

WiselImage Pro

Raster-to-vector tools.

WiselImage for Windows v5 (v4 and earlier were called SpotlightCS) is a stand-alone raster editing and raster-to-vector conversion program, and a very accomplished one. Marketed by IDEAL.com (also known as IDEAL Scanners & Systems, Inc.), it's one of the most complete packages for working with raster images and vector files I've ever seen. Its abilities include raster image cleanup, raster editing, and automatic raster-to-vector conversion with text and symbol recognition. It also offers an extensive set of drawing tools—it's no Photoshop, but you can do an amazing amount of work with what's there. Finally, it handles color image processing, including color separation and reduction.

AutoCAD users since Release 14 have become used to raster images linked to their drawings and are comfortable working with drawings that contain both raster and vector data. Current versions of AutoCAD highlight the value of working with hybrid data. It's simply not necessary to convert everything, because raster and vector data can appear together both on screen and in hard copy. Likewise, raster-to-vector software vendors are taking the same approach in supporting true hybrid files that contain both types of graphic information. Wise-Image's native file type is a hybrid format that can contain both raster and vector data.

You can load an unlimited number of raster images and either link or embed them in the WiselImage document file.

WISEIMAGE PRO COLOR FOR WINDOWS V5

Raster-to-vector conversion

pros: Great range of features for editing raster images and automatic raster-to-vector conversion.

cons: Hardware lock.

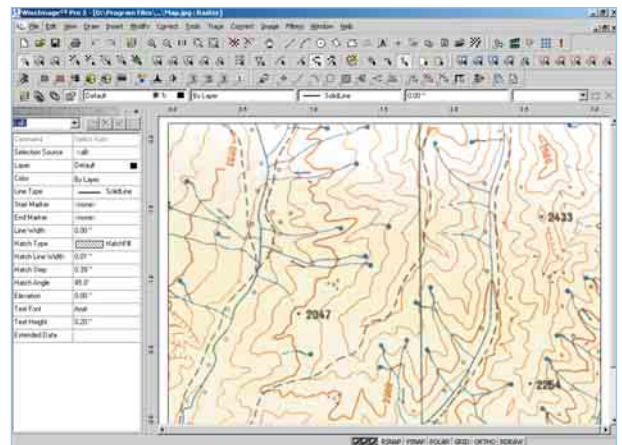
price: \$3,160

IDEAL.com

800.764.3325

www.scaneverything.com/detail.asp?id=450

WiselImage's program window features the Inspector (at left), which displays information about selected objects as well as ongoing processes. The default toolbar arrangement is shown. Believe it or not, that's only a third of them.



AutoCAD users will feel right at home with WiselImage for Windows because it uses both layers and blocks to organize and store information. You can vectorize all of a loaded raster image or convert selectively by windowing areas. WiselImage supports raster "object" recognition. Raster selection tools isolate raster lines, circles, and arcs in the same way that you select vector objects, and the Inspector window lets you modify the properties of raster objects. You can even make multiple raster copies of vector objects.

WiselImage for Windows opens vector (DWG and DXF), raster (TIF, BMP, JPG, and other common image files), and its own hybrid CWS files as well as previous Spotlight-format hybrid files. You can save a CWS file as all-vector DWG or DXF or all-raster TIF. System requirements are remarkably light for a program of this type: Pentium 166 or better, 64MB RAM, 1024×768 true-color graphics, 50MB of hard disk space, and Windows 98/NT/2000/ME.

The print and online installation guides say that "WiselImage uses the software or hardware protection system." This implies that it's the user's choice, but nowhere could I find any further information. My package included a hardware lock (the smallest I've ever seen!), so I deduced that my version was hardware locked.

The software also came with a floppy

disk with some serial numbers and license files, but no combination of lock installed/not installed, floppy-in-drive/floppy-not-in-drive let me install the program. I ended up calling IDEAL.com for assistance, and the very helpful technicians quickly diagnosed a faulty hardware lock. A new one arrived the next day, and I had no installation problems after that. The package includes a 320-page *User's Guide* and a 60-page *Getting Started* guide. The latter is most welcome—in past reviews, I've complained about the lack of a tutorial.

WiselImage for Windows is a strong first choice for stand-alone, Windows-based raster-to-vector software. IDEAL.com offers no less than eight versions of this software: four stand-alone Windows versions and four that run inside AutoCAD. They range in price from WiselImage Monochrome for Windows at \$1,140 to WiselImage Pro Color for AutoCAD at \$3,760. The WiselImage product line was known previously as SpotlightCS and AutoImageCS software. ■

David Byrnes teaches at British Columbia Institute of Technology and Emily Carr Institute of Art & Design in Vancouver, BC. He also coauthored and edited ten books on AutoCAD and AutoCAD LT and is a contributing editor of Cadalyst.

www.cadalyst.com

©Reprinted from

cadalyst

June 2002

AN ADVANSTAR PUBLICATION

Printed in U.S.A.

Copyright Notice Copyright by Advanstar Communications Inc. Advanstar Communications Inc. retains all rights to this article. This article may only be viewed or printed (1) for personal use. User may not actively save any text or graphics/photos to local hard drives or duplicate this article in whole or in part, in any medium. Advanstar Communications Inc. home page is located at <http://www.advanstar.com>.