Shotwell

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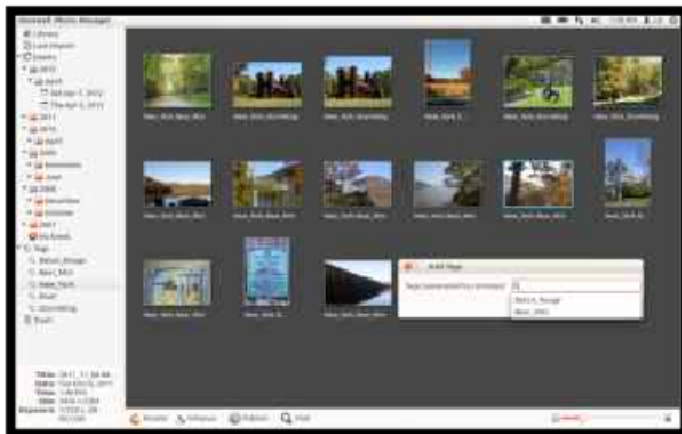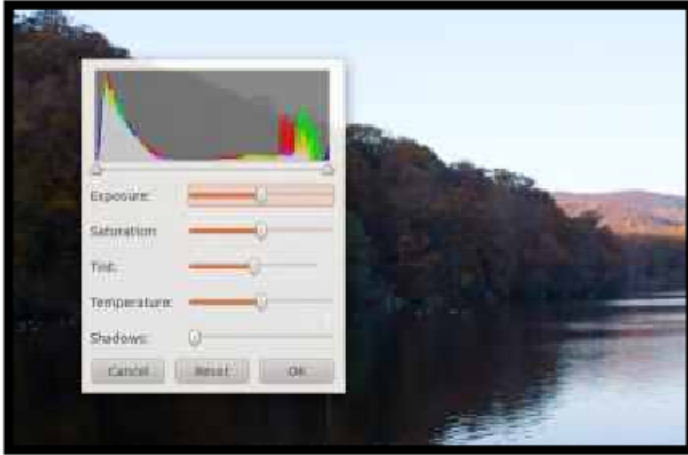http://cccclinuxsig.pbwiki.com
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Digital cameras allow us to take as many pictures as we want without the cost of wasted
film from bad shots. One result, however, is that we generate lots of image files that can
be difficult to organize. Simple photo management software is available to help with
organization and also to conduct basic editing of the original photograph. Picasa (from
Google) has been a popular cross-platform program for this purpose, but Google
recently announced it will not provide future updates for Linux users. *DigiKam* is the
recommended alternative for *KDE* users. For *GNOME* users, *Shotwell* is the popular
choice (it is now the default *Ubuntu* photo manager, replacing *F-Spot*).

Shotwell can import photos and videos directly from your camera, or you can import
images from existing files (it supports JPG, PNG, TIFF, and BMP file types). It will
automatically arrange photos by date. In addition, you can add one or more "tags" to the
photo for additional grouping. In the screenshot below, you see pictures tagged with
"New York." Some pictures also have additional text specifying specific location. On the
task pane on the left-hand side, you can click on "New York" to see all from that state,
or click on a particular location to see those just from that locale. Clicking on the date
identifiers will display photos from that time period regardless of location. Other
common tags to use would be to append text for a person's name or for a special event
(birthday, vacation, etc.). You can add, delete, or edit the tags at any time.

Shotwell has editing features to let you rotate, crop, and eliminate red-eye defects. It
also has a very simple but effective exposure and color balance tool with live histogram
response (see below). The "enhance" tool automatically guesses appropriate intensity
levels and is a powerful and quick way to rapidly get your photos looking great.

Shotwell has the ability to publish photos and videos to *Facebook*, *Flickr*, and *Picasa*. Currently, *Shotwell* has very limited capabilities for RAW images. They will be loaded but changed into JPG structure for editing.

As with any album software (either music or photographs), it is best to pick the one you like and stick with that choice. The key point is that the tags and other labels are tracked in an internal database. If you move the files manually, you can break the link to the database file. *Shotwell* does allow you drag and drop photos within its structure. When importing images into the *Shotwell* system, the files are copied into a designated file folder, thus keeping your original files. One approach is to use the program to load your "best" images so that you can use it to review them quickly and share with others.

The thrust of *Shotwell* is to be an image manager. For more complex editing tasks, a bit-map editing program such as *The GIMP* is recommended for refining the picture before importing into *Shotwell*. The program is available for *Linux* via most package mangers. For more information, see *yorba.org/shotwell*.