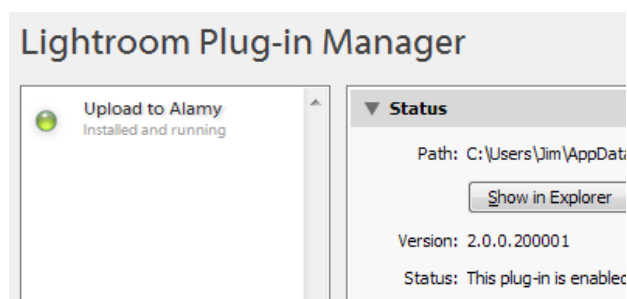
MANUAL INSTALLATION

If you prefer to install manually, download the ZIP file instead of the MSI. When it has downloaded, follow the instructions below for installing on the Mac; the steps are identical on Windows.

OSX (Mac)

1. Download the ZIP and extract it to your desktop. You should see a folder called “**LRAlamy**” (Mac) or “**LRAlamy.lrplugin**” (Windows), containing the plug-in.
2. Move this folder anywhere you like.
3. Open Lightroom’s Plugin Manager from the File menu, and click the “Add” button at the bottom of the list.
4. Use the file dialog that appears to select the plugin (ending in **.lrplugin**).

Check that a plug-in called “**Alamy-Lightroom Bridge**” is shown as “**Installed and running**”.



SETTING UP LIGHTROOM

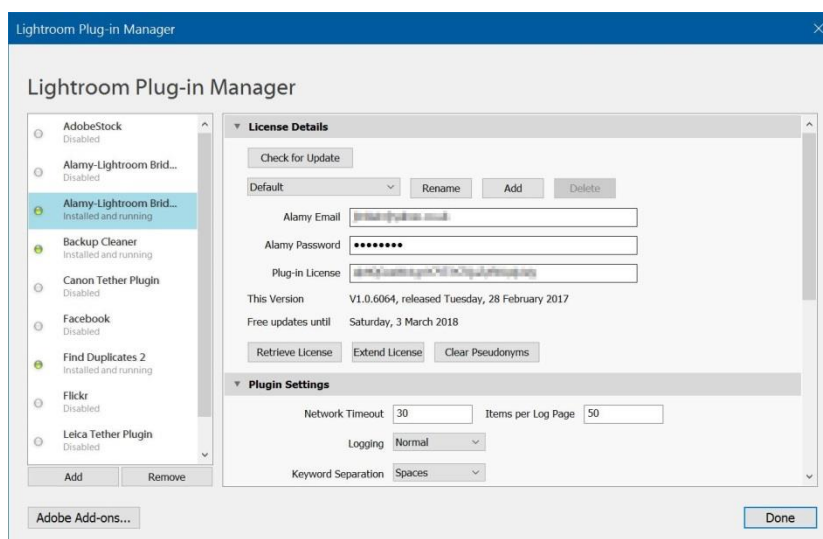
ENTER YOUR LICENCE KEY

If you have bought the plug-in, you should receive a licence key in an email. Without this, the plug-in will process only three images at a time. To enter the licence key, simply copy and paste it from the email to the box in the Connection Settings dialog that is at the top of the Plugin Manager.

If you lose your license key, you can retrieve it at any time from the Support Center at <http://www.lightroom-plugins.com/support.php>. You will have had an account created automatically; if you have never used it before, you can use the “Forgot Password” button to receive an email containing the account password. The account name will be the email address that you used to buy the license.

ENTER YOUR ALAMY ACCOUNT DETAILS

For the plugin to interact with Alamy at all, you need to enter your Alamy account details. To do this, open the Plugin Manager and select the Alamy-Lightroom Bridge plugin from the list on the left.



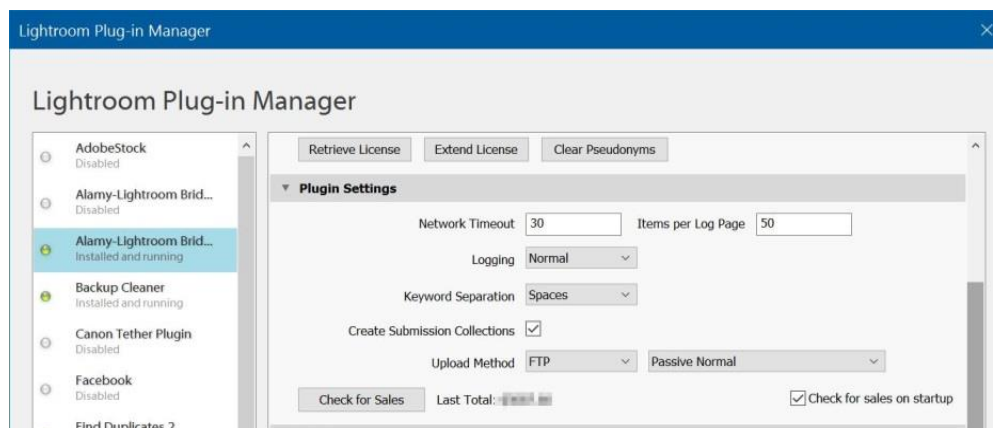
Enter the email address and password for your Alamy account into the boxes. Your license is assigned to an individual Alamy account, so if you have one then enter that as well.

Multiple Alamy accounts are supported by clicking on the “Add” button.

Your account details are stored locally on your computer. They are not sent anywhere else except, of course, to Alamy.

OTHER GENERAL SETTINGS

The plugin has several other settings which apply globally. On the right-hand side of the Plugin Manager, scroll down to the “Plugin Settings” section.



Normally these settings can be left at the default values.

- Network Timeout is the number of seconds to wait for a response from Alamy before asking Lightroom to give up. There may be an additional delay after this.
- Items per Log Page sets the number of photos that are written to each page of the exporter logs.
- Logging can be set to “Normal” or “Debug”; the latter has a much greater level of detail and is unlikely to be of any use except in the case where you have been asked to send a debug logfile to support.
- Keyword Separation can be set to “Spaces” or “Commas”. This only affects the separation in the local “Tags” and “Supertags” fields.
- Create Submission Collections states whether the plugin will automatically create new collections when fetching metadata from Alamy. If you upload using FTP, the real submission number is not available and will only be found out the next time you perform a fetch. When this option is on, a new static collection will be created, containing the photos that Alamy received as part of this submission.
- Upload Method can be set to FTP or Web. Normally FTP is both faster and more reliable, but you can fall back to the web uploader if necessary. If you are using FTP, the FTP mode can also be chosen.

Finally you can perform a manual check for sales without performing a full metadata download. You can also choose whether or not to check for sales each time Lightroom starts.

QUICK-START

This assumes you already have some images on sale with Alamy, and that they are stored in Lightroom. The key to matching the images is the original filename, which Alamy takes as “Your Reference”.

The following section simply tells you what to do, not why you’re doing it, so please take the time to read the more detailed sections of the manual later.

These are the basic steps:

- **UPLOAD SOME PHOTOS TO ALAMY**

This can be done using the plugin, or separately using Alamy’s online or FTP uploaders. The plugin will work with both new photos and ones you have had with Alamy for some time.

- **RUN THE FETCH ALAMY METADATA EXPORTER**

This will contact Alamy and ask for information about any photos you have with them. This information will include the “Alamy Reference” and “Your Reference” values – these two are key to the rest of the process.

- **UPDATE INFORMATION IN LIGHTROOM FOR MANY PHOTOS AT ONCE**

Use Lightroom’s tools to help set your keywords, captions and any other relevant information. Or, use Alamy’s online tools to do the same, whichever you prefer.

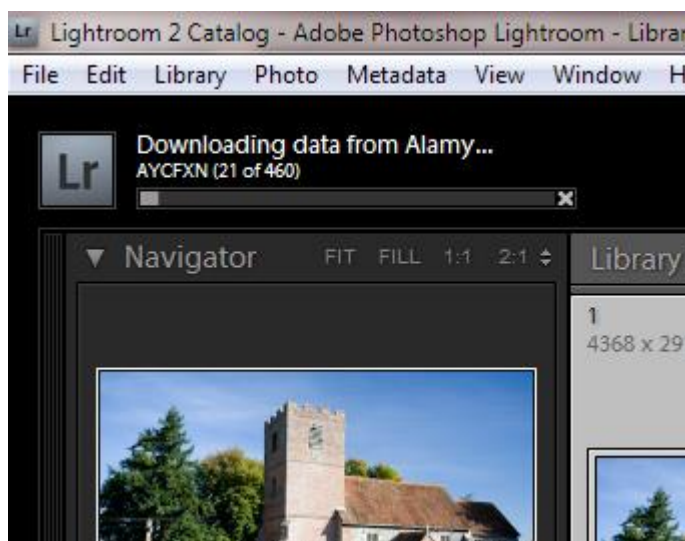
- **RUN THE SET ALAMY METADATA EXPORTER**

The “Set Alamy Metadata” exporter will send some or all of your changes to Alamy, depending on the options selected.

To get started, select any image at all and use the “**File→Export...**” menu. At the top of the Export dialog, you should be able to choose “**Fetch Alamy Metadata**” from the list of exporters by clicking on the large heading which (depending on the version of Lightroom) will probably say “**Hard Disk**”.

Click on ‘**Log In**’, in the ‘Alamy Connection’ section and within a few seconds the ‘**Alamy ID**’ and ‘**Session ID**’ fields should change. If there is a problem with logging in to Alamy, you will be told what went wrong; the most common issue is an incorrect account name and/or password.

In the ‘**Download Settings**’ section of the export dialog, tick ‘**Show log on completion**’ and ‘**Overwrite Alamy Data**’, and un-tick the ‘**Overwrite IPTC Data**’ option. At this stage it would be recommended to set the keyword option to “Ignore”. Finally, select ‘**Fetch data for all images**’ before clicking on ‘**Export**’.



Because this is the first time you have contacted Alamy using the plugin, you will see a dialog saying “Your pseudonyms have changed”. To pass this, you must restart Lightroom; this is so that it can update an internal list containing your Alamy pseudonyms. These will be kept up to date automatically.

Once you have restarted, select the “**File→Export...**” menu and click '**Export**' again. The normal Lightroom Export status bar should start to work through all your images – that is, the ones stored at Alamy, not the ones in your Lightroom catalog – and try to match them.

Once it has completed, you will be shown a summary showing whether or not each image could be matched. Any that couldn't be matched will be shown in red along with the reason. Any metadata that was changed as part of the download will also be reported on this page.

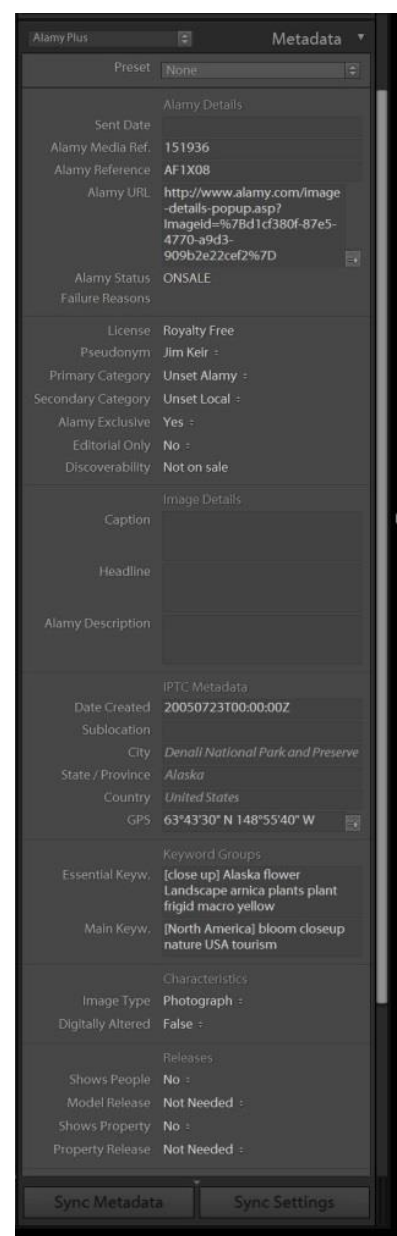
These logs are stored in your Documents folder, in a sub-folder called “Alamy Logs”. This is not automatically cleaned, but you can safely delete any files in here without affecting the plugin.

The matching works like this:

- If one image can be found in Lightroom where the filename matches “Your Reference” at Alamy, it is matched.
- If more than one image is found, and one already has a matching “Image Reference”, that one is matched.
- Otherwise if only one has an Alamy “Media Reference”, that one is matched.
- Otherwise, none are matched.

Provided that an image stored at Alamy can be correctly matched with one stored in Lightroom, the majority of the metadata that Alamy stores is downloaded and associated with that image in Lightroom. This can all be used for searching, and much of it can be changed with the current exception of the “Alamy Status”, “License” and “Restrictions” fields. There are some other fields which are shown as information-only and so can not be changed.

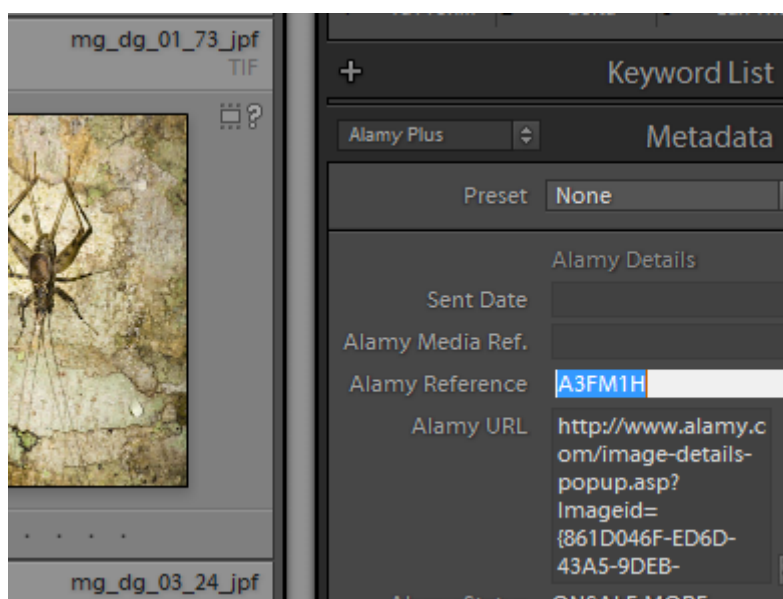
Alamy have rules regarding the changing of license types, and also for which restrictions can be assigned to which license types, and it is not possible within a Lightroom plugin to perform proper validation of these rules at the time that you change the data. To avoid problems, these fields are read-only and must be changed online using Alamy’s own tools.



Hopefully now you will already have most of your Alamy pictures correctly catalogued in Lightroom! Let's assume that some weren't matched because of duplicate filenames.

If you check the log that was created, they would be marked up as being in error, and a link is provided which takes you to what Alamy thinks that picture should be. It's up to you now to find it in Lightroom. The easiest way is to use the filename that is shown in the log as the basis for a search.

Once you have found the correct image, you can do one of two things. The simplest option is to add the Alamy reference, the six-character code like "A3FM1H", to your image in Lightroom by entering it in the "**Alamy Reference**" field:



This gives you an exact match. Alternatively, you could add anything you like to the "**Alamy Media Ref.**" field. The next time you use the "Fetch from Alamy" feature, this picture will be taken as a valid match, and the others with the same filename will be ignored.

What if nothing was matched because there was no matching filename at all? You follow the same procedure – use the filename or the image in the log to find out what the picture is and then find it yourself – and then set the six-character "**Alamy Reference**" for the right picture. If no filename can be matched, the plug-in takes your word for it that this is the right picture.

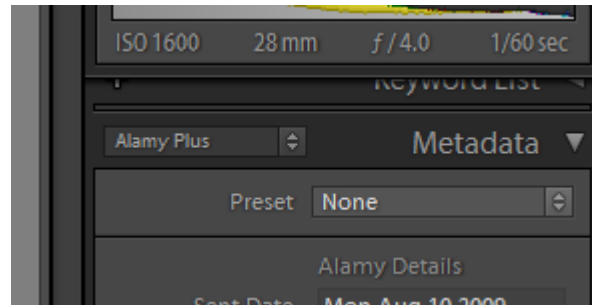
There are many options in the "Fetch Alamy Metadata" exporter to help you deal with the case where your filenames are different to the filenames that were actually sent to Alamy, provided that there is some kind of pattern. These options are described in detail later in the manual.

FINDING THE ALAMY METADATA

Several fields are added to Lightroom's catalog to store the specialist Alamy metadata for your pictures. These are all visible from the Library module, in the “Metadata” panel on the right.

There are two predefined groups available which should help. These can be selected using the drop-down list to the left of the Metadata header.

The new groups contain these fields (bold means editable):



ALAMY

Submitted Date	Media Reference
Image Reference	Media URL
Upload Status	QC Failure Reasons
Licence Type	Pseudonym
Alamy Exclusive	Discoverability
Alamy Description	
Primary Category	Secondary Category
Essential Keywords	Main Keywords
Image Type	Digitally Altered
Shows People	Has Model Release
Shows Property	Has Property Release
Sales Total	Sales Count

ALAMY PLUS

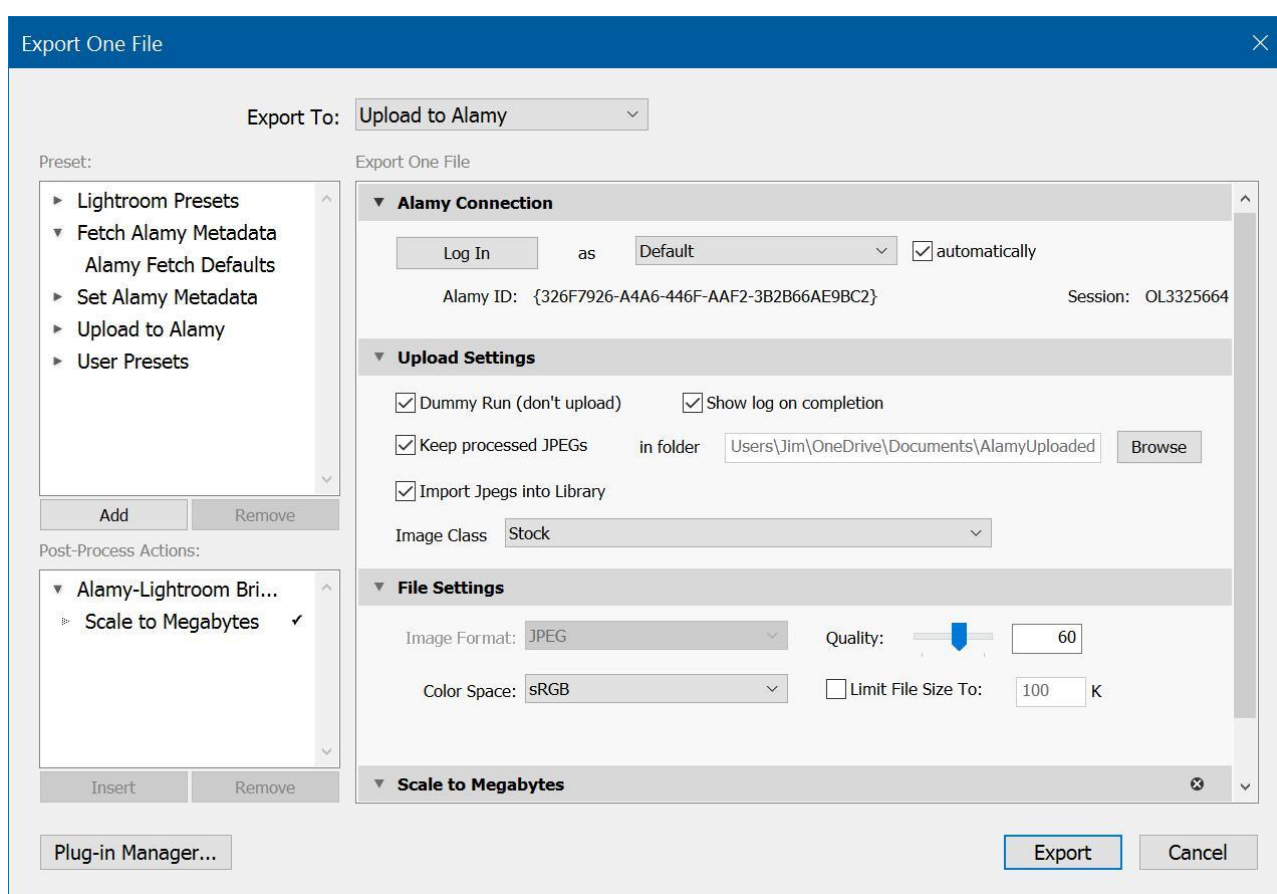
Sent Date	Alamy Media Reference
Alamy Image Reference	Alamy Media URL
Image Status	QC Failure Reasons
Licence Type	Pseudonym
Primary Category	Secondary Category
Alamy Exclusive	Editorial Only
Discoverability	IPTC Caption
IPTC Headline	Alamy Description
IPTC Date Created	IPTC Location
IPTC City	IPTC State
IPTC Country	EXIF GPS
Supertags	Tags
Image Type	Digitally Altered
Shows People	Has Model Release
Shows Property	Has Property Release
Restriction – Advertising	Restriction – Consumer Goods
Restriction – Editorial	Restriction – Personal Use
Sales Count	Sales Total

UPLOAD TO ALAMY

This exporter uploads selected images to your Alamy account. Of course, you still need to check for quality beforehand, and you can also set any standard (i.e. IPTC or EXIF) metadata you want included with the image.

The Alamy-specific metadata such as details of the pseudonym, number of people etc. are *not* sent at this stage. This is because the initial upload must be a simple JPEG file, and there is no defined place to store this kind of information in a JPEG. Please see the Quick-Start section for a more detailed description of the standard process.

Once you are happy with the quality of your images, select them as you normally would in Lightroom and select “**File→Export...**”.



ALAMY CONNECTION

If this is the first time you have used the plugin, you will need to enter your Alamy account's email address and password in the Plugin Manager. Once they are entered, click “**Log In**”.

If the username and password have been set before, and you ticked the '**Log in automatically**' box, you will be logged in automatically. Either way, the '**Export**' button will be disabled until you have logged in.

UPLOAD SETTINGS

This section allows you to change how the upload process works.

DUMMY RUN

Ticking this will run through the whole export process as normal except that no images are sent to Alamy, and no changes are made to the custom fields which store the upload status.

SHOW LOG ON COMPLETION

When an upload is finished, you can choose to automatically view a log of the results. This will show each image that was processed and a short description of what happened to it.

The logs are still created if you un-tick this. They can be found in your Documents folder, in a sub-folder called '**Alamy Logs**'.

KEEP PROCESSED JPEGS

Part of the export process is to convert your images into JPEG format as temporary copies, because Alamy require this format. Tick this box to keep the temporary JPEG files on disk, otherwise they will be deleted after the upload is complete.

IN FOLDER

If you choose to keep the processed JPEG images, they are stored in the folder chosen here, in a sub-folder named for the Alamy Media Reference. As an example, any images uploaded with the settings shown in the screenshot above would be stored in a folder called "**E:\AlamyUploaded\OL464723**".

IMPORT JPEGS INTO LIBRARY

If the JPEGs produced during the upload are kept, this tickbox controls whether you want then imported into your Lightroom catalog or just left on disk. After import, it will have the same upload information added to it as the original image, except that the Status field will be set to 'Submitted Copy' instead of 'Submitted'.

IMAGE CLASS

Alamy have several different classes for which you can upload images. The normal setting is "Stock", but if you have been granted permission by Alamy to upload other classes, you can choose the correct one here.

SCALE TO MEGABYTES

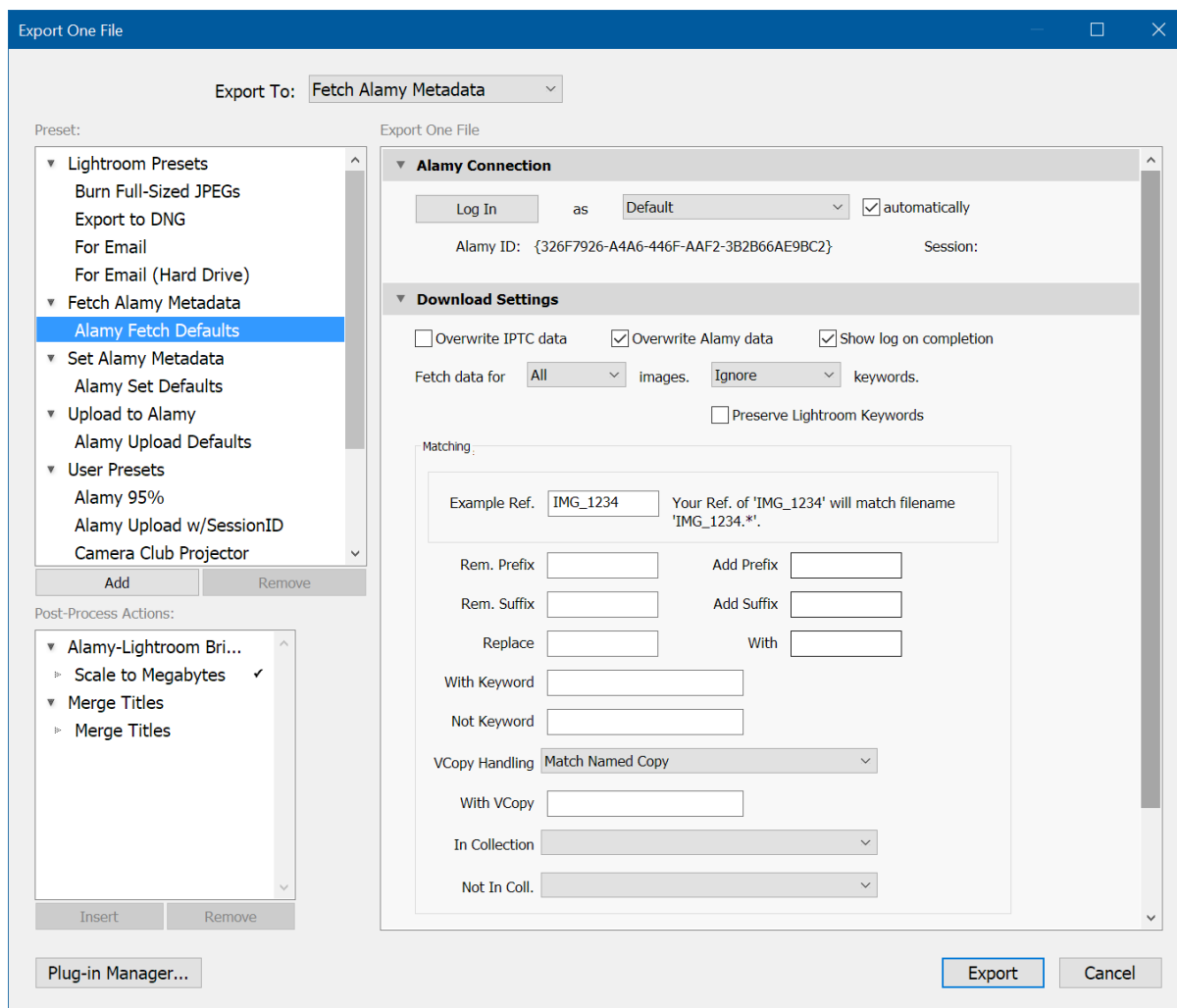
A custom filter is provided with the plug-in, which must be used. This filter scales each image up so that it fulfils Alamy's minimum size requirements, that each image must be at least 17Mb uncompressed and less than 100Mb. It may be safer to scale slightly larger than this, say to 25Mb.

Any images which are already larger than this size are not reduced unless they are larger than the size given as 'Maximum'.

If this filter is not enabled, the plug-in will refuse to upload anything; the '**Export**' button will be disabled.

FETCH ALAMY METADATA

Although this is downloading data from Alamy and updating the Lightroom catalog, it is still used as an export service, so that all the Alamy-related functions can be found in the same place. Since it is an export service, you need to have at least one exportable image selected in Lightroom for the “**Export...**” menu to be available. However, this may work against your entire Lightroom catalog, not just any images you have selected, depending on what you ask the plugin to do.



ALAMY CONNECTION

This section must be set up exactly as for the 'Upload to Alamy' exporter. In short, pick the login that you wish to use and either click Login or select the 'automatically' option.

DOWNLOAD SETTINGS

This controls how to set any information that is retrieved from Alamy.

- **OVERWRITE IPTC DATA**

When this is not selected, IPTC fields in Lightroom will only be set using metadata downloaded from Alamy if they are empty. If it is ticked, all matching fields will be set with Alamy's data.

- **OVERWRITE ALAMY DATA**

When this is not selected, Alamy-specific fields in Lightroom will only be set using metadata downloaded from Alamy if they are empty. If it is ticked, all matching fields will be set with Alamy's data. Normally this should be set to 'on'.

These two controls should allow you to set some of your Alamy metadata during their QC process, perform a Fetch operation to get the Alamy Ref, and then upload the completed metadata.

The "Alamy Ref" and "Image URL" fields are always set during a fetch, regardless of this setting.

- **SHOW LOG ON COMPLETION**

As with the Upload to Alamy export service, this shows a log of the 'Fetch Metadata' operation once it has completed. These logs are extremely useful for tracking what has changed, and for correcting any problems.

- **FETCH DATA FOR ...**

Using this you can control how much information is retrieved from Alamy. You can choose between 'All', 'Not Ready', 'Ready', 'On Sale', 'Selected', and the first 100, 500 or 1000 images, sorted by how recently they have been uploaded.

Retrieving data is fairly quick so normally 'All' is acceptable, but if you have many thousands of images for sale with Alamy it might be more efficient to only retrieve metadata for the most recent ones. If you choose 'Selected' images, the plugin will try to request data for the specific images you have chosen. If the image has already had data downloaded from Alamy, it will have Alamy's unique identifier associated with it. If this is not the case then the plugin will fall back on first an "Alamy Ref" value, and then to the "Your Ref" value based on the filename, and will search Alamy's database to find any potential matches.

- **... KEYWORDS**

You have the option to update your Lightroom keyword list based on the keywords set at Alamy. "Merge" will add Alamy's keywords to any that already exist in Lightroom, while "Replace" will also remove any Lightroom keywords that aren't set at Alamy. "Ignore" makes no changes at all. See p.22 for (much) more information.

- **PRESERVE LIGHTROOM KEYWORDS**

When keywords are being downloaded, they are usually stored in the "Essential" and "Main" keyword fields and then split down to either merge or replace the Lightroom keyword assignments, depending on the setting of the previous dropdown. If you tick the "Preserve Lightroom Keywords" option then this last stage is not done.

- **MATCHING : PREFIX AND SUFFIX**

This setting, and the following ones, affect the way that the plug-in matches Alamy's "Your Reference" to your filenames in Lightroom. The simplest case is where the filename has not changed since you uploaded the file to Alamy, in which case the filename and "Your Ref" values will match. In this simple case, leave all the "Matching" fields empty. If you rename your photos after uploading them as a matter of course, you will need to use this part of the dialog to help with the automatic matching process.

There are many possible combinations that you can use here. Please see page 20 for some examples, or simply use the example text shown in the dialog to work out the correct values.

- **MATCHING : REPLACE ... WITH ...**

After any prefix or suffix has been added or removed, the plug-in will replace the letters in the first box with those in the second.

- **MATCHING : WITH KEYWORD**

For any files that match the "Your Reference", they will only be matched if they also have the Lightroom keyword in this box.

- **MATCHING : NOT KEYWORD**

For any files that match the "Your Reference", they will only be matched if they do not have the Lightroom keyword in this box.

- **MATCHING : V COPY HANDLING**

Normally the plugin will only set data if it is sure that it has matched one, and only one, photo. This can cause problems when you have virtual copies of a photo you have uploaded. Use this control to choose whether you want to match original photos only, or named virtual copies only, or both, or to require manual AlamyRef entry where there is any doubt.

- **MATCHING: WITH V COPY**

Only enabled when the previous control is set to "Match Named Copy", only Virtual Copies that have this text in their name will be considered for matching. For example, if you create virtual copies to submit to Alamy and all your virtual copies contain the phrase "Alamy" in their name, by entering "Alamy" in this field you would narrow the matching search to only those virtual copies.

- **MATCHING: IN COLLECTION**

Only images that are a part of the named collection will be considered for matching.

- **MATCHING: NOT IN COLLECTION**

Images that are part of the named collection will never be considered for matching. This is most useful when combined with a Smart Collection which filters on the "Folder" value.

SAMPLE MATCHING SETTINGS

Getting the match between your Alamy photos and their original in Lightroom is possibly the trickiest part of getting the plugin set up. If you leave the filenames as they were when you submitted them, you will have few problems.

As long as you stick to one method of renaming, or of marking your Lightroom catalog to include or exclude photos, one combination of “Matching” settings should work consistently once it has been set up.

Exactly how you need to set this section will depend on your individual way of marking or renaming your photos, but the following tips may help. Each tip is independent of the others.

- Include all your submitted photos in a standard Collection and use the “In Collection” control to limit matching.
- When you submit a photo, add a non-exportable keyword such as “_Alamy_”, and require this to be present using the “With Keyword” option.
- If you keep the exported JPEG copies, you can exclude these by adding a different keyword and requiring this *not* to be present using the “Not Keyword” option.
- Always export the JPEG copies to the same folder structure, and use a Smart Collection to list the contents of this folder. For example, store them under “C:\Photos\AlamyJPEGs” and set your Smart Collection to match this as part of the path. You can then use the “Not In Collection” control to exclude these JPEG copies. (Normally they would be excluded anyway, but if the field that identifies them to the plugin as exported copies is changed or lost, they would become eligible for matching as an original copy).
- If you have renamed your photos and kept to a consistent renaming scheme, use the “Remove Prefix”, “Add Prefix” and “Replace” ... “With” boxes to describe how you rename. There are many possible combinations of settings for these boxes, and they will be highly individual.
- In all cases, the easiest way to find out what will happen is to simply read the small description to the right of the “Matching” box.

SCALE TO MEGABYTES FILTER

This filter, used as part of the “Upload to Alamy” exporter, is completely unused here. However, if it is included with the “Upload” exporter as it must be, Lightroom also includes it automatically with both the “Fetch Alamy Metadata” and “Set Alamy Metadata” exporters. To save having to remove and re-add it, simply ignore it.

HOW THE PLUGIN SETS METADATA

Each image that is downloaded from Alamy will be matched to the Lightroom catalog, based on the Alamy “Your Reference” field. This is automatically set by Alamy to the image filename when they are uploaded. This means you should use unique filenames so that you can identify the correct images after they have been uploaded.

When the plugin first tries to fetch metadata for a given photo, it needs to use the current filename to try to match Alamy’s “Your Reference” field. If you have many images with matching filenames, or none at all, the plug-in will look in Lightroom’s “Alamy Ref.” field for each photo and use anything it finds there to try and match the reference value returned by Alamy. This allows you to force a match for a specific image by manually entering the correct Alamy Ref.

Next, any other rules (i.e. keyword, containing collections) you set in the dialog are applied to each potentially matched image. Any images which don’t satisfy the rules are ignored.

Finally, if only one matching filename is found, that file will be a candidate to have the metadata fields set. If more than one is found, any that have a value in the “Alamy Media Ref.” custom field will have their metadata set.

IN SHORT, BY FAR THE EASIEST WAY TO GET YOUR PHOTOS MATCHED CORRECTLY IS TO USE UNIQUE FILENAMES FOR THEM, BEFORE THEY ARE UPLOADED TO ALAMY!

I use a two- or three-letter code for the subject, followed by a memory-card number, followed by a sequence number. For people taking many more photos than I do, you could maybe use a combination of date and sequence. This can be set in Lightroom’s “Import” dialog, in the “File Naming” section, so that you don’t even have to rename things yourself.

If you have many photos with exactly the same filename, the only way to reliably match them against Alamy’s data is for you to use the logs that are created as part of the Fetch process. In these logs you have a link to the appropriate image on Alamy website, along with a thumbnail of the image. This link is also stored in the “Alamy URL” field in Lightroom. Using this information, it is up to you to find the right match visually, then type in the correct Alamy Reference to the right image in Lightroom.

Once the photo is matched and you have the “Alamy Ref” field stored, you are free to rename the photo in Lightroom if necessary. I would still recommend renaming photos *before* submitting them, if only to save potential confusion later on.

KEYWORDS

Setting keywords is more complicated than it might appear because of the hierarchical way that Lightroom stores keywords.

ALAMY HAVE CHANGED THE WAY THEY HANDLE KEYWORDS TO BE MORE POWERFUL AND EASIER TO USE. IF YOU HAVE BEEN USING ALAMY OR THIS PLUGIN FOR SOME TIME, PLEASE RE-READ THIS SECTION.

Most tools assume that keywords are a simple list of words. Lightroom has a much more powerful keywording system where a keyword can have parents, children and synonyms. When you add a keyword to a photo, all that keyword's parents (a parent can also have parents) are also added. If any keyword has synonyms, they get added too – adding one keyword to a photo can result in dozens of other words being added along with it. The complexity arises when one of the automatically-added words is changed using Alamy's online tools.

Let's say you have this structure:

KEYWORD	SYNONYMS
Asia	travel
↳Cambodia	
↳Siem Reap	
↳Angkor Wat	temple, ancient, unesco

You add the keyword “Angkor Wat” to a photo. When you export that photo, it will have these keywords:

ancient [Angkor Wat] Asia Cambodia [Siem Reap] temple travel unesco

Note that the keywords with spaces have been added with square brackets around them. This used to be Alamy's recommended way of passing multi-word keywords. However, that has changed and it is now possible to send both words and phrases to Alamy in a way that needs no special annotations.

Alamy now use the concept of ‘tags’ and ‘supertags’, which correspond to their old ‘Main Keywords’ and ‘Essential Keywords’ text fields. Since there is no way in a Lightroom plugin to individual Lightroom keywords to be tagged as more important, the old method of storing Alamy's keywords in two text fields remains. This means that the old bracket annotation is still in use in the plugin.

To return to the example, let's assume that you've used Alamy's online keyword editor to remove the “Asia” keyword. The only keyword that was added to the photo in Lightroom was “Angkor Wat”, and removing that would also remove all the other keywords that were added automatically.

Also, if you had previously sent keywords made up of multiple words, there is a good chance that they will have been separated into single words by Alamy. If you uploaded the image originally with a very old version of the plugin, or using Alamy's online tool, the keywords would have been sent as the following:

ancient Angkor Asia Cambodia Reap Siem Temple travel unesco

This is because they would have been taken from the EXIF Keyword field in the uploaded JPEG, and Lightroom simply appends all keywords in alphabetical order during the export. The result is that the keywords returned no longer match the keywords stored in Lightroom because "Siem Reap" and "Ankgor Wat" have been separated.

The keyword update rules in the plugin will try to work around these situations. It will try to match pairs of incoming keywords to single Lightroom keywords with spaces. If multiple keywords are received from Alamy that are missing from Lightroom it will try to find existing hierarchies which add as many of the missing keywords as possible rather than creating new, individual keywords for each one. Lastly, if it has to remove a keyword which has parents and/or synonyms then it will recreate as much of the remaining parent/child/synonym structure as possible instead of creating single, unrelated keywords.

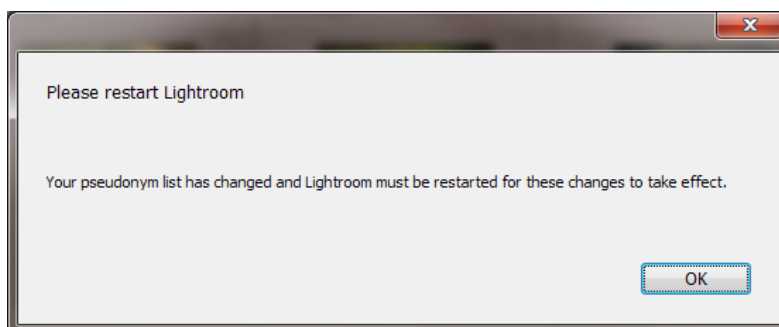
Please see page 28 for a separate description of how the keyword fields are filled out by the Set Metadata part of the plugin.

PSEUDONYMS

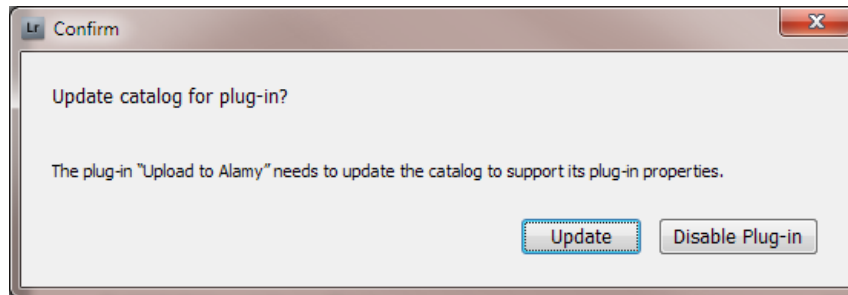
Alamy has a feature where one photographer or agency can submit photos under different names. This can help you to track your photos. It also maintains a separate AlamyRank value for each pseudonym, which may be of use if your various photographic subject areas sell differently.

You can choose which pseudonym you use for each photo from Lightroom, using the "Pseudonym" drop-down list. However, Lightroom wants the contents of all such lists to be pre-defined by the plugin programmer.

To work round this, one of the plug-in's own files – "**AddPseudonyms.lua**" – is re-written by the plug-in itself. Every time you use the "Fetch Alamy Metadata" exporter, your pseudonyms are fetched from Alamy. If they don't match the current list, the list is updated. Because Lightroom isn't expecting parts of the program to change as it is running, you need to restart Lightroom to pick up these changes but you will be reminded of this:

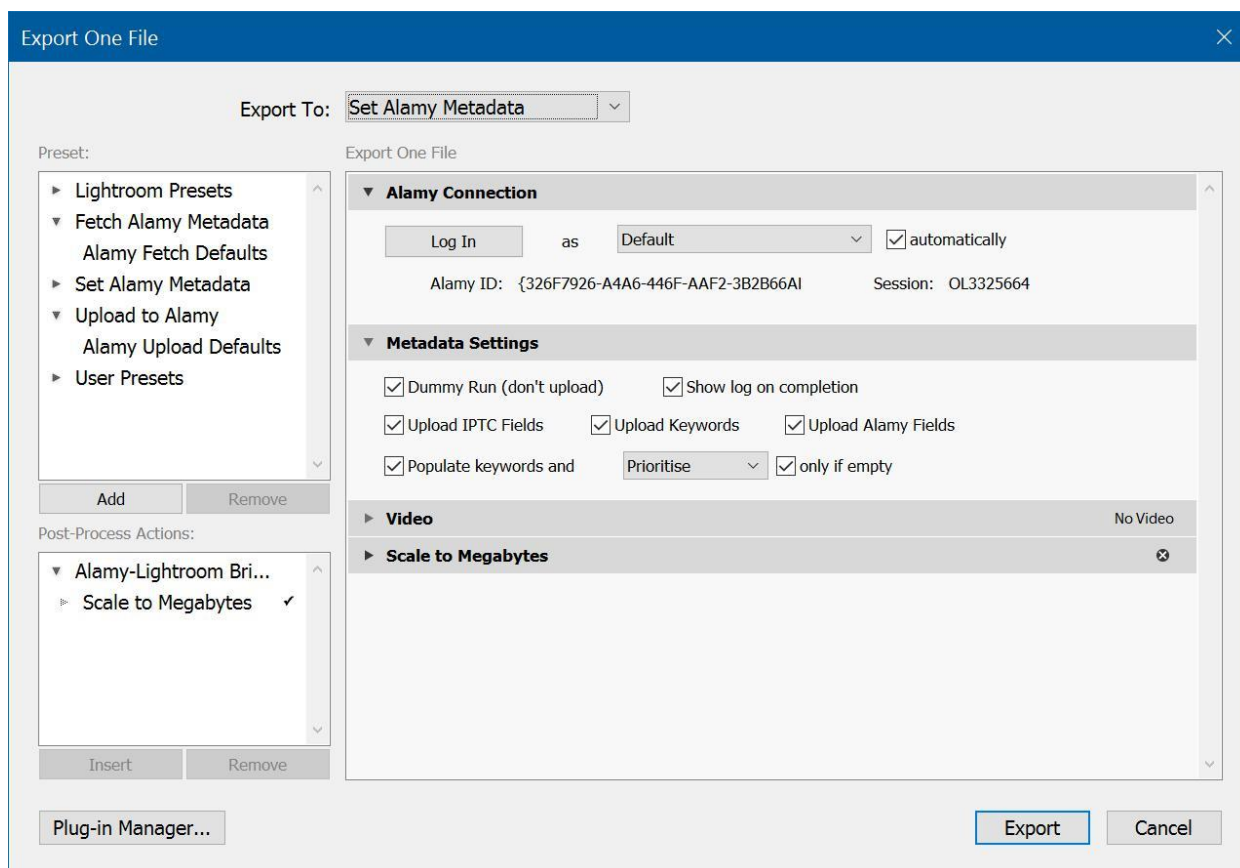


On restarting Lightroom, you will be prompted to update the catalog again:



SET ALAMY METADATA

This exporter takes all the metadata for any selected images which have an “Alamy Reference” set, and sets the corresponding fields at Alamy.



ALAMY CONNECTION

This section must be set up exactly as for the 'Upload to Alamy' exporter (see page 15 for details).

METADATA SETTINGS

This section controls how much information is sent to Alamy.

- **DUMMY RUN**

With this ticked, no information at all is sent to Alamy. You can use this to check that everything is likely to be OK when the data is actually sent; mainly it is here as an aid to testing.

- **SHOW LOG ON COMPLETION**

As with the Upload to Alamy export service, this shows a log of the “Set Metadata” operation once it has completed. The log will show a thumbnail of each photo and a list of items that were sent.

- **UPLOAD IPTC FIELDS**

With this ticked, the IPTC “Caption”, “Location” and “Date and Time” fields are sent to Alamy.

- **UPLOAD KEYWORDS**

With this ticked, lists of keywords are sent to Alamy. Please see page 28 for full details.

- **UPLOAD ALAMY FIELDS**

With this ticked, Alamy-specific metadata such as “Image Type” and “Model Release” are sent to Alamy.

- **POPULATE KEYWORDS...**

Controls how and when keyword fields are changed. Please see page 28 for details.

SCALE TO MEGABYTES

As with the “Fetch Alamy Metadata” exporter, this is completely ignored.

HOW IT SETS METADATA

Each image that you have selected in Lightroom is checked to see if it has a valid “Alamy Reference” set. If it does, that reference is used to tell Alamy which image to update. Any metadata you have in Lightroom is packaged up and sent to Alamy. These are the fields that are sent:

Alamy's own data:

- Photograph or Illustration
- Is Digitally Altered
- Shows How Many People
- Has a Model Release
- Shows Property Requiring a Release
- Has a Property Release
- Supertags (important keywords)
- Tags (other keywords)
- Pseudonym
- Description
- Exclusive to Alamy
- Editorial Only
- Primary and Secondary Category

Other data:

- Date Taken
- Caption
- Date Taken (if no EXIF data exists. Should be formatted as 'YYYYMMDD'.)
- Location, including GPS

Alamy expect a single 'Location' value, while IPTC provide four. The value sent to Alamy is made up from the IPTC 'Location', 'City', 'State' and 'Country' fields.

HOW IT SETS KEYWORDS

Keywords are a special case. Alamy split keywords into two groups – “Supertags” and “Tags”. Normally for photos, keywords are stored in a single group. To try and work round this, there are two new metadata fields for Alamy’s “Supertags” and “Tags” keyword groups. These are simple text boxes, and keywords should be entered with either spaces or commas between them, depending on your settings in the Plugin Manager.

You can enter multi-word keywords with double-quotes or square brackets round them - e.g. “King Kong” - to have them treated as a single word. Although both Alamy and Lightroom now support multi-word keywords without using any special annotations, restrictions on Lightroom plugins mean that the only way of handling keywords in a special way is to use a single piece of text.

WHEN YOU HAVE NO TAGS OR SUPERTAGS

The plugin maintains separate fields for Alamy’s “Supertags” and “Tags” keyword lists. These affect the photo’s “Discoverability” rating. If either of these fields is empty, the plugin will use all the assigned Lightroom keywords for that photo to fill these fields, up to Alamy’s limits. Although these keywords will probably not be in the best possible order, any keywords will be better than none. The exact order in which the keywords are added depends on your settings; these are discussed below.

WHEN YOU DO HAVE TAGS AND SUPERTAGS

Since the “Supertags” and “Tags” keyword fields are maintained separately by the plugin, you are free to alter these in any way you like and they will be sent to Alamy untouched, apart from splitting the text into individual tags. The only time that changes would be made to these fields is when they are too long. It is not possible to tell Lightroom to limit a text field to a set number of words, so there is nothing to stop you entering more than Alamy will accept.

To avoid this, if the “Supertags” field is too long then words will be moved to the start of the “Tags” field, so as to maintain the order of importance as closely as possible.

KEYWORD ORDERING

There are several places where you can tell the plugin to assign keywords to a photo, based on the Lightroom keywords. When assigning keywords, there are several options which affect how they are assigned. Automatically-assigned keywords are never going to be as good as manually-assigned ones, so the intention of this feature is simply that having any keywords at all is better than having none.

The two main choices are whether or not to merge new keywords with existing ones, and in what order.

MERGE OR REPLACE

The simplest option is to replace the Alamy “Supertags” and “Tags” keyword fields entirely.

If you have already assigned keywords manually but wish to include new words that have been added to the Lightroom keyword list, you can choose to merge the new words with the existing ones.

This works by creating a single list where the Supertags are first, then the Tags, and then all the Lightroom keywords which are not already on the list. This list is then split in order of importance. In this way, any keywords which you have already manually assigned will retain their importance and any new words will be added to the end.

KEYWORD ORDERING

There are three options for ordering the keywords before they are assigned to the Alamy keyword lists; “Alphabetical”, “Unordered” or “Priority”.

Alphabetical order is exactly as it sounds; before being assigned, the keywords are sorted. This is similar to the order in which Lightroom would normally return keywords anyway, if you don’t use any hierarchy or synonyms.

Unordered applies no sorting at all. Words will be added in the order that Lightroom returns them, which is basically alphabetical. However, related words – synonyms or parents – will tend to be grouped with the words to which they are related.

Finally, priority mode applies some basic analysis to the individual words and assigns each one a priority, and this priority is used to order the list before it is split. Priority ordering is detailed in the next section.

UNDERSTANDING PRIORITY ORDERING

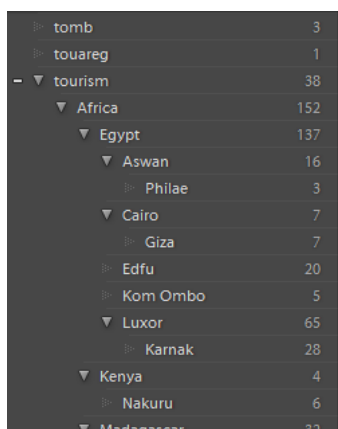
Each keyword is allocated a priority, based on some very simple observations. No real linguistic analysis is done, but the results are often considerably better than no ordering or alphabetical ordering.

The following areas are considered when the priority is calculated:

- A single keyword made up of more than one word is higher priority.
- A keyword which is included automatically as a parent of another keyword is lower priority. Typically, a hierarchy of keywords will have general areas at the top of the hierarchy and more specific terms as you go down.
- A keyword which is capitalised is higher priority.
- Synonyms are lower priority.
- Words which are also used in the caption are higher priority.

With these simple rules, a good attempt can be made to guess the relative importance of different terms. This method does depend, however, on using Lightroom's keywording system effectively.

The most important aspect is the use of hierarchy. Lightroom is capable of grouping keywords together in tree structures, and assigning a keyword which is part of a group will automatically assign all keywords which lie above it in the group.



For example, in the screenshot to the left there is a keyword hierarchy covering geographical names. If you were to add the single keyword “Kom Ombo” to a photo, Lightroom would automatically assign the keywords “Egypt” and “Africa”.

When calculating the relative priorities of these keywords, “Kom Ombo” would be seen as highest priority, then “Egypt” because it is above “Kom Ombo” in the tree structure, and then “Africa” with the least priority. The “tourism” keyword has been marked as “Not for export” in Lightroom, so would not be considered.

“Kom Ombo” would also get a small priority increase because it is capitalised, and another because it has more than one word.

If you were to add “tomb” to the same photo, it would be seen as fairly high priority because it is the last item in it's hierarchy – it has no descendants – but since it is not capitalised and is made up of a single word, it would be considered as lower priority than “Kom Ombo”.

In short, grouping your keywords in this way can save you a lot of time when adding keywords to a photo because it is possible to add many keywords which have at least some relevance very quickly, by only adding a single, very relevant word. By using this powerful and under-appreciated feature of Lightroom, you will also help the plugin to make more intelligent decisions about allocating your keywords in a suitable order for Alamy.

THE PLUGIN EXTRAS MENU

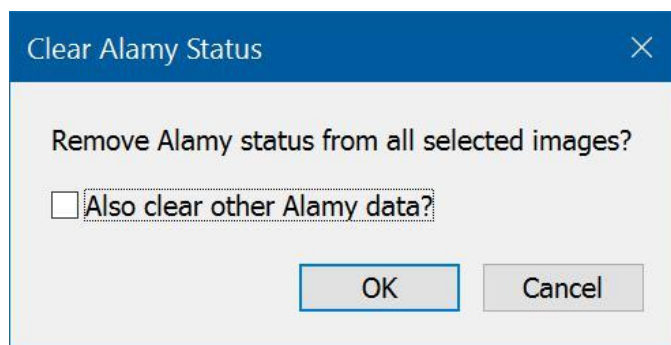
Several useful tools can be found on the “Plugin Extras” menu, on the Library menu.

CLEAR ALAMY METADATA

Sometimes you may need to remove the Alamy-specific metadata from your images, for example if a submitted image is rejected or deleted, or if the wrong image is identified during the Fetch process. Because some of the metadata fields are read-only, such as the Status field, you can't do this manually.

There is an option on the Library menu which will do this for you. You can choose to remove only the Status value, or all Alamy metadata, from all the images currently selected by using the “**Library**→**Plug-in Extras**→**Clear Alamy Status**” menu.

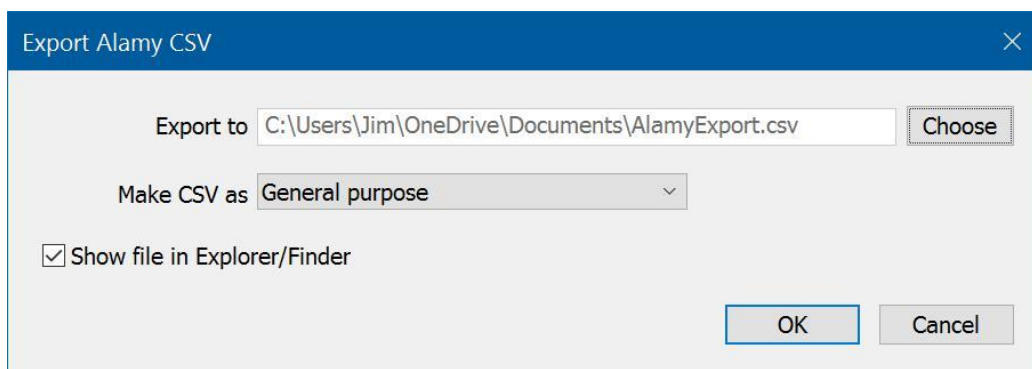
A small dialog will appear:



This simply gives you the option to cancel and do nothing, or to continue and clear the Status or all other Alamy-specific metadata fields such as “Supertags” and “Media Reference”.

EXPORT TO CSV

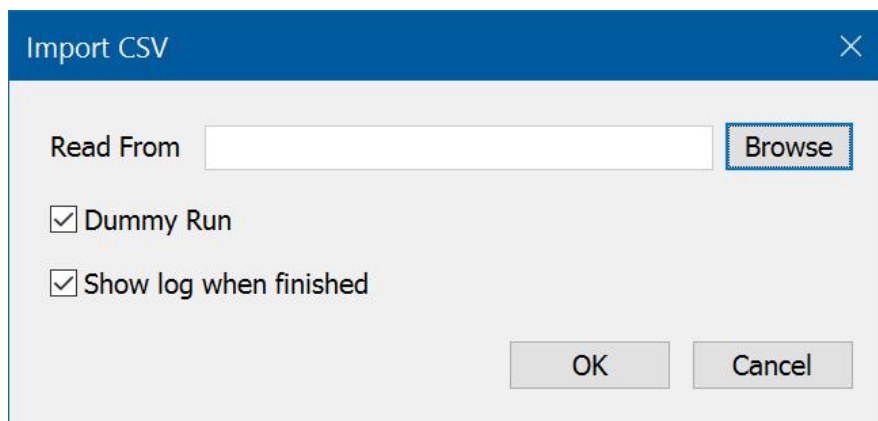
If you need to get the Alamy metadata into another application, this command will help. It creates a CSV file (Comma Separated Values) which can be read by many applications including Microsoft Excel.



To use this command, select the “**Library→Plug-in Extras→Alamy Export to CSV**” menu item. You can choose one of three different layouts for the CSV file; one is general purpose, one is in a format specified by Alamy, and the last is intended as a way to exchange keywords with 3rd-party companies.

IMPORT FROM CSV

This allows you to import from a CSV file containing keyword information. If you use another application or a keywording service to provide your keywords, this command will help.



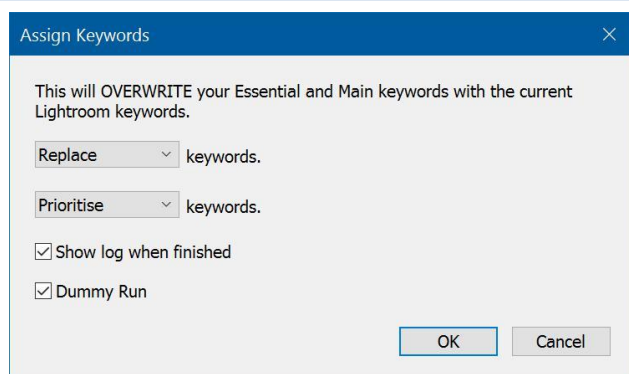
The CSV is assumed to have a header line, and the headers are used to determine how to read the contents of the file. You must give one (or both) of “Filename” and “AlamyRef” columns for the plugin to know which photo to apply the other data to.

Other fields that can be read are:

Path, Filename, Alamy Ref, Caption, Location, Latitude, Longitude, Altitude, KeywordIDs, Essential, and Main. You can also use “Essential Keywords” and “Essential Keyw.” as alternatives to “Essential”, and similarly for “Main”.

When the import is complete, you can see the results in the logfile that is created. As with other commands, the “Dummy Run” option lets you try the import without making any changes.

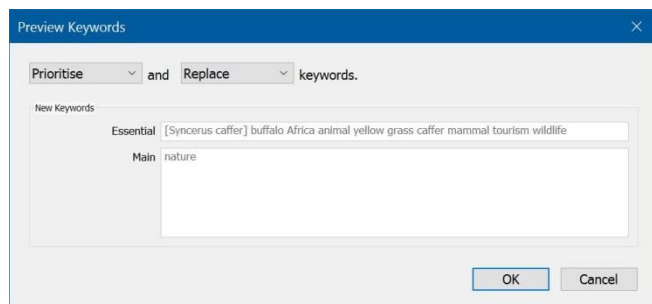
REASSIGN KEYWORDS



This will either replace or augment your existing Alamy keyword fields, based on the Lightroom keywords. For full details of how the automatic keywording works, please see p.28 .

PREVIEW KEYWORDS

Similar to the previous command, this works out the keywords for the current photo based on different keywording settings. Unlike the previous command, this one will only show you the keywords without changing anything. You can use this to see the effect of making changes to the Lightroom keyword hierarchy quickly, without needing to make any changes or read log files.



FIND DUPLICATE ALAMYREFS

It is possible to end up with more than one photo with the same Alamy Reference value set. This value is the most important one when it comes to all fetch and set operations, so this can mean that you make unintentional changes to important fields by sending data for one photo more than once.

Another easy way to have duplicates created is to simply create virtual copies, after the original photo has had an Alamy Reference set. When you create a virtual copy, Lightroom copies all existing data from the original photo to the virtual copy, including any defined by plugins.

To help prevent this, running the “Find Duplicates” command will scan your entire catalog to find any photos which share the same Alamy Reference. They will show up in one of the supplied Smart Collections, and from there you can choose which of the two (or more) photos is the genuine one. You can then use the Clear Alamy Metadata command, described on p.31, to clear all Alamy information from the inappropriately-labelled images.

UPDATE WORD COUNTS

The plugin can do some basic analysis of your captions and keywords to try and highlight areas which may need attention. Lightroom already gives you the option to show photos which have no caption or keywords and there are Smart Collections set up to show these. There is now the ability to get more information on these important areas.

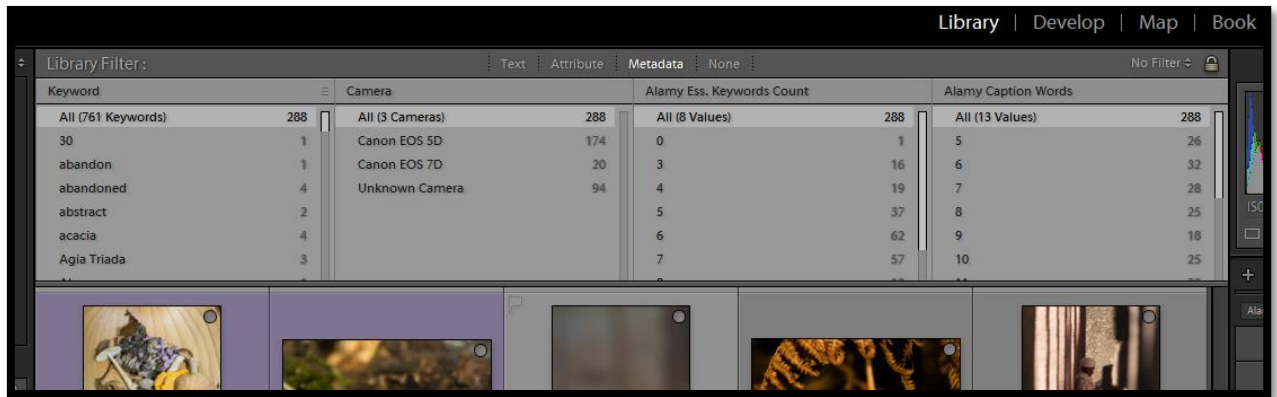
This menu item performs some simple checks on the caption and keywords of any selected photos that have Alamy data associated with them. Typically you would select all your Alamy photos and then run the command. Unfortunately there is no way to make Lightroom automatically notify a standard plugin when keywords or caption change, so for now it is necessary to manually use this menu item to update the counts.

Each field – caption, and the three keyword fields – are analysed. At present this done as a simple count of words which are not stop-words. “Stop-words” are those which typically contain little or no information of themselves, and are usually ignored by search engines. Words such as “the”, “as”, “to” etc. will be ignored by the plugin, leaving only those words which carry descriptive information. The number of remaining words in each field is counted and stored.

After the command has run, you will be able to use the Library module’s Filter Bar to access the results.

LIBRARY FILTER BAR

One of Lightroom's standard features in the Library module is the Filter Bar, which can be opened by clicking on one of the four small headers above the library itself. If these are not visible, check on the "View" menu that the "Show Filter Bar" option is ticked.



With the plugin installed, the Filter Bar now has access to several new filter fields:

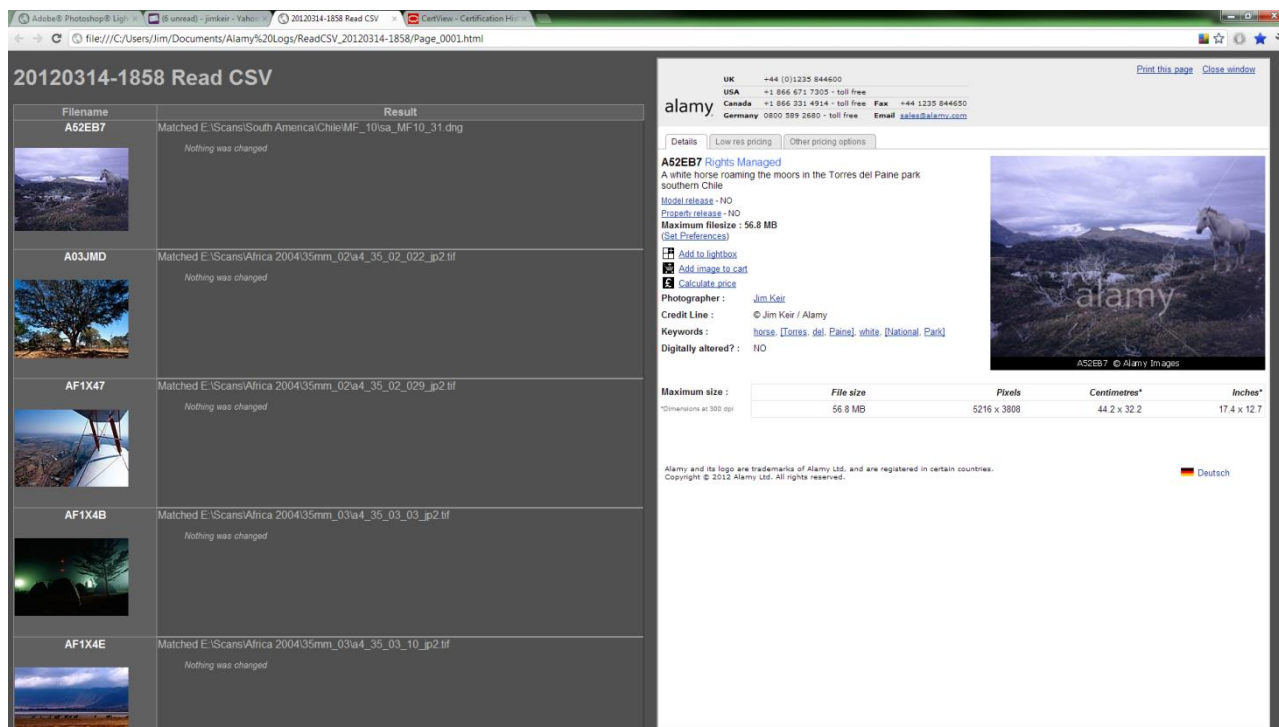
- Alamy Status
- QC Failure Reason
- License (i.e. Rights Managed, Royalty Free etc.)
- Alamy Caption Word Count
- Alamy All Tags Count
- Alamy Supertags Count
- Alamy Main Tags Count
- Pseudonym
- Primary Category
- Secondary Category
- Discoverability %
- Advertising Restricted
- Consumer Goods Restricted
- Editorial Restricted
- Personal Use Restricted

Changing the filters is done by clicking the name of an existing filter group – that is, if the filter currently exists for “Keyword” as in the screenshot above, click on the “Keyword” title and you will get a drop-down list from which you can select the new Alamy-specific filters. There is a full tutorial on using the filter bar at http://www.learn-to-lightroom.com/articles/library_filters/.

LOGGING

Many of the commands will create a log of their actions. This log will be created in a subfolder of your Documents folder called “**Alamy Logs**” and will consist of one or more html files. If a logfile is created then you will be given the option of showing the log automatically once the action completes.

Old logs are left in place, but you are free to delete them whenever you wish.



The left-hand part of the page shows the photo that corresponds to this log entry. These thumbnail images are taken directly from Alamy’s website, so you will need to be online for the thumbnails to appear. If you are not online you can still use the Alamy Reference, shown above the thumbnail, to identify the image inside Lightroom.

The Alamy Reference as well as the thumbnail are a link which will show Alamy’s page for this photo in the right-hand panel of the page.

The main part of the left-hand panel is a description of what was done for each photo. Every item of information that was sent or changed will be listed here, even in “dummy run” mode.

Finally, you can change the number of photos that appear on each page of a log in the Plugin Manager.

KNOWN PROBLEMS

DATE CREATED IS SET ON EVERY FETCH

In Lightroom 3.6 there is a bug where the “Date Created” field is returned to plugins as an empty value. This means that it will be set every time you perform a Fetch. This bug has been fixed since Lightroom 4.0 .