

Better Query Saul: Backing Up

I have about 75,000 photos on my hard drive. Some of you no doubt have more, many less. What would happen if your hard drive failed or was destroyed?

This article is about backing up your photos and the various ways you can do that. My photos are stored on a Drobo hard drive. My Drobo has 5 slots and each slot contains an internal hard drive. I currently have two 4, two 2, and one 1 TB drives in the Drobo. That totals to 13 TBs of disk space but only 9 TBs of storage. Drobo is one of a series of RAID devices – Redundant Array of Inexpensive Disks – basically it is a redundant system where your photos are stored on various disks so that if one of your hard disks fail, no information is lost. You simply insert a new disk and the information is recreated. There are other ‘redundant systems’ besides Drobo and they are worthwhile looking into. Drobo has a number of models that vary with the number of slots the machine has. A basic Drobo costs \$400 at B&H and can hold 16TB of photos.

External portable hard drives are another way of backing up your photos. A 2 TB hard drive costs \$75 at Best Buy with a 4TB drive costing \$109. I buy lots of these drives! Every year after New Years, I backup my photos for the year to an external hard drive and I give it to my friend.¹

A third option is to use the Cloud. There are many, many companies that provide Cloud services. Prices and conditions vary greatly depending upon the amount of storage, the number of users, the frequency of access the maximum size of uploads, etc. Most of these companies offer free storage although the size of the storage maybe quite limited. The largest I’ve seen is 10 GB. The table below provides some information about annual prices:²

Company	1 TB	2 TB	5 TB
DROPBOX		\$150	\$240
1 DRIVE		69.50	99.50
SPIDEROAK		129	279
MICROSOFT 1 DRIVE	\$99		
GOOGLE	120		
APPLE 1 CLOUD	120		
BOX	120 (100GB)		
CERTAIN SAFE	240 (100GB)		

¹ My files are organized in LR first by year, then by month, then by subject -- for example, ‘2017 10 Cuba’. This makes it easy for me to backup by year.

² It was difficult to compare prices. The terms and conditions were quite varied.

Probably the BEST deal in Cloud storage is Amazon Prime. Besides getting your packages shipped for free (not counting the membership fee!), Amazon Prime allows unlimited photo storage. One drawback is that access to your photos, that is, uploading and downloading, is very slow. I've used 150 GBs of storage on Amazon Prime so far with plans to do much more.