

## Color Flatbed Scanners

The color scanners that met the requirements scan reflective media such as photographs. All read in 24 bits per pixel--that is, 16.7 million colors. The scanning window had to be at least 11 inches wide. The resolution was a minimum requirement.

### Product

Umax 1200

Umax Technologies

3170 Coronado Dr.

Santa Clara, CA 95054

(800) 562-0311

(408) 982-0771

Price: \$5,995

Umax 630

Umax Technologies

3170 Coronado Dr.

Santa Clara, CA 95054

(800) 562-0311

(408) 982-0771

Price: \$1,995

HP ScanJet IIc

Hewlett-Packard Co.

19310 Pruneridge Ave.

Cupertino, CA 95014

(800) 752-0900

Price: \$2,195

ScanMaker 600Z

Microtek Lab

680 Knox St.

Torrance, CA 90502

(800) 654-4160

(213) 321-2121

Price: \$1,995

Sharp JX600  
Sharp Electronics Corp.  
Sharp Plaza  
Mahwah, NJ 07430  
(800) 237-4277  
(201) 529-8200  
Price: \$13,500

Sharp JX-320  
Sharp Electronics Corp.  
Sharp Plaza  
Mahwah, NJ 07430  
(800) 237-4277  
(201) 529-8200  
Price: \$2,195

Scanmaster 3 Plus  
Howtek  
21 Park Ave.  
Hudson, NH 03051  
(603) 882-5200  
Price: \$9,195

Mustek MFS-3000C  
Mustek  
15225 Alton Pkwy.  
Irvine, CA 92718  
(800) 366-4620  
(714) 833-7740  
Price: \$1,295

Epson ES-300C  
Epson America  
20770 Madrona Ave.  
Torrance, CA 90503  
(800) 922-8911

(310) 782-0770

Price: \$1,399

Scan 300/Color

Abaton

48431 Milmont Dr.

Fremont, CA 94538

(800) 628-3837

(510) 498-1111

Price: \$1,995

irements for the PC/Computing 200 are flatbed models that raphs (though several models also scan transparencies). 16,777,216 colors--as well as grayscales and monochrome o accommodate letter-size stationary as a minimum

## Evaluation

This one-pass machine ranks highest because of a strong all-around showing. The Umax 1200 produces sharp images with a wide range of color. PhotoStyler provided all the image-editing tools and output controls necessary for selecting and editing the minute details that matter in a high-resolution image. Strong warranty, phone support, and good documentation were the icing on the cake. With optional transparency scanning, the 1200's only hardware shortcoming is the lack of an 11-by-17-inch scanning window.

A close second to its one-pass sibling, the three-pass Umax 630 tops the chart for the same reasons as the 1200: It provides a professional-quality image and supports it with a strong all-around showing. At less than half the price of the 1200, the Umax 630 has a few drawbacks: It has little contrast and a lot of convergence in the final image.

The HP ScanJet IIc scans fastest, leaving the others trailing by 20K per second. Its affordable price, easy installation, and legal-size window make this one of our favorite machines. The image-editing software, Publisher's Paintbrush, lacks the high-end controls of PhotoStyler and Image-In, but it offers a good range of tools. Image output generally meets the quality standards required by professional publishing.

Microtek's top-of-the-line machine is noteworthy not only for the software it provides but also for its ease of installation. The bundled PhotoStyler image-editing package provides detailed color correction tools; RGB, HSL, and CMYK viewing; separation setup controls; and halftone editing just about all you could ask for to control high-end output. Add all this to its ability to scan a sharp, detailed image, and the ScanMaker, priced

at under \$2,000, is limited only by its sluggish scanning speed and an A4-size scanning window.

With a list price of \$13,500, the Sharp JX600 ought to be great. This 55-pound, one-pass scanner includes an 11-by-17-inch scanning bed and transparency scanning as well as the impressive Image-In software for high-end image editing. It can scan at 600 dots per inch and will interpolate up to 1,200 dpi. This scanner garnered the second-highest score for its high-resolution output (trailing only the Umax 1200) and a perfect score for scanned convergence.

The Sharp JX-320's strengths are legion. To start, the price is right: This is the least expensive scanner with a transparency-scanning option. The software includes a high-end professional image-editing program, Image-In, that provides CMYK, RGB, and HSV controls as well as an array of filters and powerful editing tools that can tackle any image. The Sharp JX-320's high-res output was smooth and sharp but did not reflect the level of detail seen on the higher-scoring scanners.

The Scanmaster 3 Plus's gargantuan image window (measuring 11 by 17 inches), a transparency scanning add-on (a feature offered by only a handful of scanners), and resolution interpolation of up to 1,200 dpi make this scanner a very good choice. With film output quality that earned perfect numbers for focus and contrast, the Howtek is excellent for professionals. The only thing holding the Howtek back is its nonprofessional image-editing software, ColorLab.

The bargain-priced Mustek MFS-3000C is the only scanner that shipped with Picture Publisher Limited Edition from Micrografx. Picture Publisher provides all the controls imaginable to improve an image's output, including the ability to edit quartertones, control calibration, and edit and view each CMYK plate before sending it to film. The 3000C's low price and adequate hardware and software controls make it a good choice if you need an office scanner to output images for business publishing.

At \$1,399, not only is the one-pass Epson ES-300C's price right but its output hits the mark, too. The high-resolution output image earned a perfect mark for its contrast, and scores dipped only slightly for focus, smoothness, and color integrity. The Epson is a strong contender if you want an office scanning solution for low-end desktop publishing. Be forewarned, however:

Although the hardware is a bargain, the user needs to have above-average knowledge of the PC's IRQs and base address for installation.

While maintaining a high level of color integrity, the Abaton Scan 300/Color provides a strong set of scanning software controls. Buying a professional image-editing program to replace Abaton's ColorLab would make this scanner a strong addition to a desktop publishing setup.

Score

87.6

86.2

85.8

84.5

81.7

77.2

76.3

73.8

71.2



67.2