

AP Testbench

Over the next few pages we present this week's **equipment tests**, **reader questions** and **technique pointers**

Firstcall e-filming 360 Digital Drive Panorama tripod base £351.33

For more information visit www.firstcall-photographic.co.uk

PANORAMIC and 360° photography appear to be in vogue, and Firstcall's e-filming 360 Digital Drive Panorama base provides a sophisticated and user-friendly option for the SLR user. It is a simple process to attach the digital base to any tripod head and then an SLR camera, either horizontally or vertically using a bracket. The device connects to the camera via a cable-release socket (supplied for most DSLRs). By using the digital display, the speed at which the device rotates between exposures, the number of exposures and angle between exposures can be adjusted. The precision and accuracy of measurements is impressive, right down to every 0.1secs and 1°. As the camera rotates through 360°, it is important the cable is positioned so that it does not tangle with the tripod to avoid damaging the device. I would like to see a slightly longer cable supplied, or even wireless operation.

The base is powered by four AA batteries and it can be controlled by remote. Coolstitch and 3D Maker software are supplied, providing a simple platform to post-process the images. Aimed at real-estate and product photography professionals, the £350 price tag puts this niche product in the realm of the specialist landscape and architecture photographer.

Tim Coleman

**Amateur
Photographer**
Simple and precise
digital base for the
360° photographer
★★★★☆



The AP guarantee to you

All our tests are conducted by people who understand the product area, as well as photography. We aim to discover any shortcomings, as well as finding those aspects that deserve praise. All our tests are thorough, honest and independent

Cloud Engines Pogoplug £99

For more information visit www.pogoplug.com

CLOUD Engines' Pogoplug is an NAS (Network Access Storage) device. There are four USB ports on the Pogoplug (but no FireWire connectivity), which means it is possible to connect up to four external USB 2.0 hard/flash drives simultaneously. The data on the drives can then be accessed via the internet through a password-protected site. Files can be viewed and downloaded or extra files uploaded onto the external drive via Pogoplug. My concerns over the data residing on the network were eased, as Cloud Engines' management interface takes just a snapshot of the data on the drive. Pogoplug is simple to set up, taking me less than two minutes.

The device is reliant on good internet speeds and I found download speeds ranged between 15 and 42KB/s, but generally nearer 40KB/s, which equates to around 25 seconds to download 1MB of data. A nice touch is the slideshow creator within Pogoplug, and these slideshows can be shared too. The Pogoplug is a very useful tool for the remote sharing and accessing of data. **Tim Coleman**



**Amateur
Photographer**
Access and sharing
of large data files
made easy
★★★★☆

FORTHCOMING TESTS In the next few weeks AP hopes to run the following equipment through the most rigorous testing procedures in the industry...

HDR software

Find the perfect High Dynamic Range software for your photography.

AP 18 September

Canon 70-200mm f/2.8 vs Sigma 70-200mm f/2.8

The latest 70-200mm f/2.8 stabilised optics from Canon and Sigma go head-to-head.

AP 25 September

Panasonic Lumix DMC-LX5

Can the successor to the popular LX3 compete in today's market? We test the Canon PowerShot G11's latest competitor.

AP 25 September

Nikon D3100

At last, a Nikon DX-format DSLR with more than 12 million pixels. We put the D3100 through its paces.

AP 16 October

Canon EOS 60D

Canon's replacement for the enthusiast-level has 18 million pixels, a variangle screen and full HD video.

AP 30 October