

Logitech Scanman Model 32 (Version 2.0) Mike Bromley

Fig. 1 Mike - no caption

The use of Scanman 2.0 was my first venture into scanning and I am impressed with its capabilities and features. A hand held scanner should be a "must have" peripheral for any computer enthusiast with desk publishing designs on something less than a commercial scale. At the same time the user must reconcile his requirements with the scanner's main limitation, a maximum 4.2" scanning width. This often voiced criticism is misplaced as this scanner was not designed to compete with the full page scanners (doesn't compete in price, either).

In other aspects the Scanman measures up well. It now supports color monitors with up to 32 grays and has editing tools which allow for "fine tuning" of brightness & contrast in images scanned in the Gray mode. The "tear off" tool menu provides editing tools for touching up scanned images, including a paint tool that can also use up to 32 grays. A zoom in & out feature lets you focus your work. Scanned images can be rotated in 90 degree increments or inverted; they can be resized as well and some selections can be made transparent to enhance the final presentation. A print feature allows you to control the size of the image that is output. Settings on the scanner head allow for variations in brightness as well as the size of dithering grains which create the resolution desired.

Version 2.0 interfaces more easily with a broader range of applications than its predecessor, Scanman 1.0. These include:

- MacPaint II, HyperCard, Director
- Studio/8, PixelPaint
- SuperPaint, Canvas 2
- Word, MacWrite, FullWrite, Nisus, WordPerfect
- MacDraw II, Canvas, PowerPoint, More
- PageMaker, RagTime, QuarkXPress
- OmniPage, Read-It!
- Streamline, Illustrator, FreeHand

i.e., it's extremely versatile! It supports MacPaint, PICT/PICT2, and TIFF file formats. (The EPS format was not mentioned in the user's manual.) I was not impressed however, with results obtained using either the Clipboard or Scrapbook. After scanning an image in the gray mode, I attempted to insert it into a Word document (in a halftone format) via the cut and paste method allowed by Word. The resulting image was very coarse and not acceptable to me. Several attempts to improve the image proved futile.

Despite good tools, Scanman is not competition for half tone photo applications, such as PhotoMac or Image Studio.

The format for scanning pictures is easily understood and remains unchanged from its earlier version. It took a couple tries to "get the hang of it" as I did not realize the roller needed to stay in contact with the picture as it scanned the image. Some care had to be exercised in making sure the image did in fact fit within the scanning window. Some difficulty presented itself when images were scanned from magazines or books in that the scanned surface, not being flat, yielded as the scanner rolled over it and allowed "hot spots" to appear in the finished image. No difficulty was encountered controlling the speed or the "line up" of the scan. Small borders around the finished image and cropping eliminated less than perfect edges.

The scanner has 2 scanning modes: Line Art & Gray. A Mixed Mode can be obtained through line art scanning using gray settings. It allows a resolution of up to 400 dpi and images are rendered in 4 different ways: (1) Gray (available only to computers supporting color), (2) Advanced Halftone (simulation of grays through a diffusion process), (3) Screen Halftone (simulated grays but not diffused), and (4) High Contrast (black and white). The following pictures illustrate the different results obtained using the last three print modes:

Figures 3 Houses caption a = Advanced Halftone, caption b = Screen Halftone, caption c = High Contrast
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When scanning in an image in Gray mode, the Save format must be set to Save in Gray and the resolution need not be any greater than the screen resolution (e.g., 72 dpi on standard monitors). If this is not done and the image is saved in, say, Advanced Halftones, Scanman automatically converts the image to Line Art and no contrast/brightness editing is possible. If the Gray mode is properly selected in the Save process, but the resolution is more than the screen resolution, enormous amounts of memory are eaten up..**and at no improvement in image quality.**

The print format dialog box allows you to set the resolution of the output on your printer. This is where high resolution pays off if your printer is equal to the settings selected. It took awhile for it to "sink in" that the settings for Save were completely separate from the settings for Print and there was a certain amount of pandemonium in the house when a very small snapshot took 1.8MB to save and when I tried to edit it after the save I found it uneditable and rendered in line art mode.

Figure Little Girl, caption = My granddaughter, Chantale
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A scanned color photo of my granddaughter, when rendered through the Advanced Halftone process and imported into PageMaker produced an excellent image, when printed on a laser printer. I was very pleased with the result, due in large part to a fair amount of experimentation with editing tools.

I tried scanning using the Scanman Desk Accessory while in Word 4.0. The scanned image had to be saved to the Clipboard and the results were not good (as noted previously). I conclude that line art is the only satisfactory subject matter when the Clipboard/Scrapbook facility is used. The Desk Accessory had some memory restrictions and a caveat in the user's manual "strongly recommended" Scanman being used as an application rather than a DA when using MultiFinder.

A lot of the enjoyment of owning a scanner depends upon the quality of the printer available. A standard ImageWriter's 72 dpi capability effectively excludes it from any serious gray scale printing

however it would be great for line art. ImageWriter II & ImageWriter LQ with resolution capabilities of 144 & 216 dpi , respectively, open many more possibilities.

Figure 4 Lady, caption = Line Art from newspaper

Despite restrictions placed by printing equipment, Scanman does a good job. It is only slightly pricier than one of its competitors, Lightning Scan but the latter supports only 16 grays. Another competitor, Thunderscan, matches Scanman with features and is more inexpensive but is fairly cumbersome to install and is limited to use with the ImageWriter as it mounts right onto that printer.

All in all, I feel Scanman is a good value for the average computer user. I was disappointed with its use in Word but very happy with the results produced in PageMaker through its "Place" command. The differing results are probably created by the export/import formats of the target document rather than the Scanman application.

One thing is certain, Scanman is easy to use and it makes your desktop publishing come alive.