

FLICKR HACKS™

*Tips & Tools for Sharing
Photos Online*



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With a foreword by Caterina Fake, cofounder of Flickr*

Flicker Hacks™

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**HACK**
#23

View Flickr Photos on TiVo

Flickr Central for TiVo's Home Media Engine lets you view Flickr photos on your television.

More and more, we share digital versions of the pictures we take. While it's easy to pass around printed photos in any setting, showing digital photos to friends and family can be trickier. Most computers are set up for one user at a time, and it's not always easy to crowd a bunch of people around the monitor.

However, our televisions are almost always set up to accommodate a good number of comfortable viewers. And if you've already joined the digital television age with TiVo, with a bit of setup you can browse Flickr photos on your TV.

What You Need

Flickr on TV is possible thanks to TiVo's release of the Home Media Engine (HME), a way for outside developers to create little programs that run on TiVo. Developers have created games, weather applications, and even RSS readers that you can use through your TV. The HME system uses your home PC to run the applications and a home network to transfer data, and the TiVo displays the applications on your television.

To run HME, you'll need a TiVo Series 2 that's connected to your home network. If you're using the phone line to update your program data, you'll need to add a network adapter to your TiVo setup. You'll find a list of compatible adapters at <http://customersupport.tivo.com/knowledge/root/public/tv2006.htm?> Figure 3-31 shows a TiVo Series 2 with a Linksys WUSB12 wireless network adapter.



In addition to running HME applications, a network adapter will allow you to download the television schedule over your Internet connection instead of your phone line. That means no more battles with TiVo over who gets to use the phone!

Once your TiVo is on your home network, you'll want to be sure you can run HME applications. Browse to the HME project page (<http://tivohme.sourceforge.net>), and click the HME Quick Start link under the For Hobbyists heading. Take a look at the system requirements, download HME Quick Start, and follow the instructions. If you run HME Quick Start and see a new option under your TiVo Music, Photos & More menu, you'll know you have everything set to run Flickr Central.



Figure 3-31. A Series 2 TiVo with a wireless network adapter

Starting Flickr Central

Once you've confirmed that your TiVo can run HME applications, download the Flickr Central application from http://home.comcast.net/~major_clanger/TiVo/. Unzip the file, open the new *FlickrCentral* directory, and double-click *run.bat*. You should see the Flickr Central launcher shown in Figure 3-32.

To use all of the features available, choose the Authenticate User option and add Flickr Central to your list of approved applications. To have a few more features, you can enter your Flickr username, or, for a bare-bones version, choose the “No login” option (but be aware that with this option you'll be able to view only a couple of public photo sets).

Once Flickr Central is running, you should see “Welcome to Flickr Central” with a note that the application is running. Now, leave your PC, turn on your TV, and hit the TiVo button on your remote.

Navigating Flickr Central

From the main TiVo menu, choose Music, Photos & More. You should see the option for Flickr Central at the top of the page. Select Flickr Central to bring up the initial menu shown in Figure 3-33.

You can access much of what you find on the Flickr web site through Flickr Central, though navigation is much different. Click Photos to see the options for viewing photos, as shown in Figure 3-34.



Figure 3-32. Flickr Central launcher

The Everyone's option will show you the photos found at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/> (i.e., the most recent photos from anyone posting to Flickr). The Contacts' option will show you photos from your contacts, like you'd find at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/friends/>.

You can also view your own photos in order or at random and browse photos you've marked as favorites. Choosing the Tags option will take you to a menu where you can enter any tag you'd like to search for, as shown in Figure 3-35.

Each photo that you view takes up the entire television screen; there are no thumbnail views of photos in Flickr Central. While you're browsing a photostream or set, you can click the right or left arrow on the remote control to

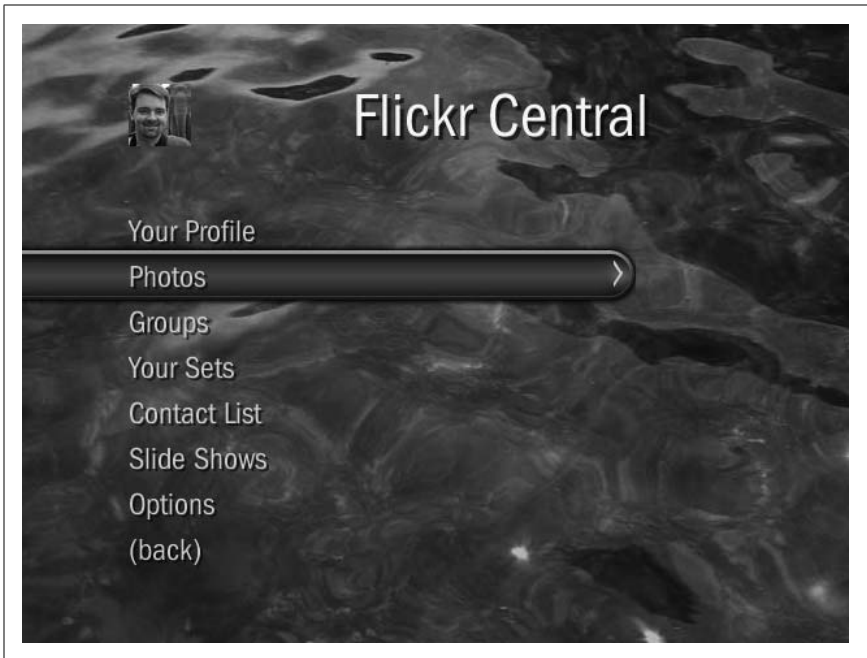


Figure 3-33. Flickr Central main menu

change the direction of browsing. The up arrow ends your trip through the photos.

If you click the info button, you'll get a screen that includes the title, the description, and the name of the Flickr member who posted the photo, as shown in Figure 3-36.

From the main menu, you can also view the latest photos posted to your groups, view your photo sets, or browse a list of your contacts, as shown in Figure 3-37.

You can use Flickr Central to monitor any new Flickr activity, but it doesn't work well for participation. For example, you can't post photos, comment on others' photos, or add notes or tags to any photos.

Despite these limitations, Flickr Central is a great way to view what's happening on Flickr on TV, and it might be handy for family gatherings as a new way to share your photos.

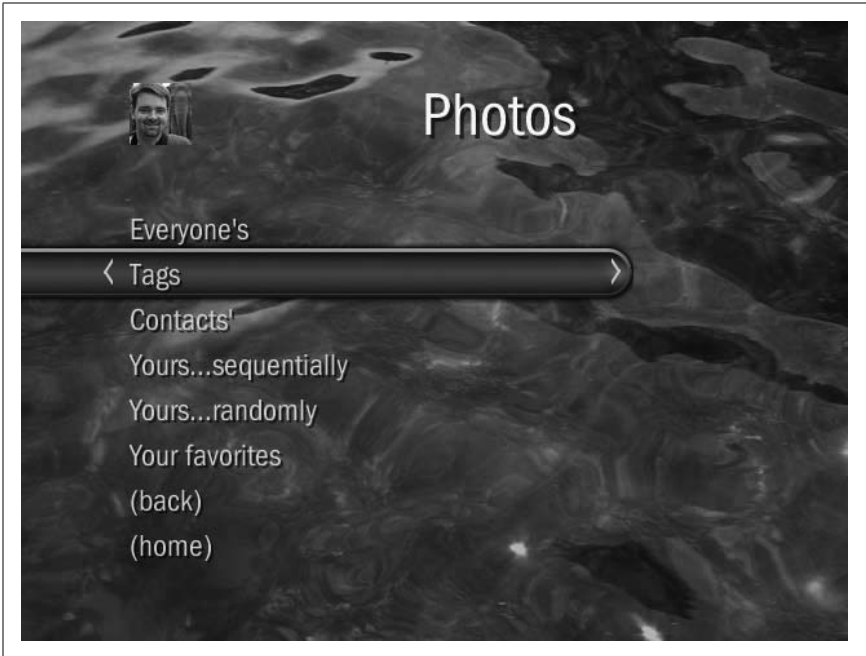


Figure 3-34. The Flickr Central Photos menu



Figure 3-35. Entering a tag at Flickr Central

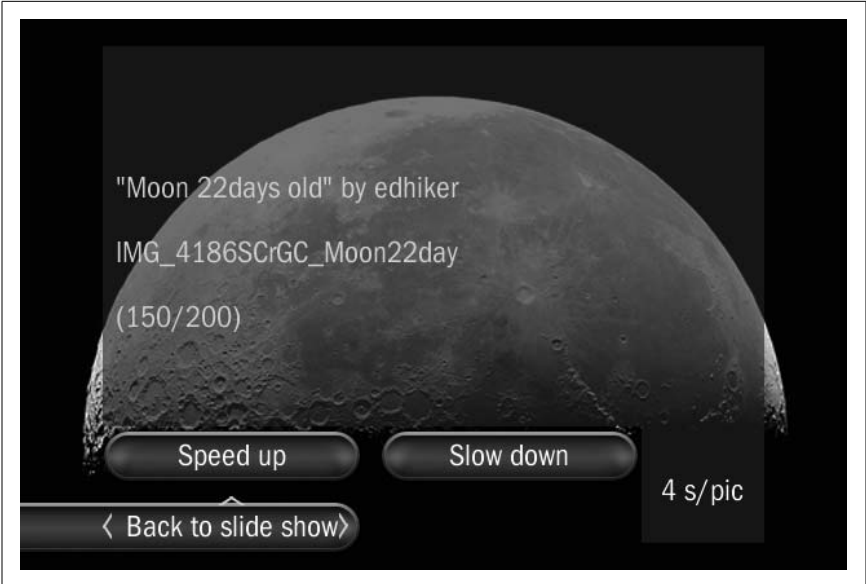


Figure 3-36. Viewing photo details with Flickr Central



Figure 3-37. Browsing Flickr contacts at Flickr Central