



Engaging Nature Lovers via National Geographic's Photo-Sharing Experience

The Opportunity. In honor of its 125th anniversary, National Geographic wanted to launch a global photo-sharing website, powered by various social media channels, where nature-lovers could engage with one another by posting photos of plants and animals. In addition to supporting National Geographic's core mission of inspiring people of all ages to care about the planet, this new web initiative (called [The Great Nature Project](#)) would further globalize the organization's **biodiversity** initiative, which included taking data inventory of plants and animals using "Citizen Scientists."

National Geographic

The National Geographic Society is one of the largest nonprofit scientific and educational institutions in the world. Its pursuits include geography, archaeology, natural science, and the promotion of environmental and historical conservation.

The Obstacles

As one of the largest initiatives National Geographic has ever created, Great Nature was considered a high-risk, high-reward project from its inception. Once funding for the project was secured, stakeholders faced a tight timeline of just four months, budgetary restrictions, and a partially complete design concept for the project.

In addition to these other obstacles, NG Education, the lead stakeholder on the project, was tasked with coordinating project activities and gaining approval from more than 10 other departments to ensure the site satisfied their needs.

The Acceleration

Celerity's [Web and Mobile team](#) was engaged to provide User Experience design, analytics strategy, web development, and project management. Using an agile-based development method, we worked with NG Marketing to complete the user-facing portion of the site and deliver a **sitemap** and **wireframes**. Our high-communication project management style, in addition to a clearly articulated path of escalation, ensured that we could anticipate downstream needs to satisfy each stakeholder and still deliver the website on-time and on-budget.

Key features & functionalities delivered by our designers and developers include:

- **Near real-time photo aggregation** from a variety of photo-sharing sources (including Instagram, Flickr, Twitter, iNaturalist, Project Noah, iSpot, NG YourShot and NG Kids MyShot)
- **Interactive map feature** that allows users to search photos by location that have been uploaded with a GIS tag
- **Customizable, shareable group pages** and the ability to help organize or promote Great Nature events
- **Integration with external science projects** such as iSpot and Citizen Science that help identify species through photography
- **Share** and "like" options
- Easy **content management** and ability to **moderate photos** from the back end using the **Django CMS**
- Instant **muting of broken photos and inappropriate keywords**

Engaging Nature Lovers via National Geographic's Photo-Sharing Experience



- Integrated with **NG Analytics**, which we built out using a new analytics strategy and their existing platform, to track site activity
- **High scalability** through four levels of caching that allow the site to query partner databases frequently, ensuring rapid photo aggregation
- **Built-in architecture to anticipate downstream needs**, such as the ability to edit FAQ's and Promos through the CMS
- Load-tested site to ensure **speed** and **scalability**

Lasting Results

Celerity met National Geographic's accelerated timeline of four months and launched the site **on-budget** and **on-time**. Touted for its rapid load-time, The Great Nature Project website is already creating a real-time snapshot of Earth's incredible biodiversity, and participation has been exploding in the following ways:

- In the running to reach the **Guinness World Record Title** for the largest online photo album of animals (100,000 photos)
- More than 107,000 images uploaded
- Near-real time aggregation of photos from integrated social media sites
- Photography collections being created by well-known celebrities

Technologies Used

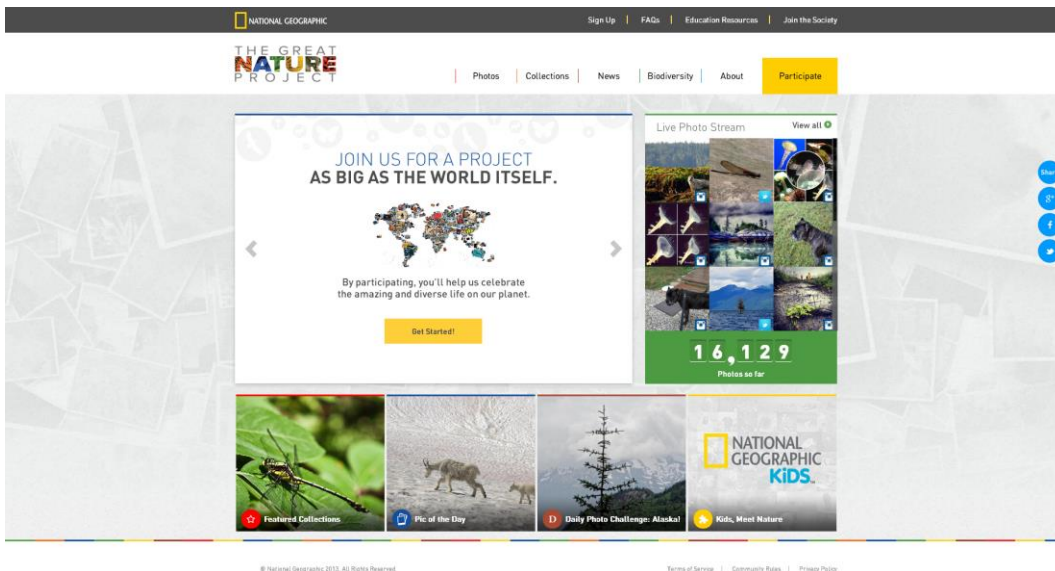
- Twitter Bootstrap
- jQuery
- Angular.js or Backbone.js
- AddThis
- Google Analytics
- Django
- TastiePie
- Nginx
- Rabbitmq
- Supervisor
- Uwsgi
- Postgresql
- Python
- Salt Stack
- Haystack with ElasticSearch

About Celerity

Celerity is a business acceleration consultancy devoted to helping companies break through key stuck points and solve critical problems. We deliver proven solutions in four main areas: technology adoption and integration, business process efficiency, strategy and alignment and talent.

CONTACT

Elisabeth Beller, *Web & Mobile Practice Director*
 ebeller@celerity.com



Corporate Headquarters
 P. 703.848.1900 F. 703.848.2139

WWW.CELERITY.COM