

New ScanSnap puts you back in control of the paper jungle

Fujitsu scanner includes organizer, filing system and security protection

Steve Makris
The Edmonton Journal

Wednesday, November 28, 2007

EDMONTON - Ever wonder how much information constantly gathers in your home or small business?

I'm not talking about digital or old-fashioned pictures, music or movies.

This is about information that matters, such as bills, letters, warranties, wills and more, much of it on paper. And much of it difficult to get at unless you meticulously file every piece of paper in the right folder. In my home that amounts to an entire filing cabinet.

According to the University of California at Berkley, more information, 57 billion gigabytes, was created in 2004-05 than in the entire history of mankind. That's equivalent to 12 billion encyclopedias!

Add the digital information you get on your computer which you probably print, and we are talking information overload.

We are stuck with paperwork for a while yet. Is there a better way to do this?

Fujitsu Canada's announcement on Monday for its newest ScanSnap, the S300, \$295, got me thinking.

What if I scanned all my important paperwork, saved it the same way the original looked, and could find it in my computer later by searching for any word I could remember about it?

This is exactly what the ScanSnap does, but with added levels of sophistication.

The technology Fujitsu uses is not new. But its scanner design and smart software package are worth looking into.

It's small, very portable and runs off a wall outlet or your laptop's USB -- it needs two USB ports to do so. It has two scanner heads for quickly scanning both sides of a page. I scanned five double-side pages in less than a minute.

Best of all, it automatically saves every scan to PDF, Adobe Systems Portable Document Format. It can be viewed on any computer platform, using a free downloadable reader and looks exactly the way it was first laid out, graphics, fonts and all.



CREDIT: Steve Makris, The Journal
Fujitsu's new S300 ScanSnap is small but runs off a laptop, can scan two-sided pages with one pass and save home documents, such as bills or business files, to searchable PDF files, and comes with Dummies software for organizing your files.

ScanSnap can convert each of these scans to searchable text, allowing you to find documents by searching for any word in it. Windows Vista and Mac OS X Spotlight easily do that today off their desktops and can find searchable documents quickly.

You can scan also business cards and transfer them to popular e-mail applications that run in Windows, such as Outlook or Outlook Express.

The scanner comes with ScanSnap Organizer for managing business documents, CardMinder for managing business cards, and QuickMenu for quickly e-mailing or printing fresh scans.

The scanner is smart, too, with automatic blank page deletion, colour detection, paper-size detection and more.

If you don't like dumping all your scanned documents in one folder, you can try the included free standard version of OrganizeMY Electronic Filing Cabinet for Dummies. It comes with pre-organized business- and home-type folders, letting you file stuff the way you would in a real cabinet. But being digital, you can update files, make your own categories, add dated action reminders, such as car service schedules under your purchased car folder, and important contacts associated with each type of document.

The program allows you to back up these documents on your computer or elsewhere. Sensitive PDF documents, such as medical or bank statements can be protected with passwords of your choice.

smakris@thejournal.canwest.com

IS IT FOR YOU?

I like the idea of searchable duplicate digital files of my home and business paperwork and the sixth generation ScanSnap does that well. A Mac version will be out early next year, although available now in a slightly pricier model.

Am I ready to dump my real file cabinet?

Not yet, but my kids will.

For more information on where to buy go to www.fujitsu.ca/scansnap and www.org-matters.com

© The Edmonton Journal 2007

CLOSE WINDOW

Copyright © 2007 CanWest Interactive, a division of [CanWest MediaWorks Publications, Inc.](#) All rights reserved.