

News monitored for: HP Snapfish

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CHIC E-CLICKS

Personalised photo products are the in-thing now with digital photography taking to the online platform

HOW LONG HAS it been since you actually printed some photographs? Pretty long, we're guessing. Ever since digital photography caught on, actual printing of photographs took a nosedive. Sure, there are a handful of people who still print their photographs — wedding and event photography still get printed and local photo studios have adapted for printing from memory cards, CDs, mobiles and USB drives. But the real push now comes in the form of personalised photo products. That's why several online services are vying for a piece of the photo printing pie in India. Personalised photo products don't just mean photo books and greeting cards anymore. To differentiate themselves, players like Snapfish, itasveer, Zoomin, Myntra and Picsquare offer many innovative products to lure customers.

"The Indian photo printing market is estimated at over ₹10,000 crore annually. A negligible portion of this is online as of now," says Animesh Jain, one of the co-founders of itasveer.com. "It's difficult to attract first-time customers who have completely stopped printing photographs. We are a small business, so we rely on word of mouth," said Mr Jain.

Apart from printing, even online storage of photos is a draw.

Tiles, watch dials

If you prefer something out of the ordinary, ourshop.in offers customised jigsaw puzzles, pillows, plates and coin holders. Myprint.in can do customised visiting cards, giant flex banners, caps & stickers. Myntra.com can print your photos on framed tiles and wooden plaques, make customised laptop backpacks & add your photo/logo onto a watch dial. And Snapfish.in can do customised playing cards, notebooks and key rings.

Snapfish by HP is amongst the largest players in the market, with 85 million users in 22 countries. "Snapfish now offers consumers free online photo sharing, unlimited online photo storage, the largest array of photo products online and professionally developed digital camera prints for as low as ₹2.95 each (4"x6" size)," said Snapfish India country manager Michael Bala.

"To go beyond photos, Snapfish is also starting the publisher initiative. Snapfish Publisher will allow India's rich pool of designers, developers and printing

partners to reach more than 85 million registered users through the world-wide Snapfish network, to market and sell their creative designs, merchandise and services" said Mr Bala. Talking about getting consumers to print their photographs, a startup called Snaptree had an innovative idea earlier this year: print your 4"x6" photographs and get them delivered, completely free! The service was advertising driven, and each photograph would have a small advertisement in a lower corner. Another catch was that a limit of 20 photographs per month was imposed per user, and each user would have to register afresh every month to supply details for the advertisers. The idea didn't work and Snaptree folded up. If you have a hard drive full of digital photographs gathering dust, try out the innovative new options. Some of the other popular websites offering personalised photo products are printbucket.com, gkvale.com, ourshop.in, pringoo.com, snapgalaxy.com and myprint.in.

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