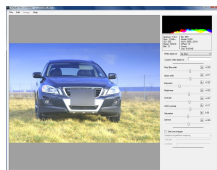


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XDepth Raw Converter application window

[Develop RAW Images with the Utmost Ease](#)

XDepth image format - half raw, half JPEG

What happened to the good ol' days when you had to make all sorts of adjustments to the camera prior to taking a picture? Truth be told, you had only one shot to take a great picture and for this you had to make the right settings. A tad more exposure or not approximating the distance correctly could have ruined a unique moment.

But times have changed and a professional photographer no longer needs to put his brains on the table in order to make the best regulations so as to achieve the utmost accuracy and capture the moment as close to reality as possible. Professional cameras can take raw pictures and permit ulterior adjusting of exposure, contrast or brightness. So things got a whole lot easier and you can now take all the time to tweak an image and bring it to the stage you desire.

However, raw images include plenty of information and this particularity prevents regular image viewers from opening them. Special software is necessary for the matter and generally this is pretty difficult to encounter. Fortunately, Trellis Management came up with XDepth RAW Converter, a freebie designed to give both professionals and novices the possibility to post-process the image with maximum ease.

The application is actually a basic RAW image converter that supports 48-bit images and brings its own format (XDepth RAW) which can be viewed by any viewer that supports JPG format. The particularity of this proprietary format is that, although it is saved and looks like a regular JPEG, it also offers RAW compression allowing you further processing and a diminished size on disk.

XDepth RAW Converter presents a very basic interface that shows all image processing options in the right hand part and the image to the left. In the menu bar, File is by far the richest and the most important as it shelters the option for saving the file in XDepth proprietary format, as DNG (digital negative), saving current settings on the disk and loading previously-saved settings from the disk.

After loading a RAW image, user focus shifts towards the right hand side of the application window as that's where all post-processing takes place. XDepth RAW Converter displays image histogram together with details about the camera (maker, model and megapixels) and the way it took the picture (aperture, shut time) and image (file format, resolution, depth and size).

Adjusting the camera's White Balance in accordance to the environment (color temperature of the light source) is the first step to taking a realistic image. An incorrect WB can cast unrealistic colors damaging the final result. XDepth RAW Converter offers a set of six predefined illuminants plus the possibility to customize them. Thusly WB picks can be between Daylight, Cloudy, Shade, Tungsten, Fluorescent and Flash.

In case the camera was ill adjusted, White Balance can be corrected in XDepth RAW Converter. However, it seems that Nikon-generated images are whimsical enough not to be decoded correctly by the application. White Balance in their case would appear awfully off the track. But this happened only with Nikon files; in testing a Canon RAW file everything

went fine.

Besides the White Balance option XDepth RAW Converter also provides the possibility to tamper with the Red, Blue and Green shift causing balance or unbalance in the RGB components. Changing the current values needs a simple drag of the slider to the desired rate.

The total amount of light falling on the photo is controlled by exposure, which can be adjusted. The same slider is available for you to drag to the right value. The same goes for brightness, contrast, saturation, gamma and HDR contrast (High Dynamic Range) and for all of them the application will provide a live preview the moment a modification occurs. Of course, none of the changes will be saved unless you so desire.

HDR Contrast is an automatic brightening and darkening calibrator for the photo. Pixels brighter than 0.5 will be brightened even more while all of them under this value will be darkened. Thus the dynamic range is increased the moment new contrast and exposure values are applied.

Tone mapping operators present in XDepth RAW Converter are designed to bring a touch of natural to the image. The outcome will be in agreement to the tone mapping chosen: Adaptive Logarithmic Mapping, Dynamic Range Reduction and Gradient Domain High Dynamic Range Compression.

XDepth RAW Converter provides basic options for post-processing images and it is also completely free of charge. It functions as a standalone application so no additional software is needed to use it. It provides the basic options for bringing a raw image to your standards, adjust its brightness, gamma, saturation and RGB components, set the White Balance and even integrate tone mappers. Despite its limited number of options, it manages to stand out through its own format, which is practically a compromise between raw format and compressed standard.

An XDepth file is in fact a JPEG-raw because it can be opened just like a regular JPEG file but contains raw options allowing you to develop it as any other RAW picture. Upon saving a file in XDepth format you can impose quality, detail level, as well as author information. Additionally, it permits protecting it with a password.

The standard, compressed formats an image can be saved as are JPEG, BMP, TIFF and PNG. Alternatively the file can be stored as Xdepth-48 image or HDR image.

The Good

XDepth RAW Converter is free of charge and extremely easy to use. On the spot preview resulting from changing the various values allows you to see the impact immediately and make further adjustments if necessary.

XDepth format is an amazing introduction as it combines the qualities of a raw image with the smaller-size and pervasive support of a JPEG.

DNG support is growing and XDepth RAW Converter does not deprive you of storing the image in this archival format.

The Bad

The application is not as complex in options and functions as one would expect. During our testing, the preview function took a while longer to complete than Capture NX 2.

White Balance for Nikon files is not handled well, but that is not the software at work, simply the format itself. Many other applications fail to read it properly.

The Truth

Although XDepth RAW Converter is not jam-packed with options and fine-tuning functions, it does very well with what it has under the hood.

It includes on the spot preview for you to immediately see how the changes affect the picture and allows undoing the last action as many times as you want. Also, there is a fast button to return to the default value.

The XDepth format is quite something, allowing viewing of the image with practically any image viewer on the market and at the same time preserving the raw advantage.

The downside is the lack of more generous fine-tweaking options. For now it is stuck with basic functions and options.

Here are some snapshots of the application in action: