

Kyocera TASKalfa 552ci

Business Color Device
50 PPM Color / 55 PPM Black
Copy · Print · Fax · Scan



Overall Rating	★★★★☆
Value	★★★★☆
Ease of Use.....	★★★★☆
Black Copy Productivity	★★★★☆
Color Copy Productivity	★★★★☆
Black Print Productivity.....	★★★★☆
Color Print Productivity.....	★★★★☆
Black Image Quality	★★★★☆
Color Image Quality	★★★★☆
Multitasking.....	Lab Test Report Only
Utilities	Lab Test Report Only
Reliability.....	Lab Test Report Only
Feedback to Workstations	Lab Test Report Only
Toner Yield/Costs per Page.....	Lab Test Report Only

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Offering rated speeds of 50 ppm for color and 55 ppm for black, the Kyocera TASKalfa 552ci is the newest member of the company's line of business color MFPs. It proved to be a very strong overall performer in BLI's Field Test, earning an overall rating of Four and a Half Stars out of a possible Five Stars overall. The unit exhibited excellent black and very good color image quality, and stood out in key productivity areas, including BLI's job stream test. The device also offers very good overall ease of use and long-life consumables, all at a price that is among the lowest for the competitive group.

Featuring standard copy, print and scan capabilities, along with optional faxing, the TASKalfa 552ci's control panel and print drivers are similar to that of Kyocera's monochrome MFPs, thus allowing users to make an easy transition from a black-and-white MFP to this color MFP. The control panel is also highly customizable, allowing users to add up to 18 shortcuts for quick access to commonly-used selections. New to the print driver, the Quick Print tab enables users to create and save custom profiles stored as graphical icons to allow programming of complex jobs in one click. Removing misfeeds and replacing toner were also found to be simple overall. A Web browser has been added as a standard feature from the control panel, and it will also play a part as the company expands its new HyPAS (Hybrid

Ratings are based upon a five-star system where five is the best.

Suggested retail price: \$20,168 base unit. (Complete specifications information for this unit, including pricing for accessories and options, is available through bliQ, at www.buyerslab.com/bliq.)

Testing method: The unit's copy/print capabilities were tested using a Windows XP workstation, connected via a gigabit Ethernet switch with CAT-5E Ethernet cables, the Kyocera print controller and Kyocera's KX print driver, which includes PCL and KPDL (PostScript emulation).

Advantages

- Outstanding overall value, including a price that is among the lowest for the group when comparably configured and a very good overall test performance.
- Excellent overall performance in color for BLI's job stream test, which simulates usage in a real-world, multi-user environment.
- Fast first-copy times in both color and black from the document feeder and platen mean users can quickly make copies and return to their desks, increasing efficiency. Test results when copying multiple sets in single-sided mode also higher than average.
- Outstanding black image quality and very good overall color image quality means users can effectively leverage black and color in their documents, charts and marketing presentations.
- Whereas some competitors have multiple components that need to be replaced at different yields, the TASKalfa 552ci's preventive maintenance interval coincides with that of the drum and developer yields, lowering the number of service calls typically required.
- Dual-scan document feeder option scans both sides of an original in one pass and reduces wear and tear on the engine.
- The print driver's Quick Print tab enables users to create and save custom profiles stored as graphical icons to allow programming of complex jobs in one click.
- Excellent overall ease of programming from the control panel and robust customization capabilities, with the ability to add up to 18 total shortcuts to the device's core functions.
- Simple overall procedures for removing misfeeds and replacing toner.
- In addition to printing from and scanning to any USB drive right from the touch screen control panel, users can encrypt to USB, as well as apply finishing capabilities, duplex settings, image quality adjustments and pull from any tray.
- Standard Web browser access from the control panel.

Shortcomings

- Cumbersome procedures for switching between the PCL and PostScript drivers, as users must right click the device in Windows' "Printers and Faxes" and close and reopen the driver for the change to take effect.
- Slightly more cumbersome procedures for adjusting paper drawers than some competing models; the sliding metal length guides feature pegs on the underside, so users must lift the guide and slide it to the appropriate paper size, then push it down into the appropriate holes to lock it into place. When loading paper size larger than letter size in the first drawer, an extension arm on the length guide must be pushed down due to the location of the bypass internally.
- Standard and maximum paper capacities are also the lowest for the group.

Platform for Advanced Solutions) platform for third-party applications. The device also comes standard with two 160-GB hard drives and 2 GB of RAM that support Kyocera's Document Box, which allows users to securely print and store jobs on the device and output them when needed.

▲ VALUE ANALYSIS



The TASKalfa 552ci, configured as a copier/printer with PCL and PostScript 3 printing, a saddle-stitch finisher and a reversing automatic document feeder, has a suggested retail price that is among the lowest of the group, coming in at almost 13 percent below the average. Users can also add a 100-sheet dual-scan document feeder that scans single-sided pages at up to 75 ipm and double-sided pages at up to 100 ipm. If the dual-scan document feeder is added, which scans double-sided originals in a single pass and reduces wear and tear on the engine, the device is still nearly 11.5 percent lower than the average of the group. In addition to offering outstanding black image quality and very good color image quality, as well as very good overall ease of use and productivity, the TASKalfa 552ci's rated color and black drum yields, at 300,000 impressions each, are among the highest for the group. The drum yields also coincide with the preventive maintenance schedule and color and black developer yields, lowering the number of service calls typically required. In addition, the document feeder and bypass capacities are competitive with the group, as are the standard and maximum memory and hard drive capacities. Users can also add a 3,000-sheet large-capacity tray or dual 500-sheet paper trays. Both the 3,000-sheet finisher and the 1,000-sheet finisher offer multi-position stapling of up to 50 sheets. Two- and three-hole punching and booklet making are also available, with folding of up to 16 sheets to create 64-page booklets, as is a multi-bin mailbox for the 3,000-sheet finisher. Up to two G3 fax systems can be added as well. BLI rates value by evaluating a unit's SRP in relation to its overall performance, paper handling, and user and service intervention (see Advantages/Shortcomings).

▲ SUMMARY

Because of its color capabilities, as well as its excellent black and very good color image quality, and very good overall ease of use and productivity, BLI gives the Kyocera TASKalfa 552ci an overall Field Tested Rating** of Four and a Half Stars.

*** Note: The data presented in this Field Test Report was obtained from testing performed by BLI outside of our 10,000 sq. ft. test lab. BLI's Lab Test Reports contain the results of BLI's extensive in-house testing for reliability, multitasking, toner yield/cost per page and performance of additional functions and on additional platforms. Please contact BLI (phone 201-488-0404, or e-mail info@buyerslab.com) for information regarding when the Lab Test Report for this product will be available.*

Ease of Use

Control panel	★★★★★
User maintenance	★★★★☆
Print drivers	★★★★☆

Control Panel

The TASKalfa 552ci features a color LCD display control panel. Although there is no contrast dial, the clarity of the LCD is excellent. In addition, the control panel can be tilted to two locking positions, allowing users to view it from various lighting conditions, and also providing easy access for persons with disabilities. Contrast can be adjusted from the touch screen. The Accessibility Display hard key enlarges the copy screen for users who prefer this setup, such as the visually impaired. A Help hard key is also available, and provides a fairly detailed list which can take users through various selections of the control panel. Help is available for basic copying, sending capabilities, selecting destinations from address book, printing, storing and editing a custom box document, basic scanning, cancelling a job, checking job details, changing job processing order, viewing job history, printing from removable memory and checking toner. LED indicators notify users of the device status. Green indicates ok, and red indicates a problem with the device.

Hard keys for Status/Job Cancel, Copy, Program, Send, Application and Document Box allow users to easily switch between the different functions of the device. The hard keys are color coded and include LED indicators that remain lit to indicate which function is in use. In addition, the control panel screen is color coded based on the function users have selected, serving as an additional reference for users to know which function they are currently working in. The control panel is highly customizable via the System Menu hard key, and users can change the default screen to any of the available functions. The default screen can even be changed to the Accessibility Display. Six shortcuts can be added per core function (Copy, Send, Document Box),

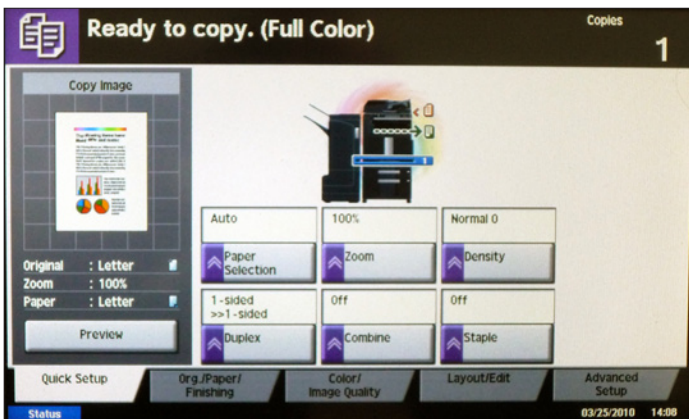


TASKalfa 552ci Control Panel

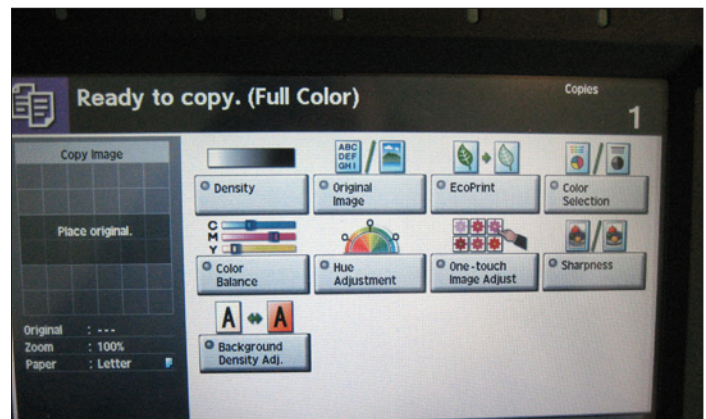
for 18 total. A status line on the bottom of the copy screen cycles through and informs users on the status of consumables, such as toner and waste toner container.

On the Quick Setup tab within the Copy function, a thumbnail on the left side of the screen displays the selections for the current job being programmed, including paper size, color, finishing and reduction/enlargement. At the default settings, most of the selections for a typical copy job can be accessed from the Quick Setup tab, albeit not programmable from this tab, including duplex, paper selection, reduce/enlarge, collate/offset, color selection and finishing options such as staple and hole punch. When one of the copy job functions is clicked on, a window pops up within the Quick Setup tab that allows users to make their selections. A More button from the pop-up windows provides additional choices, but when selected takes users away from the Quick Setup tab versus opening up another pop-up window. Users are brought back to the Quick Setup tab after pressing ok.

The Org./Paper/Finishing tab offers selections for mixed size originals, original orientation, collate/offset, staple/punch and paper output. The Color/Image Quality tab features an eco print selection, which can be used to save toner when printing or to test copies or any other occasion where high quality print is not necessary. Also from the Color/Image Quality tab, users can adjust the strength of cyan, magenta, yellow and black, as well as adjust the sharpness and background density. One-touch image adjustment selections include Vivid, Dull, Sharp, Smooth, Light and Dark.



When a copy job function is clicked on, a window pops up within the Quick Setup tab that allows users to make their selections.

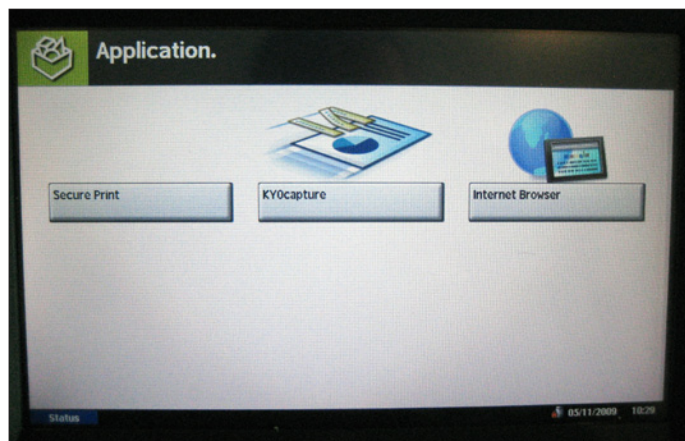


Color/Image Quality Tab

Some advanced features available include Continuous Scan, which enables users to scan a large number of originals in separate batches and then produce them as one job. Priority Override gives a print job top priority to be completed before returning to other print jobs. This feature is also available in the job queue. In addition, paper can be inserted between each OHP transparency. Page numbers can be added to printing documents, and users can print front covers or front and back covers. Users can print on different types of paper using different paper sources. Memo pages can also be created within copies for writing comments. Users can reserve half of a page for memo space, and can also copy two pages of an original to one page. To program a booklet copy job, users must not only access the Layout/Edit tab to select booklet and binding selections, but also the Org./Paper/Finishing tab for paper selection.

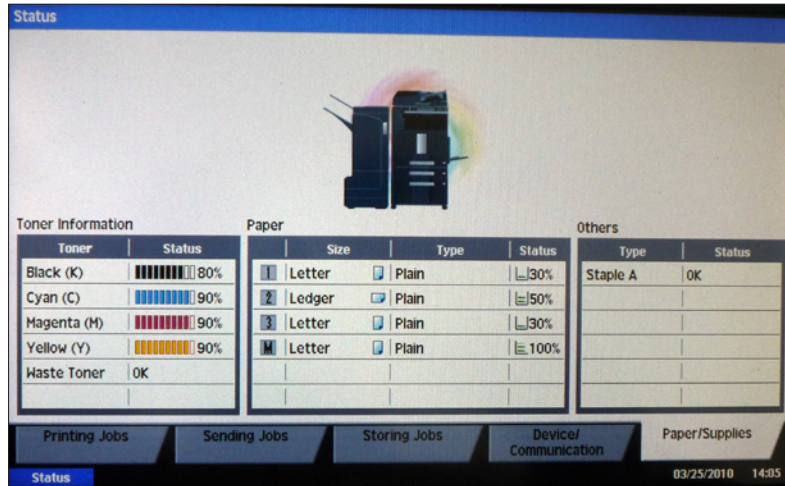
At the right of the panel is the USB port and when a USB flash drive is inserted, a menu is launched that can automatically bring the user to the Removable Memory tab (see the scanner section for more on this capability). Kyocera's Document Box allows users to securely print and store jobs on the device and output them when needed. It offers long-term job storage, and is also where users can access the host USB interface. Other capabilities of Document Box include proof and hold from printing and private print to custom box with access codes.

Via the Application hard key, users can access Kyocera's document workflow solutions such as KYOcapture and KYOcapture Express, which integrate with many of the industry's leading document management systems, including SentryFile, Laserfiche, Documentum and Microsoft SharePoint (see scanning section for more on this). The new Web browser is also accessible from the Application hard key, and will play a part as the company expands its new HyPAS (Hybrid Platform for Advanced Solutions) platform for third-party applications. The Web browser does not allow for printing.



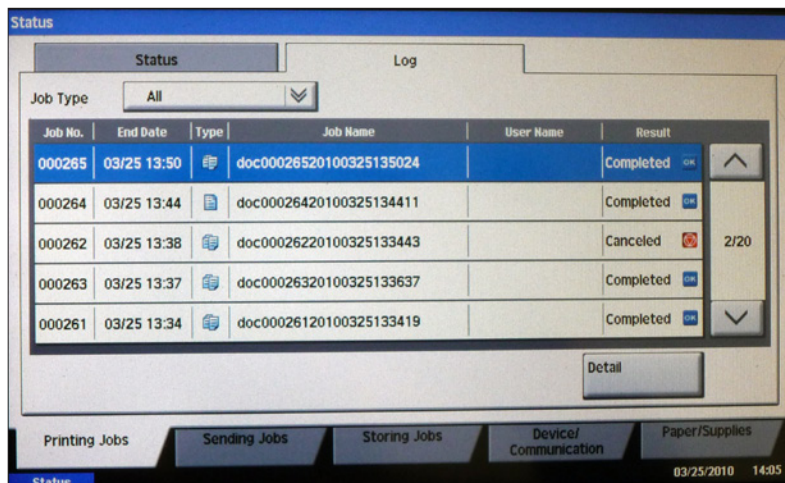
Via the Application hard key, users can access Kyocera's document workflow solutions such as KYOcapture and KYOcapture Express, as well as the new Web browser.

When users select the Status/Job Cancel hard key and then the Paper/Supplies tab, detailed information on toner and paper supplies is provided. Details include percent full for toner and paper in 10 percent increments, as well as the status of the waste toner container and size and type of paper loaded in each tray. Details on staple and punch waste are also provided. The Status/Job Cancel is also where the job queue is located. The Program function allows users to edit and register stored programs. Up to 50 are available.



The Paper/Supplies tab provides detailed information on toner and paper.

The job queue indicates the number of originals in copy and print jobs and counts up as sets are printed. Copied and printed pages are also counted up, but users must close the queue and reopen it in order for copied and printed pages to be updated. The user is identified when printing. Complete and incomplete jobs are also indicated, and users can move and delete jobs.



Job Queue

Throughput Capabilities and Materials

Standard paper supply	Sources	2
	Total capacity	1,000 sheets
	Paper sizes	5.5" x 8.5" to 11" x 17"
	Weights	16-lb. bond to 90-lb. index
Bypass	Capacity	100 sheets
	Paper sizes	5.5" x 8.5" to 11" x 17"
	Weights	16-lb. bond to 120-lb. index
Document feeder (optional RADF or DSPF)	Capacity	100 sheets
	Paper sizes	5.5" x 8.5" to 11" x 17"
	Weights	9 to 42 lbs.
Maximum paper supply	Sources	5
	Total capacity	4,100 sheets
	Paper sizes	5.5" x 8.5" to 11" x 17"
	Weights	16-lb. bond to 120-lb. index

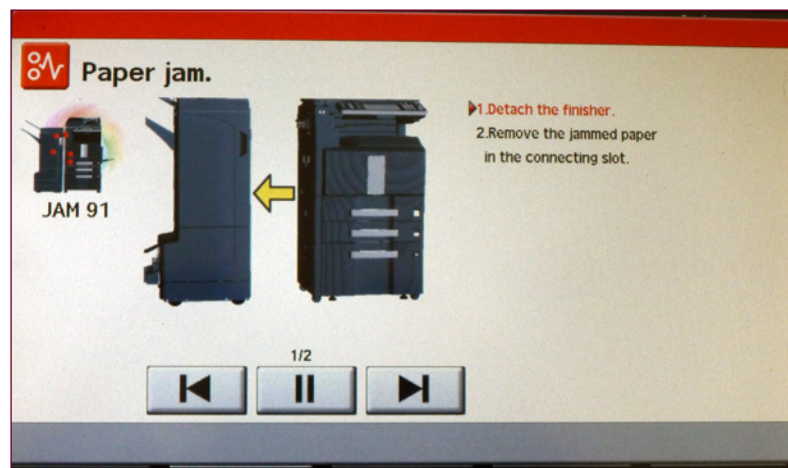
A dedicated Counter hard key breaks down copies and prints produced by copy, print, fax and total for black and white, full color, single color and total. Scanned pages produced are broken down by copy, fax, others and total. The counter also provides a breakdown of printed pages by paper size. The counter information can be printed, and the printed page is in color and in addition to counter details offers toner gauges, network settings and paper usage breakdown. The device's serial number is not provided, however.

User Maintenance

The TASKalfa 552ci comes standard with dual drawers that accommodate up to 500 sheets of paper each and paper sizes up to 11" x 17". The drawers handle paper weights up to 90-lb. index, and the 100-sheet bypass tray can handle paper up to 120-lb. index. Users can choose either the 100-sheet dual-scan document feeder or the 100-sheet reversing automatic document feeder and have the flexibility to upgrade the document feeder as their business needs evolve. The dual-scan document feeder scans single-sided pages at up to 75 ipm and double-sided pages at up to 100 ipm, while the reversing automatic document feeder scans single-sided pages at 75 ipm and double-sided pages at 45 ipm. Users can also add a 3,000-sheet large-capacity tray or dual 500-sheet paper trays.

Adjusting the paper drawers is simple overall, but slightly more cumbersome than some competing models. The width guides are adjusted and locked into

place via a spring-loaded lock built into the guide. The sliding metal length guides feature pegs on the underside, however. Thus, users must lift the guide and slide it to the appropriate paper size, then push it down into the appropriate holes to lock into place, which is more cumbersome than some competing models. In addition, when loading paper size larger than letter size in the first drawer, an extension arm on the length guide must be pushed down due to the location of the bypass internally. The drawers do feature automatic paper sensors and therefore no confirmation is needed at the control panel, which is a plus. The bypass tray has automatic paper sensors and paper will be auto pulled from it if no supply is available in the other paper sources.



The display provides both text and graphics and is dynamic, walking users through the misfeed clearing process.



Each toner cartridge has a release lever that users lift up to pull out the cartridge as well as a handle for easy carrying

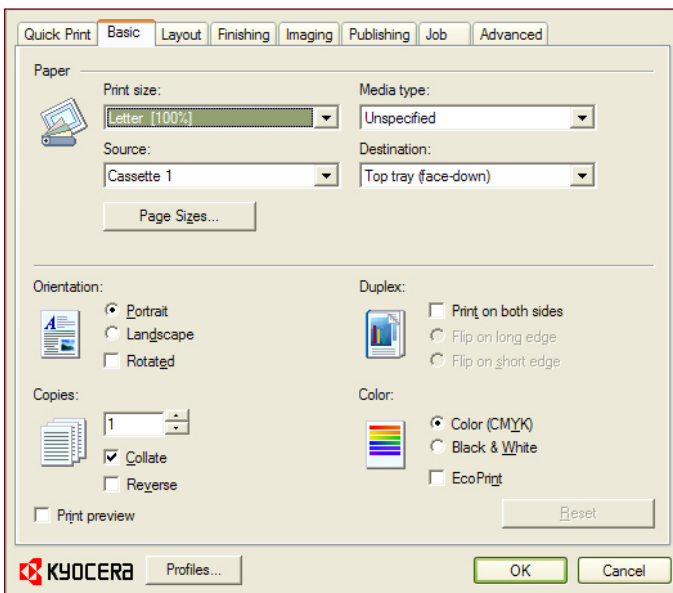
Removing misfeeds is very simple overall. The display provides both text and graphics and is dynamic, walking users through the process. The text on screen is easy to understand and the graphics are very clear. In addition, LEDs outside the panels and inside the machine accurately guide the users to the misfeed locations. The indicators clear as misfeeds are removed. If a misfeed occurs in the left side of the machine, the finisher needs to be unlatched and moved away from the base of the device, increasing the device's footprint. When removing misfeeds, the drum is not exposed, and therefore not susceptible to any damage.

Replacing toner is also very simple overall. At the front of the device there is a label with illustrations explaining the installation and replacement of toner and the waste tank. Each cartridge has a release lever that users lift up to pull out the cartridge as well as a handle for easy carrying. While the toner and waste tanks are user replaceable, a service call is required to replace the drums.

Print Drivers

The print controller features an 800-MHz processor, along with the KX driver, which offers users switchable PCL 6 and PostScript 3 emulation (PDF is also available). XPS printing is available via a separate driver. Although the KX driver encompasses three different PDL versions that are identical in appearance and layout, at first it may be confusing to the user how to access the different versions. For example, if users want to print in PostScript, they must right-click the device in “Printers and Faxes” in Windows and select “Properties.” Then they must also select the Device Settings tab within “Properties,” then “PDL,” which launches a “PDL Settings” dialog box. From the dialog box, users select the drop-down menu and then select the driver they wish to print with. Also within the PDL Settings dialog box is a selection for GDI compatible mode. Users should note, too, that when they change the driver selection in the dialog box, they must close the driver and reopen it for the change to take effect. By selecting the “Auto Configure tab in Device Settings” in Windows, the drivers automatically detect and display the device’s configuration, eliminating the need for an administrator to manually specify this information.

Overall, the KX driver was found to be easy to understand and simple to use. New to the device, the Quick Print tab allows users to select commonly used print features, such as Orientation, Collate, Print on both sides and Multiple pages per sheet. In addition, the Quick Print tab enables users to create and save custom profiles stored as graphical icons to allow programming of complex jobs in one click. Other advanced features include Eco Print (Basic tab), which allows users reduce the amount of toner per job. Eco Print can also be set as the default setting. The Profiles button allows users to create and import commonly used settings for print jobs.



Basic Tab of KX Driver

Most of the features required for a typical print job are available from the Basic tab, including paper selection and source, duplex, collate sets and quantity. While the drivers are graphical, they do not feature a point-and-click interface or consumables feedback. Selecting paper source and destination is done using pull-down menus located at the top half of the Basic tab. The bottom half of the tab includes the selections for duplex, quantity and collate, as well as orientation, color and eco print. However, there is a job review pane to the left of the driver that shows all the selections that a user has made for a print job.

The Layout tab contains selections for booklet printing, multiple pages per sheet, poster and scaling. Pages per sheet can be set at two, four, six, nine, 12, 16, or 25. For poster settings, users can opt to overlap edges, print crop marks, or print assembly marks. Print formats available include Poster Pages, Proof Sheet, or Poster Pages and Proof Sheet.

The Finishing tab includes staple settings and job offsetting. The Imaging tab allows users to set the print quality to either High or Custom, which makes the eco print capability available. Trapping levels can be turned off or set to light, medium, heavy, or very heavy. Printer profile settings available include Text and Graphics, Text and Photos, Vivid Colors, Publications, Line art and Advanced. From the driver's Publishing tab, users can select cover mode and insert either front covers or both front and back covers. Users can also easily select to print onto the front outside, front inside, back inside or back outside. The specified media for covers can be selected from a pull-down menu. Page inserts and transparencies can also be included in jobs. Up to three paper sources can be used per print job.

The Job tab features selections for quick copy, proof and hold, private print, job storage and custom box. Custom box allows a user to type a job name up to 79 characters for job storage, making it easy for a user to identify their job. The Advanced tab features selections for watermarking and Prologue/Epilogue, which allows users to insert macros into specific locations in a print job. On the Advanced tab of the print drivers is the Status Monitor button, which displays an image of the device in the right-hand side of the screen along with a pop-up message, such as "Paper Low in Cassette 1." Users can hide the image by right clicking and selecting "Hide the Status Monitor." The print driver can be made a monochrome only driver through advanced settings.

While an EFI Fiery print controller is not available for the device, Kyocera is in the process of having the TASKalfa 552ci Pantone-approved. The other four models that make up the TASKalfa color series completed testing and Pantone-approval was announced in December of 2009. Pantone has established itself as a universally recognized color standard and the company's color systems are the most widely spread worldwide. PANTONE color standards permit the accurate specification and communication of colors for a variety of uses, including logos and products.

Kyocera's Color Optimizer can now be installed when the print drivers are installed. A chart within the driver provides variations of a color to allow users to pick the one that most closely matches a company's logo, for example.

▲ **Black Copy Productivity** ★★★★★☆

- First-copy time ★★★★★★
- Multiple-set speed ★★★★★☆
- Multiple-set efficiency ★★★★★☆

Color Copy Productivity ★★★★★☆

- First-copy time ★★★★★★
- Multiple-set speed ★★★★★☆
- Multiple-set efficiency ★★★★★☆

Copy productivity for business color units is tested by BLI in both black mode and auto-color mode. In black mode, copies are output in black using black toner regardless of whether the originals are color or black. In auto-color mode, the model detects whether originals are black or color and automatically adjusts to produce black or color output. For example, if one page is composed of black and white and the next page contains color, the unit will print the second page in color using full-color mode without any additional user intervention. It will then revert back to printing in black mode if the subsequent page contains black and white only. When a user selects full-color mode, originals are copied in color regardless of whether the originals are color or black and white, thus black and white pages are printed using process black (a mixture of cyan, magenta, yellow and black toner). BLI tests these units in 1:1 and 1:2 copy mode by using a 10-page test document that comprises six black and white pages and four pages that contain black text combined with color text, charts, logos and printed photographs; and 2:2 mode is tested using a 10-page two-sided document (20 images) consisting of 12 black and white pages and eight pages that contain black text combined with color text, charts, logos and printed photographs.

First-Copy Time (in seconds)

	TASKalfa 552ci	COMPETITIVE UNITS	
		Fastest	Slowest
BLACK			
Platen	4.3	4.3	12.6
Document feeder	5.6	5.6	11.9
AUTO COLOR			
Platen	8.9	8.9	15.2
Document feeder	9.9	9.9	16.6

Bold indicates that this unit is the best in the group.

First-Copy Time

The TASKalfa 552ci's first-copy times in auto-color mode are the fastest of similarly equipped models tested to date from both the document feeder and platen, at 9.9 seconds and 8.9 seconds, respectively. In black mode, the unit's first-copy times are also the fastest of the group from both the document feeder and platen, at 5.6 seconds and 4.3 seconds, respectively.

First-copy time measures the time it takes for the first copy to be produced after the Start button is pressed. The test is conducted using BLI's black and color test originals, using normal contrast and standard resolution and with all auto features off.

Multiple-Set Copy Speed

The TASKalfa 552ci's tested copy speed in auto-color mode is among the fastest of the group in 1:1 mode, at 35.1 cpm, and is competitive in 1:2 and 2:2 modes, at 26.4 cpm and 30.1 cpm, respectively. In black mode, the model's tested copy speed is competitive with the group in all three modes tested, at 43.1 cpm, 33.2 cpm and 37.8 cpm, respectively.

BLI tests a unit's copy productivity by making one, five and 10 sets of a 10-page document in three copy modes: 1:1 mode (single-sided originals to single-sided copies), 1:2 mode (single-sided originals to double-sided copies) and 2:2 mode (double-sided originals to double-sided copies). BLI obtains the overall productivity for each copy mode by averaging the productivity results for each run length.

Multiple-Set Copy Efficiency

The TASKalfa 552ci's tested copy efficiency (the percentage of the rated speed at which the unit operates when producing real-world jobs) in auto-color mode is among the highest for the group in 1:1 mode, at 70.2%, and is competitive in 1:2 and 2:2 modes, at 52.7% and 60.2%, respectively. In black mode, the unit's tested copy efficiency is the highest for the group in 1:1 mode, at 78.4%, and is competitive in 1:2 and 2:2 modes, at 60.2% and 68.8%, respectively.

BLI tests a unit's copy efficiency by making one, five and 10 sets of a 10-page document in three copy modes: 1:1, 1:2 and 2:2. BLI obtains the overall efficiency for each copy mode by averaging the efficiency ratings (derived by dividing the tested speed of the device by the rated speed and then multiplying by 100) for each run length. The closer the rate is to 100%, or if it exceeds 100%, the more efficient the unit.

Multiple-Set Copy Speed (in cpm)

	TASKalfa 552ci	COMPETITIVE UNITS	
		Fastest	Slowest
BLACK			
1:1	43.1	46.1	38.9
1:2	33.2	43.0	29.4
2:2	37.8	46.6	21.2
AUTO COLOR			
1:1	35.1	38.2	17.1
1:2	26.4	30.6	16.5
2:2	30.1	36.3	18.2

Productivity is tested using a 10-page document.

Multiple-Set Copy Efficiency (in percent)

	TASKalfa 552ci	COMPETITIVE UNITS	
		Highest	Lowest
BLACK			
1:1	78.4	78.4	64.9
1:2	60.2	74.6	49.0
2:2	68.8	84.7	61.5
AUTO COLOR			
1:1	70.2	121.7	31.1
1:2	52.7	102.9	48.2
2:2	60.2	113.7	46.2

Bold indicates that this unit is the best of the group. Efficiency is tested using a 10-page document.

▲ **Black Print Productivity** ★★★★★☆

- Multiple-set speed ★★★★★☆
- Multiple-set efficiency ★★★★★☆
- Job stream ★★★★★☆

Color Print Productivity ★★★★★☆

- Multiple-set speed ★★★★★☆
- Multiple-set efficiency ★★★★★☆
- Job stream ★★★★★★

BLI tests print productivity for business color units in both black mode and auto-detect mode. The black mode always prints in black regardless of whether the originals are color or black. In auto-detect mode, the model detects whether originals are black or color and automatically changes modes to produce black or color output. BLI tests these units by using a 10-page test document that comprises six black text pages and four pages that contain black text combined with color charts, logos and printed photographs.

Multiple-Set Print Speed

The TASKalfa 552ci's tested print speed in auto-detect mode is competitive with similarly equipped models tested to date in both simplex and duplex modes, at 32.3 ppm and 25.8 ppm, respectively. In black mode, the unit's tested print speed is also competitive with the group, at 43.5 ppm in simplex mode and 33.5 ppm in duplex mode.

BLI tests a unit's print productivity by printing one, five and 10 sets of a 10-page document. Print jobs are sent using the PCL print driver at 600 dpi resolution. BLI obtains the overall productivity for each print mode by averaging the productivity for each run length.

Multiple-Set Print Efficiency

The TASKalfa 552ci's tested print efficiency (the percentage of the rated speed at which the unit operates when producing real-world jobs) in auto-detect mode is competitive with the group in both simplex and duplex mode, at 64.6% and 51.7%, respectively. In black mode, tested print efficiency is also competitive with the group in both simplex and duplex mode, at 79.1% and 60.8%, respectively.

BLI tests a unit's print efficiency by printing one, five and 10 sets of a 10-page document. Print jobs are sent using the PCL print driver at 600 dpi resolution. BLI obtains the overall efficiency for each print mode by averaging the efficiency ratings (derived by dividing the tested speed of the device by the rated speed and then multiplying by 100) for each run length. The closer the rate is to 100%, or if it exceeds 100%, the more efficient the unit.

Job Stream

The TASKalfa 552ci's tested speed when printing BLI's job stream test in auto-detect mode from the PCL driver is among the fastest of similarly equipped models tested to date. It completed the job stream test in 36.31 seconds, running at 31.4 ppm, which translates to an efficiency rate of 62.8%. The closer the efficiency rate is to 100%, or if it exceeds 100%, the more efficient the unit.

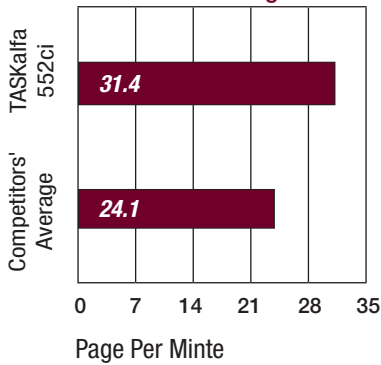
In black mode from the PCL driver, the unit's tested speed for the job stream test is competitive with the group. It completed the job stream test in 30.66 seconds, running at 37.2 ppm, which translates to an efficiency rate of 67.6%.

The TASKalfa 552ci's tested job stream speed in auto-detect mode when using the KPDL driver is the fastest for the group. It completed the job stream test in 35.38 seconds, running at 32.2 ppm, which translates to an efficiency rate of 64.4%.

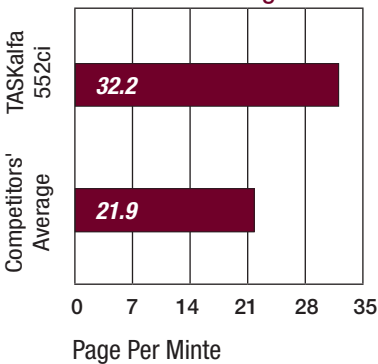
In black mode, the TASKalfa 552ci's tested speed for the job stream test when using the KPDL driver is competitive with the group. It completed the job stream test in 32.84 seconds, running at 34.7 ppm, which translates to an efficiency rate of 63.1%.

BLI's job stream includes a combination of black and color Word documents, Outlook e-mail messages, Excel spreadsheets, PowerPoint, HTML and Acrobat PDF files. This test simulates the type of traffic a typical device might experience in a real-world, multi-user environment. To determine job stream speed, BLI sends all of the files to the printer as a group, at which time the stopwatch begins; timing ends when the last page of the last file exits the device. Job stream efficiency is determined by the percentage of the rated speed at which the unit operates when producing real-world jobs. The closer the rate is to 100%, or if it exceeds 100%, the more efficient the unit.

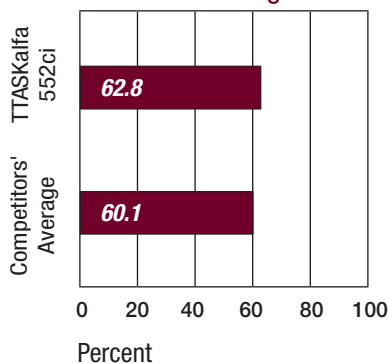
Job Stream Speed in Auto Detect Using PCL Driver



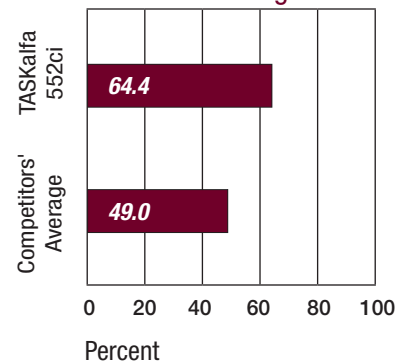
Job Stream Speed in Auto Detect Using KPDL Driver



Job Stream Efficiency in Auto Detect Using PCL Driver



Job Stream Efficiency in Auto Detect Using KPDL Driver



▲ IMAGE QUALITY BLACK



Copy

Text was good overall, with above average darkness and fully formed characters. Sharpness and smoothness were below average. Text was also jagged under magnification. Line art was also good. Fine lines were distinct and consistent, and circles were fully formed without magnification. Stair-stepping of diagonal lines was evident, however, as was some toner overspray under magnification. Halftone range was very good, with grayscale visible from 15% (which is the minimum coverage level of the original) to 100%, and distinct separation between most levels. Halftone patterns were very smooth overall. Solids were excellent, with above average darkness and consistency of coverage.

Print

Text was very good overall, with above average darkness and fully formed characters, as well as average sharpness and smoothness. Line art was excellent, as fine lines remained distinct, line thickness was consistent and circles were fully formed with and without magnification. Halftone range was good, with grayscale visible from 5% to 100% and distinct separation between most levels. Halftone patterns were excellent, with above average smoothness and no banding. Solids were also excellent, demonstrating above average darkness and above average consistency of coverage.

▲ IMAGE QUALITY COLOR



Copy and Print

Color business graphics and color photographic images were both very good in print mode and good in copy mode. In print mode, saturation was bright and background reproduction was above average. Flesh tones were natural, and color halftone range and separation between levels were above average. Sharpness and smoothness were average. In copy mode, saturation was bright and sharpness and pastel shades were average, but background reproduction was below average. Flesh tones were natural, and smoothness and color halftone range were average, as some shades were too light.

Auto-Color Detection

BLI tests auto-color detection by selecting auto-color mode on the control panel and copying one set of BLI's 10-page document. This test document comprises six black text pages and four pages that contain black text combined with color charts, logos and printed photographs. BLI's testing found that the unit was able to accurately reproduce all of the pages in the test document in both copy and print modes.

MULTITASKING

Reserves

The TASKalfa 552ci allows users to reserve additional copy jobs while a print or copy job is in progress. The number of reserves available is limited only by the memory of the device.

Interrupt

To pause a job in progress in order to perform an immediate copy job, the user selects the Interrupt hard key on the control panel and is able to access most features required for a typical copy job. During testing, this unit automatically returned to non-interrupted print and/or copy mode within approximately 1 minute and restarted the job that was interrupted without user intervention. This would be beneficial in a networked environment where many jobs would likely be waiting in the queue. Some other units do not automatically return to non-interrupted mode; others return to non-interrupted mode but do not restart the interrupted job until the Start key is pressed.

OTHER FEATURES

Scan

Standard scanning capabilities include scan to e-mail, folder, FTP and USB, as well as WSD scanning (Windows Vista) and TWAIN scanning. Users can scan at resolutions from 200 to 600 dpi. High compression and encryption of scanned PDFs is also standard. The quick search key allows for quick and easy searching through the programmed destinations, as users can simply

enter the numeric code associated with the destination. The device holds up to 1,000 destinations. Auto detect USB automatically takes users to the Removable Memory tab under Document Box when a USB flash drive is inserted into the device. Users can print from and scan to any USB drive right from the touch screen control panel in PDF, JPEG, TIFF and XPS file formats. Users can encrypt to USB as well. From the host USB, users can also apply finishing capabilities, duplex settings, image quality adjustments and pull from any tray. The device also comes standard with ScanSoft PaperPort for OCR capabilities.

The optional KYOCapture solution is a server-based document capture application that can create a rules-based workflow capture for processing and routing hardcopy and electronic documents. The application is integrated with the device and makes it easy for users familiar with copier operation to apply indexing information to scanned documents before sending them to different business applications. It also integrates with many of the industry's leading document management systems, including SentryFile, Laserfiche, Documentum and Microsoft SharePoint.

Fax

Faxing features include a 33.6-Kbps modem and JBIG compression. Additional fax functions include Duplex TX/RX, Confidential RX/TX, F-Code RX/TX, broadcasting, fax box and dual fax. Up to two G3 fax systems can be added as well. Fax memory is 12 MB standard and 120 MB maximum.

Security and Regulatory Compliance

In addition to an optional Data Security Kit that has been submitted for Common Criteria certification at EAL level 3, other security features include Secure Print and Virtual Mailbox, which require users to enter passwords to enable output directly at the device. Users can also add a Security Watermark to their documents to deter unauthorized copying. The optional Printed Document Guard kit feature prevents the unauthorized printing, copying, scanning and faxing of documents from Kyocera devices. For example, if a user prints a document with the Document Guard feature enabled, and then tries to scan it, the scan will not go through. If the same document is copied, the user will get a blank page. The server-based PrintQ Manager Secure Job Release allows users to access their secured documents stored at a server from any PrintQ-enabled TASKalfa MFP. The network interface is also IPv6-compliant.

The control panel can be tilted and the paper drawers are 508 compliant. The copy screen can be enlarged for the visually impaired. The open access restriction on the document feeder ensures that the document feeder will not fall.

In addition to using a long-life drum, the device is Energy Star- and RoHS-compliant. Additional environmental features include a warm-up time of 58 seconds or less, sleep mode, duplex and combine copy modes, low noise levels and minimal ozone emissions, according to Kyocera. Kyocera was also awarded the Excellence in Partnership (EIP) award for Industry Green Contractor from the U.S. government's General Services Administration (GSA) in recognition for its environmental commitment. In addition, the company's U.S. facility's Environmental Management System (EMS) has achieved ISO14001:2004 certification.

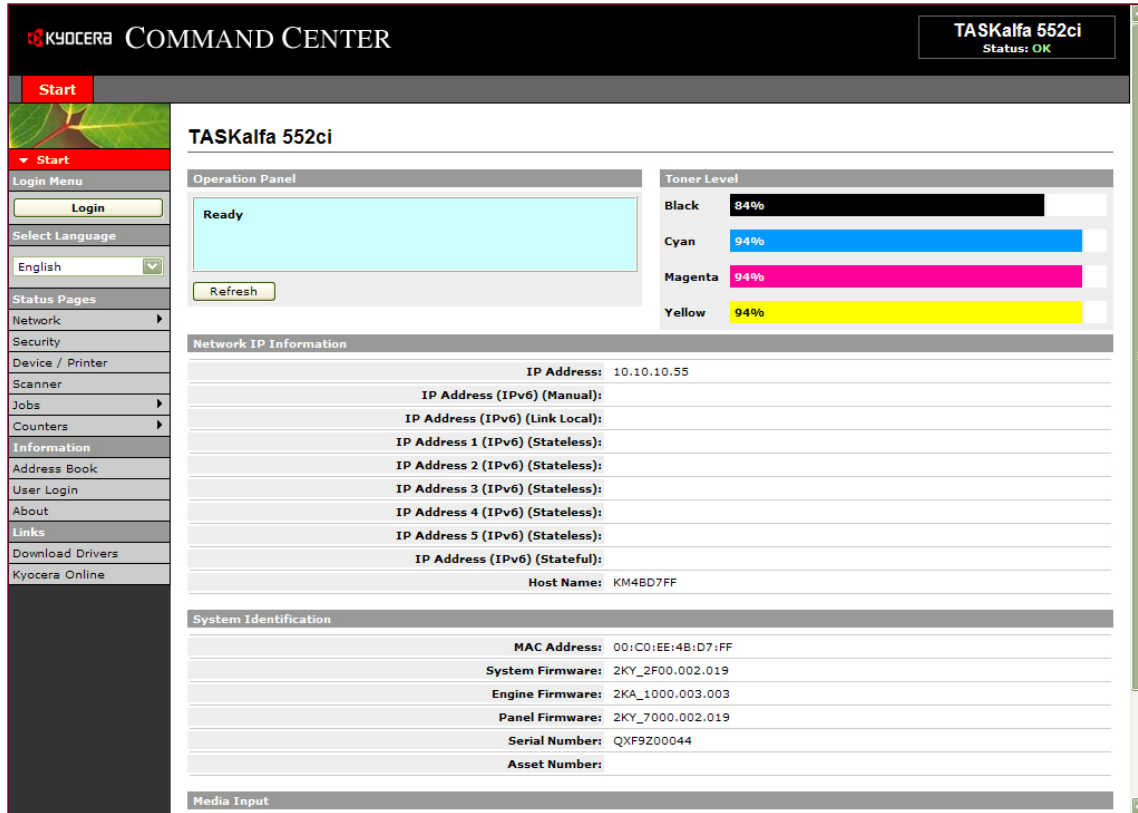
Also of note is that there are no fans in the device. Rather, the unit features tubing that is designed to take in fresh air and filter the air through specific areas that need cooling.

Administrative Utilities

The TASKalfa 552ci utilizes Kyocera's Command Center, which can be accessed from any Web browser. Once an IP address is assigned to the device, the browser can view the configuration page. This page is divided into various layers for easy administration and can be secured with a password to limit access. From the Command Center, a network administrator can apply any network or device setting, including Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP) or Simplified Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP).

KMnet Viewer is an advanced network management software tool that is compatible with all Kyocera MFPs and printers. The settings of all printers on the network can be checked visually and amended from any Windows PC. Further, KMnet Viewer acts as a real-time, early warning system by sending e-mail messages on the machine status, as well as when toner and paper are low. Administrators can also opt for audio or pop-up notification. Filters also allow administrators to see which devices have errors.

Also available is PrintQ Manager, a device management solution that incorporates print queue monitoring and server-based security for output of documents. The device also features KMnet for Accounting, which allows administrators to manage cost control directly from their desktops.



KYOCERA COMMAND CENTER **TASKalfa 552ci**
Status: OK

Start

TASKalfa 552ci

Operation Panel

Ready

Refresh

Toner Level

Black	94%
Cyan	94%
Magenta	94%
Yellow	94%

Network IP Information

IP Address:	10.10.10.55
IP Address (IPv6) (Manual):	
IP Address (IPv6) (Link Local):	
IP Address 1 (IPv6) (Stateless):	
IP Address 2 (IPv6) (Stateless):	
IP Address 3 (IPv6) (Stateless):	
IP Address 4 (IPv6) (Stateless):	
IP Address 5 (IPv6) (Stateless):	
IP Address (IPv6) (Stateful):	
Host Name:	KM4BD7FF

System Identification

MAC Address:	00:CO:EE:4B:D7:FF
System Firmware:	2KY_2F00.002.019
Engine Firmware:	2KA_1000.003.003
Panel Firmware:	2KY_7000.002.019
Serial Number:	QXF9Z00044
Asset Number:	

Media Input

Kyocera Command Center