

MadisonPhotoPlus the Photo Summit **e-Photo Newsletter**

February, 2005

Just the other day a customer came into the Madison store and asked for help with a digital camera problem. This was a new customer about 45-50 years old, female, and visibly confused. It seemed that she had been using a digital camera for a few years now, and was happy as a clam keeping her photos on her hard drive until she would eventually get around to printing them. A couple of nights previous her house was burglarized and her computer was stolen. She wanted to know what could be done to possibly retrieve her pictures from her memory card (even though she had previously deleted them and reused the card).

Not every moment behind the counter is filled with joy. As the conversation ensued, it came out that 2 birthdays, a wedding, a graduation, and the last pictures of a son killed in Iraq were among those lost. She was devastated. Understandably so. There is, unfortunately, no happy ending to this story. They are gone forever.

Rather than grieve for this woman's misfortune, let's all learn from it. Like any other magnetically recorded data, it's not permanent. Until printed and or burned to a hard drive, the images are transient. With today's printers, even inkjet prints are expected to last over 100 years. There really is no excuse for not making prints. This poor woman and her family are left with nothing.

The following is a reprint of an on-line article (http://www.photomarketing.com/dailynews/nl_default.htm) regarding just how safe your photos are when stored on the internet (Where we all know there really is no such thing as REAL security, don't we?) for archiving or sharing. The original article appeared in the February 2, 2005 edition of the *San Francisco Chronicle* (<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2005/02/02/BUG7QB3U0S1.DTL>). It's a little sobering, to say the least...

Photos stored online may disappear if users don't carefully read the fine print

Jacqui Flugger, who no longer has photos of her wedding, photos of her vacations or photos of her Christmas parties, has learned two important things about life: 1. Always read the fine print. 2. Don't forget to update your e-mail address.

Flugger signed up about four years ago with Ofoto, a digital photo-processing service that allows people to store their pictures online, *The San Francisco Chronicle* reports. Ofoto, acquired by Kodak in 2001, is a leader in online photo storage, maintaining about 500 million images for its roughly 20 million members. Flugger filled 36 online albums with hundreds of shots from her wedding and other experiences. Keeping her pictures online, she found, was a great way to share them with others, and it didn't cost her a thing. Or so she thought.

A couple of weeks ago, Flugger logged on to Ofoto and discovered that all her albums had been deleted. She immediately contacted the company and demanded that her priceless memories be restored, the article says. An Ofoto service rep wrote back: "We have reviewed your account and did not find a recent purchase. This means that we are not able to restore your images as you are not in compliance with the Terms of Service."

Flugger checked out Ofoto's Terms of Service, the article says. She had to dig deep into the company's fine print. Under Section 22 (out of 23 service terms), she learned: "If you do not purchase any product or service from Ofoto for a period of 12 months, Ofoto may delete the images stored in your account. In addition, if your account becomes inactive for a

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period of 60 months, Ofoto may, at its option, terminate access to the account altogether (including deletion of any account information held by Ofoto)."

Snapfish, another leading online photo company, has a similar policy, the San Francisco Chronicle says. But other services, including Shutterfly and Yahoo Photos, allow photos to be stored without financial conditions. So Flugger ordered some prints and asked her albums be brought back online. "We truly regret to inform you," an Ofoto rep replied, "once an album has been deleted, we are unable to restore the photos."

Flugger was astonished, the article says. "I picked Ofoto instead of another service because of the Kodak name," she told me. "It provided some level of comfort. They can't just set photos aside when something like this happens and then restore them?" Apparently not.

But what happened to Flugger isn't really Ofoto's fault, the article says. "We send anywhere from four to five e-mail notifications with a pretty clear subject line before an album is deleted," said Liz Scanlon, a company spokeswoman. "If we have a shipping address, we also send a postcard." When Flugger signed up with Ofoto, she used her business e-mail address. Flugger left her job in last summer and moved to Seattle. She kept uploading photos to her Ofoto albums but neglected to inform the company about her change in address and e-mail. When Ofoto's computers began sending out automatic notifications, therefore, Flugger never got them. (Scanlon acknowledged the company's system isn't designed to accommodate returned e-mail.) "I feel like an idiot because I didn't update my e-mail address," Flugger said. "I know it was my responsibility. But I don't know of anyone who knows about Ofoto's policy. I asked around. The company really needs to make this clearer." It does, and in fact may start alerting members to the looming

demise of their photo albums when they log on to the site — a much more consumer-friendly approach.

We've Got Class

The next installment in our BIPS program (**Better Imaging Photo School**) will be Tuesday evening, March 15, 2005. The evening will be a workshop called **"Ok. Now I Have a Digital Camera. What do I do?"**

Not only is this session designed for people new to electronic photography, but also for those thinking about making the "leap". As of now, it will be held in Madison PhotoPlus from 6:30 until 8:30. The cost will be \$30 per person, and you will be able to keep the prints and CDs you'll make.

Recipients of this newsletter will have first dibs on signing up for the event. If you are interested in more details, or would like to confirm a seat for the evening, please email jerry@madisonphoto.com before February 17. The class will be limited to no more than 15 people, with Jerry and Eric acting as instructors. If you've never been to one of our BIPS programs, you don't know what you've missing.

U.S. National Photo Show

Later this month the photo world will turn its eyes towards Orlando, FL, for the 2005 PMA photography show. Lynne and Jerry will be attending, and will report back to you in next month's newsletter.

Both Madison PhotoPlus and the Photo Summit now have 2 workstations each for you to make prints or CDs from your digital images. Come in and we'll

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show you how easy they are to use.

Before closing out this month's newsletter, here's a gorgeous photo we all wish we had taken.

Happy shooting! Enjoy the snow.

P.S. please copy and paste this into your browser for more exceptional photographs.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/spl/hi/picture_gallery/05/in_pictures_world_press_photo_award_2004/html/12.stm

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