
A Big Advantage

By Wayne Halm

The Advantage

Digital pictures can be copied. They can be copied easily and cheaply. They can be copied in virtually endless numbers.

The Need

My Mother, like many Mothers, has more pictures of her family than one person can carry. Thousands of pictures capturing events in the life of my family. Thousands of pictures but mostly only one copy of each. These pictures are valuable, perhaps not to the world, but to my family.

These pictures are valuable and they are vulnerable. They are in danger from fire, from floods (always a concern is the South of Louisiana), and in danger of simple theft by any of my four sisters. These pictures need more protection than homeowners insurance provides.

The Solution

To offer some protection against the loss of these pictures, I began scanning them into my computer, then burning groups of them onto CDs. Each of my sisters gets a copy of each CD and I keep a copy in my archive. I feel better, my sisters feel better, and now more people get to look at the pictures - which seems like the whole point anyway.

To arrange and index the pictures, after scanning, I used a program that also allows both text and audio notes to be attached to each picture. This allowed my Mom and I to discuss the "old days" and attach lively notes to most pictures. All in all a pleasant activity.

Carried Away

Of course I got carried away. I didn't stop with the pictures, I scanned old letters, school report cards, newspaper clippings, almost anything that would fit on the scanner. (Many things that wouldn't fit on the scanner, I captured in pictures with my digital camera.)

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