

# THE LAWYER'S PC®

*A Newsletter for Lawyers Using Personal Computers*

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## ON-THE-GO SCANNING FUJITSU'S SCANSNAP S300 IS "AMAZING" & EASY TO USE

By Stephen Bird, Contributing Editor

**W**hen I looked at a Fujitsu ScanSnap several years ago (see the July 15, 2004, issue of *The Lawyer's PC*), I concluded by saying, "I really like this compact, speedy desktop scanner. Fujitsu has succeeded in making it as simple as possible to use. . . ." This time, it is not a desktop but a portable scanner I'm reviewing, the Fujitsu ScanSnap S300. It, too, is very simple to use—and very likable.

At first impression, the unit seemed heavier than three pounds without the power adapter (see <http://tinyurl.com/2el3tg>), so I weighed it. Not much can be said for my ability to accurately gauge weight. By comparison, the earlier ScanSnap weighs about twice as much. Simply put, at only three pounds, the S300 is a solid, well-built piece of equipment that should be able to withstand the rigours of any mobile lawyer's lifestyle.

**Lightweight, compact, easy to set up and use—the ScanSnap S300 offers the key traits traveling legal professionals look for in a portable scanner.**

Besides the weight, users also will be concerned about size. It is approximately 11x4x3 inches (or exactly 284x95x77 millimeters), which is small enough to carry around, especially if it comes with its own carrying case.<sup>1</sup>

The scanner provides ADF (Automatic Document Feeder) duplex color scanning with CIS (Color Image Sensor) x 2. I particularly

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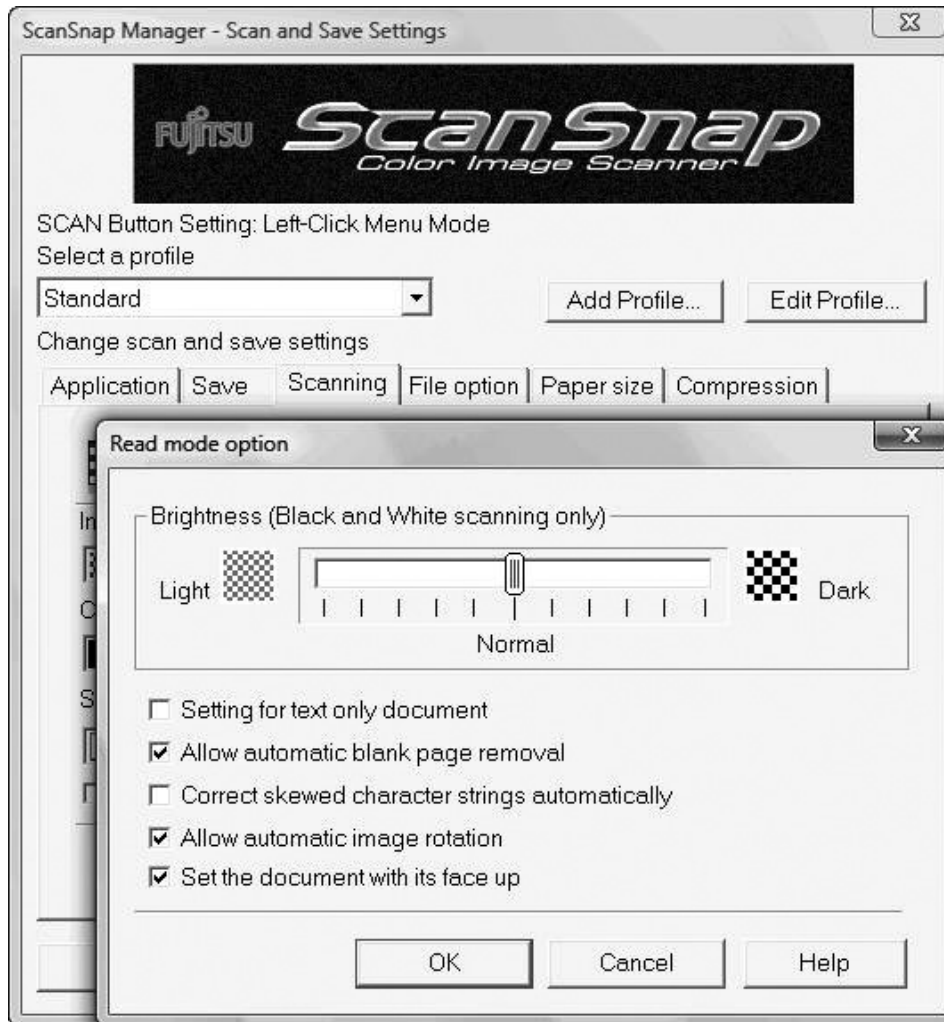
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like the color/B&W/automatic color-and-B&W detection feature. The optical resolution is up to 600x600dpi, depending on the selected mode: normal, better, best or excellent. Scanning speed depends on the mode of choice. For example, normal scanning speed (150dpi in color or 300dpi in B&W) is 8 pages or 16 images per minute<sup>2</sup>, while, as expected, the scanning speed in "excellent" mode (600dpi in color or 1200dpi in B&W) is slower at 0.5 page or 1 image per minute. The scanner can handle a paper weight (thickness) from 17 to 28 pounds.

The scanner package includes a USB cable, USB bus power cable for situations where a normal power outlet is unavailable, AC adapter and cable, multilingual Getting Started Guide and set-up CD that includes ScanSnap Manager, ScanSnap Organizer (to view/control scanned content) and Card-Minder<sup>3</sup> programs, as well as a 236-page Operator's Guide in PDF format.

Installation was straightforward, although I ignored the recommended "set document face-down and scan," which is how our office fax machine works. While I should have gone with the familiar approach, I was comforted by Section 4.2 of the Operator's Guide on how to change this setting. The easiest way to get to the Operator's Guide is through Windows (Vista) Start/All Programs/ScanSnap Manager, then double-click on ScanSnap Operator's



**The ScanSnap S300 has a very small footprint, as shown in the photo on Page 2. Left: the “Read mode option” menu.**

Guide. The guide (actually called ScanSnapManual.pdf) is installed as part of the “Getting Started” process. For this task, start reading Section 4.2 at Page 59, then check out the “Option” button under “Scanning,” or see the accompanying screen capture.

The only other “problem” I encountered was CardMinder wanting to use <Alt><F3> hot keys, which many readers will recognize as the Reveal Codes command in WordPerfect. It seems hot keys are a necessary part of CardMinder, so I’d choose something unlikely to be used by another program, or I’d load it only when needed.

Probably the only thing easier than installing the software is using the scanner. Single or multiple pages can be fed into the scanner for single-side or duplex scanning. Like my earlier experience with the ScanSnap, I’m impressed with the speed of the scanner and I’m particularly impressed with its ability to sense when images are skewed (which is often, given the way I feed documents) and to correct the alignment automatically.

ScanSnap now supports different sizes of paper in the same batch. Once users select “Scan mixed paper size” on the Paper Size tab within ScanSnap Manager, anything from business cards to legal-size paper can be scanned and automatically cropped. The ScanSnap Manager provides password protection of the file for viewing, while a program like Adobe Acrobat is required to set other levels of security—*i.e.*, for copying and printing.

**“Probably the only thing easier than installing the software is using the scanner. Single or multiple pages can be fed into the scanner for single-side or duplex scanning.”**

A Google search for other S300 reviews<sup>4</sup> comes up with a number of very favorable comments. *Hardware Geeks* (<http://tinyurl.com/3anpam>), in giving it five stars and calling it “amazing,” notes, “It is a must-have for any mobile professional or anyone who needs a quality scanner that doesn’t take up too much space.” A helpful review in *Mobile Magazine* (<http://tinyurl.com/2jxpgv>) concludes, “Overall, the Fujitsu ScanSnap S300 Portable PDF Scanner is a fantastic product backed up by a very trustworthy name in the business sector. The construction is rock solid and the software is an absolute breeze to use.”

For me, the purchasing decision would be simple: If I didn’t already own a Fujitsu ScanSnap, then I’d buy the S300! Its list price is about \$300, with Internet prices approximately \$30-\$50 lower.

## WHOLE HOUSE TRANSMITTER ENHANCES SATELLITE RADIO

While on the subject of technology accessories, I would like to report a very different but equally delightful recent discovery I made. In my review of the Sirius Sportster 4 satellite radio (December 15, 2007, Page 9), I concluded by saying I was pleased with the Sportster 4, but disappointed the built-in FM transmitter wasn’t more powerful. I’d hoped to use the transmitter to “broadcast” Sirius radio to other sound systems in my home/office. Users can set the transmitter to an unused FM band in their area so there’ll be no interference from a local radio station; then, an inside FM radio is tuned to that band to receive the Sirius “broadcast” or relay. I initially could not make that work, and I wondered whether a Whole House FM Transmitter (<http://tinyurl.com/2wu8uj>) might be the solution to the weak power of the Sportster 4. The answer is a resounding yes!

The package obviously was put together with considerable thought. The complete set includes the FM stereo transmitter (about the size of a deck of cards), AC power supply, car power adapter, retractable stereo audio cable (used to connect the radio to the transmitter), retractable USB power cable and RCA jack adapter with volume control.

### ARTICLE NOTES

<sup>1</sup> A free carrying case is available in the U.S. until the end of March 2008, while in Canada a free copy of *Electronic Filing Cabinet for Dummies* is included. A one-year exchange warranty also is included.

<sup>2</sup> Images-per-minute (ipm) is used to count double-sided pages, while pages-per-minute (ppm) counts single-sided documents.

<sup>3</sup> Users can scan business cards into an editable format and then export to contact managers such as Microsoft Outlook and Outlook Express.

<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately, I couldn’t find any reviews of the new Fujitsu fi-6000NS color duplex network scanner (see <http://tinyurl.com/3377tx>), which could be very useful in a law office. It scans in color, grayscale and monochrome at duplex speeds up to 25ppm/50ipm, offers TomTom 920600dpi optical resolution, a 50-page automatic document feeder (ADF) and dual CCD (charge-coupled device) scanning arrays. U.S. online prices start at just more than \$2,100, while Canadian online prices are about \$300 higher.

<sup>5</sup> A SanDisk Sansa MP3 player and RCA CD boombox both work well in my home office, and radios work well throughout the house—including the basement. **Tip:** If no sound is where/when you’d expect, then check if the FM Transmitter is turned on. A positive (best in class) review can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/3bprgb>.

<sup>6</sup> Get 10 percent off the purchase price if you order before May 1, 2008, and use the discount code “lawyerpc10.”

Both the Sportster 4 and the Whole House Transmitter were set to the unused 107.9 frequency, and then various radios, stereos, etc., in my home/office were tuned to it. All that was needed then was to power-on the various devices—and there was satellite radio everywhere!

One caveat: the Sportster controls the play list, so each system tuned to 107.9 receives whatever Sirius is playing at the time. However, for variety, listeners can change the Sportster 4 channel to another of the 110-plus Sirius channels, change the FM band on the radio closest to them, use another playback device, or enjoy the quiet.

As well as satellite radio (Sirius and XM), the Whole House FM Transmitter works with radios, iPod and MP3 players, CD/tape players, PDAs, PCs, Macs, Internet radio, TV/VCR/DVD and various audio devices in the office, living room, patio, deck, lawn, garage and basement.<sup>5</sup>

The Whole House Transmitter, which is FCC-approved, costs \$90<sup>6</sup> plus shipping from Michigan. While astute eBay buyers will find new units, there are advantages to purchasing the product from the company's store, such as free upgrades to extended warranties. Highly recommended! ❖

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# A “CLEARER VISTA”?

## MS SERVICE PACKS FOR VISTA, WINXP & OFFICE 2007

By Stephen Bird, Contributing Editor

**W**indows Vista Service Pack 1 Release Candidate (Vista SP1 RC) recently was released to the public, so I decided to install it on a Microsoft Virtual PC Vista test system. This time-limited beta (that is, a “Release Candidate”), which will stop working after June 30, 2008, provides a good opportunity to check out what Microsoft has been doing with Vista since it originally was released. My impression from reading the computer press is there are few new features, with most of the focus on tweaking what is already there. However, before we look at some of the changes, it is worth emphasizing that it’s best not to install any beta on primary or mission-critical systems. Most readers of this newsletter will want to wait until the *final version* of Vista SP1 is released in the first quarter of 2008. This early look will provide some idea of what Vista users can expect to see in SP1.

Elliot Katz, Windows senior product manager for Microsoft Canada, says Vista SP1 “addresses feedback from our customers. In addition to previously released updates, SP1 will contain changes focused on addressing specific reliability, performance and compatibility issues, supporting new types of hardware, and adding support for several emerging standards. SP1 also continues to improve upon the IT administration experience. SP1 is not intended to be a vehicle for releasing new features; however, some existing components do gain slightly enhanced functionality.”

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He indicates that Vista provides higher productivity, mobility and security, with lower ownership costs, than any previous version of Windows.

Organizations at different stages in their upgrades to Vista can take different approaches:

- \* Customers currently evaluating and deploying Vista should continue their evaluation, pilot program and deployment of Vista RTM.

- \* Customers just starting to evaluate Windows Vista should plan a pilot program, targeting the PCs that gain the most business value from Vista

(for example, many organizations may find that mobile PCs receive the most benefits) and that present the simplest upgrade from Windows Vista RTM to SP1.

- \* Customers who choose to wait for Windows Vista SP1 should start their compatibility testing on Windows Vista RTM now, then begin their evaluation and pilot programs on the Release Candidate of Vista SP1 when it is released. Vista includes architectural changes relative to Windows XP, in the interest of improved security and reliability. These changes can cause some applications that work on Windows XP not to work on Vista. The architectural changes also are part of Vista SP1. For this reason, testing applications on Vista RTM will be a good proxy for compatibility with Vista SP1.

Changes to Windows Vista can be found in these categories:

- \* Hardware Ecosystem Support and Enhancements;
- \* Application Compatibility Improvements;

- \* Reliability Improvements;
- \* Performance and Power Consumption Improvements;
- \* Security Improvements;
- \* Support for New Technologies and Standards;
- \* Desktop Administration and Management;
- \* Setup and Deployment Improvements;
- \* Interoperability Improvements;
- \* Feature or API Changes;
- \* General Improvements and Enhancements;
- \* Windows Vista Alignment With Windows Server 2008.

While many changes are very technical, typical users can expect improvements in the things that matter most to them. For example, SP1 reportedly addresses “many of the most common causes of crashes and

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hangs in Windows Vista,” including Windows Calendar and Media Player concerns and certain Vista driver issues. There are also numerous performance improvements, including file copying, reduced time to read large images, and the effectiveness of a USB ReadyBoost device.

Details of the notable changes in Vista SP1 can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/39cg4y>. If you are interested in what Paul Thurrott has to say, visit his SuperSite for Windows at <http://tinyurl.com/33esrm>; be sure to notice the “Related Reading and Screen Shots” on the right side of the screen and the link to his recent comments (<http://tinyurl.com/2qb9l8>) concerning RC1: “Folks, Windows Vista is already a stellar operating system, and whether you believe that or not, please don’t be misled into believing that SP1 is

going to change the overall experience very much. Even in pre-release form, SP1 is solid and stable, but it’s not a big change for anyone who’s been using Vista all along.”

### **WINDOWS XP SERVICE PACK 3**

**W**indows XP Service Pack 3 (SP3) is also a Release Candidate (RC), or beta. Long-time readers may recall my description and the importance of WinXP SP2 in the September 15, 2004, issue of *The Lawyer’s PC*. According to a Microsoft white paper (<http://tinyurl.com/2v3x7z>), WinXP SP3 offers a few new functions like Network Access Protection (NAP), but primarily, it was designed to provide all updates to WinXP. And since SP3 is cumulative, users can install it on top of WinXP SP1 or SP2.

### **MICROSOFT OFFICE 2007**

**S**ervice Pack 1 for Microsoft Office 2007 is not a beta release. It is the real deal and so, after checking with an early user and reading the “Patch Watch” column in the *Windows Secrets* newsletter, I installed it on my main Vista system. So far everything looks good and, as a point of confirmation, I installed the document assembly program, Pathagoras, into Word 2007. There’ll be more on Pathagoras in an upcoming article.

A list of the apps to which SP1 applies can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/2m7zl7>. More details are available in this KnowledgeBase article: <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/936982>. The latter source tells us: “The 2007 Microsoft Office suite Service Pack 1 (SP1) contains significant security improvements, stability improvements, and performance improvements. Some fixes that are included with the 2007 Microsoft Office suite SP1 were previously released in separate updates. The 2007 Microsoft Office suite SP1 combines the previously released fixes into one update.”

## ***FINAL THOUGHTS***

**M**y experience with all of these service packs has been unproblematic. The only thing to say is that installing Vista SP1 RC took an hour or so, and it needs to be uninstalled before installing the final version of Vista SP1. MS Office 2007 may get installed as a default installation when Windows updates are viewed and installed. I was going to show a screenshot with a caution about this; however, I just realized I already had installed it two weeks ago. So much for this tech writer paying attention to what he is doing!

These service packs are all free and should make one's computing experience better. I'd suggest installing Office 2007 SP1 now, with the others following on release. ❖

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