



# Does our Customer have to Care about the Technology? 'Soft' issues

Tony Stieber

## Understanding Technology

- User education growing around media issues
- Perfect storage based on perfect media longevity?
- How much technology awareness is required?

## What else can go wrong (besides hardware or media)?

- **Short term:**
  - Mistakes
  - Migration
  - Malice
  - Backup
- *Long-term:*
  - *Disaster*
  - *Format / sort order changes*
  - *Software obsolescence / Metadata loss*
  - *IT Management*
  - *Family Factors*

## Mistakes

- Accidental displacement
- Erasure
- Overwriting with a 'bad' edit
- 'Left behind' photos on additional PC in household

# Migration

- Migrating to a new computer / drive
  - Methods:
    - External HD
    - Optical disks
    - USB Intelligent Cable
  - Usability:
    - Forgotten locations
    - Unexpected interactions
  - Transfer failures:
    - Long filenames
    - Transmission errors

## Malice

- Virus:
  - Erasure / modification / displacement
  - Time-bomb
  - First Day
  - Prevention:
    - Necessary but not sufficient: anti-virus software
    - No internet?
- Theft

## Metadata Linkages

- Folder systems
  - Destruction of hierarchy
  - Duplicate filenames
  - Meaningless filenames
- Database systems
  - File/folder changes with other application
  - ‘Hidden’ DB
  - DB versions
  - Cross-application compatibility?
- Vista changes

## Backup

- Size mismatch of backup medium
  - Splitting folders for CD/DVD
  - Backup across multiple drives
  - Backup from multiple drives
- Backup frequency
  - Latest efforts not backed up
  - Partial backups

## What can go wrong that is not related to hardware or media?

- *Short term:*
  - *Mistakes*
  - *Migration*
  - *Malice*
  - *Backup*
- **Long-term:**
  - **Disaster**
  - **Format / sort order changes**
  - **Software obsolescence / Metadata loss**
  - **IT Management**
  - **Family Factors**

# Disaster

- Localized
  - Fire
  - Flood
  - Wind
- Wide-area
  - Earthquake

## Format / Sort Order Changes

- Image format change:
  - Backwards compatibility
  - Automated service /User tools
  - Loss minimization
- Sort order change:
  - Changed sort orders can result in hard-to-find photos (e.g. Windows XP)

## Software obsolescence / Metadata loss

- Database migration?
- ‘Hidden’ DB
- Loss of metadata:
  - Albums
  - Slideshows
  - Categories
  - Annotations / keywords
- Inclusion of metadata in structure of individual file (Vista)

# IT Management

- Home environment more complex:
  - Requires more management
  - Must maintaining discipline of data location and backups
- Managing multiple software licenses on multiple computers

## Family Factors

- Legacy:
  - Mixed media (paper/film/digital)
- Volume:
  - Important photos get lost in massive collections
- Family Problems:
  - Break-up / loss of collections

## Conclusion

- Required activity:
  - User cannot be passive – must be active to ensure that photos stay ‘alive’
  - Funding: replace hardware regularly
  - Environmental / recycling
- Alternative: online solutions



**Be watchful!**

<http://www.savemymemories.org/>