

## Product Test Review: PrinTao 8 by LaserSoft Imaging



Occasionally we review a book, or product that we think CAPA members may have some significant interest in exploring further. This product review is about PrinTao 8, which is a relatively new software product for printing your images very professionally, provided you are a user of a Mac computer. You need to print using either a Canon or Epson printer.

Dan Bryer, D R from North Bay, and Rick Shapka from North Vancouver, conducted the review. Dan prints from an Epson 7900 using Image Print 9, and Rick prints from an Epson Pro 3880 using Photoshop. For this review, both were provided with a full working version of PrinTao 8 software from LaserSoft Imaging from the USA office. Neither Dan nor Rick are professional printmakers, but are quite comfortable producing a high quality print image from a digital file.

### What we did to test PrinTao 8:

- We used color-calibrated monitors (a NEC PA272W, and a LaCie 324i respectively), and each person exchanged digital files for the prints to be made. We printed exactly from the digital files exchanged; no changes to each other's file.
- We each printed our own images, and then the other person's images, using our own normal print workflow. Next we printed using the print workflow of PrinTao 8 software.

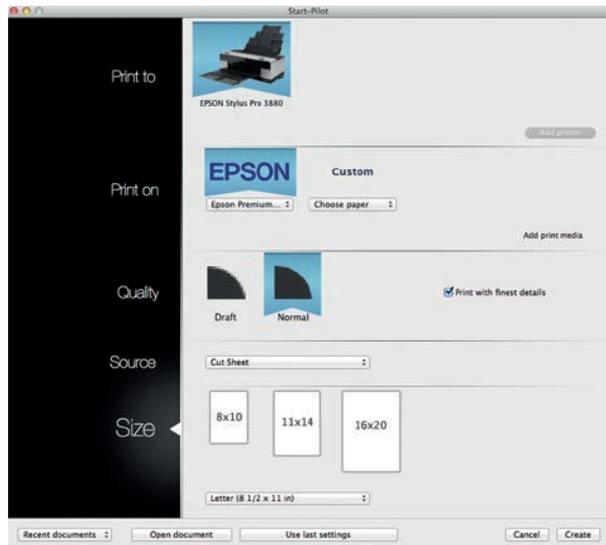
- Each of us compared the images printed, using the two different workflows.
- We met to compare, and discuss the image results printed with the different workflows.
- We then asked some other CAPA members to compare and discuss their print preferences, and reasons for their choices.
- All our print comparisons were based upon visual acuity, in light conditions that approximated 5500 degrees Kelvin.

### Use of PrinTao 8 Software:

- The software is relatively easy to load and navigate. There are very understandable tutorials available on how to use the software. Just Google PrinTao 8.
- The screen shot shows the settings, and is a step-by-step process to follow to load an image for print. PrinTao 8 has made available 100s of ICC paper profiles from which you can choose or you can choose to load your own custom profile. This is one significant advantage of using the software. Most popular paper profiles come preloaded with the PrinTao 8 software.

### Results of the Print Tests:

- With any software there is a learning curve, but if you have some knowledge of working from your own computer and printer, you will learn this software fairly quickly. This is not to imply you will not have some questions, to which the PrinTao 8 representative Darren Vena responded quickly.
- When comparing the color prints from the 7900, using Image Print and PrinTao 8, there was a just noticeable difference between the test prints. PrinTao 8 prints were slightly less saturated, with somewhat less contrast. Dan prefers the subtle differences of Image Print, but says considering the difference in software cost, others may not appreciate the difference.



- When comparing the color prints from the 3880, using Photoshop as the print manager rather than PrinTao8, the preferred print was the PrinTao 8 result. The prints seemed to be slightly lighter in overall tone. The colors are very realistic, and closely match the calibrated monitor screen, the first time. Rick attributes this to the ICC profiles that are built into the PrinTao 8 software.
- The CAPA members who viewed the (blind test) prints pretty much agreed with the comments above. There was overall agreement that PrinTao 8 produced a preferred print result to using Photoshop as the print driver.
- We primarily compared color prints, although Rick did a test with a black and white image. PrinTao8 produced a very nice print from the 3880. However there was a very slight yellow color cast in the sky clouds that required an additional adjustment to obtain the final satisfactory print.

Overall Dan and Rick were pleased with the results from PrinTao 8. If you are looking to learn more about producing better prints, or move to the next step with your printing, we encourage to experiment and download a trial version of this product from LaserSoft Imaging.

\*\* Neither Dan nor Rick received any compensation from LaserSoft Imaging for doing this PrinTao 8 product review. They used their own computers, printers, ink and papers for this print test.