



PRICE £180 **EX VAT** £149 **SUPPLIER** Visioneer
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Sick of desk-hogging flatbed scanners? Why not investigate the sheet fed scanners?

One drawback associated with traditional flatbed scanners is the sheer amount of desk space they occupy. No matter how a manufacturer may try to trim away at the plastic edges around the glass plate, it's still going to be big if it's going to scan A4 documents. Visioneer has a solution to this age-old

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- System requirements**
 Pentium, 32MB RAM,
 70MB HD space,
 CD-Rom drive,
 Win95/98/NT4.0
- Tested on**
 Athlon 1GHz, 128MB
 RAM, Win 98SE

problem in the form of its sheet fed scanner, the Strobe Pro NT. The advantage of using an array of LEDs to capture the image, as opposed to the traditional CCD system, is that you can produce a smaller unit. There are trade-offs for this size reduction, the main one being that you cannot obtain the higher resolutions that a flatbed CCD scanner can.

In this case, you need to address what you will use the scanner for. If you are working with high-resolution images that need to be kept that way, then you need a flatbed scanner. If you are storing images and text for archive purposes, or for use in electronic communication, you need to keep the file size down as much as possible by setting low scanning resolutions. With a maximum resolution of 300 x 600 dpi, the Strobe Pro is ideal for this. The unit can obtain resolutions of 2,400dpi via interpolation, but the increase in quality is questionable, and the file size is vast.

The bundled PaperPort 6.1 Deluxe program makes capturing a variety of documents a simple task. An A4 mono image, scanned at 200dpi, took just nine seconds to complete. The image quality was good enough to recognise fine detail from the pencil sketch scanned. Similarly, an A4 page of text was scanned in nine seconds, at the same resolution. Converting the scanned image via OCR into Microsoft WordPad took just three seconds, and the conversion was fairly

accurate with no errors found in the translation. Performing a colour scan at 200dpi in 24-bit colour was a different matter, however. The image ran through the scanner in one minute, four seconds, which is a reasonable time. The image quality was not excellent, however, with a couple of faint lines seeming to have been picked up in the scan.

Overall, the package is effective and comprehensive. And if you're wondering what the NT title means, it refers to the variety of cables supplied: USB, parallel and serial. The software bundle is complete, being centred around PaperPort and MGI Photosuite II SE. This scanner is good for basic everyday uses, but lacks the high-end performance offered by some flatbed scanners.

Joe Lees

PCPlus Verdict

VISIONEER STROBE PRO NT

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGAINST |
| → Quick scan times | → Not the highest quality |
| → Easy to use | → Can be hard to align documents |

Specification	6
Quality	7
Performance	8
Value for money	7
OVERALL	7/10

