

Introduction

Hofmann Digital Album is a computer program made for designing and ordering, in an instinctive, fast and simple way, digital albums. Once you have created the album in your computer, it is sent by Internet to Hofmann, where it will be printed and bound, being sent later to the requested photography store or to a private address.

System requirements

Hardware

Minimum requirements: Processor Intel Pentium II to 400 MHz. RAM memory: 128 MB. Free disc space: 400 MB. Monitor colour configuration: 24 bits.

Recommended requirements: Processor Intel Pentium III to 1000 MHz. RAM memory: over 256 MB. Free disc Space: 1 GB. Monitor colour configuration: 24 bits.

Software.

Allowed operating systems: Windows 98 (2nd edition), Windows Millennium, Windows XP, Windows 2000, Windows 2000 Server and Windows 2003 Server.

It is recommended to update the system with last available downloads and updates from www.microsoft.com/windowsupdate

Installation

Program download

The download is very simple: you only have to click on the "Program free download" link on our www.hofmann.es website and then select "Save". Kindly indicate the location where you want to keep the file (we recommend to do it on the desktop) and the download will start. Using ADSL connection (broadband) this download will take about five minutes. Using modem connection this process can last about one hour.

At the end of the process, the downloaded file called "Setup Hofmann Digital Album" will be located on the desktop, if our recommendation was followed. Double clicking on the icon, the installation will begin, but before actually starting, it will be checked automatically, if your PC has already the ".Net Framework" software from Microsoft, which our program uses. Many modern computers have this software already installed and more and more programs use it. If this Microsoft framework should not be available on your PC, it will be downloaded automatically, of course, free of charge. Downloading time will depend on your connection type.

The program installation itself will take about a minute. Afterwards, you only have to double click on the "Hofmann Digital Album" icon on the desktop and the program will open automatically.

QUICK GUIDE "Hofmann Digital Album"

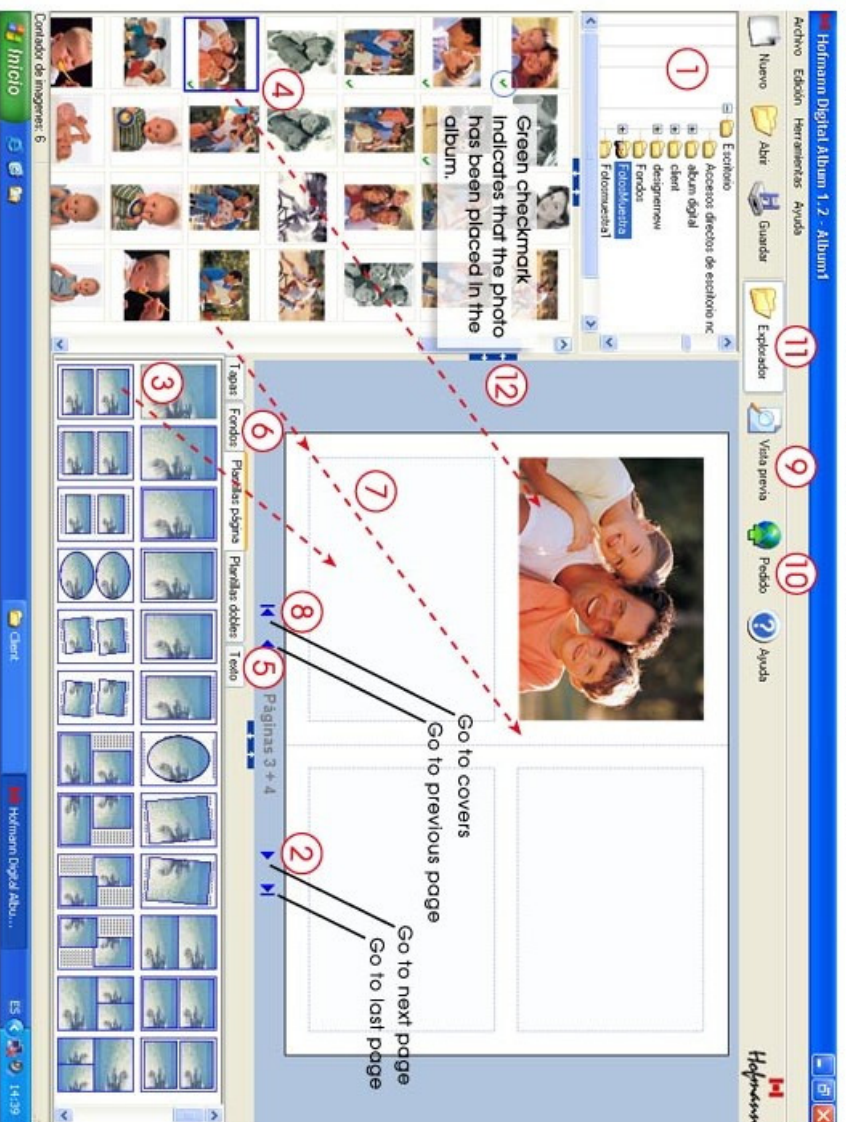
"Drag & drop" (--->) is the most frequent action you will do. It consists of clicking on an element and, without releasing the mouse button, dragging it to the desired location and placing it there. It works for placing photos, layouts, backgrounds, covers and texts.

STEP BY STEP

1. Look for the following red numbers in the scheme.
2. Select your folder of photos and they will appear underneath.
3. Click on "next page" > to move on to the pages.
4. Choose layouts and "drag & drop" them on the pages.
5. "Drag & drop" your photos on the placeholders of the layouts.
6. Click on "Text", "drag & drop" the box on the album, write in the text editor that appears on the left part and click on "accept".
7. Click on "backgrounds" and "drag & drop" any of the ones we propose on the album.
8. You can also use one of your photos as background by dropping it on the album between placeholders. Click on < in order to go to the cover and then "drag & drop" your favourite one on the album. The photo of the palm on the cover indicates that you can place instead one of your photos. "Drag & drop" photos on front, back cover and spine. Write the titles.
9. Click on "preview" in order to see how it will look printed.
10. After making the whole album click on "Order" and follow the instructions.

OTHER FREQUENT ACTIONS

1. With the mouse placed on any photo of the album:
 - Double click on left button: you enter the photo editor to modify your photos.
 - One click on right button: it enables you to choose actions like "rotide image", "delete image", "apply or delete white frame", "automatic image improvement" and more.
2. In order to crop a photo in the photo editor, move the mouse on one red corner until an inclined arrow ↗ appears, then click and drag. In order to move the whole frame to another location click on it and drag.
3. In order to modify the size of a free text box, click once on the box, go to a blue corner until the inclined arrow appears, then click and drag. You can move it wherever you want: click on it and drag.



USEFUL ADVICE

1. If you click on the "Explorer" icon (11), the explorer will disappear and reappear alternatively.
2. If you do not place a photo or you do not write text, the background will be printed. For that reason if you wish to have a photo on a double page, then place it as a background.
3. If you want to change a photo already placed, it is not necessary to delete it first, simply drag the new photo and drop it on the previous one.
4. When a photo is placed on a dark background or on another photo, it usually looks nicer if it has a white frame (you have to click on the right button and select "apply frame").
5. The free text box can be placed outside or inside the photos. If you can't see the text, the problem may be that the selected colour of the text and the background is the same (e.g. white text on white background).
6. Click and drag on (12) to organize the working area at your convenience.

Program operation

Once the installation is finished the "Hofmann Digital Album" icon will be located on the desktop. Double clicking on the icon, the program will start showing the following window:



If you have the code, fill it in and click on "accept". If you do not have it, then click on "Later".

Then the following window will open:



You may choose between the following four options:

1. If you select "Create a new album" a window will appear, where you can pick the number of pages for your album (50 or 70).



However, it is possible to change your choice anytime while you are designing the album. Clicking on "Next" the program interface will open.

2. If the second option "Create a new album automatically" is chosen, the following window will ask for the folder containing your photos, which you would like to introduce, as well as the "Number of pages" you wish for your album.



Since this option always works with the two horizontal photos layout, if you select 50 pages, then 100 photos will be placed, and in case 70 pages are chosen, there will be 140 photos. Clicking on "Next" the automatic photo loading process will begin. Once finalized, the program will open showing the cover on its interface. There will be no photo inserted in this cover, as this choice is up to you. It is recommended to review all the pages, as you may wish to change any layout, add some text or edit any photo.

3. If you select the third option "Open an existing album" the program will open the explorer so that you can select the folder, where the already existing album is.

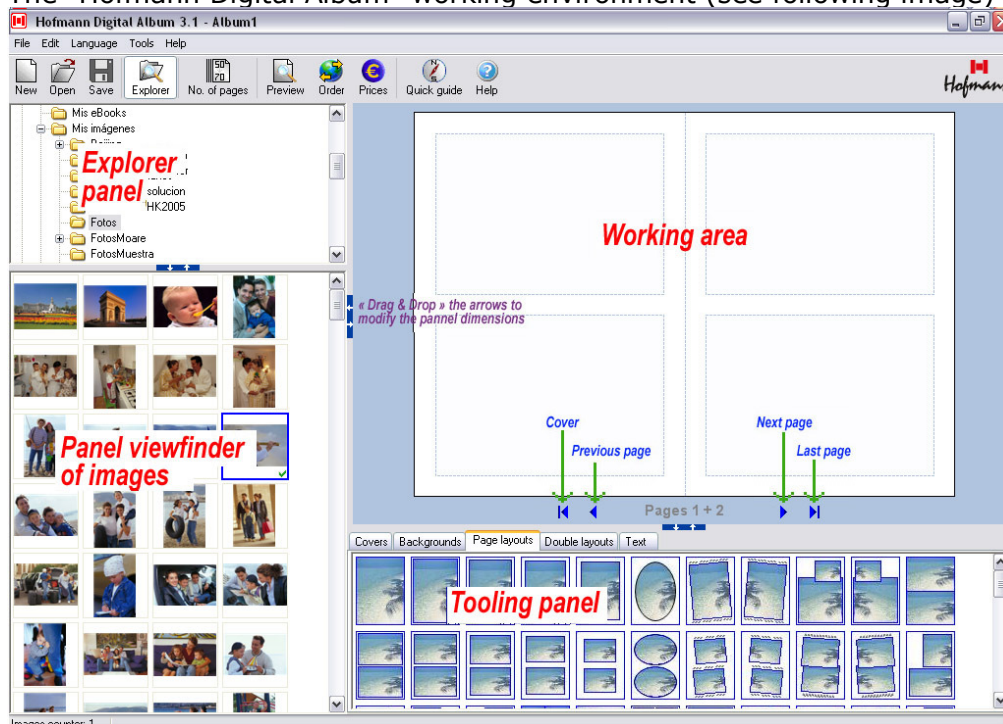


Once you have selected the album click on "Next" and the loading of this album into the program will begin. Once finished the program interface will open containing all photos already saved.

4. If you select the option "Check for new program versions" an Internet connection will be established, which will check for a later version than the one you have. If so, it is recommended to update the installed version following the program instructions, and otherwise, you will be able to continue.

Working environment

The "Hofmann Digital Album" working environment (see following image)



consists of the menu bar, the icons bar containing the most frequent actions and a state bar in the bottom part that shows information, as in any other application of the Windows environment. Additionally, it includes an explorer panel of folders, an image viewfinder panel, a tooling panel and the working space for the design of digital albums. The different panels can be organized at your convenience by using the blue symbols with two white arrows that are located between the panels.

Explorer panel

The explorer allows you to select the folder you want to work with. By clicking on it, the photos are automatically miniatura shown in the image viewfinder. You can work with any common formats used by digital cameras, but also with scanned photo files. This allows you to include your already printed photos in digital albums. Once you have selected the folder and in order to gain space you can hide the explorer panel by clicking on "Explorer" in the icons bar. If you click on the same icon again, the explorer will reappear.

Panel viewfinder of images

The image viewfinder shows all the images, which are included in the selected folder above. These photos can be dragged into the album, which consists of clicking on an photo and, without releasing the mouse button, dragging it to the desired location and placing it there.

In order to obtain different information about the image, you only have to leave the mouse on it.

As it is also useful to know which images have already been used in the album, these photos are marked with a green checkmark.

Working area

The program initially opens showing here the album cover. The front cover is on the right side, the back cover on the left one and the spine in between. However, this working area can also show two pages of an opened album, on which you can drag the layouts, photos, text boxes and backgrounds.

Underneath this album you will find the numbers of the opened pages. There are two blue arrows located on both sides so that you can move forward and backward through the pages (see in the previous figure).

Tooling panel (Covers, Backgrounds, Single layouts, Double layouts and Text)

The tooling panel contains the creative elements, which are covers, backgrounds and layouts, which are proposed by the program in order to help you design your album. Furthermore, the text option enables you to insert your text wherever you want.

The most frequent action you will do is "dragging & dropping": if, for example, you want to place an image on a placeholder, you have to click on that image and, without releasing the mouse button, you have to "drag" that image to the chosen place and "drop" it there by releasing the mouse button. You can operate with the covers, backgrounds, layouts and text boxes in the same way.

If you are using the program for the first time, you should simply try everything out. There are no wrong choices and you will soon control all functions.

Covers

By pressing on the "Cover" tab you gain access to the different cover designs offered by the program. By moving down the tooling panel scroll bar you will be able to see all of them. At the same time, a predefined cover shows in the working space of the album. You may replace it and use any other desired cover design.

Almost all of the covers contain three placeholders for your photos: one on the cover, another on the lower part of the spine and the third one on the back cover. These placeholders show a sample image of a palm shade to show you the place where your photos can be inserted. Moreover, there are text boxes on the spine and front cover for the titles.

You can not add any more text boxes or layouts on the covers besides the proposed ones. Like in all other pages, if a photo or text is not introduced, the background will be printed, as you can check by using the "preview" icon.

Backgrounds

By pressing on the "Backgrounds" tab you gain access to the backgrounds proposed by the program. "Drag & drop" any background you like anywhere on the album and it will be installed there.

If you wish one of your photos to be the background, it is also possible just by dragging it from the image viewfinder panel and dropping it on the album between any placeholders.

In order to place a photo completely on a double page just drag it as a background and do not place any photo on the placeholders of the layouts. This way, only the full background will be printed. Remember to preview.

If you wish to delete a background, place the mouse on it, click on the right mouse button and then select the point "delete background" of the pulldown menu.

Single and double layouts.

By pressing on these tabs you will be able to see a great variety of single and double layouts which can be dragged&dropped on the album. They can be interchanged as many times as you want. In case you already placed some photos, they will be relocated in the new layout.

On the other hand, if no photo is placed in a layout, the background will be printed. This gives you the possibility of making nice designs by placing a photo as background, then using layouts with many placeholders and filling only some of them with other photos in order not to interfere with the overall vision of the background photo.

Text

If you want to add a new text on the album, just click on the "text" tab. A text box will appear underneath indicating you should click on the box and drag&drop it on the album. The text editor will open in the lower left part of the screen and you will be able to write and format your text, which means you can select text font, colour, size and text positioning. Click on "OK" and the text will appear on the album. Finally drag the whole text box to your desired location, even within the photos. It is recommended to always check that all the text is visible, if necessary by using the preview. If a part of the text is missing, you will have to increase or modify the box size. Click on it and locate the mouse on one of the blue corners until the

cursor adopts the image of an inclined arrow. Then drag it until the desired size is obtained.

In order to move the whole text to another place (outside or inside the photos) place the mouse in the centre of the box, click on it and drag it to the desired position.

You may see that the text does not appear on the album. The reason will most likely be that the colour of the text and the background is the same. In this case you would have to select a different colour for one of them.

If you want to work on an already inserted text, double click on the box. The editor will open and you can modify the text at your choice.

Texts from other files (e.g. Word) can be inserted into the text editor, although the original formatting may be altered.

You can insert as many text boxes as you want into the album. In order to delete one, place the mouse on the text box, click on the right mouse button and select the "delete text box" option of the pulldown menu.

Icon bar

The following are some of the usual icons used by the Windows environment and they allow fast access to the most frequent program functions:

New: opens a new album.

Open: opens an existing album.

Save: saves the album to a folder.

Explorer: hides and shows the Explorer alternatively in order to select the folder with the photos.

No. of pages: the number of pages can be changed from 50 to 70 and also from 70 to 50.

Preview: visualizes the album and shows exactly how it will be printed. Within this function you can also move forwards and backwards along the album pages and modify the zoom of the preview at the same time.

Order: click on this button once you are finished with the album creation. You can only place an order directly from our program via internet.

If any pages or the cover were left blank (maybe on purpose), a checking window will inform about it. Better check it, correct the possible mistake and start the order again. Make sure that everything is fine, as no corrections will be possible once the order has been sent.

The program will ask for your conformation to save the album, which we recommend in order to conserve the complete album file.

Please make sure at this stage that you are connected to internet in order to enable our assistant guide you through the order process. Indicate your personal data and a secure payment connection with VISA or MASTERCARD will be established. Once the payment has taken place, it is not possible to cancel or modify the album, as it is compressed automatically, coded without any quality loss and sent to our server via Internet. Even if the transmission should be interrupted, it can be started later again, without any loss of transferred data.

Kindly make sure that you write all data correctly, particularly your e-mail address. Otherwise we can not inform you properly about the order status. Please also allow our program to establish an internet connection, as many users have a protection software (firewall) installed.

Prices: by clicking on this icon a connection with Hofmann's web page is established in order to see the prices of the printed digital albums.

Help: here the connection is established in order to download the user's manual.

Mouse

Left button: by double clicking on an inserted photo or a text box the corresponding editor opens (more info regarding the photo and text editor hereunder).

Right button: by clicking on a photo, a text box or a background a menu showing the available options for that element opens up.

Edit image: opens the photo editor.

Delete image: eliminates the image

Apply/ delete frame: here you can alternatively apply a thin, white frame to a photo or delete the frame. This option is especially interesting when the photos are placed on colourful backgrounds or on other photos.

In order to apply the white frame to many consecutive photos, it is helpful to go to the main menu "File>Properties" and then select "Apply frame to the photos". From this moment onwards, all the photos that are introduced into the layouts will have a white frame. If the frame is no longer desired, go to the same menu and disable this option.

Automatic image improvement: looks for the best balance of contrast, brightness and intensity. It usually improves the image.

Turn: turns the photo 90° to the left or right and also 180°.

Go to page: indicates the number of the page to which you wish to go.

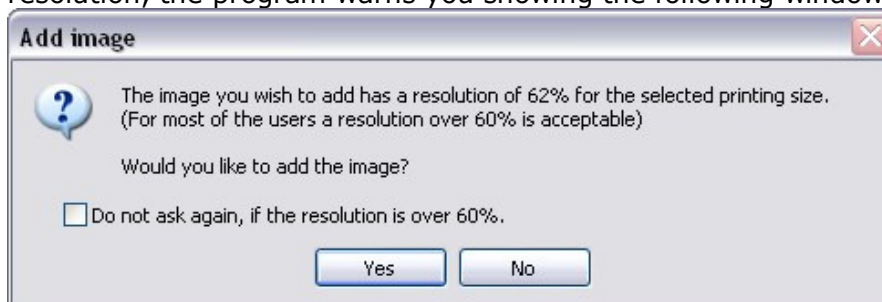
Insert sheet: adds two pages right before the current pages, which eliminates the two last pages of the album.

Delete sheet: deletes the two current pages, which adds two blank pages at the end of the album.

Photo resolution

The number of pixels indicates how many dots compound a photo. A three megapixel camera, for instance, can take a photo with maximally three megapixels. For any given photo the bigger the placeholder, the smaller becomes the resolution (number of pixels per surface) and the printing has less quality.

Therefore, when a photo is introduced into a placeholder that needs higher resolution, the program warns you showing the following window:



If the box "do not ask again, if the resolution surpasses 60%" is ticked, the program understands that these photos are accepted and will only warn, logically, if the resolution is below 60%.

For your reference note that you can use your photos at full double page, if they have over 3 megapixels.

In order to know the resolution of an inserted photo just move the mouse over it and a tooltip will appear with the information.

Determined text boxes

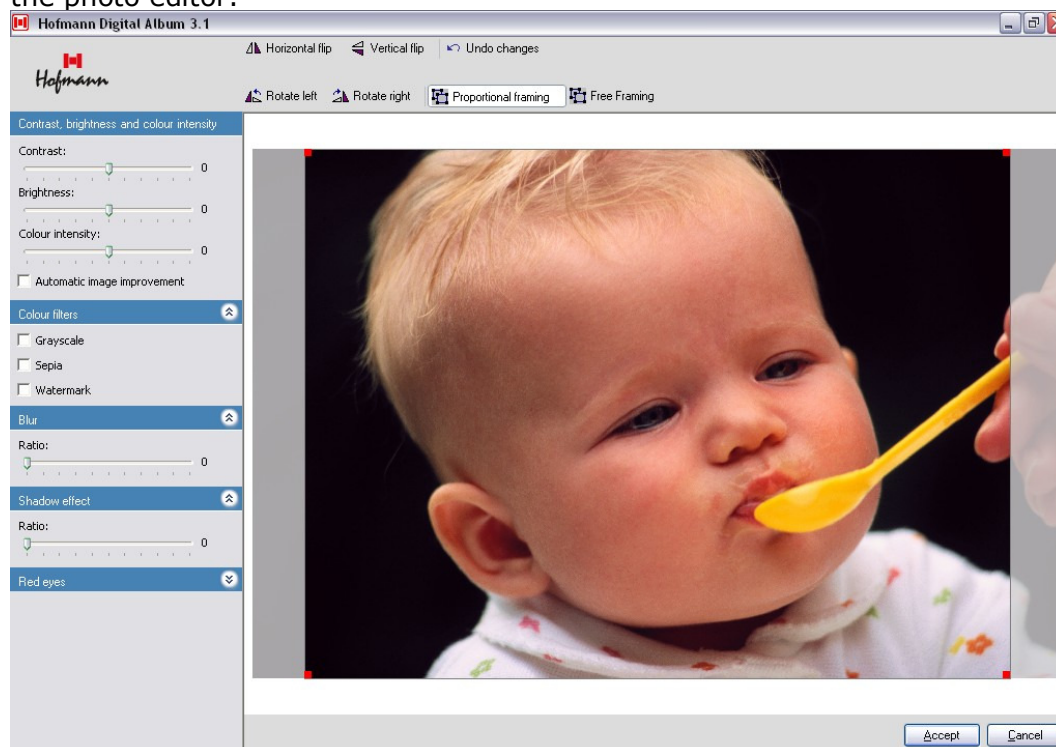
Besides the already mentioned free text boxes the program also includes these determined boxes, which appear only on the cover and also on the layouts with inclined placeholders. Their size cannot be altered.

In order to insert text into these boxes or modify an already inserted text, just double click on the text box or alternatively place the mouse on the text box and click on the right button selecting the option "Edit text". In both ways the text editor opens, and it enables you to modify, format and delete text. One click on "OK" will close the editor and you will see the result on the album.

You cannot delete these boxes nor you can modify them. However, if no text is introduced (or the one already introduced is deleted) no text is printed.

Photo editor

In order to improve or edit any already inserted photo, just double click on it or alternatively place the mouse on the photo. Then click on the right button and select the "Edit photo" option. In any case you will open the photo editor, which will enable you to rotate and flip images, change the levels for brightness, contrast and intensity, apply colour filters... Please note that no matter the changes made here, your original photos will never be modified. The following figure shows the aspect of the photo editor:



The functionalities that are offered are as follows:

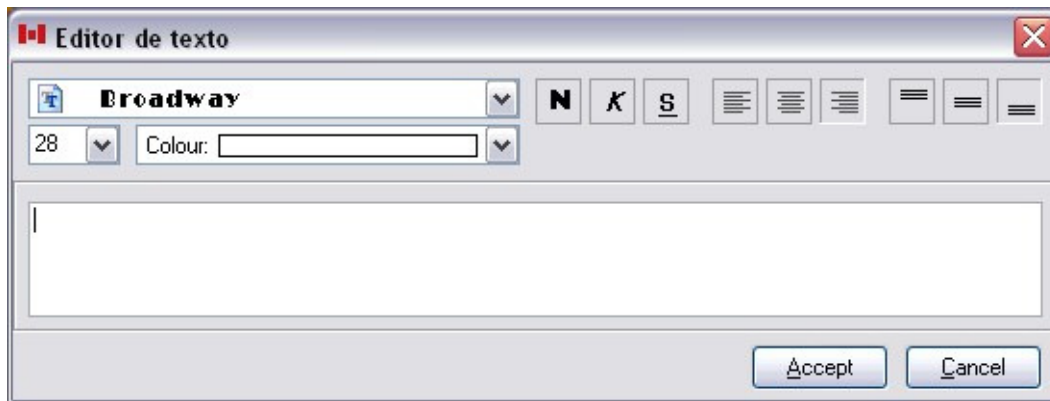
- **Horizontal and vertical flip:** gives a horizontal or vertical "mirror" effect.
- **Undo changes:** it brings the photo's original aspect back.
- **Left and right rotation:** it turns the photo in jumps of 90°.
- **Proportional framing:** it fits and trims the photo to the placeholder. If you wish to modify the size of the frame, locate the mouse on one of the red corners until it adopts the image of an inclined arrow and then drag it until the desired frame size is obtained. In order to move the whole frame, click on the frame centre and drag it to the desired location.
- **Free Framing:** by using this option the whole photo turn always visible inside the placeholder. This means that it probably will not fill the placeholder completely, unless both of them have the same side proportions. The photo can be cropped and moved as in the previous section, but in this case the framing is free and will not keep the side proportions of the placeholder.
- **Contrast, brightness and intensity:** the levels can be varied voluntarily.
- **Automatic image improvement:** the previous levels are automatically varied in the ideal proportions. Usually the image improves.
- **Colour filters:** tones like "Black&White", Sepia and "Water mark" (this one usually as background) can be applied.
- **Defocusing:** makes the image blurry. This effect is also usually applied to a placed photo as background.
- **Relief:** it confers the image a three-dimensional aspect.
- **Remove "red eyes" effect:** it enables you to correct the red colour of the eyes caused by the flash. Click on the eye centre and then click "OK".

Text editor

In order to modify an already inserted text, just double click on the text box or, alternatively, place the mouse on the text box and click on the right button selecting the "Edit text" option.

In both cases the text editor opens in the lower left part of the screen and it enables you to write and format the text at your choice.

The following figure shows the aspect of the text editor:



The functions that the text editor offers are:

- Font selection (type of lettering).
- Font size.
- Font colour
- Bold, italics or underlined.
- Horizontal alignment in relation to the text box.
- Vertical alignment in relation to the text box.

The font, colour, size, etc., are not visualized inside the editor, but they will be applied to the text box in the album. In order to change any of these values (size, colour, font) it is not necessary to select the text. Simply select the desired value and click on the "Accept" button.

It may happen that a text does not appear on the album. The reason will most probably be that the colour of the text and the background is the same (e.g. white text on white background). In this case you would have to select a different colour for one of them.

It is recommended to always check that all the text is visible, if necessary by using the preview. If a part of the text is missing, you will have to increase or modify the box size. Click on it and locate the mouse on one of the blue corners until the cursor adopts the image of an inclined arrow. Then drag it until the desired size is obtained.

You can also move the whole text to the desired position (outside or inside the photos) just by clicking on the centre of the box and dragging it.

We have gone through the most important elements of the program and we have tried to answer the most usual questions. In any case, we recommend to check regularly (and naturally free of charge) when the program starts, whether there are newer program versions, which certainly will include updated manuals. This way you make sure that you will always create your albums with our most updated version.

However, should you have any further questions, please contact our customer service, which is at your disposal, by email at albumdigital@hofmann.es, and we will answer as soon as possible.

We look forward to receive any other comments, which will certainly be helpful to improve our offer.

We thank you in advance!