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DIGITAL ORGANIZATION TIPS WITH THE CLOUD LIFE

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Who doesn't feel overwhelmed by the endless volumes of family photos, heirlooms, kid art, videos, and other memorabilia that take up prime real estate in most attics and garages? My solution is always to start by editing down to the most treasured essentials — but then what?

With the recent series of natural disasters across the country, I know I'm not alone in wondering the best way to safely and efficiently store our most precious photos and sentimental items.

Lucky for all of us, Anna Morris and Brittany Messmer have founded [The Cloud Life](#) – a brilliant new service designed to help individuals and families digitize, archive, and protect their most important documents, photos, and heirlooms. They were struck by the idea for their company after a series of natural disasters hit California, and they realized that none of their most precious family photos were stored digitally. Anna and Brittany saw a real need to help people organize and preserve their most precious memories – documents, photos, videos, and art – to ensure these treasures could be enjoyed for generations to come, even in the event of a disaster or home loss.



The Cloud Life offers a full service concierge option and they've recently launched a DIY option (their app is available for all iPhone users and gives the option to upload and digitize on your own).

Anna and Brittany, were kind enough to chat with me and share some of their best tips on digital organizing and archiving. Great tips straight ahead!

For people who are totally overwhelmed by the volume of their heirlooms, art, mementos, etc. any tips to help edit? How do you approach the piles?

It is best to take one category at a time and divide it into manageable sub-categories. We've identified 6 main categories to help with that process: Documents, Photos, Artwork, Recordings, Family Heirlooms, and All Encompassing. For example, when dealing with photos decide ahead of time what sub-categories make the most sense for your family. Maybe it is by family members, by year, or by event. Make a notecard for each sub-category and spread those out on a large flat surface. As you start to organize, place each respective photo in the proper place. During this process, you can narrow down the photos (for example eliminate duplicate or blurry photos) and then begin the scanning process.

What's the best way to organize your digital photos?

We recommend scanning and organizing all your photos and negatives by person, date, event, or season. Being consistent will make it easy to find what you're looking for.



What items other than photos would you suggest digitizing? (i.e heirlooms, kid art, documents)

Scanning and digitizing favorite family heirlooms makes it easy to store and share. Items like grandma's wedding dress, shoes, and veil can be photographed and uploaded so the whole family can enjoy the memories. If you have a favorite portrait of your child, or painting commissioned for your family, scan these one-of-a kind pieces of art and digitize them. If you were to lose a piece of art, you can always re-print on the finest paper and still enjoy the artwork. Other items we suggest

digitizing include children's artwork, to eliminate the clutter, as well as memorable greeting cards, love letters, baby books, and all important documents.

Is it significant to scan important documents and store them digitally? Which documents specifically do you suggest scanning?

Make your life simpler and more efficient by having your most important documents at your fingertips (from anywhere in the world)!

Here are a few of the documents we recommended scanning:

- Passport
- Driver's License
- Birth Certificate
- Marriage Certificate

Is there a practical option for preserving old VHS videos or DVD memories?

The **Cloud Life** offers services to convert old home videos on VHS or DVD to digital files you can enjoy from your phone and computer.



Thanks so much to Anna and Brittany for sharing these very helpful tips. I'm going to go clean out my basement now! // To learn more about The Cloud Life, visit www.thecloudlife.com. Be sure to check out The Cloud Life's App in the iTunes App Store and receive your Free 7 Day Trial.