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June 2008



Editors' Choice 35mm Film Scanner

Plustek OpticFilm 7500i AI 35mm Film Scanner

Reviewed by Terry Kibiloski



The new Plustek OpticFilm 7500i AI is the best 35mm color slide and negative scanner on the market for both amateur and professional photographers. This scanner will help you create high quality images for magazines, photo enlargements, brochures, digitized slides & negatives, Web pages, and images to share with friends and family on the Internet. Have you taken out your old slides and photos lately? If so, you probable wondered what happened to the quality. In this world of touched up digital photography, we tend to remember our old 35mm slides as being just as clear and crisp as today's digital photos. Yet, when we get out the old projector and sit back for some nice memories, we find that the slides have faded, the scratches are glaring, and our old film camera was nowhere near the quality we remember. Most of us have a similar experience with our old photos.

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Does all of this sound familiar? If so, Plustek's new slide and film scanner is just for you.

The new Plustek OpticFilm 7500i AI (Internet price around \$480), is a 7200 dpi film scanner, with enhanced Multi-Sampling for color slides, Multi-Exposure for negative film, and an iSRD feature for dust and scratch removal. It doesn't get any better than this. This scanner automatically cleans up the scratches, and the accompanying software helps you restore your old slides and photos to better than brand new as you balance the color, change the contrast and brightness, and improve the composition. Are you excited yet? You should be. When you start using the Plustek OpticFilm 7500i AI, you feel like you are in photographer's heaven. All you need to add is the time to keep having fun restoring your old photos and color slides.

After thoroughly testing the new Plustek OpticFilm 7500i AI scanner, we are convinced that this is the best unit on the market to help you bring your old photos and slides into the digital format. When you buy this scanner, you also get SilverFast 6.5 AI Studio (MultiExposure) iSRD software and 35mm IT8 calibration targets, which are great for professional users. The SilverFast 6.5 AI Studio (MultiExposure) iSRD software provides enhanced powerful function such as Multi-Exposure, IT8 Target, Auto Adjust, USM, NegaFix, Selective Color Correction, iSRD (Infrared Smart Removal of Defect), SoftPrint, plus many more. For you casual users, this just means you have a host of professional tools to get great results as you dig more and more into the many available features. In the package, you also get NewSoft Presto! ImageFolio 4.5, which is a comprehensive multimedia image-processing program, plus NewSoft Presto! PageManager 7.10, which makes it easy to scan, share, and organize your images and documents

To minimize noise (electrical interference), the Plustek multiple sampling function makes 4 scans during scan time, since the noise pattern changes each scan, the image is averaged together and noise is cancelled out if inconsistencies are present. Once you have a noise free image, the iSRD (Infrared Smart Removal of Defect) kicks in to automatically eliminate minor flaws, such as dust and scratches, using infrared channels. This feature brings a new dimension in defect removal technologies. Notice how it cleans up the problems so noticeable in the sky are of this color slide. Brilliant!



Two modes, automatic and manual, are available. In automatic mode, SilverFast iSRD operates completely on its own, as it applies corrected result to the entire scan frame. In manual mode, you can select certain area(s) to work on, and leave the rest untouched. With defects removed, SilverFast iSRD does not soften or blur the scanned file and it provides the user with an enhanced genuine image.



The unit comes with two film holders: one for up to four mounted slides, and the other for holding a piece of filmstrip with up to 6 frames at one time. The photo below shows how the film holders are used in the unit. You simply slide the holders through the dust cover protected slot in the side of the unit and scan each slide or negative in the holder by simply pressing a single button on the front of the unit. When you scan the first slide, the unit will automatically launch the appropriate software.



We really liked the film holders as they are very durable and built to last for thousands of hours of scanning, plus the media is well protected as it is securely fastened into place with no physical contact during the scanning process. Additional film holders are available separately if you wish to set up a production line for scanning a great deal of slides or negatives.

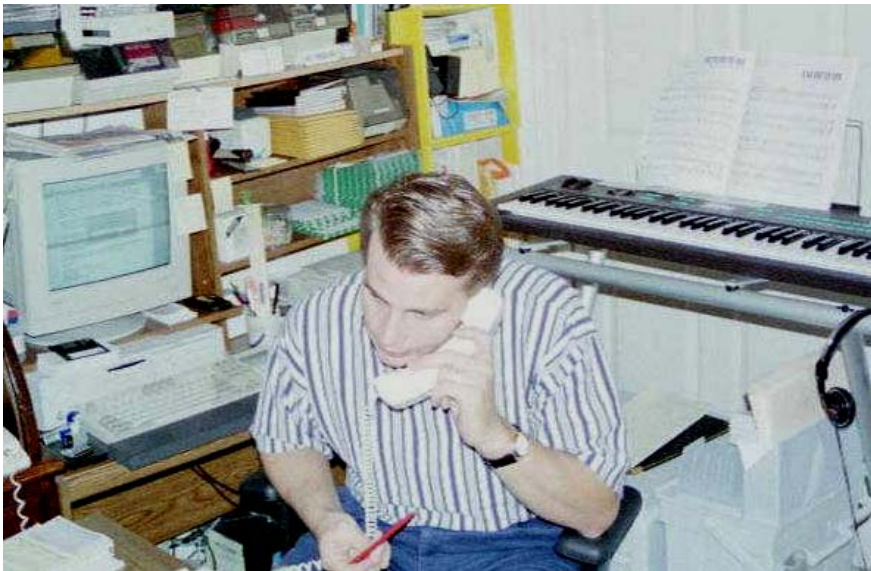
As we tested the Plustek OpticFilm 7500i AI scanner, we used a 25-year-old faded slide of our Entertainment Editor. The hardware and software helped us restore this slide to much better than brand new.



Just for grins, we scanned the slide in as a film negative, which would normally be turned into a print image, but since we scanned in the positive color slide, we ended up getting a negative of the slide.



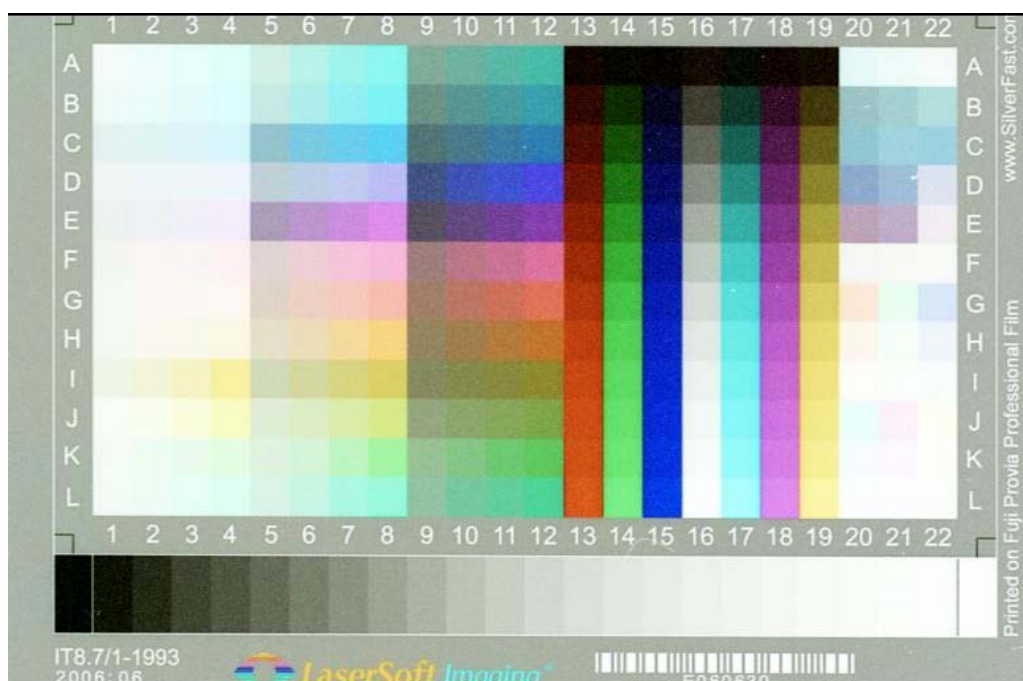
We then dug out a 15-year-old color negative of our Technical Editor, which was extremely faded, and managed to produce a printed image that was far better than the original, which even in its original state was much too light.



Finally, we scanned in a black & white negative of our legendary photo of the comedian Gallagher when he took his watermelon out of its protective Plexiglas box at COMDEX and splattered it all over a group of IBM executives who had originally hired him to promote IBM's new ThinkPad but then ticked him off by putting too many restrictions on him. You can find the full story under our Interesting News area, titled "Gallagher and IBM, The Rest Of The Story!" We were very pleased with the quality this scanner provided with one of the negatives from this historic roll of film, especially since we were the only publication to capture this historic moment.



Like us, you surely have many color slides and negatives of historic moments you would like to preserve as digital images that you can use professionally or simply send to all of your family and friends. We wish we would have had this unit available prior to a family reunion in the mid 90s. How great it would have been to provide digital images of the hundreds of family slides and negatives we had available, to every one who attended.



For you professionals, you will really appreciate the SilverFast 35mm IT8 Calibration Target, which lets you generate ICC color profiles. Using this feature, you can calibrate your scanner using a standard color target from LaserSoft Imaging, which is included in the package. SilverFast will not only generate a profile, it will also generate its own internal calibration based on the target. This allows enhanced color accuracy.



The included LaserSoft SilverFast 6.5 AI Studio iSRD is a world class professional scan software, with Stand-Alone SilverFast Launcher and TWAIN Plug-in applications. It provides casual users and professionals with a powerful tool for scanning, editing, and color reproduction. As mentioned earlier, SilverFast Ai Studio iSRD includes Multi-Exposure, AACO, iSRD, SRD, Auto-Adjust, USM, SCC, SoftProof, IT8 Target, NegaFix, and many other advance features.



NewSoft Presto! ImageFolio 4.5 is a comprehensive multimedia image-processing program that helps you create new or enhanced images by using the ImageFolio's powerful tools. Complete image-tuning functions include:

- Easy to manage and preview image files.
- Monitor Gamma adjustment.
- TWAIN interface support for automatic fine-tuning during scanning.
- Support TIF, PCX, BMP, TGA, JPG, PCD, WMF, and PNG file format. (PC)
- Image Manager functions as an image database and uses folders to manage and preview files.



NewSoft Presto! PageManager 7.10 is a perfect solution for scanning, managing and sharing documents, while also helping you not only convert piles of papers into organized, digitized files, but also view, edit, send, and back up files in many formats. Functions include:

- Powerful document management software for OCR, PDF creation, or format conversion to Microsoft Word or Excel.
- Instant PDF creation or conversion to Word (maintaining color and images)
- Network support to share files over a network
- Stack associated files together so they can be opened together
- Scan to application for further image editing and OCR
- Browse images conveniently by the Slideshow applet



A very nice feature of this bundled package is the carrying bag that lets you take the Plustek OpticFilm 7500i AI on the road. This padded carrying bag is specially designed for the film scanner, with the main compartment accommodating the scanner, film holders, power adaptor and USB cord. It comes with an easy-to-grip handle for hand carry, and features Velcro taped pocket to house film holders.

For all you techies, the complete technical specifications are shown below:

- Interface USB 2.0
- Technology Color CCD image sensor
- Hardware Resolution 7200 x 7200 dpi
- Dynamic Range 3.5
- Max. scanning area 36.8 x 25.4 mm (1.45 "x 1") for
- Preview Speed 11 sec (positive film), 11.38 sec (negative film) without calibration

- Scan Speed Approx. 73 sec (3600 dpi), 332 sec (7200 dpi) for color slide
- Hardware
- Multi-Exposure on negative film Yes
- Multi-Sampling Yes
- Infrared Function Yes
- Color Depth 48 bit/pixel
- Scan Mode Single Pass
- Lamp Cold Cathode
- Dimensions
- (D x W x H) 272 x 120 x 119 mm / 4.73"x10.7"x4.7"
- (scanner only)
- Net Weight Approx. 1.6Kg / 3.5 lbs (scanner only)
- Film Holder Mounted slides, up to 4 slides
- Filmstrip, up to 6 frames
- Infrared BUILT-IN
- Regulatory Certificates CE, FCC, UL/cUL, TUV, BSMI
- OS Support Windows 2000, XP, Vista Compatible

Accessories

- Padded Carry Bag
- Negative and Positive film holder
- Plustek Setup/Application CD-ROM
- SilverFast CD-ROM
- Quickguide
- USB cable – 150cm (59.05")
- Power Adaptor:Output 15V, 1.0A
- 35mm IT8 Calibration Target

System Requirements

- CD-ROM Drive
- One available USB Port
- 512 MB RAM
- 500 MB free HDD space
- High Color graphic card (VGA or higher)

Windows

- CPU: Pentium III or faster CPU
- Microsoft Windows 2000 / XP / Vista Compatible

Macintosh:

- CPU: PPC G4, PPC G5, Intel
- MAC 10.3.9 and higher including Leopard

Note: This is minimum requirement only. It is **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** to use a higher performance computer.

Well, there you have it. You need not look any further for the best 35mm color slide and negative scanner on the market for both amateur and professional photographers. The new Plustek OpticFilm 7500i AI has every imaginable feature you could desire, performs as advertised, and easily earned the *Computer Times* Editors' Choice award. This product is available through Plustek. To learn how to purchase other high quality Plustek scanners, please click on the photo or text links below.



[Plustek OpticFilm 7200i SE Scanner](#)



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