

## Lose your photos, lose your mind

**Avoid wiping out your precious memories with one of the many digital photo archiving options.**

People often ask me about how to store all of their digital pictures and videos safely.

From my perspective, there are two (2) main concerns. First is storage space. Second is loss prevention.

Many of the new, high resolution, cameras are producing large picture files. More and more people are creating digital videos. These files are also very large.

Have you met anyone who has recently lost some or all of their digital pictures or videos? I have. Just a few years ago, the main way people lost pictures and videos were from flood or fire. Today, people are losing them from something as simple as an electronic glitch! How can we avoid this loss? One answer is to get a new computer with a large hard disk then burn CD's or DVD's or use an online backup solution.

In this article, I am going to suggest a different approach. I am going to help you build a storage system. This approach will provide you with over a terabyte of storage (approximately 400,000 high resolution pictures) with redundancy that will go a long way toward preserving your family history.

The first item you will need is a mid-tower computer. Yes, that is right... a 2 or 3 year old computer with a Network Interface Card and a 64bit PCI slot in it will work just fine. If you do not have a computer like this, you can purchase one on e-bay for less than \$250.

Next you will purchase a Serial ATA (SATA) Redundant Array of Independent Disks (RAID) Adapter. This will write your data onto 5 hard disks at the same time so that if one disk crashes your data is not lost. You can purchase a LSI Logic MegaRAID PCI card on-line at [www.outpost.com](http://www.outpost.com) for around \$329.99.

Next you will purchase five (5) 300GB SATA hard disks from [www.outpost.com](http://www.outpost.com) for around \$99.99 each.

Next you will need to purchase power cables to run these 5 hard disks. Look for power splitters at [www.usb-ware.com](http://www.usb-ware.com). They will cost around \$5.99 each and you will need three (3).

A tricky maneuver might be needed to mount these five (5) drives in your used computer chassis. Some older cases will not have enough slots. Check out your system before moving ahead. You may also want to upgrade your power supply to a 350 Watt unit. You will need to check which style your chassis takes and then purchase the new one. You can get one at [www.outpost.com](http://www.outpost.com) for between \$30.00 and \$60.00.

The best operating system for this project is a free one. If you do not have a properly licensed copy of Windows, you may want to try Linux.

This whole project should take no longer than four hours to build and it should cost around \$1000. Consider this a small price to pay for a nearly unlimited storage vault with built in safety. As always, if you get stuck... call someone competent for help.

For the non-adventurous types... you can buy a pre-built Buffalo HD-H1.0TGL/R5 1TB NAS with around 700MB of RAID 5 storage at [www.newegg.com](http://www.newegg.com) for around \$700.

What do you think? Any other fun ideas?  
Please send questions, comments and suggestions to [questions@compusurgeon.com](mailto:questions@compusurgeon.com).