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By: Ionut Ilascu, Editor, Software Reviews



Sleep Tight!

Don't let the bad bugs bite

How many times have you stayed in front of your computer waiting for it to finish something so that you could turn it off? It happened to me dozens of times, especially at night. I had no other option but to sit in front of my monitor and watch the percentage line grow slowly. I would look for something to do, but I would be too sleepy to gather myself and drag around the room. In the end I would wake up in the morning drooling all over the keyboard and my computer still running. How many times did you curse the software producers for not including the Turn Off Computer After Job Is Done option? Some of the programs are now equipped with this option (like Nero Burning). Imagine a 2-hour job for your computer at 1 a.m. And a wake up call at 7 a.m. And above that, a wife that keeps complaining that the computer is on way too much. Just lovely!!! Until one time too many, I decided to look for a software that would solve my problem. I remembered that a friend of mine had mentioned about something like that. So I began my searches. Thus, I came across SmartSleep 3.5. SmartSleep is a shareware from Dextronet that costs \$19.95. It is a computer shut-down utility that will help you schedule your computer to turn-off at a user specified time and date. The minimalist interface will not pose any problems, so even the most inexperienced user can manage the program. What else can you do with it besides the computer shut-down scheduling? Well, the software responds to the needs of all users and it performs reboots, log-offs, suspends the computer, puts your machine into hibernate mode, displays a black screen or even executes a file and message display. No matter if the opened applications are not responding, SmartSleep will force them to close and the shutdown of your computer will take place. The Schedule Task feature has some options that allow you to perform the action at specified time intervals (only some days of the week, twice a day, every day at the same time, etc.). The Timer displays the current time, the time the action will take place, the type of the action; you can even choose to decrease sound volume slowly up to minimum. In this window you can choose if you want the application to display a black screen, in order to save your monitor's life. The Atomic Clock feature allows you to synchronize the time on your computer with the time on one of the preset time servers. The time servers can be changed if you modify the .txt file in the SmartSleep folder. That way you can be absolutely sure that your computer will perform the desired action exactly when you want it to. **The Good** The software is exactly what you need if you want your computer to turn-off by itself at your specified time and date. It runs on all Windows OSs. It has a timer and an absolute time option, which helps if your machine has tasks to finish and you cannot be there to turn it off manually. **The Bad** The bitter part of the software is that it has a 21 days trial period after which the user must pay \$19.95. I wish it also had a turn-on option (wake-on-lan). **The Truth** The price is too spicy if you think that there are similar softwares that perform the same actions for free. The Atomic Clock is a great idea though, because you can sync the time on your computer to that on the time servers. SmartSleep is a great software (apart from its being so expensive) and you should use it for the trial period. It has all the features you need from a computer shut-down scheduling application. But I could never pay the money knowing that there are absolutely free softwares on the market that perform almost the same actions. *Here are some snapshots of the application in action:*