



InkSaver

Reviewer comments are in black
Strydent (InkSaver) comments are in red

What's it do?

InkSaver allows you to control the amount of ink used by your inkjet printer. With InkSaver, you can make your ink cartridges last up to 4 times longer.

Does it do what it promises?

Reviewer 1: It promises to save ink up to 75%, and that's what it does. However, quality will suffer. If you're only satisfied with the very best in printing quality, you might skip InkSaver. Tested on my HP Deskjet 690C, I seem to get the best results with print quality set to "Normal." After printing InkSaver's own sample page, black ink text printing looked acceptable for external use up to 45% savings; however, this setting was too optimistic when printing text documents with other font types, especially with less bold types. I had to limit the savings to 35% to get acceptable results with finer prints. It's another story for printing all kinds of graphics in color. Any ink saving is too much here. At least on documents for external use, a visible reduction in quality surfaced even with 5% savings. For my own internal use, I can live with the poorer quality of 75% savings for black ink and 25% savings for the color. Most of my printing is for external use, so I certainly don't fool myself by saying that InkSaver will have paid for itself after using two and one-half black ink cartridges, which will take about a year in my case. **You appear to be disappointed that settings of 75% for black and 25% for color are the best for internal documents. This actually translates to the user getting twice as much printed output from his ink cartridges, which is pretty good. We know that documents for external use need to look their best, so we recommend that users set InkSaver to a low ink savings level for letters and resumes and to more aggressive ink savings levels for internal use documents. More than 80% of InkSaver customers use 4 or more ink cartridges annually. For those who use only one or two per year, it will take a little longer for InkSaver to pay for itself - but it will ultimately pay for itself and continue to save money in the long run.**

Reviewer 2: This product while OK for people who print a lot of text, is all but useless in my opinion for anyone who prints pictures or graphics of any kind. The quality being produced with my Epson 740 was OK for text, but nothing else. **We know that not every print job should undergo the same level of ink reduction and it's easy to adjust ink savings levels and turn InkSaver on and off.**

Reviewer 3: It "appears" to. You could easily see by adjusting the settings that it was doing something, but I didn't go into extensive "empty new cartridges" comparison tests.

Reviewer 4: InkSaver made inkjet cartridges last one-third to one-sixth longer (33% to 17% improvement) and saves me maybe as much as \$10 per year. Although their FAQ states "InkSaver will not noticeably affect your printing speed" it slows my printout by a factor of 2-3 times. **We have not encountered this slowdown in our internal testing. If there is a bug, we'd like to replicate it and solve it as soon as possible.**

Was it easy to install?

Reviewer 1: Yes, it couldn't be easier.

Reviewer 2: It was a simple install. The usual install options apply, e.g., where to install, settings, etc.

Reviewer 3: Yes. Install was very straightforward and simple. I like the sample page that prints out after reboot to let you know the print quality of the settings you choose. I started the registration process, but didn't see any real benefit to it, and cancelled that part.

Reviewer 4: As easy and trouble-free as any application program I can remember.

Good points?

Reviewer 1: Pretty easy to set up, printing the sample page points you to the right direction. A little fine tuning might be needed, then you can almost forget about the program, unless you want to save more with different savings settings for internal use. Very easy to use, it just works in the background.

Reviewer 2: None.

Reviewer 3: I've had no problem whatsoever with this program installed and active with HP 840C printer and Win XP Home operating system. It's user friendly, simple to change settings on, and nonintrusive.

Reviewer 4: Packaging and design is the best I can ever recall in a PC application - the physical container, the cover artwork, even the type font. The Quick-Start Guide was clear, concise (but sufficient), and especially the Configuration/Control Panel & Ink Savings Estimator, good, clean, easy-to-use and hard-to-misuse design work. The Ink Savings Estimator function shows a real commitment to potential users which, in this case, alas, far more likely demonstrates why NOT to purchase. Another good point is the licensing plan, per CPU rather than per printer.

Weak points?

Reviewer 1: None, other than weak performance on color printing.

Reviewer 2: I started having issues with the program's ink check and printer check which is supposed to show how your printer will actually print something using the InkSaver "special" ink saving techniques. The color ink cartridge I had installed was about half full. After I ran the install and the program kicked out its test page, I was out of color ink. **This is simply impossible. The InkSaver sample page prints a single color image and black text page for assisting the user in selecting appropriate savings level. There is nothing special about this page, and there are no additional printer diagnostics run during installation that would consume ink.** I installed a new color cartridge and started again. I printed four pages of pictures at different quality settings with InkSaver disabled. I then ran the tests using different InkSaver settings and found no improvement in print quality over a draft version. I was simply seeing a steady degradation of print quality as the percentage of ink savings increased. InkSaver was not improving the quality over draft pictures but simply using less ink with poor printer quality because of it. I'm not sure how much less ink I was using, but the quality would make the product unusable for any type of picture or graphics printing. Plain text was fine up to a 50% ink savings, and then the drop-off was severe. **We at Strydent view the ability to print quality text documents at a 50% savings level to be one of the product's stronger points.**

Reviewer 3: None that I could find.

Reviewer 4: The cost is double what might fly in the marketplace, and cost-justification is missing. It's hard to imagine any practical cases. Business and volume printing is done on laser printers, not inkjets. **This statement lacks foundation, and is clearly misleading to readers. The free trial period and the Ink Savings Estimator feature provides users with the opportunity to try the product before purchasing and calculate their own ROI. There is a great market demand for products that reduce ink costs for inkjet owners. The market for third-party ink cartridges is a multi-billion dollar industry. User and press**

enthusiasm for InkSaver have been great. While it is true that most large businesses do volume printing with laser printers, there is a tremendous amount of printing occurring with inkjet printers.

Other comments?

Reviewer 1: In my opinion, InkSaver is a must-have for everyone using a printer, unless you only need the very best in printing quality. For all others, InkSaver is a money saver.

Reviewer 2: I cannot overly stress how much I did not like this application.

Reviewer 3: To be honest, I doubt that I'd purchase this program. You have three quality settings to choose from by default with the printer software installation, so you already have some control there. On the other hand, there may be some that would benefit by the "in-between" settings InkSaver provides to save ink and keep a bit better quality. It would pay for itself over time, but it all depends on how much printing a person needs to do on a regular basis to determine if it is worth the initial cost. If you do a lot of printing and go through a lot of cartridges, it would be a good program to use. I just don't think the "average Joe" is going to see that much benefit from it.

Reviewer 4: I would have preferred a hardcopy User's Guide in the package (it's only 27 pages).

I suggest, to establish credibility, the User's Guide or Quick Start Guide contain a simple statement to explain how the product does what it does. One such statement is in the FAQ: "A printer typically uses bigger dots and prints at a lower DPI resolution when printing in draft mode. With InkSaver, you can print at your inkjet's highest DPI resolution, using small dots, thus reducing ink consumption without greatly impacting print quality." There is already enough "windage" in the case-making and no point burying good and relevant information.

The Quick Start Guide needs a user-advisory to remind the user to download the latest update level.

Having a telephone number for technical support is good; however, the coverage hours 8am to 3:30 pm PT Monday-Friday is very bad. As well-designed and simplistic as InkSaver is, I can't believe having ongoing and all-day support available would cost you much

InkSaver's failure to support the Epson Stylus Photo series of printers is bad news. This is a booming application area and InkSaver is not aboard yet. **The Epson Stylus Photo Series will be supported later this fall. We will constantly be adding support for additional and new printers.**

The poster on the ISExt page is misleading: "Now only \$34.99" for "downloadable" and "physical shipment" but shipping is an additional \$8 to \$15 cost.

InkSaver needs a "Cancel" button on InkSaver Settings Tile. I couldn't stop the print run to look up information in the User's Manual.

My two-sided printouts often had the initial page stick (not eject) when complete or nearly complete, and there was no way to eject it other than canceling the print job and rerunning the remaining page(s). This may be peculiar to my setup and configuration, but I don't think so. **This problem will be addressed in a maintenance release due out later this fall.**

PtrsPanel never completed handling the first job I printed with InkSaver. It has ongoing document entries recurring about ever 10 seconds: 2 recurring entries the first of which is "Local Downlevel Document <<<***EPSON EBAPI Dummy Document Data***>>>". Possibly my machine or setup caused this, but it made me wonder if InkSaver uses some dummy process to manage its application/printer liaison? **It does not. The message encountered is a printer message not generated or related to InkSaver's operation.**

My Epson printer has three degrees of quality: best, standard, and draft. It was very hard to know which

setting to use in conjunction with InkSaver. In practice, only Best and Standard settings were viable. The Draft setting made the print too light to read, and this caused InkSaver printouts to slow to a crawl.

Why would InkSaver have dependency on Network Configuration? Why should a user have to uninstall the trialware version before installing the InkSaver product? That's one case of bad design in my opinion. InkSaver is designed to work with most typical setups, a direct connection to the user's PC. It is compatible with TCP/IP network settings. There are technical limitations that currently prevent other network or sharing configurations. We are working to eliminate the need to uninstall the demo version before installing the full product, and that improvement will be available later this fall.

Will you continue to use it?

Reviewer 1: Most certainly. This is a keeper!

Reviewer 2: No. My use was not positive. Other systems and other printers may have more positive results.

Reviewer 3: I think so. As long as I already have the program, and it seems to be functioning without any problems, I'll take advantage of it.

Reviewer 4: Yes. It's a neat program, just not economical.

THE NEAT NET TRICKS COMPOSITE SCORE
FOR THIS SOFTWARE: 4.3

On a scale on 1 (TERRIBLE) to 10 (SUPERB)

Download at <http://www.strydent.com>

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