



March, 2010

The More Things Change ...

One of the problems facing the original digital cameras was the reliance on built in memory. There were no memory cards. There were many, many disappointed new camera users.

For 2010, and probably beyond, camera makers are installing large amounts of memory space in their new models. Olympus, for example, is now building in either 1 or 2 gigabytes of flash memory into various cameras. Let's play detectives and see if we can figure out why ...

The most obvious guess would be building a memory card into the camera, but that offers more problems than benefits. Let's consider each.

As discussed in previous issues, using the USB cable supplied with the camera to download data to your computer is frequently unsafe. Many batteries do not have sufficient energy to download 2 GB of data on a single charge. Should the battery die during file transfer, pfffft, memory is all gone, and odds are that the camera's memory function would be permanently damaged. The download speed using the cable is also much slower than a card reader

Almost all recent camera designs include the ability to record not only video, but HD video for television playback, not just for computer monitor viewing. Video recording takes up lots of memory very quickly and 2GB isn't very many minutes worth. Unlike still photos, video must be downloaded in its entirety, so the problems of direct camera downloading are magnified.

Olympus Camera Company has suggested that the memory space should be used for sharing images. Instead of taking a photo album to grand

ma's or wherever, load the 1GB or 2GB of images to be shown on the camera's LCD panel, a computer or TV, but not downloaded to some other storage medium. Previously recorded images would be copied to this storage memory and viewed, then deleted. Not a bad idea.

Many people print their photos at print stations (such as in our stores) or via online sources. The print stations cannot accept images directly from a camera's internal memory, nor is it in any way convenient to upload them directly to the internet through a computer. In either instance the images must be downloaded to a card, CD, flash drive or hard drive (for internet transfer) to be usable. The camera's internal storage certainly is a liability for such uses.

More and more cameras are coming with software built in, such as photo editing programs. These programs need transient memory for space to perform their various jobs, just like a computer needs RAM (random access memory). Newer cameras do not include a printed users' manual, but will use part or all of this 1-2GB of space to have them available for reading on the LCD panel. If you need space for more photos, you can delete or copy the manual to a memory card and download to a computer for printing.

Some snapshotters never want to delete a picture, and store them on their memory card forever. Such a person will now store them in this 1-2GB of space which is letting the user's emotions get in the way of rational thinking. The following illustration is an actual photo of a sign found near the Weehawken ferry terminal here in New Jersey. It illustrates the folly of leaving photos in the camera's memory.



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This poor woman apparently never downloaded her original photos and was storing them in her camera, which was either stolen, lost, or misplaced.



Imagine her frantic state of mind and the guilt she must have experienced when making this sign. This is why our stores stress over and over again not to store photos on your memory cards, in your camera or on your hard drives. A CD can't be erased and is playable almost anywhere. DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU!

It is also possible that these new camera models are precursors for yet to be announced, advanced capabilities which will require the extensive on-board memory. What is being presented now at up to 2GB is certainly a marketers dream, and expect the storage space to be expanded just like what happened with megapixels. More is not always an asset.

Removable memory (cards) will continue to be necessary for digital photography for a long time to come, so don't be fooled by the new marketing hype from the camera makers.

Floral Photography Tip

Many times when photographing flowers, the delicate petals are rendered as large blotches of color due to the quality of the existing light and the vantage point of the photographer. Just a few seconds of forethought and preparation can greatly improve these photos.

Assuming that the flowers are growing in the ground, don't look down upon them when taking your pictures. Instead, bend your little knees and get down to the flowers' level. If you have the luck to be shooting an arrangement or potted plant, you may not have to bend those knees.

Typically, the flower(s) is more important to the photo than the background is, so get closer to the blossoms to eliminate as much annoying background as possible. Next, get or make a neutral colored reflector. It doesn't have to be elaborate, just reflective. Put the reflector behind the flowers and take a flash picture. Some of the light reflected back will pass through the petals on its way back to you, highlighting the delicate texture and marketing of the blooms.

You'll have to experiment a little to find what camera to flower and flower to reflector working distances will be the best for your particular camera, lens and flash, but it will be worth it.



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New Staff Member

It's not often when we appoint a new staff member, but please join us in welcoming Lauren Alyssa Harmen to our staff. She was hired upon birth on Wednesday, March 3, 2010. Her father, Bret, commented that she immediately cried in perfect English and indicated advanced innate knowledge of how to act with a camera, at least in front of the lens.



Be back next month. Enjoy the rest of winter, and TAKE PICTURES

MadisonPhotoPlus

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*Eric, Jerry, Joy, Marie, Mario, Rob,
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Bret, John P, John T, Josh & Lynne.

in case you missed this...

THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bill Keane

