

PC WORLD

View and Back Up Photos While on the Go

PHOTO VIEWERS
IN AN ERA when digital cameras take 10-plus-megapixel images, you may find it impossible to rely on media cards to store all your images. That's where a photo viewer such as Digital Foci's \$470 **Picture Porter Elite** or Epson's \$699 **P-5000** comes in: These handheld devices have large screens, built-in media-card slots, and 80GB hard drives. In my tests of two shipping units, the devices displayed similar ranges of functionality, yet each stood out for different reasons.

Both battery-operated handhelds come with software that permits you to back up your media cards to the device's hard drive and then view the photos on an LCD screen.

The Picture Porter Elite employs a fast, efficient, Linux-based operating system that's easy to navigate. The unit accommodates CompactFlash, SD, and Memory Stick cards. Slip a card in, and the device automatically prompts you to perform a photo backup (for images and videos on a me-

dia card) or a full backup (for all of the data stored on a card). Copying goes quickly, and photos looked satisfactory on the Picture Porter Elite's scratch-resistant, 3.6-inch, 320-by-240-resolution LCD. The device can handle JPEG, GIF, BMP, and TIFF files, as well as some RAW formats.

Though I wasn't thrilled by the Picture Porter Elite's boxy, squared-off design (its dimensions are 3.1 inches tall by 5.3 inches wide by 1.1 inches deep, and it weighs 11 ounces), I did appreciate the device's convenient joystick and its easy-to-use menu navigation buttons.

BIG-IMAGE DELIGHT

IN CONTRAST, the 80GB Epson P-5000 is larger (3.5 inches tall by 5.9 inches wide by 1.3 inches deep) and heavier (1 pound), enabling it to accommodate a 4-inch, 640-by-480-resolution screen. That gorgeous display supports 16.7 million colors; not surprisingly, images appeared sharper, clearer, and more detailed on this model, making it an excellent choice for professional photographers.

The P-5000 has an elegant, curved design. Its handsome matte-black case includes intuitive, well-labeled navigation buttons situated in the upper-right corner. The two card slots at the top accept CompactFlash and SD cards. Like the Picture Porter Elite, the Epson viewer prompts you to back up your images to the device.

I had no trouble navigating the P-5000's refined menus. The Linux-based software let me scroll quickly through images; the menus let me create albums and slide shows on the fly, and assign individual ratings to photos and albums.

Nevertheless, the P-5000 is more limited than the Picture Porter Elite in some respects. Its card slot does not accommodate Memory Stick media, for instance, and it supports only JPEG and RAW images.

I would recommend Epson's P-5000 for serious photographers; its larger, higher-resolution screen will justify the premium price. But the Picture Porter Elite will certainly get the job done, too.

—Melissa J. Perenson



THE PICTURE PORTER Elite (left) suffers from a boxy design, while Epson's P-5000 is larger but uses that space for its bigger LCD.