

EPSON PERFECTION 4870 PHOTO

SCANNING BETTER – FASTER – CHEAPER

preview scan took 28seconds. Because the image was dark and I wanted to select the whole frame, I made a generous selection including a bit of the film holder, then made a 'Zoom Preview Scan', which took 19seconds. This gives a much bigger image to accurately select the boundary and a better look to tweak the histogram and ensure optimum expose. The 306% scan took 1min 25sec; the 816% a very commendable 2min 20. Each of these would have been somewhat slower had I applied more corrections.

If all this sounds a bit techo don't be off-put. Epson bundles a whole heap of great software with the PERFECTION 4870, suitable for all levels of expertise from beginner to pro. I won't detail these software items other to make special mention of Adobe® Photoshop® Elements ver 2, which will cater for all but the top-end of image editing and to briefly review that very smart, 'Smart Panel'.

When scanning for production of the 'Mail, I prefer to work within Photoshop, importing the Epson Twain scanning module set in 'Professional Mode'. The other option is to scan via Smart Panel which really does live up to its name offering a wide range of functions to wide ranging levels of user expertise.

First up, the primary two 'Photo' functions of 'Reprint Photo' (which requires a connected printer) and 'Scan and Save', offer options from 'auto-everything' where the software cleverly determines what is to be scanned and how best it should be printed, through to an intelligent choice of opportunities for user intervention for the more experienced.

Next, the 'Document' section also impresses. The 'Copy Centre' function cleverly turns the computer

and printer into a colour or B&W photocopier - highly spec'd if a little slow. 'Documents', 'Edit Text' OCR function blew Deb away – it's far far more accurate in recognition than the OCR application we currently use in production – particularly with poor quality copy like some of our correspondents fax us (no names, Bushy).

'Photo Project's' sole 'Scan to Application' function works well, recognising the applications on your system into which an image can be scanned and caters from dummy, to not-at-all-dummy, skill bases. My preference is to scan from within a chosen application because it is so much faster.

'Share Your Photo' 'Scan to E-Mail' and 'EPSON Photo Site' functions weren't looked at 'cos I forgot and pro publishers are a bit set in their ways how they like doing these things. A brief glimpse looked hopeful for 'Outlook' users.

Conclusion

EPSON's scanners have always impressed me. Streets ahead of other well-respected brands hunting the low-priced segment of the market and often right up there in \$ market segments well above Epson's target. So it is with the EPSON PERFECTION 4870 PHOTO. Exceptional value, functionality and performance - at least from my limited look. Reliability and backup? If my experience with Epson's printers is anything to go by, I'd say, tops.

If they would like to leave the trial unit with me for a couple of years, I'll give you a more fact-based observation.

Bob Hunter



Crop from same tranny but 816% enlargement – A4 size, magazine quality