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Kyocera's FS-C5300: Thumbs-up

Ease of deployment, performance, management and efficiency make this colour laser a strong choice

Kyocera Mita finds itself in one of the most crowded, competitive areas of information technology in the channel: the imaging and printing space. From Hewlett-Packard to Xerox, to the likes of Oki Data, Ricoh, Samsung and Lexmark, Kyocera Mita is taking on a long list of companies in a dogfight every day for market share and mind share in the solution provider channel.

Frankly, we've regularly recommended printers from HP, Xerox, Oki Data and the others – companies that have also maintained fairly robust channel programs. Kyocera Mita often has found itself duking it out for the No. 3 or No. 4 position in the US channel. After looking at one of its more recent colour laser printers, the FS-C5300 DN, though, the CRN Test Centre can say it's not because its product line lacks quality.

The FS-C5300 DN stands as the first printer to actually come into the Test Centre's lab vacuum-packed into a plastic bag that was then placed into its box. Out of the box, the printer was on the network and ready for business within 15 minutes. (It would have been 10 minutes, but the yellow toner cartridge didn't seem to want to click into place as described in the manual until we moved a yellow plastic slider into its proper place.)

Compared with other printers and multifunction printer devices we've reviewed over the past year, it's not exactly a hulking device: It stands at 51 x 47 x 34 centimetres.

Upon startup, with eco-print mode turned off, the FS-C5300 DN consumed 120 watts. During regular print jobs, that dropped to about 44 watts (or less than a light bulb). On idle, it measured 19 watts on our Kill-o-Watt measuring device. While the power consumed during idling could stand to be brought down a notch or two, we believe the FS-C5300 DN will almost certainly reduce

power costs if it's brought in to displace anything that's two years old or older. Eco-friendliness has been a priority of Kyocera Mita for a couple of years now (hence, its Ecosys product lineup) so we'll leave it to you to decide whether to quibble over the 19 watts during idling.

The system comes with 256 MB of memory on-board, but also with expansion capability. Generally speaking, we liked the performance. While Kyocera Mita's documenta-

tion lists the device as being able to print at speeds of as much as 28 ppm in monochrome or colour, the fastest we saw out of the unit in our lab was 21 pages per minute (ppm). However, it took 2 minutes and 29 seconds to print a 50-page document from a PDF, which we believe is a nice performance for the price.

We'd add that the ppm performance is either on par with, or slightly better, than other imaging and printing devices

in this class that we've reviewed over the past several months.

Monochrome prints were exceptionally clear and sharp. So, too, were colour prints we produced during evaluation. Earth tones were about as clear as we've come to see in any imaging or printing device. Reds and blues were bright but were true to the originals.

From an administrative standpoint, the FS-C5300 DN is solid. The browser-based console "Command Centre" provides the basic view into toner and paper levels, as well as networking configuration, security options (like SSL),

usage information and more. People on a network can be assigned colour or monochrome-only permissions, as well as limits on printing output.

The FS-C5300 DN, which has a machine life of approximately 600,000 pages, is priced at \$1869.

The bottom line is that, with the combination of ease-of-deployment, performance, management and efficiency, along with Kyocera Mita's robust channel program, this is a device that the CRN Test Centre can recommend strongly.

IMAGE & PRINTING PRICE

\$1869

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