

## Creating a Digital Assets Plan

The desire for immortality, or at least remembrance, is an enduring human trait. Passing things to future generations is good way to preserve your identity.

Like millions of people worldwide, you may have email, social media accounts, photos, and business data stored on your computer, smart phone, and in the cloud. These digital assets are an increasingly integral part of your daily life. They comprise your online digital identity.

Unless you preserve it, your digital identity may risk extinction. Online assets like multimedia and financial information, may not be accessible to your loved ones after you're gone.

Good organization, inventory, planning and storage are essential to creating your digital assets plan. Once you have your inventory organized, you can make informed decisions about your final digital asset wishes and how to secure your digital legacy.

Your devices serve as keys to your email, social presence, business, and financial accounts. As you create your digital plan, identify and inventory your devices and the content stored on them first.

### Identify Your Digital Assets

First, inventory and backup your devices and their content. Organize your digital assets into these categories:

- Computers and devices: content from desktops, laptops, tablets, and mobile phones
- Email: content from incoming, sent, and stored messages
- Content from social network channels like Facebook, Twitter, etc.
- Online businesses including online stores, blogs, and websites, like PayPal, eBay, and Etsy
- Multimedia content from Shutterfly, Snapfish, and Flickr, Instagram, etc.

## *Inventory Your Digital Assets*

- *List personal devices and Internet accounts.*

The shift to cloud-based storage makes locating personal content more challenging. List all digital content accounts and sources.

- *List devices and the digital files separately.*

You should consider the future owner of a device separate from its contents. Files can be shared among different loved ones.

For a template go to: [www.yourdigitalafterlife.com/resources](http://www.yourdigitalafterlife.com/resources).

## *Communicate and Provide Access*

Clearly communicate your wishes for your devices and digital content to your loved ones, digital executor and/or heirs. Provide the physical location, usernames, and passwords for all devices and accounts.

Remember that access to data and preservation are different concepts. Your heirs may have access to your digital content after you pass away, but this does not ensure its future preservation.

## *Backup Your Digital Assets*

Back up your computer and devices. Automate the backup to occur regularly. Storing content online prevents data loss in case of accident or theft. Back up methods include:

- Storage media, like CDs and DVDs
- Optical media
- Online backup services, including:
  - [www.mozy.com](http://www.mozy.com)
  - [www.idrive.com](http://www.idrive.com)
  - [www.sosonlinebackup.com](http://www.sosonlinebackup.com)
  - [www.carbonite.com](http://www.carbonite.com)
  - [www.sugarsync.com](http://www.sugarsync.com)

## *Protect and Preserve Your Digital Assets*

- Check the laws in your state
- Check “Terms of Service” from your online service provider to confirm after-death access privileges.
- List your assets in your estate planning documents, including location, username and password access, and usage rights to your for all of your devices, data, and online accounts.

Digital asset technology is evolving to help you create a permanent online archive of your digital life that could exist well beyond your physical life. The Internet can't make you immortal, but with planning, your digital legacy could have an enduring afterlife.