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## **PLUS COALITION RELEASES GLOBAL IMAGE LICENSING STANDARDS**

### **Publishers, Designers and Art Buyers Join Forces with Photographers, Illustrators, Artist Representatives and Stock Agencies to Use Universal System for Universal Benefit**

**New York, NY, January 3, 2006** – Businesses that create or use images are celebrating the release of new industry standards that significantly simplify the process of granting, obtaining and managing the permissions necessary to use photographs and illustrations. The PLUS (Picture Licensing Universal System) standards have been approved and released by the PLUS Coalition, a global non-profit organization with widespread participation by trade associations and stakeholders from the photography, illustration, advertising, design and publishing industries.

Officially launched in a special multi-industry event at the annual Photo Plus Expo trade show in New York, the PLUS standards were established by the largest collaborative effort in the history of image licensing, culminating a three years of intensive standards development. For the first time, publishers, designers and advertising agency art buyers can use universal terminology and standardized codes to simplify the process of obtaining and managing image licenses from photographers, illustrators and stock image agencies, worldwide.

“The PLUS standards facilitate efficient communication and commerce in an increasingly global image licensing marketplace,” says Jeff Sedlik, President and CEO of the PLUS Coalition. “PLUS is the universal language for image licensing, allowing everyone, everywhere to work from the same page when licensing images.”

Image licensing is the means by which artists and stock image agencies provide their customers with permission to use photographs and illustrations. Whether a customer commissions the creation of a new image or elects to use an existing “stock” image, the transaction typically involves a license, by which the copyright owner or an authorized agent grants the customer the right to use the image. In addition to simplifying the process of granting and obtaining image licenses, the PLUS standards make it easy for image users to access license information and to keep track of the rights associated with each image. PLUS allows license information to travel as embedded “metadata” in a standardized “License Data Format” within digital image files.

Supplementing last year’s release of the PLUS Picture Licensing Glossary, the PLUS Coalition has released four additional licensing standards: The PLUS Media Matrix, PLUS Packs, PLUS-ID System, and PLUS License Data Format.

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### **PLUS Media Matrix**

The PLUS Media Matrix provides a standardized hierarchy of media categories, media types and media options, allowing users to easily identify and differentiate specific types of media usage such as “Point of Purchase,” “Transit” and even “Edible Media.” Importantly, the PLUS standards do not standardize fees or pricing.

### **PLUS Packs**

PLUS Packs introduce a new universal standard for streamlined “rights-managed” image licensing. Simple and convenient, PLUS Packs offer the flexibility of broadly defined rights, in a form that is simple, straightforward and transparent. PLUS Packs include the most common commercial, editorial and personal uses.

### **PLUS-ID System**

PLUS has assigned a universal Matrix-ID code to each type of media and to each media usage option. Art buyers, designers and publishers use PLUS Matrix IDs as a convenient and precise means of specifying usage rights for commissioned and stock images when communicating with any artist or stock agency, worldwide.

### **PLUS License Data Format**

The PLUS License Data Format provides a universal standard for summarizing information essential to the understanding of an image license, such as the names of the parties, permissions granted, and any limitations on the use of the image. The License Data Format is machine readable, and is used by artists and stock agencies to embed image license information in digital image files, allowing customers to easily view the usage rights associated with any image.

The PLUS standards will appear in software commonly used to create, edit, manage, browse, distribute and license images. Additional PLUS components now under development include the PLUS License Generator, License Information Panels, License Embedder & Decoder, Artist & Licensor Registry and the License Registry, all launching in 2007. To learn more about joining the PLUS Coalition and using the PLUS standards, visit the PLUS web site at [www.useplus.org](http://www.useplus.org).

**The PLUS Coalition promotes clear and precise communication, leveraging current technologies to allow license information to travel within digital image files. Designed for the global marketplace of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, PLUS makes image licenses easy to understand, and easy to use.**

### **About The PLUS Coalition**

The PLUS Coalition (Picture Licensing Universal System) is an international non-profit organization on a mission to simplify and facilitate the licensing of images through the development of image licensing standards and tools. PLUS receives significant support from Leadership Circle members Microsoft, Adobe, Pentagram, Jupiterimages, Adbase, Belay Development, Digimarc, Digital Railroad, ImageSpan, IPN, IPTC, *Photo District News*, PhotoServe, Poundhill Software, StockPhotoFinder, and Wong Doody. To join and support the PLUS Coalition, visit [www.useplus.org](http://www.useplus.org) or contact [membership@useplus.org](mailto:membership@useplus.org).

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