PrinTao 8
Effortless Professional Printing

SOFTWARE REVIEW
BY **ERIC STEWART**

PRINTAO 8

Making a photographic print is a rewarding experience. The tactile quality of a fine art image printed on specialty paper trumps viewing prints on even the very best monitor.

I had the opportunity to test LaserSoft Imaging's new printing software, PrinTao 8. This software is for Mac only. For this review I used the iPF6400 24″ printer from Canon, and, because this software is targeted at the mid-range professional and prosumer market, I jumped right into the program without pausing to read the manual – just like the average user.

Software should be intuitive, and this software is. When PrinTao 8 launches on your Mac, *Start-Pilot* opens. *Start-Pilot* walks you through the setup process. Printer, paper type and size and print quality are selected here through buttons and simple drop down menus. Start-Pilot then sends you to the main setup page.

The main page is also intuitive. Drag and drop options from Lightroom, iPhoto or the finder are available. The software uses Lightroom collections and iPhoto folders which makes it very easy to access your files. Mac shortcuts, shift and command, can be used to bring multiple files into the software.

Once the images are in the software, templates, which are customizable, make print layout simple. My absolute favourite template is called Nested: Best fit. This template aligns multiple files onto one canvas saving paper. Roll paper length is automatically adjusted. Brilliant.

Sheet paper users will also find the templates useful as multiple prints can be sent to the printer utilizing the built in templates. Contact sheets can also be created very easily using the pre-loaded templates. The software adds pages automatically to fit the images that you load. Whether you are printing a contact sheet or a stack of individual 8x10's. Just load your paper in the printer, press print, and walk away.
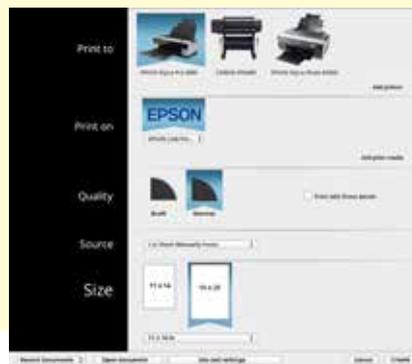
Those users who create their own custom ICC profiles can create presets for each paper they print with. These presets are accessed in the Start-Pilot through the same simple interface.

Because Start-Pilot walked you through the setup of the printer at the beginning of the process, printing is just one simple click.

There are a couple of issues still to be worked out – at this time there are not many supported printers, and Canon users currently don't have access to as many paper options as Epson users (I am assured that this is being worked on). Cropping options in the software are limited, and personally, I would love to see a little more control in the Nested options to allow for rough cuts and stroke lines for high key images.

Overall, the software is excellent at what it does. It allows users who are not well versed in colour management to create excellent colour managed prints without a lot of hassle. This means that you will save money in paper and ink – there is no waste as the prints come out right the first time!

Users who print in high volume and with a color managed workflow, as I do, will like the PrinTao 8 software for its' easy interface and excellent customizable templates.

Bio

Eric Stewart is a Photo-Lab Technician and Professional Photography Instructor at Langara College, in Vancouver B.C.