

KODAK PROFESSIONAL 1400 DIGITAL PHOTO PRINTER A £ I C E N S E \$ E T O P R I N T M O N E Y € Y ?

John Henshall feels that Kodak's new printer could pay for itself in just one evening

There was a time when Kodak dye sublimation printers cost eighteen grand, needed four people to lift them, three minutes to make a print and had a resolution of 203 pixels per inch.

Not any more though.

Kodak's new **Professional 1400** 'Thermal dye diffusion' **Digital Photo Printer** has been a long time coming since its announcement at Photokina 2004, but now at last it's here and available for only £340 + VAT. This price is less than half that of its predecessor, the 8500.

It will print an 8x10, 8x12, two 6x8s or four 4x6 prints in just ninety seconds. Prints emerge dry and water- and finger-print resistant, thanks to a gloss or matte lamination protective layer. Prints will last ... well, if not forever, for a long long time.

The best news of all is that the capital expenditure required is only £399.50 including VAT.

Running costs are reasonable too. A pack of A4 media (paper and ribbon) to print fifty 8x10 inch prints is £74.99 including VAT – just £1.50 each. Media for fifty 8.5x14 inch sheets, to print

8x12 inch prints, is £79.99 including VAT – £1.60 each.

The printer works by transferring ink from a donor ribbon which has a repeating series of yellow, magenta, cyan and lamination coatings. Each series of four colours and lamination is used to print just one image.

The image is built up by transferring ink from the donor ribbon as it passes between a blank sheet of paper and a

the more ink is transferred. This happens four times for each image – one pass each for yellow, magenta and cyan and then once again for the lamination. It's all very simple – but needs great precision and control.

Print resolution is 301 pixels per inch, continuous tone. Maximum image area is 8.27x12 inches.

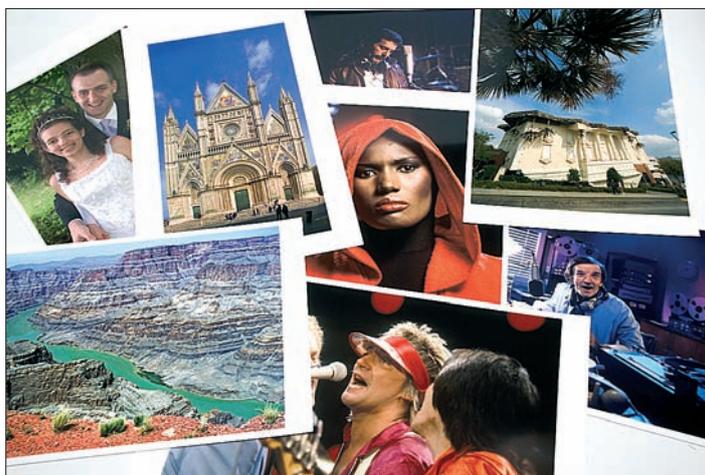
Printing time has been reduced significantly over previous models by

improving the stepper motors which move the paper through the printer. The printer is connected to the computer by USB 2.0, an upgrade which also helps speed up printing.

The way the lamination layer – known as XTRALIFE™ – is laid down has been improved so that it is now perfectly smooth, thanks to firmware and hardware changes.

The previous 8500 printer suffered from some smearing of saturated colours into lighter areas because the heads were not able to adjust temperature quickly enough. Another change in firmware, which now 'pulses' the print head, has been made to improve this.

These printers are extremely low



linear array of tiny heating elements, each of which is capable of very precise and variable heating control.

The amount of ink transferred is proportional to the heat of each element. The hotter the elements gets,



Kodak Professional 1400 Digital Photo Printer

maintenance, without any of the head clogs associated with inkjet printers. They can be moved from location to location, too, without problem.

The main problem to guard against is dust, small particles of which can cause white specks on the prints. The answer is to keep the printing environment clean. Prevention is the best cure.

Setting up the printer is very easy if you use a PC. Initially, no driver was available for the latest Macintosh operating system but this has now been rectified. However, I needed to update the printer firmware using a PC before the printer would accept files from the Macintosh.

Prints cost £1.50 (8x10) or £1.60 (8x12) each, regardless of how much dye needs to be transferred from the donor ribbon.

Two 5x8 or four 4x5 images may be printed on a sheet of A4, thus costing

75p or 37.5p each respectively.

Alternatively, two 6x8 or four 4x6 may be printed on a sheet of 8.5x14,



The Donor Colour Ribbon

costing 80p or 40p each respectively.

The Kodak Professional 1400 Digital

Photo Printer gives you the capability to produce professional quality prints in your studio or on location. The machine is light enough to be carried easily, with handy recesses on both sides to give a firm grip.

If you photograph events, such as golf days, dance clubs or black-tie 'dos', and charge £15 each for a 8x10 print, that's a gross profit of £13.50 each.

At this rate, 30 prints would cover the cost of the printer and the remaining 20 prints in the media pack would return a pure profit of £270. Thereafter, a £74.99 pack of media could clear you £675, the printer itself having already been paid for.

Now that sounds like good business to me. In fact it reminds me of Lord Thompson's famous remark about ITV being a 'license to print money'.

**So come on – let's make money. Now!
Thank you very much, Kodak.**