



Southern Maryland
Mac User Group

20058-D Point Lookout Road
Great Mills, Maryland 20634
Meetings second
Monday of the month from 7pm to 9pm
at the SMARTCO warehouse.

March 2005

IRISPen(TM) Executive - Hand Held Scanner

Reviewer: Raimund Pohl, AMUG Sydney
<rpohl@optushome.com.au>

Publisher: I.R.I.S Corporation

Distributor: Conexus Australia

Rating: 4 out of 5

RRP: AUD \$345

URL:

www.irislink.com/opt/uk/products/irispen/executive/

How do you describe a pen that provides between 90% and 99% accurate text recognition. Awesome! The IRISpen Executive does a number of jobs that most business people and university students need to do quickly and accurately.

So what is in the box? - a pen, the manual for both Mac OS X and Windows, and the software.

The IRISpen Executive -

- Reads printed text and figures
- Reads from coloured backgrounds
- Retypes handwritten numbers

- Recognizes and encodes barcodes including code 128 bar code
- Scans multiple lines before they are inserted
- Recognizes 55 different languages.

I tried the Pen on various documents with font sizes ranging from 5.5 to 22 point. The 5.5-point was messy but at 6 point it was clear and not distorted. The pen reads different formats such as text, numbers, handwritten numbers, and bar codes, as well as reading dot-matrix letters.

So we know what it does but how does it perform? The pen is slow with keyboard emulation but still very satisfying. The Apple Event is possibly the fastest method of getting data and text into applications such as Word and AppleWorks. The following has been directly scanned into Word from the IRISpen manual:

“The IRISpen inputs to any Mac applications, word processing, spreadsheets, databases, editors, encoding utilities, bookkeeping software, business cards, office software with email and electronic agendas etc.”

Performance is based on how quickly you move the pen across the page and this takes a little practice. So does writing or typing but once your brain memorises the process it is no big deal!

The final method of putting information on the page is via the clipboard and this is just a matter of scan and paste.

The pen provides many more options - it is programmable - and the pen even speaks the text as you scan and easily recognises hand written work. To place a scanned graphic in the document you need to save the scan as an image and then insert it as a normal graphic, eg:

Again the following has been scanned from the manual:
“However, you can read hand printed data and bar codes and other data all at the same time”.

The pen performs exceptionally well in terms of accuracy and with ease in all kinds of documents.

So you are left-handed? The IRISpen works just as well. The IRIS Corporation has not forgotten the human element.

System requirements are G3 or G4 (at time of writing) processor with 60 MB free disk space and 32 MB free RAM. It runs native on Mac OS X up to version 10.3.

At a glance

An exceptionally accurate portable scanner for every conceivable scanning purpose. It is easy to use and intuitive. A little expensive but well worth it!

Australian Distributor:

www.conexus.com.au/macwin/detail.tpl?item=IRH017

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Product: Learn TO TRAVEL LIKE A PRO FOR 5 BUCKS!

Author: Terry White

Company: FairShake Press

Price: \$5.00

Overall Rating: 5 out of 5

Min. System Requirements: Ha, ha, this is a book

Review date: March 2005

Reviewer: Lorene S Romero, NCMUG President

Terry White is a terrific presenter. I have seen him many, many times at Photoshop World and at Macworld Expo: SF. I have seen him live, in person (he is charming as well as informative and funny), but have never read his books. His normal book topic is InDesign, which is out of my league.

He just released a new book that is totally off his normal topic and one that really fits my needs. His new book is called Learn to Travel Like a Pro. The cost of the book is a whopping \$5. Yes it really is only \$5.

Learn to Travel Like a Pro for 5 Bucks! is only 60 pages long and includes topics such as "What to Pack", "Hotels", and "Technology on the Road". He gives helpful suggestions on what to do if your flight is cancelled, what to be sure to bring with you for your road trip (for self and your computer) and portable WiFi access points.

Terry's book is a must-have for all of us who travel. He is a Million Mile pro traveler with Adobe and knows what he is talking about. It is short and to the point and fun to read. The suggestions he makes will really improve my next travel adventure.

If you want to purchase Terry's book, I suggest going to Amazon. They give a 10% discount, which brings it down to \$4.50 and you can't beat that. But it will also be in Barnes and Noble the first week of March for full price. Go to:

<http://www.amazon.com/> and use keywords under books, Travel Like a Pro.

About the Author:

Terry White, technical resources manager for Adobe Systems, Inc., leads a team of applications engineers that focuses on professional publishing, Web authoring, and digital video. Terry has been active in the industry for over 18 years and is the founder and president of MacGroup-Detroit, Michigan's largest Macintosh users group. He is co-author of InDesign CS Killer Tips and a columnist for Mac Design magazine.