

Programmatically Accessing Cloud Photo APIs

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This is a short evaluation on whether one can perform a series of basic tasks using the APIs that cloud photo services provide.

We are imagining a scenario, where a mobile app user might want to retrieve a list of photos that they have previously stored on a cloud platform in order to review the photos, edit and delete them.

The cloud photo providers in question are:

- iCloud Photo Library
- Google Photos
- Flickr
- Facebook Moments
- Amazon Photos
- Dropbox Moments

0.1 The Providers

0.1.1 iCloud Photo Library

[iOS developer documentation](#)

- Listing and Retrieving: Yes
- Delete: Yes
- Edit: Yes

Note Great, but proprietary API. All the functionality can only be accessed directly from a native iOS apps. This rules out any kind of web application. iOS under version 8.0. Seamlessly integrates local and remote photo content, which allows treating them without having to bother with the physical storage location.

0.1.2 Google Photos

[Google Picasa Webalbums API documentation](#)

- Listing and Retrieving: Yes
- Delete: Yes
- Edit: Yes

Note API is messy and provides data in the [Google Data](#) format. Not a pleasure to use compared to RESTful APIs.

0.1.3 Flickr

[Flickr API documentation](#)

- Listing and Retrieving: Yes
- Delete: [Yes](#)
- Edit: Yes

Note RESTful API documentation. Very easy to read.

0.1.4 Facebook Moments

No API as of Oct 9, 2015

0.1.5 Amazon Photos

[Cloud Drive API documentation](#)

- Listing and Retrieving: Yes
- Deleting: Yes
- Editing: Yes

Note Well written RESTful API. Integrated into the Amazon Cloud Drive API.

0.1.6 Dropbox Carousel

No API as of May 22, 2015

0.2 Summary

The cloud photo providers with the most pizzazz are Amazon Photos and Flickr. Amazon Photos having a well written API is no surprise, as great APIs are one of Amazon's core values when working with developers. Flickr also comes at no surprise since they've been around for a long time. iCloud's walled garden fits into the whole isolated island thing they've got going. Google Photos might be more trouble than pleasure to use. Dropbox Carousel and Facebook Moments are the absolute losers as they have no API.