

Driver Genius Professional 8.0

By Barton Koslow

Driver Genius by Avanquest will help you keep your software and hardware drivers up-to-date and working properly. It uses a database of 30,000 official drivers to compare with those on your computer.

This simple, easy to use program should have been almost intuitive when first used. However, this was not the case. Instead, I found it somewhat confusing in the beginning. Both the little 8 page instruction manual and the Help files lacked a simple overview with a step by step sequence to simplify use of the program. While all the individual steps are in the manual and Help files, there is no overall organization that tells you from the beginning how to proceed in an orderly manner. Once I jumped around between the program, the manual and the Help files, I finally figured out the full order of procedure.

Now that I understood how to fully implement the program, my first step was to create a backup folder and backup my current drivers to it. Avanquest could have made it easier by creating a default backup folder when installing the program so I would not have had to interrupt the backup and go to my file manager to create one.

Avanquest incorrectly states that the program will keep your drivers up-to-date automatically. The only feature that can be "automatic", if selected under Options, is that upon startup the program checks online and downloads the latest driver reference database to your computer (not the drivers). Your first recommended step is to run Live Update which will update the reference database. The term Live Update is confusing since Live Update does not update your drivers, only the driver reference database.

Next step is to select Update Drivers. Driver Genius checks the drivers on your computer against its up-to-date reference database and lists all the drivers that require updating. Again, Avanquest asks you to provide a folder location to save your downloaded drivers instead of providing a default folder when installing the program. I had to interrupt this step, go to my file manager and create a download folder. You may then select which drivers to download, and then after downloading select a downloaded driver and install it.

This good, easy to use program is marred by poor instructions and confusing terminology that often does not conform to the actual procedures. It needs overhauling to make it easier to use the first time. Even the menu screen is not presented in a logical sequence. I hope that version 9 makes the corrections that will enable me to unreservedly recommend it.

Driver Genius sells for \$29.95. I could not find an online price other than at Avanquest's web site.

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