

Gadgets: Scanner makes digitally archiving larger photos easier

September 17 2010, By Gregg Ellman,



In 2009, my unofficial gadget of the year was Pandigital's PhotoLink One-Touch 5-by-7 Scanner.

In a matter of seconds it scans prints measuring up to 5-by-7 directly onto a SD memory card (or into a computer).

Well, Pandigital has taken it one step further with the PANSCN06 Pandigital Personal Photo Scanner/Converter.

What makes this year's model different from last year's is photos up to 8 1/2-by-11 large can be scanned almost instantly.

I knew before I even opened the box that I would be a big fan of this gadget for consumers but I went through the motions anyway.

From unpacking the box to scanning a few dozen images took less than 10 minutes. This included 8-by-10 photos as well as smaller ones down to wallet sizes.

Setup consisted of opening the box, plugging in the power cord and an SD memory card, and then hitting the power button.

Another great thing about the scanner is its portability. Say you take a trip to a relative's house and they have shoe boxes full of old family photos. Taking along the scanner is a simple chore since it weighs about 14 ounces and measures approximately 10 1/2-by-2-by-2 inches.

Images can be scanned into digital JPG files at 300 or 600 pixels per inch with a 3800x7200 24-bit color depth resolution.

The computer-less scanner comes with an AC power supply and a 1GB SD memory card, which plugs into the built-in card slot on the unit.

A sheet feeder is included for smaller or more fragile photos.

There is no software included, simply because you don't need any.

Details: pandigital.net, the scanner has a suggested price of \$149.99 but you can find it at Amazon for about \$99.

With the crazy weather experienced almost everywhere, the Eton Scorpion is a great little radio/device that can come in handy.

The handheld, multifunctional device has a digital AM\FM Radio with

NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) weather band and LED flashlight.



Eton Scorpion

Solar panels can supply the power but in the event that the unit runs out, it can be run manually with a hand-powered crank.

A USB port also is built-in to power a cell phone or most any other portable gadget. Another handy port is for headphone or speakers, which also enables users to broadcast music from a connected iPod or other portable media player.

For easy hanging, there's a carabineer attached and, believe it or not, it also has a bottle opener built into the side.

Also available from Eton is the American Red Cross Solarlink FR600 emergency radio.

This radio is a little bigger than the portable Scorpion and is more designed for home use.

It's packed with all the necessary emergency features such as a flashlight, siren, self-powered digital AM/FM/SW/NOAA, S.A.M.E. weather radio, a flashlight, a 12-hour alarm clock and the multi-functional USB port.

For emergency related weather reports, the built-in S.A.M.E technology will provide location-based weather alerts.

A green LED-illuminated backlit digital display makes all of this easy to read.

It is also solar powered or by a hand-powered crank, which might make you ask how it works.

According to Eton, 90 seconds of hand cranking provides about 15 minutes of radio play.

The solar panel takes about 10 hours in direct sunlight to fully charge the radio's battery for 10 hours of use.

Also, to make one short emergency call, just crank it for about 3 minutes.

Details: etoncorp.com, \$80 for the American Red Cross Solarlink FR600; the Scorpion is \$50.

I'm a big fan of any compact and useful gadget, such as Monster's new Outlets to Go Laptop power adapter, which is way more than a laptop charger.

You can call this item a pocket-sized gadget, but it's more suited for storage in any laptop bag for travelers on the go.

The adapter has a retractable plug to fit any standard wall outlet and has three AC outlets and two rapid charging USB ports built into its body.

With all of this, users will never find any wall outlet full and can charge or power multiple devices at the same time.

The outlet ports are separated from each, other enabling users to plug in the larger and bulky power adapters many devices demand.

Details: monstercable.com, \$29.99 is the suggested price but it can be found for about \$21 at Amazon.

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