Better Buys for Business

THE OFFICE LASER PRINTER GUIDE

- **Speeds up to 49 pages per minute**

- **Black and white laser technology**

- **Updated for 2007**

- **Editor's Choice Awards**

Lexmark E450dn

LEXMARK

Lexmark E350d
Lexmark E352dn
Lexmark E450dn
35ppm

EDITOR'S CHOICE 2007

Sum-up: Still the Mercedes of personal/small-workgroup printers.

Lexmark's E-series printers are its entry-level models, but the level of entry keeps going up. A few years ago, a 25ppm printer was sold by Lexmark as a heavy-duty office workgroup printer. Now come these three models that are meant for either personal desktop use or for sharing by a few office mates, and they run at 35ppm. Like the E250 models (above), these are very attractive-looking machines. With sleek black styling, compact size, and low noise levels, they are among the few printers on the market that could win design awards. And in many ways, they are similar to the E250 family. However, for the added price you get a nice upgrade in features.

The basic engine is similar to the E250's. The E350d and E352dn have a 366MHz processor, but the E450dn has a 400MHz processor. A 250-sheet paper tray and a single-sheet bypass (for nonstandard materials such as card stock and transparencies) can be supplemented with an optional 550-sheet paper drawer. Output is limited to 150 sheets, with a single-sheet exit for the bypass.

All models of this hybrid E350/E450 family come with duplexing capability built-in. Parallel and USB connections are standard, and an external Ethernet server is optional on the E350d ($349), standard on the E352dn ($449) and E450dn ($599). Wi-Fi connectivity is an option on all three models.

Memory starts with 32MB and is expandable to 160MB on the E350 models and 320MB on the E450dn. All three offer PCL and PostScript standard. The duty cycle is rated at 35,000 pages per month for the E350 models and 45,000 pages for the E450dn.

All three models have a lower cost per page than the E250 family. Our estimate, based on the lowest Lexmark prices, is around 2 cents if you use the larger toner cartridge in the E350d and E352dn. This is not great, but typical for a personal/small workgroup printer (a strange but true characterization of a 35ppm printer). Note that the cost per page of the E450dn is better — about 1.5 cents.

A few other features distinguish the E450dn from its siblings. Lexmark has maintained the small footprint of a workgroup printer but included software that provides better security and control functions for print jobs. This printer is also equipped with the graphics engine of the T640 workgroup printers.

In many ways, these personal/small workgroup printers are unique. It's not only their 35ppm speed but their affordability as well. Comparable printers like the 35ppm Samsung ML-3560 family can claim a lower cost per page (1.2 cents for the Samsung models) and more total paper capacity (1,100 sheets), but it's priced higher than the corresponding Lexmark models. The 35ppm Hewlett-Packard LaserJet P3005 family is somewhat more expensive, and offers only marginally better input/output paper capacities.

We applaud these stylish, speedy, and quiet machines by giving them our Editor's Choice Award. It's astonishing how the company has raised the bar on desktop printing.