

Lexmark International, Inc.

Outstanding Monochrome
Printer/MFP Line of the Year



LEXMARKTM

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Peak performance, a stellar feature set and a strong value proposition, from one end of the portfolio to the other, are hallmarks of Lexmark hardware. Over the past year BLI tested seven of the manufacturer's monochrome devices, and these traits shone through time and time again, as six of the devices earned the "Highly Recommended" seal and went on to win "Picks," which has resulted in Lexmark claiming the BLI Winter 2013 "Outstanding Monochrome Printer/MFP Line of the Year" award. While it has taken home the "Monochrome Printer Line" or "Monochrome MFP Line" four times since 2005, this is the first time that Lexmark has owned both—certainly an impressive achievement. "What customers want from their monochrome devices is simplicity, productivity, reliability and affordability," said BLI Senior Analyst for Printers and A4 MFPs Marlene Orr. "Lexmark's newest monochrome devices deliver on all these levels, offering class-leading speeds, robust design and superb reliability. On the surface Lexmark makes affordable devices, but the available workflow and management software, as well as comprehensive tools to conserve resources and control output costs, further add to the value equation."

The devices that have helped Lexmark win this award include the MS410 Series, "Outstanding A4 Monochrome Printer for Small Workgroups"; MS610 Series, "Outstanding A4 Monochrome Printer for Mid-Size Workgroups"; MS812 Series, "Outstanding A4 Departmental Monochrome Printer"; MX510/511 Series and MX610/611 Series, "Outstanding A4 Monochrome MFP for Mid-Size Workgroups"; and MX710 Series, "Outstanding A4 Monochrome MFP for Large Workgroups." Rounding out the Lexmark devices tested by BLI this calendar year, the MX310dn received BLI's "Recommended" rating.

“BLI has recognized Lexmark on four occasions in the past with ‘Line of the Year’ awards for our second-to-none monochrome laser devices, which is a great testament to our robustness, reliability, and enterprise-class features across the entire line, no matter what the price point,” said Marty Canning, Lexmark Executive Vice President and President of Imaging Solutions and Services. “It is a great honor to receive this prestigious award from BLI for the fifth time as we continue to deliver breakthrough features and performance in our product portfolio.”

Reliability

BLI has for years run the most exhaustive third-party durability testing in the industry, and includes a “Certificate of Reliability” with each Lab Test Report for devices that rate at least a very good in this category of evaluation. “The certificate is our stamp of approval that hardware can withstand the rigors of day-to-day usage in environments they’re intended to serve,” said BLI Associate Editor Carl Schell. “With the seven Lexmark monochrome devices we recently tested, there were no mis-feeds and none required any service over a total of more than 500,000 pages combined. If that’s not the epitome of highly reliable A4 technology, I don’t know what is.”

Open Architecture

Lexmark embedded Solutions Framework (eSF) enables organizations to expand functionality with time- and money-saving software developed by the manufacturer and third parties. The applications can have far-reaching effects, be they with productivity, security or document management, streamlining existing workflows or helping to create new ones. As a bonus, the MFPs come with pre-installed solutions such as Eco-copy (activates duplex and N-up selections to reduce paper waste), while Forms and Favorites (an archive for frequently used files that can be printed on demand) is available on the MFPs and the printers. “eSF is a powerful platform that not only lets businesses add tools to coincide with growth, but also to turn the device into something much more than just a piece of hardware,” Schell said. “It’s a key selling point, especially with the single-function printers as there aren’t many competitive devices that offer open architecture.”

Of the device series included in this award, the MS610, MS812, MX510/511, MX610/611 and MX710 have eSF.

Ease of Use

From the desktop, the Lexmark PCL XL Universal Print Driver allows users to save frequently used settings to allow for simple one-click printing. At the devices, routine maintenance procedures (adjusting the drawers, loading paper and clearing misfeeds) are straightforward, and, most notably, the Lexmark e-Task interface greatly eases operation at the control panel. “This full-color, customizable touch-screen LCD has always been a favorite of ours,” said BLI Senior Test Technician Tony Maceri. “Lexmark has recently upgraded it with a flash-enhanced menu system, which makes programming scan, copy or fax jobs that much easier. And even on the MS410 and MX310 series, where the e-Task interface isn’t available, navigation of the display is still very good.”

The “Green” Factor

Lexmark provides many features that can aid organizations in being environmentally responsible. Standard automatic duplexing contributes to less paper waste, and printing in toner-save mode can extend the life of the cartridge, while Eco-Mode, according to the manufacturer, lowers power consumption—all three of these can help reduce TCO. One nice touch is that any “green” measure in the driver is indicated with a “leaf” icon, thus showing users where they can make an environmental impact. Furthermore, all of the devices are compatible with Lexmark Markvision Enterprise, a fleet management utility that’s flexible and effective, and allows administrators to establish policies that can have an environmental impact such as enforced duplexing; users can preview files on flash drives and print only the pages they need; and Lexmark has a program whereby organizations can recycle cartridges. “It’s very clear to us that Lexmark’s eco-friendly offerings can play a big role in any organization’s ‘green’ initiative,” Schell said.

Image Quality and Productivity

The seven tested devices provided print quality that was rated very good overall, with crisp text, smooth line art, a broad grayscale range, and dark solids. Even output in copy mode from the four MFPs was also very good overall. And in terms of print productivity, five of the devices were rated very good overall, with the MS812de and MS710de earning a rating of excellent. As with copy quality, there was little to no drop-off in productivity in copy mode. “From the slowest-speed device of this Lexmark group (the 35-ppm MX310dn) to the fastest (the 70-ppm MS812de), consistency of image quality and productivity was unbelievable,” Maceri said. “It just goes to show that Lexmark is on top of its game in many ways.”

Additional Features

All of these Lexmark series support mobile printing from devices such as smartphones and tablets, an important feature in today’s increasingly mobile business world, and include the Lexmark Coverage Estimator, which informs users of toner coverage on printed pages. Strong scan to USB, as well as job build, capabilities are offered on the 510/511, 610/611 and 710 MFPs (these also have a legal-size platen), while nearly all of the devices (the MS410 and MX310 families excluded) offer robust print from USB functionality, too.

The Bottom Line

“Value” isn’t defined simply by the formula of purchase price and cost per page, but by many other factors—some of which have been detailed here. So businesses and users must take everything into account and analyze how they relate to day-to-day tasks, as well as bigger picture items such as lowering TCO and maximizing ROI. “When it comes to printers and MFPs, customer needs can vary greatly depending on workflow, output volumes, and industry,” Orr said. “Where Lexmark excels is in providing a range of choices to not only meet the hardware needs of a variety of users, but also to add value by giving users the tools they need to save time, conserve resources, and save money through software solutions and output management.”

We congratulate Lexmark on winning BLI’s 2013 “Outstanding Monochrome Printer/MFP Line of the Year” award.

About **BLI Pick Awards**

Twice a year with its “Pick” awards, BLI gives special recognition in each category to those products that provided the most outstanding performances in BLI’s exhaustive lab tests, and once each year, it acknowledges the vendors whose overall product lines are judged to be the best in their respective categories by virtue of their cumulative test results.

BLI’s awards stand alone in that they are based on a rigorous battery of lab tests that takes approximately two months to complete. The evaluation includes an extensive durability test, during a portion of which each unit is run at the manufacturer’s maximum duty cycle. BLI’s durability test is unique among office product evaluations and uniquely qualifies BLI to assess reliability, a critical factor for buyers and IT directors.

Other performance attributes evaluated include ease of use, media handling, productivity and value, among others. 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, BLI “Pick” awards are hard-earned awards that buyers and IT directors can trust to better guide them in their acquisition decisions.

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