



Real People Reviews

by Daniel M. East

Product: Nik Sharpener Pro!

Manufacturer/Vendor/Developer: Nik Multimedia

MSRP: \$329.95

Review date: February 19, 2004

PULL QUOTE: “Not just another image sharpening plug-in...”

DESCRIPTION (What's it do? What's it got?): If you are looking for a tool that will sharpen images for output on a variety of devices and you can fine tune specific to the need, this is it. Nik Sharpener Pro! is not just another image sharpening plug-in for Photoshop.

MIN. SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS: Photoshop 4x or higher or Photoshop LE/Photoshop Deluxe or any other Adobe PS Plug-in compatible application; OS 9/X or later.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS: I was looking to be impressed by this plug-in and I was. Images just “dial in” the way you wish they would and the output looks like you have a Leica and not a scan from an SLR like some tools. In fact, when testing on scanned images from 35mm film, NSP performed beautifully.

LIKES : The selections are easy to choose with output settings from most output including laser, inkjet and web use. Within those choices, you can adjust for quality, resolution (within the laser settings alone is great) and preview on the fly. The interface is remarkably simple and direct. Specifically, the web output is stunning as long as you do not overdo it (like any plug-in effect). What I really love is the results with NSP and isn't that really what it's all about?

DISLIKES : My only gripe about this product is how small the interface appears when using it on a laptop (not especially recommended for such a tool anyway) or monitor smaller than 17". I'd love to see a “lite” version for consumers priced a little more affordably; however, you do get what you pay for.

HOW DOES THIS PRODUCT COMPARE? : If you look at the standard sharpening tools in Photoshop, this is not only far more powerful, but produces the right results for the needs without much trial and error, if any. Extensis' Intellihance does a great job with other aspects of correction (color cast removal and descreening, e.g.), but NSP wins on detail, no contest.

WHO MIGHT ENJOY THIS PRODUCT? This is really a professional plug-in and it is something that responds to a need. For those professionals looking for outstanding output, particularly for the web or digital photographers, this is your baby.

TEST SYSTEM: Apple Titanium PowerBook G4 500 - 1Gb RAM - 10.3.2

FINAL THOUGHTS: Like the other Nik Multimedia tools I have reviewed so far, NSP does exactly what it says, and I like that. The quality is consistent and the results are all the proof I need to wholeheartedly recommend this one. While consumers may find this item a little pricey, professionals will find this to be another important tool in their arsenal that will make your fees worth the dollars spent when you see how great your output can look with Nik Multimedia's "sharp" product.

OVERALL RATING: 5 out of 5 stars EXCELLENT

For more information, visit: www.nikmultimedia.com

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Daniel East is the founder and president of The Mid-Atlantic Macintosh User Groups Team (MaMUGs) - a division of The Apple Groups Team; a member of The Apple Consultants Network (ACN); a member of The Apple Developer Connection (ACN); a panelist on "PC Talk Radio;" a live speaker/presenter and a freelance columnist for several Mac publications.

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