

CRYSTAL RIVER USERS GROUP



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Save Your Ink Cartridge for Another Day

Product Review by Lynn Page

As many CRUG members know, I use an inkjet printer regularly. My particular printer is a rather old Canon, the Canon BJC-4000. And I, as many other inkjet printer users, know our printers can use ink at an almost alarming rate. Strydent Software's new InkSaver software promises to boost pages-per-dollar by cutting ink use and without severely degrading image quality.

Over the past 18 years, Strydent has developed printer improvement software for the printer industry. Now, they have focused that printer software expertise into the creation of InkSaver, an easy to use software program that reduces the high cost of inkjet printing. It controls the amount of ink used by your inkjet printer, making ink cartridges last longer and even saves ink when printing at a printer's highest resolution.

inkSaver is convenient and works well enough to justify its \$35 purchase price, but with a few caveats. Not all documents look great printed with a partial bucket of ink. According to test results, with InkSaver set to 50-percent savings, none of the three test printers yielded color graphics that I found acceptable although the black text appeared fair on the S750 and almost tolerable on the 995c. At 25-percent, text looked fine on all three printers; and for color graphics, the HP 995c gets a full endorsement, while the Canon gets a maybe.

InkSaver makes it easy to switch back and forth between settings via separate sliders for black and color (a degree of control you don't get with the economy/draft setting available on most printers). The program can pay for itself after just a few cartridges. But since quality trade-offs vary by printer, your best bet is to download the free trial version and see how it works for you.

It works best when printing text, graphics and Web pages on plain paper. At Inksaver's 25-percent ink-reduction setting, text still looks sharp and presentable while colors lose a little saturation and pictures become slightly grainier.

At the 50-percent setting, text is still okay - probably fine for a school paper, but not a resumé. At 75-percent reduction, text looks washed out and colors are very pale, but still better than "draft" mode on most printers.

The InkSaver program works with your printer to reduce ink consumption without sacrificing print quality. Once the customizable ink control is set, InkSaver works in the background to automatically save ink on every print job. It runs on any PC running Windows® 98, ME, 2000, XP Home or XP Professional and has at least 20 MB hard drive space available.

InkSaver works with popular **HP**, **EPSON**, and **Canon** color inkjet printers. For a complete list of supported printers check Strydent's Web site at www.inksaver.com.