

REVIEW

Cut it out

Scorey thought he'd lose the will to live reviewing a mount cutter, but was pleasantly surprised when it was far easier than first expected. See what he thinks about the Longridge Trio system...

WORDS & PICTURES ADAM SCOREY

Longridge Trio Midi

Price **£325** Cut mounts A1

Web www.longridge.co.uk

Sometimes as an Editor a manufacturer requests some time with you to show you a new or renewed product. If the schedule allows, we sit making a few notes, smiling warmly as said person(s) go through the details of their pride and joy. On this particular occasion, the boardroom was filled with four people and a large, flat cardboard box. Inside the box was a Mount Cutter - the manufacturer was Longridge.

Now, I will be honest with you, the thought of spending the next hour or so learning how to cut a hole in a piece of card filled me with the sense of dread a letter from the Inland Revenue provokes. I mean, come on...

Skip forward an hour and the picture in the boardroom is somewhat different; instead of the manufacturer standing and displaying their gear, almost pleading with me to be interested, it's me getting all animated and desperate to have a go - which I finally have.

The first thing I always do is check out the price of something as I want to know if it's good value for money. Now, the Trio Midi I had a play with is about £325, so not cheap then. But, as they say, quality never is. However, is it really a quality product?

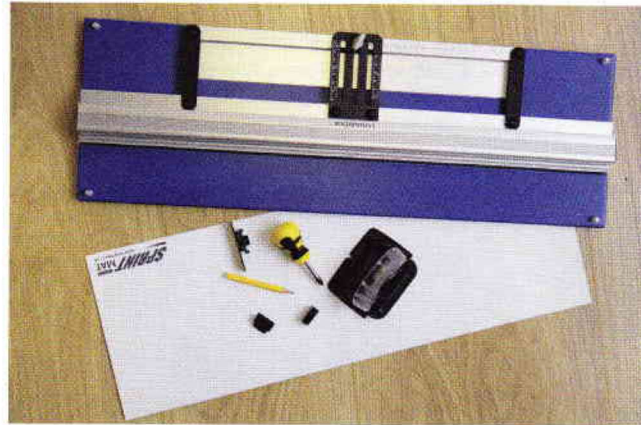
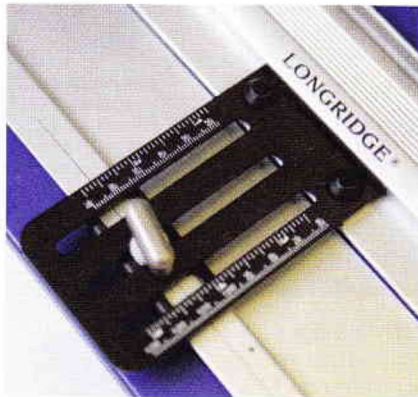
For me, any sort of product that is this expensive needs to be easy to store, easy to use and simple to set up. Add to that, it also needs to be able to repeat its job time after time after time, with accuracy and not need the owner to keep shelling out cash to do so.

Is it simple? Well, to be honest yes it is. I counted four steps to get to a precise mount. In fact, the hardest part is getting the numbers right to enable you to measure the size of the aperture - a calculator, in some cases, will be a must. The steps after measuring are to draw the lines using the parallelogram and guide rails, place the cutter stops and then cut (it can be used by left or right handed people). As long as you use good quality, square mount board you'll be fine - the stuff Longridge recommend is lovely.

Where I did struggle was making sure I didn't miss any steps; for example, there

were a couple of accessories in the box that I wasn't sure what I should use them for, the mount stop being the primary subject. However, after watching the DVD again for the second, or perhaps third time, all became clear.

The first mount I cut wasn't quite as accurate as when the guys from Longridge demoed it - for some reason the mount didn't cut the corners properly. I put it down to user error as the second time around the edges were near perfect. **DSLR**



Conclusion

For the individual, the Longridge mount cutter may be a very expensive luxury just to sit in a cupboard and gather dust. But for those who are trying to make a bit of cash from high quality prints, a camera club with a few members to share the cost, or for a pro studio, I can see this system being a real bonus and making its money back very quickly. The results straight out of the box are superb and easily repeatable. It's dead easy to use accurately after a few viewings of the DVD, and its capabilities go way beyond just cutting a few rectangle apertures in a rectangle mount board. I was pleasantly surprised, though the steep cost would be a bit of a hurdle for an individual to shoulder, though a few pals could club together I suppose. There is the slightly less expensive Duo system, but that relies on you drawing the lines on yourself. I'd suggest the Trio system for that clever parallelogram system.

VERDICT

Features	★★★★★
Handling	★★★★★
Performance	★★★★★
Value	★★★★
Overall	19/20