

# Digital Imaging REVIEW

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## BLI HONORS SPRING 2005 "PICKS OF THE YEAR"

### Lexmark C920dn

*Outstanding Large Workgroup Color LED Printer,  
Spring 2005*

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The LED-based Lexmark C920dn gave an exceptional overall performance in BLI's two-month lab evaluation, earning it a Spring 2005 BLI "Pick of the Year" award for "Outstanding Large Workgroup Color LED Printer." Accommodating up to 12" x 48" paper, the C920dn produced exceptional color output, characterized by brilliant colors that were not overly saturated. Also noteworthy is that the density of the unit's black output is the highest for laser or LED printers tested to date, meaning it produces "darker blacks" than those produced by most competitive laser/LED printers.

"The first thing you notice about the Lexmark C920dn is its exceptional image quality—it's some of the best we've seen in testing to date," said Senior Test Technician Tony Maceri. "Then there's its outstanding ease of use. The new design for the control panel, with its four-line graphical display, intuitive navigation buttons and numeric keypad, greatly simplifies entering PIN numbers for confidential printing and provides graphical help messages that instruct users on how to change consumables and remove misfeeds. It also has a convenient USB port that allows users to print PDF files directly from a flash drive and a job cancel button that allows users to select a specific job to cancel while leaving others in the queue."

Setup and installation of the drivers was very easy thanks to the auto-install feature, which will have users up and running in minutes. In addition, specifying job requirements from the well-designed PCL 6 and PostScript 3 print drivers was easy. The drivers have a Job Summary feature that allows the user to view and confirm all of the driver selections before the



job is printed, which could save toner and paper from being wasted on incorrectly printed documents. The Lexmark C920dn offers clean and straightforward procedures for replacing consumables, including the toner cartridges, drums, transfer belt, fuser and oil coating roller. In addition, procedures for loading paper and removing misfeeds are very simple.

Ease of use is further enhanced by Lexmark's MarkVision Professional utility, which is one of the most thorough and flexible management utilities BLI has evaluated to date. MarkVision identifies and monitors all Lexmark printers, as well as non-Lexmark devices, on a network and provides extensive real-time device status and print job status monitoring capabilities. In addition, a status window, also accessible through the PCL or PostScript print drivers, provides very good feedback via pop-up messages and icon alerts for a variety of warning and error conditions.

Lexmark color printers incorporate a number of features to restrict unauthorized (and potentially costly) use of color. In addition to a black-only PCL 6 driver that ships along with the regular driver, which can be installed on selected workstations to ensure that certain users print only black pages, the C920dn employs Color Print Permissions, which allows an administrator to assign specific user IDs the ability to print color. Other color control features include a "Black and White Lock" mode that disables color

printing at the device, restricting all users to monochrome output, toner-save and color-save modes, and a Coverage Estimator tool, which, when enabled through the control panel, allows users to determine the approximate coverage of each toner color on a page-by-page basis.

Using a four-drum system to apply color to paper in a single pass at Lexmark's rated speed of 32 ppm in color and 36 ppm in black, the C920n also provided excellent productivity in BLI testing, with above-average simplex efficiency rates for both color and black output from the PostScript driver and competitive to above-average simplex and duplex efficiency rates from the PCL driver. First-print times for all file types used in testing from the PostScript driver are the fastest of color printers tested to date. Performance is also faster than average using PCL.

Providing superior color output at an excellent price point (\$3,749, Web price), the Lexmark C920dn is priced 23 percent less than the average for competitive tabloid network-ready, single-pass color printers with similar standard features. Further, the unit's supplies cost per page is competitive with tested printers in this class. With its exceptional color output, flawless reliability, thorough network management utilities and very good overall economy, the C920dn is an outstanding choice for large workgroups. BLI highly recommends this model for monthly volumes of to 40,000 impressions.

### **ABOUT BLI'S PICKS OF THE YEAR**

Twice a year with its "Pick of the Year" awards, BLI gives special recognition in each category to those products that provided the most outstanding performances in BLI's exhaustive lab tests.

BLI's awards stand alone in that they are based on a rigorous battery of lab tests that takes approximately two months to complete and includes an extensive durability test, during which each unit is run at the manufacturer's maximum recommended monthly volume. BLI's durability test is unique among office product evaluations and uniquely qualifies BLI to assess reliability, which is a critical factor for buyers and IT directors, given that virtually all of the products are designed for use on networks.

In addition to assessing reliability, in terms of the number of service calls and PM (preventive maintenance) calls required, as well as misfeed frequency, BLI's comprehensive evaluation includes an assessment of copy and print quality, productivity, ease of use and economy, as well as connectivity issues such as feedback to workstations, administrative utilities, print drivers, multitasking and scanning solutions. Each product that successfully passes BLI's lab test earns BLI's "Recommended" or "Highly Recommended" seal and a BLI "Certificate of Reliability" and qualifies as a "Pick" award contender. Consequently, a BLI "Pick of the Year" is a hard-earned award that buyers and IT directors can trust to better guide them in their acquisition decisions.

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