

LEXMARK

Lexmark C920
Lexmark C920n
Lexmark C920dn
Lexmark C920dtn
32ppm full color
36ppm black & white



Sum-up: Lexmark's powerful high-speed entry in the color ledger-size printer market.

Lexmark touts the ledger-size C920's "dynamic" LED technology, claiming that it cures some of the registration problems that previous generations of LED printers encountered. In any case, we think it is a very good color printer. It's a faster version of the 28ppm C912, now discontinued.

The C920 series has speeds of 32ppm in color and 36ppm in black-and-white, and achieves this speed at an interpolated resolution of 2,400dpi. We've come a long way from just a few years ago, when 8ppm in color was considered fast.

The C920 comes in four different flavors:

- The C920 is the base version (\$3,299).
- The C920n adds networking (\$3,549).
- The C920dn adds duplexing (\$3,749).
- The C920dtn includes automatic duplex, a second paper tray and networking (\$4,999).

All models in this family start with 256MB of memory, which can be upgraded to 1GB. They use an extraordinarily powerful 1GHz processor and feature USB connectivity and PostScript 3 support as standard. All but the base model support standard Ethernet. An optional 20GB hard drive is also available, and is standard on the C920dtn.

The C920 family comes with a standard paper capacity of 650 sheets in the base model, made up of a 100-sheet multipurpose tray and a 550-sheet tray. The C920dtn, as we have stated, comes

with a second standard tray. Paper capacity can be expanded to a whopping 4,100 sheets through various combinations of options. On the output side, 650 sheets come standard with all models, though Lexmark also offers an 1,100-sheet-capacity finisher. The finisher performs single-position stapling of up to 30 sheets and has optional three- or four-hole punch.

One nice touch is the ability to print over-size sheets. The 100-sheet multipurpose feeder can hold sheets that are up to 12.5" x 36".

An optional feature you may want to add is Lexmark's ImageQuick card. ImageQuick is on-demand software that allows you to store forms or critical documents on an Internet server and lets users drag-and-drop to print the most up-to-date version. ImageQuick can handle a number of document formats, including PDF, HTML, GIF, PCL, PostScript, TIFF, and others. The software allows you to always print the latest documents, either from within your company or from outside. All end users need is a browser and access to a Lexmark printer.

Consumables costs run at a moderate 8.7¢ per page in color and a reasonable 1.7¢ in black-and-white.

Lexmark has a growing reputation for quality and great features, and we're pretty enthusiastic about the C920 family. The price points are also especially attractive, and these models are worthy competitors to machines from OKI, Ricoh, and Xerox. The OKI 9600 and the Ricoh CL7300 have very similar features. We



Lexmark C920 — A ledger printer with excellent add-on features and software.

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particularly like some of the special features on the Lexmark models, such as the automatic conversion of PDF files, and the added paper capacity.

Because of its excellent features, the C920 family gets our Editor's Choice Award.

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Vendor Profile

Lexmark was formed when IBM spun off its typewriter and mainstream printer business back in 1991. The non-compete agreement between IBM and Lexmark expired in 1996. IBM, at that point, built up a full line of desktop printers in competition with Lexmark but a few years ago announced that it would relabel Lexmark's black-and-white and color models. Now Lexmark also provides printers to a number of companies: Toshiba, Unisys, RISO, and (in some categories) Dell.

Lexmark is a power in monochrome laser printers, where

it stands (by some measures) second behind Hewlett-Packard in terms of market share. The company also sells an extensive line of color ink jet printers and has considerable market presence there. In the color laser printer market, however, Lexmark is only slowly growing bigger.

All Lexmark printers benefit from a variety of external and internal network servers and connectivity options. They also offer a sophisticated range of optional software for handling security, administration, and file conversion. These tools include ones that support printing from a number of formats (including PDF and TIFF), allow for form generation and printing, print barcodes, secure print, and allow for significant job management. Lexmark also contends that it has superior color management tools for all its color laser models.

Lexmark's current products are quite good. In speed, price, and features, they contend with everything else on the market. But the opposition isn't standing still, and Lexmark needs to keep on developing new printers to stay near the top of the pack.

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