DIGITAL SCRAPBOOKING MADE EASY

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EXPLAINING DIGITAL SCRAPBOOKING

Taking photographs is a wonderful way to preserve your precious memories. With a picture, you can freeze those special moments in time and capture them forever. Of course, scrapbooking has been around for some time, but has recently felt resurgence in its popularity.

The art, yes I said art, of scrapbooking not only gives you a creative way to preserve those incredible photos you took, but offers an exciting display for you to share with friends and family. Beyond this, it is a creative way to get your family members 'on the same page' so to speak ☺, helping you fondly remember good times while creating some new memories by working together on the project itself.

Scrapbooking is becoming such a mainstream activity that there have been new books written on the subject detailing new, inexpensive, and inventive ways to create something spectacular that does a splendid job of showcasing your last big family activity. And, it's a lot more entertaining than the 'old vacation slide show', or flipping through the hum-drum family photo album!

In fact, you can find lots of free information on the subject of scrapbooking readily available from hundreds of resources online! From newsletters to websites, there are plenty out there dedicated to the growing scrapbooking hobby. Sites like http://scrapbooking.com/, http://www.scrapjazz.com/, http://www.scrapbookaddict.com/, http://www.scrapbook.com/, or http://www.scrapbookscrapbook.com/ for instance, have provided outstanding places for scrapbooking enthusiasts the world over to get free ideas, articles, and related link repositories for more information than they can handle in one day!

However, most of these information laden resources, whether online or off, cater specifically to the traditional method of scrapbooking. But, what exactly IS the 'traditional method' of scrapbooking you might ask?

Well, traditionally, scrapbooking has been done with physical

photographs, different types and colors of paper, scissors, embellishments, yarn, ribbon, buttons, tags, and other interesting things arranged in a creative way that in essence 'frames' the photos of one's choosing. Scrapbooks can have a specific theme, or really no theme at all. It all depends on the person creating the scrapbook masterpiece.

When scrapbooking, you are only tethered by your own imagination. And of course the supplies you have on hand. A scrapbook can be as simple as some pictures pasted on construction paper with bits of writing paper tacked on for little captions describing the pictures. Or they can be as complex and flamboyant as you would like.

That's why the scrapbooking hobby is so appealing to such a broad audience. From seniors to toddlers, and everyone in between! Because it's really fun! And for some, quite addictive. But sometimes because of distance factors, you can't always share your photos with those you love most. Not unless you make 2 copies of the same scrapbook so you can keep one for yourself and mail the other off to Auntie Mae in Hawaii. Then you can gush over them together via telephone.

But with the progression of the digital era, comes a new, and easy way to scrapbook that allows you to share your creations with everyone in the world, anywhere in the world. Of course you know I'm speaking about digital scrapbooking done online.

All you need are the right tools to help you get the effects you want. Whether it's simply a private place to post your family photos, or an extravagant display that will make your friends and family go "ooh" and "aah".

THE DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPH

What's a scrapbook without the photos?! The easiest way to capture some fantastic pics of your family in action is to use your digital camera. I'm sure you already know how easy it is to use and probably have already mastered your digital camera. So, this will be the easy part of the entire scrapbooking process.

Now, for those of you who don't already have a digital camera, or just prefer to use the traditional film cameras, you can still 'digitize' your photos without too much hassle when you take in your film to be processed. Just ask the photo tech to place your pictures on a CD-ROM. Most film processing centers will have the capability and equipment to fill your request. Then you just pop that disc into the CD-ROM drive on your computer. Save the photos to your hard drive and you're all set. Simple!

In any event, to make changes to the photos, you must upload them and save them onto your desktop, or laptop ☺, computer. In this way, using digital images is much better than using traditional paper pictures because you can do whatever you wish to the digital images and it won't ruin your original photo!

EDITING YOUR PHOTOS

To edit your digital photographs you will need a tool that does just that, edits photos. The best and most fitting for what we will be doing here is actually one of the most affordable. It is a photo editing program from Corel called Paint Shop Studio Pro. With a price tag of just $79 it's a fantastic deal and will do what you need, including some pre-designed scrapbook tools. It is available as a FREE 30 Day Trial download, so you can take it for a test drive before you decide whether or not you want to spend the cash. But really, it's a no-brainer!

I suggest you try it out free first to see what it can do, and if you like it. So go to:
http://www.corel.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=Corel3/Downloads/Trials

Now, you're more than welcome to download any of the products you see there offered by Corel, but remember, for the purposes of making a great looking scrapbook layout design, we're looking for PAINT SHOP STUDIO PRO. So make sure you download that one ☺.

You will have to fill out a form before Corel will allow you to begin downloading any of their free program trial offers, but hey, it's a small price to pay to utilize such an important, and integral, program that helps you make changes to your digital photos, and even create scrapbook layouts!

CREATING YOUR LAYOUT DESIGNS

IMPORTANT SIDE NOTE BEFORE BEGINNING THIS SECTION
If you want to go with a simple 'picture post gallery' then you can skip this section and go straight to the next which will explain just how you can do this quickly and easily.
Basically, there are THREE main parts to your scrapbook layout design.

1. Your Photos
2. The Background Design You Lay Your Photos Out On
3. The Journaling (or the text that describes the photos)

Seems simple. And really, it is! There's really not too much more to the art of scrapbooking than those three parts. The rest is left up to your creative mind to hash out. The placement of the photos, the pieces that make up the background design, and the meaningful journal entries are all left up to your form of individual expressionism.

With that said, it's time to get your thinking cap on and let your imagination run wild! A good way to come up with creative scrapbooking ideas is to view other creations. And keep a pen and paper handy to write down any ideas that begin to sprout from the inspirational layout designs of others you're viewing. And keep in mind that you want to create something ORIGINAL, not just a carbon copy of someone else's work. If it is a design that you really like and would like to try and duplicate, remember to put your own unique spin on the layout. Otherwise, you will be plagiarizing another person's hard work!

A great place to begin looking at scrapbook designs from other enthusiasts is:
SCRAPBOOKING.COM
http://www.scrapbooking.com

And another exciting, and new website, that caters to digital scrapbooking is:
DIGITAL SCRAPBOOK PLACE
http://www.digitalscrapbookplace.com

There is SO MUCH fantastic information inside The Digital Scrapbook Place you would be hard pressed to find another site equaling the quality AND quantity you will find here! It would most definitely be in your best interest to give this site a very thorough once over. And, don't forget to bookmark it as I'm quite sure you will be going back there on a regular basis for new scrapbooking goodies ☺

Some Quick & Useful Ideas

If you have a flatbed scanner, you can still make good use of any physical scrapbook kits sold in crafting stores off and online. Basically, anything can be scanned and turned into a digital scrapbooking tool you can utilize time and time again!

Don't forget that places like Stock X-Change and iStockPhoto have wonderful elements that you can add to your digital scrapbook collage as well! Just type in what you are looking for in either site's search box, download, and there you have a new element!

Also, free clipart and backgrounds that you can get from the net make great digital scrapbooking elements too! Using your favorite browser and Yahoo! Search or Google, type in "free clipart" or "free backgrounds" and you're off! Remember though, most of the images you find will be free for personal use only, so you won't be able to sell your digital layouts.

Another great way to come up with some cool scrapbook collages is to think up a theme based on the event taking place in the photos. Where did you go? What are some of the things you did? Is this revealed in the pictures? Most times when we take photos of family outings there is a BEGINNING - MIDDLE - END type set up within the act of taking the pictures. So, use that to help you layout your scrapbook.

Depending on the amount of pictures you have and the activities you did while on your outing, you could even break those up into separate layout

ideas. When you scrapbook, pretty much anything goes. If you don't believe this, just take another look through all the scrapbooks of others! If you're still stuck for an idea to get started creating your own scrapbook, you can use the special scrapbook template packages that came with this ebook and can be edited with a simple HTML editing program or photo editing program that accepts .PSD(the Photoshop file extension) files. At the very least they will give you some nice looking background components and special free fonts you can use in your scrapbook creations. And they should give you some good ideas to get started with as well.

And to help you out with this process even more, I have listed some additional online resources that give away free scrapbook downloadable goodies for you here. Be sure to go through each of them since any one, or ALL, of them could have just the right thing you've been looking for. At the very least they will be able to sprout new ideas in your noggin ☺.

FREE SCRAPBOOKING IDEAS & LAYOUTS FROM HP
http://h10050.www1.hp.com/activitycenter/us/en/scrapbooks.html
FREE SCRAPBOOKING EXTRAS FROM ABOUT.COM
http://scrapbooking.about.com/od/freestuff/
BELLA ONLINE FREE FONT LISTINGS
http://www.bellaonline.com/subjects/2749.asp
RAGGEDY SCRAPPIN
http://www.raggedyscrappin.com/store/Default.asp (Links To Freebies Are At The Bottom Of The Page)
CASHEW STYLE
http://www.cashewstyle.com/downloads/index.php
COMPUTER-SCRAPS
http://www.computer-scraps.com/home_page/freebies.php
SCRAPBOOK TEMPLATES
http://www.scrapbook-templates.com/

Now, as far as the journaling part of this process goes, I found a wonderful article that will give you a few more ideas and make journaling easier for you. Read 'Stress-Free Scrapbook Journaling Ideas' by Elaine Clay right here:

http://www.christian-mommies.com/special-features/just-formoms/
stress-free-scrapbook-journaling-ideas/

Once you've gotten your layout all done up using your image editing tool(or however you decided to do this), you will need to be sure to save the scrapbook page as a WHOLE IMAGE in an easily viewable format such as .JPG or .GIF. For the best looking image, you will want to use the

.JPG format as it gives you the best image quality. And use the highest quality setting, or 100% when saving.

So, you've got your layout designs all ready to go. Now all you need is a place to put them and show them off.

SETTING UP YOUR SCRAPBOOK

The first thing we will discuss here is how you can set up a simple photo gallery, which you can also use to display your original scrapbook layouts you created with Paint Shop Studio Pro if you like. Or you can display a combination of both! Or, you can create two separate galleries for each. It's really not that difficult to set up. First, we'll talk about places that offer online services that handle this type of project on a daily basis. Then we'll discuss how you can set up your own photo gallery system from your own private website space.

Let's first look at some of the online scrapbook specialty sites and the services they offer. Since they specialize in the art/hobby of scrapbooking, these will most likely be your best bet, so I suggest you try out one of these first if you are just beginning with digital scrapbooking. They may not be very private, but they are a good place to begin getting more familiar with the online scrapbooking process. More than likely, each of them will ask you to create a free account by registering with them. It's a pretty painless process ☺.

SCRAPBOOK.COM
http://www.scrapbook.com/ubbthreads/newuser.php?Cat=
THE COOKIE JAR
http://www.cherishedscrapbooks.com/forum/register.php?action=signup
DIGITAL SCRAPPERS
http://www.digitalscrappers.net/forums/profile.php?mode=register
(here you'll need to register for their forum before you can begin your own scrapbook image gallery)

Other Free Online Photo Hosting Sites

While these tote the name 'Photo Hosting Websites', they are just what you need to share your pictures with family and friends both near and far. And each of them is free to use. Of course there are limitations, so be sure to read all the available information about the services on the sites.

FreeFotoFile
http://www.freefotofile.com/
File Post
http://www.filepost.us/
MyImageHosting
http://www.myimagehosting.com/
Photo Server
http://www.photoserver.us/
Free Webhosting Image Hosting Listings
http://www.free-webhosts.com/free-imagehosting.
php?sort=4&page=1

Doing It Yourself

Now, if you prefer to keep things in a state where you can control every little thing, then you'll want to have your own web space to place your own gallery on. This will keep it very private and give you the power to make accessing your gallery, or galleries, extremely private for your own select group of people.

The best scripting solution for the job in my humble opinion will have to be Coppermine Photo Gallery. First of all it's free. Second, it's not too much of a task to set up on your own web space so long as you have permission to run .PHP files and add Databases. If you have paid hosting, then you more than likely do. If you're running on a free host, you probably don't. If you don't have any web space at all, then the first option of placing your digital scrapbooks on another website equip for it is your best bet, so you should skip this portion all together.
But if you really want to learn how to do this and maybe offer your own scrapbook gallery services to others, continue on!

First things first. You need to pick up a copy of the Coppermine Gallery Script. Do that from here:
http://www.e-bookemporium.us/downloads/cpg1.3.3.zip
Now that you have the script, you'll need to create a directory or folder on your web space where the script will run from BEFORE you open up the script and upload it. Most people simply call this folder gallery for ease of remembering what is what. So, just create the folder and then you'll be ready to use the script.

Coppermine comes with documented instructions for properly uploading and installing it to your web space. Follow those specific instructions to the EXACT STEP outlined to ensure that your script has been installed and will run properly.

And, if you find you don't like using Coppermine, feel free to use 4images script as an alternative. You can download that script from here:
http://www.e-bookemporium.us/downloads/4images1.7.1.zip. It is also a completely free PHP image gallery script and comes with its own set of

instructions in both Dutch and English on how to upload and install it properly.

KEEPING IT PRIVATE

If you're running your own private scrapbook gallery from your own website, the best way to protect your gallery itself is by password protecting the specific file that your gallery resides in. You can do this through your web-based administration panel(usually referred to as a CPanel, LPanel, or Administration Area).

Simply find the Password Protected Directories link, or something similar to this, open it up, navigate to the folder you wish to protect, click on the FOLDER NAME, a new screen will appear, then protect the folder. Add username and password groups to allow specific people to access your gallery. You can use one username/password combination for everyone to use, or you can give each person a separate username/password combination. But ALWAYS be sure to add an administrative username/password combination for yourself!

Keeping your gallery private on other sites that host your gallery may be a bit more difficult if they don't offer this service freely. If they do, you will find the option to keep it a private gallery and should be given a specific link to reach your gallery that is kept out of general circulation with the other galleries of other members made publicly available. You may even need to hand out a specific username/password combo to friends and family members, but usually that's not the case.

MORE DIGITAL SCRAPBOOKING SITES

Here are some extra scrapbooking sites I ran across while writing up this informative product I'd like to share with you. Each one has something unique to offer and will make a great resource for any scrapbooking enthusiast interested in 'going digital'! Enjoy them, and the best of luck to you fellow 'scrapper' ☺.

SCRAPBOOKER'S PLAYGROUND
http://www.scrapbookersplayground.com/
CB DIGITAL DESIGNS
http://cbdigitaldesigns.com/
SCRAP ELEGANCE
http://scrapelegance.com/
eSCRAPPERS
http://www.escrappers.com/
COMPUTER SCRAPBOOKING
http://www.computerscrapbooking.com/
DIGITAL SCRAPBOOK DESIGN
http://www.digitalscrapbookdesign.com/zencart/
COTTAGE ARTS.NET
http://www.cottagearts.net/home.html
SCRAPBOOK-BYTES
http://www.scrapbook-bytes.com/
DIGITAL SCRAPBOOKING
http://www.digitalscrapbooking.com/
THE CREATIVE PIXEL
http://thecreativepixel.com/
PC SCRAPBOOKING
http://www.scrapbooking.de.vu/
HEART STRINGS DIGITAL DESIGNS
https://www.heathersweb.ca/catalog/
SCRAPBOOKLOOKS
http://www.scrapbooklooks.com/
SCRAPTURES
http://www.scraptures.com/
SCRAPBOOKING WITH DESIGN

http://www.scrapbookingwithflipalbum.com/
ONE SCRAPPY SITE
http://www.onescrappysite.com/

Well, that's about all there is to it! I wish you all the very best and hope that you can take your scrapbooking online by going digital!

[Your Name]

[YOUR INFO]