

SHARP UNVEILS UNIQUE COLOR MULTIFUNCTION COPIER LINE FOR GENERAL OFFICE ENVIRONMENTS

Breakthrough MX Series color MFP line features outstanding image quality, exceptional productivity and true multitasking capabilities while watching customer's bottom line

MAHWAH, NJ, January 25, 2006 -- Sharp Document Solutions Company of America announces the first four of eight new models in a color MFP (multifunctional peripheral) series that represents a significant change for the copier industry: rather than developing discrete MFP engines for various line segments, Sharp has based all models in the series on a scalable engine design, giving Sharp customers access to eight new color models in less than six months. The MX Series products will range in speed from 23 pages-per-minute (PPM) to 70 PPM.

Today, Sharp introduces the line's first four MFPs, which range in speed from 23 to 45 PPM (models MX-2300N, MX-2700N, MX-3501N and MX-4501N) and offer cost-effective color as well as advanced functionality, available previously on Sharp's monochrome models. The MX Series models will support Sharp's Open Systems Architecture for seamless integration with network applications, as well as Sharp's award-winning* security suite. All models come with 24-hour support from My Sharp, a dedicated online customer training web site.

"This line of MFPs will make our customers' lives easier – a scalable engine design will mean better usability, easier maintenance and easier integration, all resulting in increased productivity," said Ed McLaughlin, President, Sharp Document Solutions Company of America. "In the next six months, these new products will help Sharp meet our customers' demands for high-quality, color MFPs, strengthening our document business in the United States."

Powerful and Reliable MFPs

Designed for general office use, the new MX-3501N and MX-4501N make speedy work of any project with PPM speeds of 35 and 45 respectively. The MX-3501N prints and copies both color and black and white jobs at 35 PPM, while the faster MX-4501N prints and copies black and white jobs at 45 PPM and 35 PPM for color. Both mid-sized MFPs complete jobs quickly with standard features like Sharp's Color Scan²™ technology that minimizes paper handling while maximizing performance and providing faster scan speeds. To keep print and copy jobs processing efficiently, these networked MFPs have the highest on-line paper capacity in their class – up to 5,600 sheets.

All models in the MX Series line utilize Sharp's multitasking controller technology with dual job queuing to process copy, print and scan jobs more efficiently.

The MX Series MFPs also enable users to print color or black and white files directly from a USB memory device, such as a thumb drive. For added convenience, customers can scan a document on the MFP and save it to a USB memory device in popular formats such as TIFF, JPEG, PDF and encrypted PDF. Additional USB-based features include device installation cloning and firmware updates through USB memory device. Ideal for larger machine deployments, device cloning allows technicians to apply the same set-up information to every machine so users have an identical experience on all of the MX MFPs they use. The software embedded into the MFPs hardware, also referred to as the firmware, can be updated using a USB memory device, eliminating the need for technicians to carry laptops for firmware upgrades. Only authorized technicians can upgrade the machines' firmware.

Full Featured to Meet Mid-Sized Business Needs

The new entry-level document systems for small to mid-sized workgroups provide exceptional performance, with copy and print speeds in both color and black and white of up to 23 PPM on the MX-2300N and up to 27 PPM on the MX-2700N. These compact and flexible models offer many innovative features not found typically on MFPs in this category, such as advanced user account management, inbound fax routing to e-mail, secure print and scan-to SMB.

Network Security

Since MFPs have become an integral part of the networked office, IT administrators are demanding more and more advanced security features. Sharp offers several layers of network and data security to deploy digital copying, printing, scanning and faxing safely in any business or government environment. The industry-leading security for these network-attached MFPs can be enhanced through data security kits, which encrypt document data using 128-bit encryption and erase the memory of a document on the hard drive by overwriting encrypted data up to seven times.

For added security, the MX Series MFPs all have accounting and management tools to ensure that only authorized users can access the machines. The MX-4501N and MX-3501N can be programmed with up to 1,000 user accounts while the MX-2700N and MX-2300N offer 200 user accounts. These user accounts can be customized to better manage machine usage and related costs by setting limits on different features such as color copying. The MX series can also be configured to require users to log into a corporate network, using LDAP protocols, via a virtual QWERTY keyboard on the MFP's large LCD screen or external USB keyboard before they can copy, scan, fax or e-mail.

Superior Image Quality and Finishing Options

For superb reproduction quality, Sharp developed micro-fine toner technology and advanced image stabilization for enhanced image definition that delivers outstanding output on every page. The MX Series also monitors ambient conditions, such as humidity and temperature, during the imaging process to ensure optimal image quality and color balance.

To collate, sort, staple and otherwise finish outputted jobs for a professional look and feel, the new MFPs offer a choice of finishing selections, including a compact internal finisher or a floor-standing saddle-stitch finisher. All four models have three-position stapling and three-hole punching options.

Custom Application Integration with Sharp Open Systems Architecture

Sharp Open Systems Architecture (Sharp OSA) is a development platform that opens the door to a broad array of value-added functionality and flexibility, all designed to deliver the power of customization to the customer. Sharp OSA leverages the inherent interoperability of web services design to enable Sharp, its dealer network and ISV partners to better meet customer needs.

Sharp OSA streamlines document workflow and enhances productivity by making the MFP a gateway for document-based business communications, enabling customers to automate tasks and save time. For example, businesses will be able to scan an invoice on the MFP and integrate that invoice into an accounting software package instantly to process payments without user intervention at the desktop. Additionally, Sharp OSA-enabled MFPs allow companies to control access and track usage more effectively by offering tighter integration capabilities for areas such as network security and accounting.

Sharp is also partnering with developers to integrate all types of applications with Sharp MFPs. For faster deployment, Sharp OSA uses industry-standard protocols such as XML and SOAP, which allow the MFP to communicate with business-critical programs such as document management systems and workflow software, as well as

perform expanded tasks on the network.

Dedicated My Sharp Support

The MX Series models come with My Sharp support that is customized by Sharp's independent dealers to match the features of customers' MX Series MFP. Customers visit their personalized My Sharp page to see more than 50 web demonstrations that walk the user through typical and not-so-typical product usage and service questions. For example, users can use My Sharp to learn how to load toner or program complicated copy jobs. My Sharp also provides online access to user manuals and supply information so customers can get the information they need anytime with a few simple keystrokes.

Availability

The new MX-4501N, MX-3501N, MX-2700N and MX-2300N advanced color document systems will be available this month from authorized Sharp dealers.

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* Sharp was awarded a BERTL's Best of 2005 Award for "Best Security Solution Suite."