

Spot The Pro

EPSON PERFECTION V700 PHOTO SCANNER \$999

Epson's latest transparency/reflective scanner has a Dual Lens System (one scans at up to 6400dpi, the other up to 4800dpi). Optical density 4.0Dmax, comes with four height-adjustable transparency film holders, includes SilverFast SE 6, Adobe Photoshop Elements 3.0, Epson Creativity Suite and Epson Scan (with Digital ICE technology).

The V700 is a large, square, silver-and-black unit, a little imposing and not exactly attractive, but being aimed at the professional end of the consumer market, style will take a backseat to features.

The software it ships with is comprehensive for both Mac and PC. Epson Scan defaults to Full Auto Mode, which deals with the image totally automatically, blats off a scan and then quits. It does a good job on a standard photo, but anyone buying this scanner for pro applications will bypass Auto.

Home and Professional modes are far more comprehensive. Even business users will be happy with Home Mode when scanning in a lot of similar images, but Pro is the favourite.

Pro gives you configurable Unsharp Mask (as beloved by Photoshoppers), configurable Descreening, Dust Removal and ICE, plus a Color Restoration on/off.

You can choose resolutions of up to 48-bit colour for full gamut scans, Preview in full or thumbnail size, set original media types (negative, positive, reflective, etc), set size of final scans and more. You can adjust white point, contrast,

tonal histograms and colours to your heart's content, then you can save a preset once you are happy with it.

It's quick too: a full-size preview of a photographic print finishes in eight to 10 seconds and a scan in well under two minutes (faster if the scanner is warmed up, ie, when you are doing several scans in succession).

ICE, a built-in hardware routine that helps with scratched originals, doesn't magically fix everything, but doesn't fudge other details like some Photoshop restorations. Leaving ICE off sped things up and was my preference, although it proved very effective with particular types of image problems, like fine dots.

Epson's Creativity Suite basically replicates Apple's iPhoto.

Of course, I've said it before and I'll say it again: the true test of a scanner is how it handles transparencies.

Typically, a transparency original is small, ie, 35mm. But it can hold a huge amount of fine detail, and tonal and colour graduations. Yet we expect a finished scan to be many times bigger - print sized if not A4 landscape or even bigger.

The V700 has transparency holders for 35mm mounted slides, 35mm strip and common larger transparency sizes. And the results are breathtaking - warm, rich, vibrant and detailed. It's virtually professional in quality.

So, for a rather plain, ugly and imposing machine (okay, as a Mac user, I'm biased), the Perfection V700 would happily service any business or archiving photographer. However, at \$1000, it would probably be wasted on someone who just wants to scan for the net. ■ MARK WEBSTER

DETAILS



CONTACT

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SPECIFICATIONS

Flatbed reflective and transparency scanner
4800dpi x 9600dpi,
FireWire/USB2 interfaces,
48-bit colour depth, 16-bit
grey, 8216 x 297mm
scan area (platen) using
a white cold cathode
fluorescent lamp. Comes
with transparency holders.

SOFTWARE: Epson Scan,
Epson Creativity Suite,
SilverFast SE6, Adobe
Photoshop Elements 3,
ABBYY Finereader Sprint 6
(Windows)/Sprint 5 (Mac),
Newssoft Presto Biz 4 LE
and an Online User Guide

KEY FEATURES:

- Separate lenses
- Up to 6400dpi native
- USB2
- 4.0 DMax range
- Hardwired scratch removal
- Windows and Mac

PLUS

- ✦ Does a great job in all media
- ✦ Dual specialised lenses
- ✦ Fast for the powers

MINUS

- ✘ Ugly and Imposing

VERDICT

World class scanner, perfect to digitise all analogue media

Aesthetics	75%
Performance	95%
Features	95%
Functionality	90%
Price Value	90%
Overall	

89%

