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PRESS RELEASE

Rochester, Kent, England, 20 July 2007

97% of people want to keep their digital photos for life but risk loss through obsolescence or failure of online services.

Summary

Most people wish to keep their photos and their records for lifetime or even generations, yet many appear less unconcerned about the fact that in a few years' time current devices and on-line services may no longer be in use, and even the file formats might not be supported. Others are worried – even Microsoft can offer no guarantee. Old fashioned printed books and documents, such as those offered by OPUSalbums.com who sponsored the research, are still best for archives. Fortunately they are much easier to produce now.

Our Survey

Incartek has conducted a survey on behalf of OPUS albums and found out that:

41% of responders say their photos should be kept and found the rest of their lives.

56% of responders say that they should be kept for 'generations'

Only 3% said they should be kept for 10 years or less.

Incartek placed polls on a number of forums asking for thoughts on how long files can be read. Not significant enough yet, but

40% thought that computers in 2020 would be able to read current CD's and JPG files.

50% thought that they would be able to read JPG files but NOT current CD's.

10% thought that neither CD's nor JPG files would be supported.

Incartek asked Microsoft for their view. This is the response of a spokesperson:

"Microsoft has always spent a huge amount of time and resources in providing backward compatibility, wherever possible, in its products. We will continue to take this approach. However, it is impossible for any technology company to see as far into the future as 2020 with the degree of certainty suggested."

Even they can't be sure, it would seem.

Incartek also placed a poll " Will photo-share (like Flickr) and video-share (like YouTube) be around in 20 years time?" - with the responses

Both of these services will be doing fine (even if they've changed ownership or name)

Yes this sort of thing will be around - but those particular services will have gone (with their databases)

No - things will have moved on by then. Something else will be the rage

No - we'll be back to pen and paper

Although not enough responses have yet been received to make a statistically valid conclusion, no respondents believed that both of these services - or their databases - would be there in 20 years.

Our conclusion

Daniel Roberts, director of Incartek and a senior consultant with Excelsis Enterprises said "Although only God knows how long the 'rest of our lives' are, a lifetime might mean till 2080 - generations would mean 100 years or more! No one can foresee the electronic media that would be around in 20 years let alone 70? CD's will have gone the way of the floppy and tape cassette. If one wants to keep your records indefinitely, electronic media - at home or at a central repository - cannot be relied on. One thing is for sure though - well printed documents on archival acid free papers with permanent (pigmented) ink should last, especially if kept in a good environment. I recommend OPUSalbums.com who as well as having an excellent range provide good advice in this important area."

OPUSalbums.com is a specialist in home and office printed albums, scrapbooks, creative and archival papers. It is part of Ink Cartridge Technologies Ltd, Rochester, England.

Incartek is a specialist management consultancy specialising in the imaging supplies industry. It is associated with Excelsis Enterprises, a full range consultancy.

Daniel Roberts has been in the supplies and peripherals aftermarket for 30 years holding senior management positions

PS Ecademists can still contribute to these polls:

[How long do want to keep your digital photos?](#)

[Will Windows 2020 support .JPG files?](#)

[Will Windows 2020 support current CD's](#)

[Will Flickr and You Tube be around in 20 years time?](#)

or enter the full questionnaire

<http://www.oneminutepoll.com/OneMinutePoll/OneMinuteSurvey.aspx?SID=-2147482248>

For more information please contact

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["Make a great Photo Album \(or Digital Scrapbook\) yourself"](#)

Keywords

photos and records, lifetime, rest of our lives, rest of my life, generations, printed books, photo album, scrapbook, OPUS albums, OPUSalbums.com, CD's, DVD's, JPG, TIFF, PNG, TIFF, oneminutepoll, Microsoft, backward compatibility, see 2020, photo-share, Flickr, video-share, You Tube, pen and paper, our times are in God's hands, 100 years, electronic media, central repository, printed documents, archival paper, acid free paper, permanent ink, pigmented ink, creative papers, Ink Cartridge Technologies Ltd, Incartek, Windows 2020, brand freedom day