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Arcadia Software PhotoPerfect 2.9 - PC

Can this photo package make a mark?

by Stephen Patrick published on 5 September 2008

Arcadia Software is a German company and only made an English language version of PhotoPerfect with version 2.8. Launching against the big players in the market, such as Adobe, Corel or even Serif, this product offers one-click batch processing and a good entry-level price.

In this age, where we are fairly accustomed to user-friendly interfaces, installing PhotoPerfect is something of a shock. For starters, it doesn't have a launch interface of its own. Rather, you install the program from a browser window in IE or Firefox. It's a quick install, though as the program is only 14MB in size.

Launch the program and you'll see it has a fairly retro look about it. It has a fairly standard interface, with a large viewing area in the middle of the page, Histogram and processing resources to the right and the main function keys along the top and down the left-hand side.

So far so good, but the icons are small and it takes a little time getting used to the layout. What makes it harder is the initial lack of tutorial support offering to show you the basics. We eventually found the tutorials on the installation CD. There is also a range of basic tutorials on the company website. The CD contains a number of sample images, which once again you access from the menu list in your browser window.

However, once you start to use the software, it's a powerful and varied set of tools. If you need to batch process large numbers of photos, you can do this at the click of a single button. Features such as retouching, resizing and reducing red eye can also be carried out in one click. Then there is colour balance and even a retroactive white balance that can help sort out problems with many images.

We found the features list to be varied and



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powerful. You can choose to manually alter images or you can opt for the program to make changes for you. There is also built-in support for loading your images directly to Flickr.

With support for 16-bit RAW and TIFF files, we feel the semi-pro photographer or serious enthusiast will get the most of this software, and not the dabbler with the point-and-click. This version also offers better conversion of RAW files to other formats.

Most tasks are carried out in separate dialogue windows and there is a heavy emphasis on saving each version as a different file. Luckily, there is a File Directory window on the main page otherwise you'll quickly lose track of where these images are stored.

There is a free version available that you can upgrade with a license key and we'd suggest taking this route, as the look and feel may not be to your liking.

VERDICT

PhotoPerfect may be a little rough around the edges and certainly lacks the ease-of-use we've come to expect from such programs, but it's a powerful and effective tool. In order to crack the UK market it needs to make itself easier to use and far less daunting a program to get to grips with.

At a glance

What is it?

Digital photo editing software

Good

Powerful, easy install

Bad

Awkward interface, steep learning curve

Verdict

Digital photography enthusiasts will like the versatile nature of this software but casual users will loathe its retro look

Price £40

Our score

6/10

Your score

?/10