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DOCUMENT IMAGING PRODUCTS 2005: BLI'S PICKS OF THE YEAR

Konica Minolta bizhub C350

*Outstanding Full-Color Multifunctional Imaging System
for General Office Applications, Spring 2005*

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A stand-out performer among color multifunctional products, the Konica Minolta bizhub C350 has been awarded a Spring 2005 BLI "Pick of the Year" for "Outstanding Color Multifunctional Imaging System for General Office Applications." During its comprehensive two-month laboratory evaluation, the bizhub C350 demonstrated impressive reliability, good overall ease of use and very good output quality overall. Based on LED technology, the bizhub C350, which has earned ISO 15408 Common Criteria certification, is a multifunctional product in its standard configuration. While the base unit comes equipped with an embedded network print controller that provides PCL 5c printing, as well as scanning, BLI's test unit was configured with the more powerful optional IC-401 (EFI Fiery) print controller, which offers PostScript and PCL network printing, as well as scanning, adds support for Mac users and includes a comprehensive offering of utilities to manage the system, print jobs and color output.

A highly reliable unit, the bizhub C350 completed its 100,000-impression durability test with one service call and, remarkably, without even a single misfeed occurring. Konica Minolta gives customers the option of having service replace the unit's four color drums or replacing the components themselves, which is a simple enough procedure and increases uptime by eliminating the need for a service call whenever one of the drums reaches its rated life.

The bizhub C350 is also a productive unit, offering good overall efficiency in copy mode and very good efficiency in print mode as tested with the Fiery controller. In addition to providing very good multitasking capabilities, the bizhub C350 offers very good black output and deep color output with excellent consistency of coverage and no light, washed-out areas. In print mode, color output remained consistent over the course of the test period and to keep output consistent, the bizhub C350



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offers several methods of calibration. In addition, an extremely wide array of settings is available to adjust the quality of color copies as desired from the control panel and of color prints from Fiery ColorWise Pro color management tools, when configured with the Fiery controller.

When configured with the Fiery controller, this system also provides excellent feedback to workstations, which includes pop-up messages with detailed information, icon alerts and audible alerts, and paper and toner supply gauges that enable users to ensure the current supplies will accommodate their job before they send it.

“While some color units excel in their output quality, some in multitasking, some in productivity and others at ease of use, the bizhub C350 offers a winning combination of all these important elements, plus the ability to run up to 140-lb. index,”

said Daria Hoffman, BLI’s managing editor. “What makes it even more appealing,” added Hoffman, “is that it’s offered at a price that’s competitive with the Fiery controller and one of the best on the market with the unit’s standard PCL controller.” In addition, the unit’s cost per page for supplies is better than the average for color models tested to date.

While the Fiery controller provides superior performance overall, for productivity, administrative utilities and feedback to workstations, the standard unit is one of the lowest-priced models on the market, making it a good alternative for users who don’t require PostScript or the highest-performance throughput or sophisticated controls over color output. The bizhub C350 is an excellent choice for offices in need of a color multifunctional product for monthly volumes of up to 50,000 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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