THE PRINTER

Chesapeake PC Users Group, Inc.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Happy Holidays Everyone!

In keeping with our tradition, we will discuss holiday gifts at the December 14, 2005 meeting. These gifts are technological in nature, so let's review some of the items and terminology that we will discuss.

IPod

This fall, **Apple** released the latest in the **IPod** series, the **IPod Nano** and the **IPod** with video. The **Nano** holds up to 1000 songs, displays album art in full color, weighs 1.5oz and is as thin as a pencil. This is the ultimate in portable media.

For those who want more from their media players, the latest 'standard' **IPod** should be considered. This **IPod** holds up to 15000 songs, 25,000 pictures or 150 hours of video. Yes, this **IPod** does video! This is a perfect way to catch up on your favorite TV shows while you are on a flight or train (don't watch it while driving a car).

Since I'm on the topic of the **IPod,** there are a couple of terms that you should be familiar with when discussing an **IPod**.

Podcasting - Podcasting is a term used to describe a collection of technologies for automatically distributing audio and video programs over the internet using a publisher/subscriber model. It differs from earlier online collections of audio or video material, because it automatically transfers materials to the user's computer for later consumption; it is

one example of push technology. Podcasting enables independent producers to create self-published, syndicated "radio shows," and gives broadcast radio or television programs a new distribution method.

Any digital audio player or computer with audio-playing software can play podcasts. From the earliest RSS-enclosure tests in 2000 and 2001, feeds have been used to deliver video files as well as audio, and other media such as photographs and text are transferable by podcast. The term "podcast", however, still refers largely to audio content distribution.

Advanced Audio Coding (AAC) is a lossy data compression scheme intended for audio streams. This is the **IPod** 'standard' format for music encoding, similar to MP3 encoding.

The world is flat (screen)

Many of you now use a flat, LCD, screen for your computer. Many have been hesitant in spending $3000 (or more) on a flat panel for their television viewing. The prices of decent flat screens have recently fallen, and an LCD or Plasma set can now be purchased for $1500 or less. I personally purchased a 32 inch LCD TV in November for $850, delivered. And I'm very happy with the set!

Like any new technology, there are some terms that you should be aware of. When considering

The Top 19 Inch LCD Monitor

19-inch monitors previously had troubles with refresh rates and prices compared to 17-inch screens, but that disadvantage is quickly being removed, thanks to a new group of screens. The 19-inch diagonal measurement gives them roughly the same display space as a 21-inch CRT monitor. Here are the selections for the best 19-inch LCD monitor based upon research and experience.

Sony SDM-HS95P

Sony has long been a top name when it comes to consumer electronics and now they are taking that knowledge into computer displays. The SDM-HS95P is one of the brightness screens available in the 19" LCD segment and has some of the best color representation available. Response times are quite good, making it an excellent monitor for fast motion. It really is a stunning display to look at. One of the big drawbacks to the screen, is the stand that limits its adjustability.

The Best Serial ATA Hard Drive

Serial ATA is the hot technology for hard drive storage thanks to its simplicity for users to install compared to the older IDE technology. Most of the innovation for hard drive performance and capacity are now showing up in these new drives. Here are the best Serial ATA hard drives based the research and experience of the About PC Hardware / Reviews Guide.

Seagate Barracuda 7200.9 500GB

Seagate has made a lot of waves in the storage industry, particularly with its five year warranty plan on all drives. Their latest Barracuda 7200.9 drive adds SATA300 support with Native Command Queuing, a 16MB cache and a very spacious 500GB hard drive size. All of this allows the drive to push itself to the top of many performance tests. This drive is definitely one to consider for performance and reliability.

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Contrast Ratio – 600:1, 1000:1, 1200:1, etc. Basically the higher the number the better
Response time – This goes for any LCD screen, 20 ms, 12 ms, 8 ms, etc. The faster the better. This is the time it takes to go from gray to gray.
**Resolution** – 1366 x 768 etc. This is similar to computer screens.
Brightness – 450 nits, 500 nits, 600 nits, etc. The higher the better.

You should also consider the type of input that your TV will accept. Below is a typical layout with some of the new LCD TVs. When connecting to your set, the quality of the picture will be influenced by the type of input you are connecting. From worst to best television inputs are; composite (Video, Left and Right audio RCA connections), S-Video (4 pin DIN connector, Left and Right audio RCA connections), Component (Red, Green, Blue connections, Left and Right audio RCA connections), DVI (Digital Video Interface, a specialized digital video interface, Left and Right audio RCA connections) (HDMI (High Definition Media Interface, a specialized digital interface that contains both video and audio).
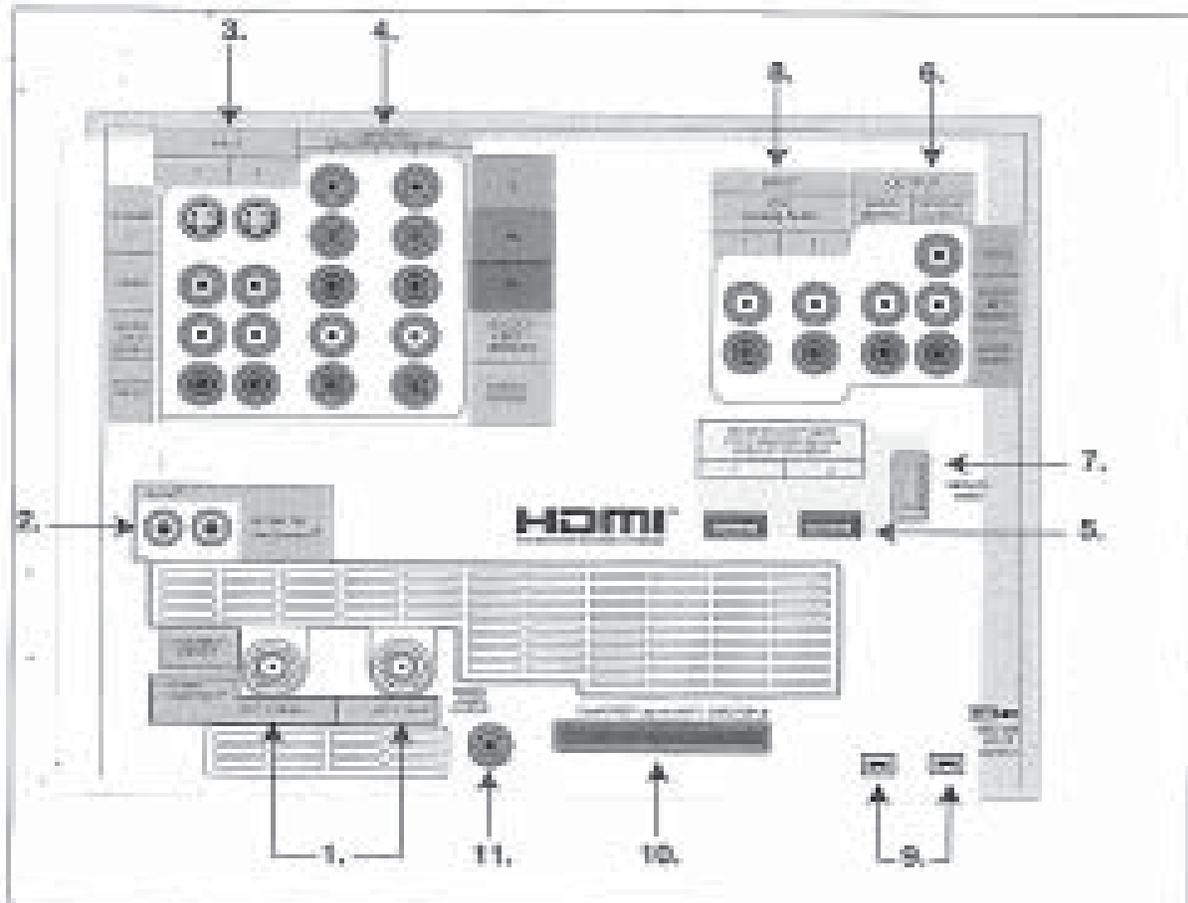
Obviously, you should always try to get the best picture possible when interfacing you your television. Most digital cable boxes provide Component output in addition to the subordinate interfaces. Some cable boxes offer DVI. Connect the best interface that you have available.

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President's Corner - cont'd

Obviously, you should always try to get the best picture possible when interfacing with your television. Most digital cable boxes provide Component output in addition to the subordinate interfaces. Some cable boxes offer DVI. Connect the best interface that you have available.

You should look for a set that has the most interfaces possible. Your DVD player may have a Component output, as well at the Component output from your cable box. If you choose a set that has two Component interfaces, you are set. Other wise you will have to switch them out when you want watch one or the other. You may also consider upgrading your DVD player to one that has an HDMI interface (if your TV has this available).

XBox 360

The XBox 360 is the next iteration of the Microsoft XBox game system. If you happen to be one of the lucky few to actually have one, count your blessings. As for the technical specs, it's pretty impressive:
CPU: 3.2GHz PowerPC processor with three cores

Graphics: ATI custom graphics chip
RAM: 512MB GDDR3 Unified System Memory
ROM: 10MB of embedded DRAM
Optical drive: 12X DVD drive
Storage: 20GB hard drive (included with Premium version; separate accessory for Core System)

To take advantage of the improved graphics, you should connect the system to a high definition television. There really isn't much more to say then it's bigger and better then the previous generation of game consoles.

Winter Weather Advisory

As you know we meet in a public school and are under their guidelines. If the school is closed, our meetings are canceled. If you are unsure the school is open, you can check the Anne Arundel County school web site, www.aacps.org

Hope to see you at the meetings!

Michael

Microsoft's AntiSpyware Re-branded 'Windows Defender'

Microsoft's Windows AntiSpyware technology has been renamed "Windows Defender" and has been expanded to detect and remove rootkits, keystroke loggers and other forms of malware. The revamped application will be bundled into the Windows Vista operating system, but users will be free to choose a competing spyware protection product from a redesigned Windows Security Center.

BUT, you can look at this another way….Here are a couple of tips:

1) Install Firefox, use exclusively, do NOT install any ActiveX plugins.

2) Do not use an email client (such as Outlook/Outlook Express, Thunderbird, etc). Use web-based email such as Yahoo or others. DON'T DOWNLOAD AND RUN EXECUTABLE ATTACHMENTS!!

Your system will stay nice and clean, free of spyware and viruses. (Until the Cows Come Home… Michael Jackson is elected to Congress….. well maybe not that long).

Or just don´t do your surfing or mail reading on an administrative account.

Ten HDTV Myths

The world of high-definition television can be as confusing as it is alluring. If you're ready to make the leap, here are the facts you need.

Plasma TV sets start out bright and beautiful, but burn out to an early death. Every single high-definition television program looks equally crisp and gorgeous. The higher resolution of a 1080p high-def set means that your shows and DVDs will always look better than on a more ordinary 720p set.

Are these gospel truths about HDTV? Nope. Just a sampling of the many popular factoids, half-truths, and myths that can make choosing and enjoying a high-def television set complicated and confusing—and in some cases, needlessly expensive.

To help dispel these myths, we consulted an A-team of HDTV experts. The challenge: Identify and debunk troublesome, costly, and all-too-prevalent misconceptions about high-definition TV—from the basics of broadcasting to the arcane secrets of hardware. We lay out the facts you'll need to have at your disposal, in order to make the right decisions. Armed with this information, you'll know just what to expect when you take the HDTV plunge.

"An HD set is all you need to get high-def programs."

In our dreams! To experience the vibrant images and the Dolby 5.1 sound of true high-definition TV, you need several things—and an HD-ready set (a display that can accept HD-format input and display it at a minimum of 720 lines of progressive-scan or noninterlaced video) is just one of them.

First, a show needs to be shot in high definition, and that may not be the case, even when a show claims that it is. Bjorn Dybdahl, owner of Bjorn's, a high-end audio-video store in San Antonio, Texas, says that he's seen many high-def sports broadcasts shown partly in standard definition because the producer is using some non-HD cameras in its coverage. And although TNT's digital channel presents *Law & Order* reruns in high definition, early episodes weren't shot in HD; as a result, in those episodes, you see a 4:3 standard-def show that is stretched and scaled up to high-def size. It doesn't look great.

Second, the program must be transmitted in high def by a station you can receive either over the air, or from your cable or satellite provider. ("Shown in high definition where available" doesn't mean it's available to you.)

Third, you need an HD receiver to process the signal. A set that has a built-in ATSC digital tuner can display over-the-air HD broadcasts with nothing more than a good antenna. ATSC, which stands for Advanced Television Standards Committee, is the group that defined the 18 formats of the coming digital TV system, only 6 of which are considered high definition. (And by the way, there is no such thing as an HD antenna—there are just antennas.) If your HDTV set comes with picture-in-picture, you won't get high-def-picture-in-high-def-picture unless your set comes with two ATSC tuners.

An HD-ready set lacks such a tuner, so you'll need either a set-top box with a tuner, or an HD box from your cable or satellite service. Regardless of the box you get, you need to make sure that you're feeding its digital output into your HD-ready set. "A lot of people will get an HD-ready set [and] an HD cable box, but they will use the analog feed from the HD box," says Jeff Cove, Panasonic's vice president for technology and alliances.

Finally, you must tune your HDTV set to a high-definition channel showing actual HD content. Picking up the analog transmission from your local affiliate on your high-def cable box won't result in delivery of a show in HD.

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Ten HDTV Myths - Cont'd

"The bigger your HDTV set, the better it will look."

Bigger isn't better if you are seated so close to the set that you can see every pixel or line of resolution. Generally, you don't want to sit closer to a 720p HDTV than twice the length of the screen diagonal.

On the other hand, if you sit too far away from a high-resolution TV, its special benefits may disappear. "For an awful lot of viewing, what limits the resolution is the human eye," says Larry Weber, president-elect of the Society for Information Display, a group of display industry pros. At a distance of 10 feet from the screen, the eye can't detect pixels smaller than 1 millimeter; so if you look at a 37-inch set from that far away, you won't notice significant difference between a high-definition image and a standard-def image.

Content also affects perceived image quality. Digital TVs are fixed-pixel displays—the screen resolution is hard-wired, so content has to be scaled, or adjusted, to fit the screen resolution. Not surprisingly, most television content is most attractive when displayed at its native resolution. That's why today's DVD movies, which reproduce the original film at 480 lines of progressive-scan video, may look better on an Enhanced Definition TV than on an HDTV: EDTV has the same screen resolution (480p) that DVDs have, while HDTV must scale the number of lines to 720p or 1080p (depending on the set), usually via software interpolation.

Conversely, to display HD programming, an EDTV has to eliminate lines of content (once again, usually by software interpolation), and on larger sets the resulting quality loss may be quite obvious.

"The higher the screen resolution, the better the image quality of an HDTV."

Most HDTV sets today are 720p displays, but a few vendors are beginning to offer 1080p sets—either LCDs or rear-projection micro-display (LCD, LCoS, DLP) models. As yet, no 1080p plasmas are available (though some have been announced in very large sizes). These sets will clearly do the best job of handling 1080p content—when it arrives. But today's HDTV shows are shown in either 720p or 1080i format: nobody broadcasts in 1080p because of bandwidth issues. Movies may someday be available in 1080p on optical media, but Hollywood hasn't settled on the next-generation hardware standard (Blu-ray or HD-DVD), much less chosen a content format.

Lack of 1080p content is one reason some vendors are holding off on introducing 1080p sets. But those that are selling 1080p sets point out that some HDTV is broadcast in 1080i, and that such content arguably looks better on a 1080p set because less scaling is involved. (On the other hand, 720p content has to be scaled up for a 1080p set.) Here again, though, the capabilities of the human eye come into play: You'll probably notice the superior resolution of 1080p only if you sit very close to the set—or have an extremely large set.

"You have to relinquish the fluid motion of a CRT screen when you move up to HDTV."

Not at all. You can purchase a high-definition CRT set—and you'll save a lot of money if you do, because they cost less than LCD and plasma-screen televisions of similar size. But in doing so you'll lose the sleek flat-panel chic of a plasma or LCD set. If you want that slim profile, however, be aware that LCDs have trouble rendering fluid motion, as a result of their somewhat pedestrian response times. Plasma and DLP screens aren't susceptible to this technological weakness.

Ten HDTV Myths - Cont'd

"Burn-in will wreck your plasma HDTV within a year."

The plasma display has advanced since the days when most of us saw plasmas only at airports, where constantly switched-on screens showing formatted flight information suffered from burn-in—ghost images that linger on screen despite no longer being transmitted.

Today, vendors rate the life expectancy of high-quality plasma TVs at 60,000 hours. That works out to more than 20 years of use if you watch 8 hours a day, 365 days a year; it's also about the same lifetime claimed for LCDs and CRTs (the latter are similarly prone to burn-in because, like plasma TVs, they depend on phosphor-based displays).

What changed? Phosphors and gas mixtures in the new plasma panels greatly reduce the risk of burn-in, and some sets use burn-in prevention software. "If you're not worried about burn-in for your CRT, you shouldn't worry about it for your plasma TV," says the Society for Information Display's Larry Weber.

"Bright LCDs look beautiful everywhere, and they use much less power than plasma or CRT sets do."

It's true that LCDs are bright, which makes them a good choice if you watch TV in a brightly lit room. But if you're inclined to turn down the lights for your rendezvous with *Entourage* or *Medium*, you probably don't want the brightest set on the block, and plasmas and CRTs offer superior color capabilities without introducing the response-time (and associated motion artifacting) issues that have long plagued LCDs.

As for power consumption, a study by Japan's Green Purchasing Network—an organization dedicated to promoting environmentally friendly purchasing by consumers, business, and government—concluded that the power consumption of similar-size plasma, CRT, and traditional LCD displays in real-world viewing situations is practically the same. However, the coming generation of LCDs that use LED backlighting, while expected to deliver significantly better color, will consume roughly twice as much power as traditional LCDs of the same size.

"These pricey TVs look so great out of the box that it's a waste to pay a small fortune to have a professional calibrate your set."

That's a double-whammy myth. It's well known in the TV business that vendors usually ship sets turned to their highest possible brightness level, since brightness draws customers on the showroom floor. At home, however, many people watch TV under low lighting conditions in which an overly bright set can look jarring. In addition, the TV may arrive with less-than-accurate color settings. Consequently, almost any set will benefit from calibration. A professional calibrator has tools that can access settings most of us can't reach—and shouldn't, since we wouldn't know what to do with them. But the pros do charge a few hundred dollars for their services, and you can achieve reasonably good results on your own with software such as the $40 DVD Essentials.

"All true HDTV programming looks equally great."

This claim gets us to a dirty little secret of HD broadcasting: All HDTV programs are compressed—some to a greater extent than others.

The FCC allots each TV station sufficient airwave spectrum to broadcast a little over 19 megabits per second of data, but stations aren't required to devote their share to a single high-def program. They may compress an HD show enough to leave room for one or two standard-def broadcasts as well—a practice known as multicasting.

The ATSC standard includes support for

Ten HDTV Myths - Cont'd

MPEG2 video encoding, but it says nothing about compression levels. Broadcasting an uncompressed MPEG2 video would require 885 mbps (for 720p content) or 995 mbps (for 1080i content). A station that broadcasts a single HD program can devote only 18 mbps to it, HDTV consultant Peter Putman says; and to get that, broadcasters have to use a compression ratio of 49:1 for 720p and 55:1 for 1080i.

If a station uses its bandwidth to broadcast both an HD show and a standard-def show, the HD program has to fit into 13 or 14 mbps. And a station sending out two standard-definition channels along with an HD channel must compress the HD signal to roughly 13.5 mbps, which entails compression ratios in the vicinity of 66:1. Such high compression produces artifacts that might not be noticeable on a small CRT, but can be quite obvious on a big fixed-pixel display. These include mosquito noise, an effect in which small dots seem to surround a person's head; and macroblock errors, similar to what a fast-moving video game looks like on a PC with too little graphics power.

You can get a hint of how much a station compresses its video by learning whether it multicasts. But generally speaking, satellite and cable carriers compress HD programs more than over-the-air broadcasters do. Though they have a lot more bandwidth at their disposal than terrestrial stations, these pay-TV carriers need it for sending out the dozens of channels their subscribers expect (not to mention extras like Internet access). Dish Network has said that, because of bandwidth constraints, it will gradually move all of its customers to equipment that supports MPEG4 encoding, which is more efficient than MPEG2. But sometimes it's out of the carriers' hands, too. Pay-TV content providers such as Discovery, ESPN, and HBO also compress their programs before beaming them to the cable and satellite services.

"Standard-definition TV is unwatchable on HDTV."

Well...this is a case of hyperbole, not of outright fabrication. True, standard-def programming will never look as good as HD programming on an HDTV because of the scaling issues mentioned previously. But vendors are toiling to better the SD experience on their HD sets, and the success of these efforts varies between vendors and sets. So if you're expecting to watch standard-definition TV on an HD set, make sure that you do your own taste tests.

"I'll have to toss all my current analog sets when the digital conversion kicks in."

Though this is not strictly an HDTV issue, it is a common misconception about the digital transition, which Congress seems bent on completing by 2008. At that point your old sets won't be able to snag over-the-air broadcasts without help, but you should still be able to use them by buying inexpensive digital-to-analog converters. And cable or satellite boxes will still work because the service provider will take care of the conversion. Of course, you won't be able to experience HDTV on an analog set.

These may not be the only myths you'll encounter in your quest for the perfect HDTV—and you can't trust everything you hear (or see) in a showroom. So careful research is essential before you pay for what's likely to be the most expensive TV set you've ever bought. And that is the gospel truth.

Ed: I already went out and bought my 50" Plasma TV.

Chesapeake PC Users Group

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Firefox 1.5

REVIEW DATE: 11.24.05

The best browser gets even better with improved tab controls, reworked user preferences, a more robust extensions system, faster page loading and better security.

PROS

Already streamlined user interface gets better with the addition of drag-and-drop organization of tabs. Background security-patch updates. Intelligent caching speeds up forward and backward browsing.

CONS

Incompatible with ActiveX or other Internet Explorer-specific code. Extensions need to be updated.

In the space of a roughly a year, Firefox has gone from relative obscurity to being the second most popular browser in the world. It's got only about 9 percent of the Internet browsing market, but that's incredible for a version 1.0 product, especially since the top browser, Microsoft Internet Explorer, comes bundled with new PCs. The release of Firefox 1.5, the first major upgrade since Firefox 1.0 came out in November 2004, is almost certain to drive adoption rates even higher.

Firefox has not fattened up with its success; it's still lean, mean, fast, and clean. The core application itself is less than 5MB. By comparison, Internet Explorer 6 SP1 (including Outlook Express) ranges from 11MB to 75MB depending on which files are needed, according to the Microsoft Web site.

At first glance, Firefox 1.5 (we tested RC3) doesn't seem much different from Firefox 1.0. Everything is where it should be, with the familiar customizable button bars and a tabbed browsing interface. And in case you're considering a download, 1.5 RC3 is rock-solid. The only complications may be some non-compatible extensions—but we'll get to that later.

The most noticeable improvement in the user interface is the ability to reorder tabs via drag-and-drop. With Firefox 1.0, users had to view tabs in the order in which they were opened. Navigation is significantly faster, as Mozilla has implemented "intelligent caching" on the forward and back buttons, so the pages one is most likely to visit are preloaded—with no visible performance impact. User preferences have been redesigned to provide a cleaner tabbed interface, and features are more intuitively arranged.

But the most important Firefox tune-ups are under the hood. Application and extension updates are now pushed to the background. This relieves the burden of having to upgrade the application and extensions manually, as with Firefox 1.0, and ensures that the latest security patches are applied. Mozilla will have the ability to shut down holes as soon as they are found by pushing security patches to the browser. Many of these updates will be, according to the Mozilla Organization, less than 500KB, so they'll be unobtrusive (if noticeable at all). Our Firefox 1.5 RC2 was background-updated to Firefox 1.5 RC3 with very little impact on our browsing experience.

Firefox 1.5 includes an entirely new extension system, which unfortunately means that many older extensions won't work (Adblock and Forecast Fox worked properly on our test machine). Developers are updating their extensions as you read this, so the updated extensions could be in pretty good shape by the time 1.5 launches. Mozilla has even revamped the extensions-installation system. Although the process worked well in most instances, the installation, upgrade, and uninstall subsystems were prone to error. When it was installing a new version of an extension, it occasionally left files from older versions behind, which could lead to incompatibilities and browser instability.

The final, gold-code release of Firefox 1.5 should arrive before the end of November. You can download RC3 at: http://www.mozilla.org/products/firefox/

Ricoh Aficio G700

COMPANY Ricoh Corp.http://www.ricoh-usa.com

SPEC DATA Rated Speed: Text: 20 ppm Rated Speed: Color: 20 ppm Maximum Paper Size: Legal USB or Parallel Connection Type:

USB Number of Cartridges: 4 Number of Colors (Tanks): 4

BOTTOM LINE The Ricoh Aficio G700 is technically an ink jet, but behaves like a laser. It offers extraordinary performance, high-quality text and graphics, and photo quality that's low for an ink jet but reasonable for a laser. Its competition is not other ink jets, but low-end color lasers.

PROS High-quality text. High-quality graphics in best quality mode. Extraordinarily fast performance. Duplexing standard. Optional 500-sheet tray for maximum 700-sheet input capacity.

CONS Network adapter is optional and external. Graphics in default mode show banding, which limits the usefulness of default mode.

PRICE $449.00

Every so often someone comes out with a printer that doesn't fit well into the usual categories. The Ricoh Aficio G700 is the latest example. Although it's technically an ink jet, in that it sprays ink directly on paper, it's a new variation on ink jets. More important, the speed, quality, and price are much more in line with entry-level color lasers than with ink jets. All of this means its best fit is with the same small-office or heavy-duty home-office users who might otherwise choose a color laser.

The G700 measures 8.6 by 19.3 by 18.5inches (HWD) and weighs a hefty 24 pounds. That's bigger and heavier than most ink jets, but still a lot lighter than most low-end color lasers. Setup is straightforward. Simply load paper, install the four ink cartridges, plug in the power cord and USB cable, and install the software. You will also find an alignment routine in the driver, but according to Ricoh, there's never a need to align the printhead, since it's permanently installed in the printer, rather than being part of the ink cartridges.

The most important difference between the G700 and garden-variety ink jets is in the ink technology. The ink is a highly viscous gel rather than the usual liquid. As a result, it penetrates plain paper on contact, then dries almost immediately. That, in turn, makes it feasible to put ink on paper more quickly than with liquid ink—using a wider printhead than standard ink jets—which yields the fast performance.

Because of the G700's performance claims, we tested it with both the ink jet version of our business applications suite and the laser version (using QualityLogic's hardware and software to time the tests in both cases, www.qualitylogic.com). The ink jet version includes two 12-page Microsoft Word files. The laser version substitutes two 50-page files.

On the ink jet version of the suite, the G700 turned in a record-setting 6 minute 35 second total, cutting the previous record—13:10 for the HP Business Inkjet 1200d—in half. Even more impressive, the G700 sped through the laser version of the test in 13:48, which also qualifies as a new record for laser-class color printers

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in its price range. The fastest true color laser we've tested that's priced at $600 or less is the Samsung CLP-510N with an 18:14 total. And the Editors' Choice HP Color Laserjet 2600n was even slower, at 21:09.

Output quality is also laser-like, with ratings at the high end of very good for text, the high end of good for graphics, and the high end of fair for photos. Compared with ink jets, the text rating is high and the photo rating low. But compared with color lasers in its price range, the text quality is a notch below the most common score, photos are just a bit below average, and graphics are solidly midrange.

The G700 barely missed an excellent rating for text, with just under half the test fonts easily readable at 4 points, and none needing anything larger than 6. That's certainly good enough to handle anything you're likely to throw at it. Graphics are marginally good enough to use when you want output that reflects well on your professionalism. However, default mode shows obvious banding, so you'll need to use the best mode when quality counts. Photos are best described as newspaper quality—good enough for client newsletters or Web pages, but not much more.

With its slightly less than ideal quality, the G700 doesn't offer quite enough to replace the HP Color Laserjet 2600n as our Editors' Choice for entry-level color laser-class printers. But it does offer enough to earn a spot beside it, with the 2600n still our pick if you care more about output quality, and the G700 the winner if you care more about speed.

Quality Ratings and Sub-ratings

We use ratings to help highlight the strengths and weaknesses of printers and AIOs. Quality ratings use the same scale for all printers and AIOs. Text, Graphics, and Photo quality separately, since how well a printer does on one type of output does not predict how it will do on another type. For the same reason, we rate Performance for Business Applications and for Photos separately. The Performance ratings, are relative to all other printers or AIOs in the same category, at the time, we test the printer or AIO.

We also rate the Useability of each printer or AIO, the Paper Handling capability, and the Value based on a comparison with other printers or AIOs in the same category, with a Good (3) rating in each case, indicating the norm for that category. For AIOs, we rate both the Range of functions, defined by how many functions the AIO offers, and the Usability of those functions, defined by how easy those functions are to use. Finally, for dedicated photo printers and for ink jet printers that score at least a good (3) rating for photo quality, we rate Photo Permanence based on manufacturer claims of lightfastness and exposed lifetimes, and we rate Water Resistance, based on our own testing.

Quality ratings: **Text:** ●●●●◐ **Graphics:** ●●●◐○ **Photos:** ●●◐○○

Performance: **Business Apps:** ▬▬▬▬ **Photos: N/A**

Value: ▬▬▬

Useability: ●●◐○○ **Paper handling:** ●●●◐○

AIO Functions: **Range: N/A** **Useability: N/A** **Photo Permanence: N/A**

Water Resistance: N/A

The Next Regular Meeting will be at
The Severn River Middle School

Wednesday,
December 14th, 2005
Meeting will be held in the large meeting room.
It starts at 7:00 PM with club business and a short discussion period.

There will be Presentations on

Holiday Gift Ideas

Members and their friends are welcome to come, ask questions and become enlightened.

How to Find: Severn River Middle School

SRMS is close to the Arnold, MD campus of the Anne Arundel Community College. From Annapolis and parts south, take Rte 2 (Ritchie Highway) north about 3 miles from the intersection of Rt. 50, **turn right on College Parkway**. At the first light, turn left on Peninsula Farm Road. (Of course, if you are coming from points North, you would turn left on to College Parkway) about a half-mile down the road the large SRMS school building, set back off a large two level parking lot, will be visible on your right. Park here and go to the main entrance. Signs will be posted to direct you to the **Large Group Room** where we will be meeting.

How to find: The Technology SIG, A ChPCUG Special Interest Group**

The meetings are held at the SRMS in the Library.

Chesapeake PC Users Group

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Annapolis, MD 21401

FIRST CLASS

INSIDE THIS VERY ISSUE!
Computer Hardware Reviews
President's Corner
Holiday Gifts
HDTV Myths
MS AntiSpyware Update
Firefox 1.5
... and a little more!

Note: *The date above your name on the mailing label is the expiration date of your membership. Contact the Membership Chairman (page 2, column 2) to update.*