

Kyocera Mita FS-8000C

Now with 128Mb as standard

COLOUR LASER PRINTER

verdict *Not the fastest colour laser, but the FS-8000C delivers in the quality stakes and offers unbeatable running costs.*

price £3,995 (£4,694 inc VAT)

supplier Kyocera Mita 01189 230622

internet www.kyoceramita.co.uk

availability Now

specifications 600 × 600dpi A3 colour laser, quoted mono print speed 30ppm A4, 15ppm A3; quoted colour print speed, 8ppm A4, 4ppm A3; 400MHz PowerPC processor, 64Mb of RAM expandable to 256Mb, serial and parallel ports, PCL5e, KCGL and PostScript 3 emulations, twin 500-sheet lower input trays, 150-sheet multipurpose tray, CompactFlash socket, drivers for Windows 95, 98, ME, NT and 2000 supplied. Options: SB-110 10/100BaseTX print server card, £199; 3.2Gb hard disk, £329; duplex unit, £739; document stacker, £1,899; document finisher, £1,399; document sorter, £1,199; 32Mb memory upgrade, £109; 64Mb memory upgrade, £169; 128Mb memory upgrade, £299.

running costs K toner (25,000 pages), £67; C,M,Y toner (10,000 pages), £78 each; Oil roller kit (25,000 pages), £27; maintenance kit (400,000 mono or 100,000 colour pages), £370. Cost per A4 page: 0.56p per mono page at 5 per cent coverage; 3.1p per page at 20 per cent CMYK coverage, 5 per cent per colour.



The thrust towards making colour prevalent in the office is currently being championed by big names such as HP and Oki.

But perhaps the single largest barrier for most companies looking to integrate a departmental colour laser printer is added print costs. However, Kyocera's new FS-8000C aims to reduce much of this burden thanks to the implementation of ECOSYS technology, delivering colour printing at a claimed 60 per cent less cost than its major competitors.

The FS-8000C is Kyocera's first colour ECOSYS printer and it offers a complete solution first time out. The C model reviewed comes with just the lower paper trays, although ours had the optional SB-110 10/100BaseTX Ethernet adaptor included too. A range of finishing and stacking modules, plus duplex options is also provided by Kyocera.

In terms of specifications, the FS-8000C isn't the fastest colour laser around, partly due to the use of four-pass technology rather than

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the increasingly popular single-pass systems. That said, the mono print speeds of 30ppm (pages per minute) in A4 (15ppm in A3) are acceptable, although 8ppm for A4 colour (4ppm for A3) isn't exactly scintillating.

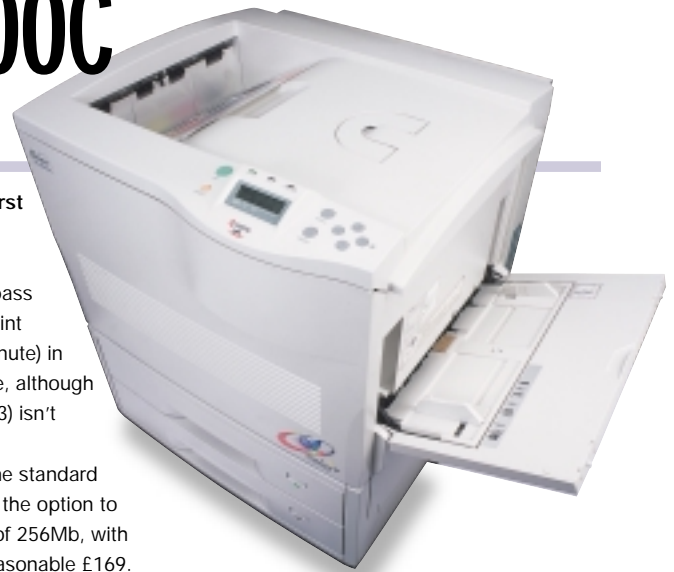
The FS-8000C is fitted with the standard 64Mb of RAM, although there is the option to add memory up to a maximum of 256Mb, with an additional 64Mb costing a reasonable £169. Kyocera also offers a 3.2Gb hard disk for £329, which, once installed, adds options such as proof-and-hold and private printing, and there's also a CompactFlash socket included, which can be used to upload additional fonts.

Installation was simple and we soon had the FS-8000C working over the network and also happily over TCP/IP. Remote administration is possible via a Web browser and Kyocera also includes its Net Viewer software. Either method can be used to alter settings; for example, setting up email alerts for various situations such as low toner or cover open.

With colour still not widely adopted, any colour laser must meet the demands of business for fast and high-quality black text, so to kick off the performance tests we started with our standard 50-page plain text document. The FS-8000C handled this easily, completing the job in 97 seconds for an outstanding 31ppm. The time to first page out of 18 seconds was also in line with Kyocera's claims and the overall quality was very good, with a nice glossy sheen and crisp characters.

The FS-8000C also handled our 50-page letter with colour headers and logos with ease, taking just six minutes. This met the 8ppm claim for A4 colour. Block colours were also solid and strong, and the overall look was highly professional. However, with more demanding colour tasks, the FS-8000C couldn't keep pace. Our graphics-heavy 24-page DTP document, which also contains a wide variety of fonts, took six minutes to print, equating to a less impressive 4ppm. That said, the results were worth the wait, with images possessing good detail and a pleasing colour balance. Granted, pictures were fairly grainy, but overall the FS-8000C is one of the better lasers I've seen for colour image quality.

Similarly, our 12-page Excel spreadsheet test had the FS-8000C struggling to reach full speed, dropping to around 4.2ppm. However, the quality was again excellent, with strong colours, sharp text and evenly shaded graphs.



This is precisely the type of application where colour can really make a difference, and the FS-8000C is well up to the job.

Even photographic images printed well and, despite the grain, detail and colour balance were good. We were impressed by the FS-8000C's ability to print greyscale images, and with the quality turned to maximum in the driver the FS-8000C printed a superb reproduction of our image quality test, even if overall greyscale extension was a little truncated. Performance in A3 was also good. An A3 spreadsheet with spot colour printing was in line with Kyocera's claims at 4ppm. A3 mono print speeds were equally good, with a ten-page spreadsheet printing in 46 seconds, equating to 13ppm.

Economy is always a key concern, and this is one of Kyocera's main aims with the FS-8000C. The ECOSYS system involves using long-life drum and developer kits, which are guaranteed to last for the stated lifetime, or for three years. It certainly appears to work, because the FS-8000C has an excellent colour cost per page of just 3.1p, with mono printing at an equally superb 0.56p per page. This is all at 5 per cent coverage and, naturally, actual costs will depend on the amount of colour you use, but there's little doubt the FS-8000C is a class leader in terms of cost effectiveness.

The Kyocera FS-8000C is an excellent departmental colour laser printer, delivering high-quality output, both in mono and in colour. Colour print speeds aren't the best available today, so if you're looking mainly to print in colour it may be better to opt for an LED-based device such as Oki's C7200n (see *Reviews, issue 76, p151*). But, if you're looking to print colour occasionally, or target its usage, the FS-8000C is more than capable.

Gareth Ogden

		results
PC PRO	OVERALL	★★★★★
	PERFORMANCE	★★★★★
	FEATURES	★★★★★
	VALUE FOR MONEY	★★★★★