



MONOCHROME IMAGE QUALITY



KONICA MINOLTA

END USER GOLD AWARD

Konica Minolta delivers consistent image quality throughout the day without the need for regular engineer visits or routine maintenance.

– Office Manager, Legal Advice Center, Bristol, UK

While color may be grabbing all the headlines, monochrome still makes up the vast majority of document production in the world today. Indeed, many documents do not even require color and thus will not make the expensive upgrade.

Indeed, monochrome image quality has come a long way in the last few years especially in the areas of halftone reproduction and fine line definition. While many factors are involved in monochrome image quality, including printer head design and toner transfer, the toner quality itself has become a area of focus of manufacturers and is the major reason for these image quality advances. Traditionally dry toner particles are made through a process of pulverization, involving the blending of resin and wax and a granulation process. While this method can produce small size particles for high-resolution images, the particle shapes may not be uniform.

Manufacturers are introducing a new generation of chemically grown toners that both fit within tight size and shape distributions. The result is that monochrome image quality has improved greatly.

We polled our end-user reader to learn how they viewed each manufacturer overall ability to deliver high-quality monochrome output.

About the Winner:

Konica Minolta was formed with the merger of two leading imaging companies, Konica and Minolta, in 2003. Both companies brought impressive credentials to the merge.

Konica introduced its first roll of black and white film in 1929. The company entered the business machines market in 1971 with the introduction of the U-BIX 480, Japan's first photostatic plain-paper copier. Konica went on to develop and market a full range of digital printers, copiers, fax and multifunctional products, as well as application software solutions designed to meet the demands of a busy office environment.

Konica's ECOJET system, which utilizes dry tablet from chemicals for photoprocessing, was introduced in 1994 and put into wide distribution the following year.

Kazuo Tashima established Minolta as a camera manufacturer in November 1928. The company joined the business equipment industry in 1960 with the development of its first photocopier.

Minolta launched the first color copier able to produce two color copies in a single process in 1987. The machine was called the EP490Z. In 2000, Minolta announced a research and development partnership with Konica to work jointly on numerous different product development fronts. The following year, Minolta established a venture with Fujitsu Ltd., intended to help the development of color laser printers.

Konica and former rival Minolta merged in a partnership spanning research and development as well as manufacturing and marketing. Prior to merging, the two companies had also formed a joint venture with the goal of creating a new, state of the art toner manufacturing plant.

About the Awards:

The Readers' Choice Awards are the cumulative findings culled from thousands of BERTL surveys. Unlike other industry awards which are chosen by a small group of industry pundits, BERTL Readers' Choice Awards are decided by our readers the most experienced, technically savvy and discerning digital imaging equipment buyers and users in the world.