

Kyocera TASKalfa 620

62 PPM Segment
4 Monochrome Device
Copy · Print · Scan



Overall Rating	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Ease of Use.....	★★★★★
Copy Productivity	★★★★☆
Print Productivity	★★★★☆
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

The 62-ppm Kyocera TASKalfa 620, which is among the lowest-priced MFPs in its speed range, offers excellent overall value. Featuring standard copy and optional network print and scan functionality (fax is not available), the unit demonstrated good overall productivity and image quality in the field. Targeted to “users who require a high-speed, reliable device,” according to Kyocera, the device replaces the KM-6030. The TASKalfa 620 offers an array of enhancements over the predecessor. The most obvious is a new black design. Also, the standard 260-sheet duplex single-pass feeder scans documents 25 percent faster than the KM-6030. Other features include an all-in-one KX print driver that offers identical PCL 5e/6 and PostScript drivers for easy navigation. The KYOcapture Express and KYOcapture solutions let customers scan, route, archive and retrieve documents via integration with document management systems such as Laserfiche, Documentum and SharePoint.

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

Suggested retail price: \$19,500 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 hub with gigabit Ethernet cables, the PowerPC-750Cxe print controller and the PCL and PostScript 3 drivers.

Advantages

- Priced among the lowest for competitive models available.
- Standard 260-sheet duplexing single-pass feeder scans both sides of an original in one pass, reducing wear and tear and increasing duplex print and copy productivity.
- The unit features long-life consumables; the drum yield, at 3,600,000 impressions, is among the highest of the competitive group.
- Kyocera's proprietary all-in-one KX print driver includes PCL 5e/6 and PostScript equivalent drivers, thereby reducing the number of mouse clicks to install separate print drivers.
- The Profiles button in the KX driver allows users to create and import commonly used print features such as duplex and multiple pages per sheet.
- Very good ease of use from the print drivers. The PCL 5e/6 and PostScript print drivers are identical in appearance and layout, and all of the selections for a typical print job are selectable from the main tab.
- The optional enterprise-level KYOcapture and entry-level KYOcapture Express allow users to scan and route documents to document management solutions.
- Optional data security kit overwrites data stored on the hard drive.
- The unit features a tilting control panel, thereby contributing to Section 508 compliance.
- Procedures for removing misfeeds and replacing the toner cartridge are simple.

Shortcomings

- Second lowest job stream performance when using the PostScript driver.
- Cumbersome procedures for switching between the PostScript or PCL emulations in the KX Driver, as users must right click the device in Windows' "Printers and Faxes" and close and reopen the driver for the change to take effect.

▲ VALUE ANALYSIS



The TASKalfa 620, configured as a copier/printer with PostScript 3 and PCL printing, saddle-stitch finishing and a standard DSPF, has an acquisition price that is among the lowest for competitive models available. In addition, it offers a strong feature set, including the highest document feeder capacity and among the highest drum and toner yields. Finishing options include a 3,200-sheet finisher that features multi-position stapling and an optional 2- and 3-hole punch unit, five-bin multi-tray and a booklet folder that saddle-stitches letter, legal or ledger-size booklets up to 16 sheets of 16-lb. bond to 110-lb. index.

Its low price, combined with its good overall performance in the field test and excellent ease of use, make the TASKalfa 620 a very strong value. BLI rates value by evaluating a unit's price in relation to its overall performance, paper handling, and user and service intervention (see Advantages/Shortcomings).

▲ SUMMARY

Its outstanding overall value and ease of use, and good overall productivity and image quality, earn the TASKalfa 620 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

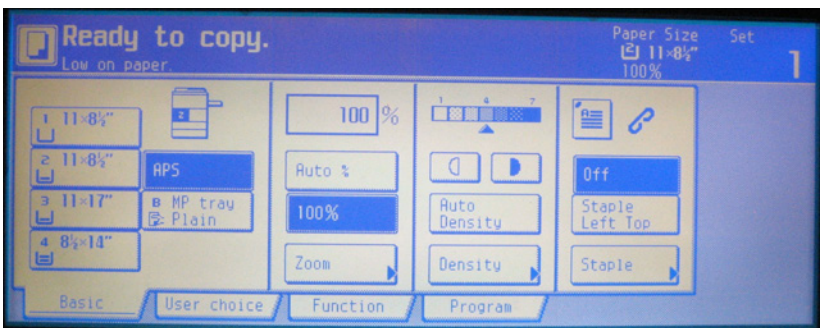
A dial on the left side of the control panel allows users to change the display's contrast. In addition, the control panel can be tilted by pushing and pulling a lock on the right side of the panel. Separate hard keys for copy, print and scan are clearly labeled on the left side of the panel, and each is equipped with built-in LEDs that illuminate to indicate which function is operational. Although no Help key is available, a brief description of a selected feature such as Proof Copy appears on the display when that feature is selected.

The display is comprised of four tabs: Basic, User Choice, Function and Program. The Basic tab consists of four panes that users can customize via the System Menu/Counter hard key and selecting "Customize (Basic)." The default screen displays paper source, reduction/enlargement, auto density and finishing options (stapling). The User Choice screen is also customizable from the System Menu/Counter hard key, allowing users to choose the copy settings they use most frequently. A PIN code is required to change the default copy settings of either the Basic or User Screen. Within both the "Customize (Basic)" and "Customize (User Choice)" screens, two columns are available, "Register Mode" and "Addition Mode." To replace a function such as Proof Copy from the Register Mode column, the user would select "Off" in the Addition Mode column and then add a function from the Addition Mode column that corresponds to the pane the user wants the function to be located on. In addition to customizing the display, users can add up to three "shortcuts" (commonly used features) to the display by accessing the Function tab.

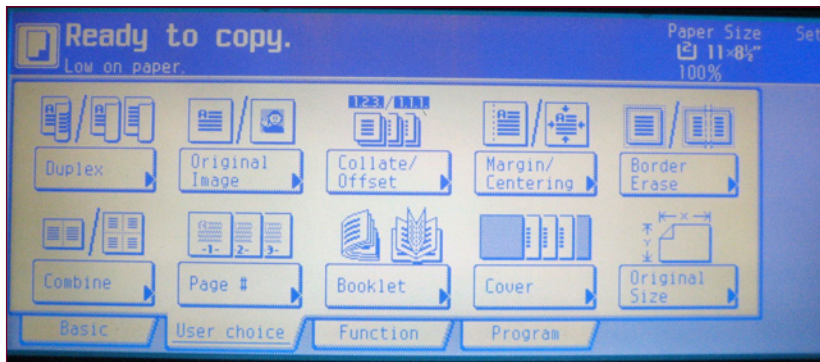
To access the TASKalfa 620's job queue, users select the Print Management hard key above the display. This menu enables users to view the job queues for current and reserved copy and print jobs. By pressing the Document Properties touch key within the Print Status tab, users see details of current and pending jobs, including user name, the date and time a job was received at the device, the paper size designated for the job, the number of pages in the original document, the number of sets and the tray in use. The user can move (ahead or behind) and delete jobs in the list. Although the number of sets for the current job is counted up on the main display, the job queue does not count up pages for the job in progress. The Job History tab within the Print Management menu enables users to scroll through screens to view up to 1,000 jobs processed at the unit. A user can select a job in the list and press the Check Details touch key to view the same details that can be found in Document Properties. BLI technicians noted that after pressing the Print Management hard key, as well as the other hard keys above the display,

the display defaults to the Basic Screen of the Copy menu, leaving users to repeatedly press the hard keys. According to Kyocera, however, the interval can be changed in the System Menu from 10 seconds to approximately five minutes.

The TASKalfa 620's meter count, available via the System Menu/Counter hard key, allows users to view the total meter count on the device, as well as the number of print and original documents copied and scanned (with the print and scan options installed). Users can print the counter report by selecting the Print Report touch key within the Counter menu. Also, the KM-net for Accounting utility enables administrators to view, print and export meter counts from their desktops.



The TASKalfa 620's Basic tab



The customizable User Choice tab

Advanced features available on the control panel include Document Management, Print Management, Repeat Copy, Job Build and Mixed Size Originals, all of which are accessed from clearly labeled hard keys directly above the display. The Job Build hard key, which includes three tabs, Basic, Quality and Edit, allows users to apply different settings to each section of a document, such as finishing options or a duplex copy. The Mixed Size Originals feature enables users to feed originals of different paper sizes through the 260-sheet document feeder so that they output onto paper sizes matching each original. The Document Management hard key enables users to store documents on the copier's hard disk for future printing. The documents can be assigned to various boxes, including Synergy Print Box, which allows users to register originals as documents in the box and print the desired quantity later as needed without the originals. Up to 10 of these documents can be combined into a single copy job for printing. In addition, the Form Box allows users to register and store forms used for form overlay. As noted, the Print Management hard key enables users to access the TASKalfa 620's job queue.

Throughput Capabilities and Materials

Standard paper supply	Sources	4
	Total capacity	4,050 sheets
	Paper sizes	5.5" x 8.5" to 11" x 17"
	Weights	12-lb. bond to 90-lb. index
Bypass	Capacity	100 sheets
	Paper sizes	5.5" x 8.5"/11" x 17"
	Weights	13-lb. bond to 110-lb. index
Document feeder (standard DSPF)	Capacity	260 sheets
	Paper sizes	5.5" x 8.5" to 11" x 17"
	Weights	13 lb. to 43 lb. bond
Maximum paper supply	Sources	6
	Total capacity	8,150 sheets
	Paper sizes	5.5" x 8.5" to 11" x 17"
	Weights	13-lb. bond to 110-lb. index
Media types	Bond paper, recycled paper, transparencies, labels and envelopes	

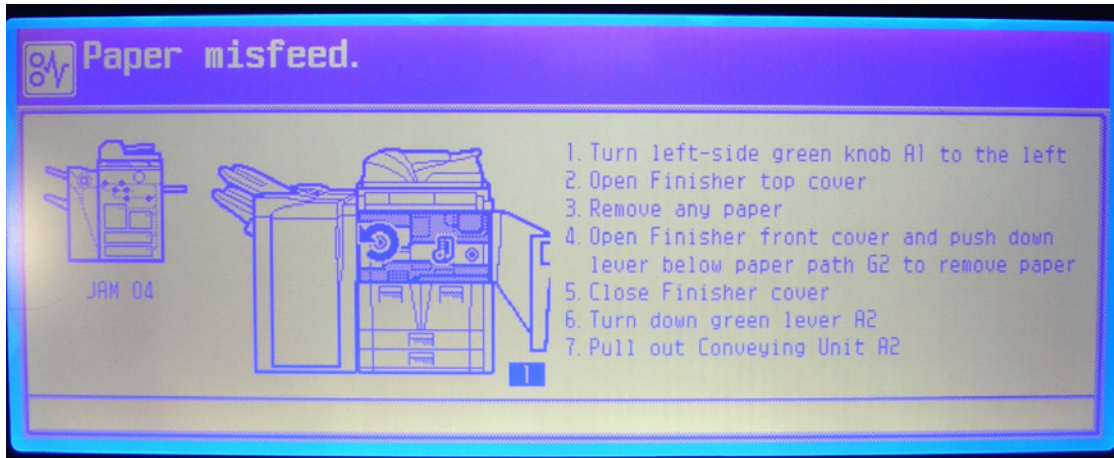
User Maintenance

The TASKalfa 620 comes standard with four drawers: Drawers one and two each accommodate 1,500 sheets of letter-size paper and drawers three and four each accommodate 525 sheets of up to ledger-size paper. The four drawers can handle maximum paper weights of up to 90-lb. index, which is a competitive paper weight for the group. A 100-sheet bypass tray is also standard, and can handle paper weights up to 110-lb. index, which is also a competitive paper weight. The device can accommodate a maximum of six paper sources and a capacity of 8,150 sheets.

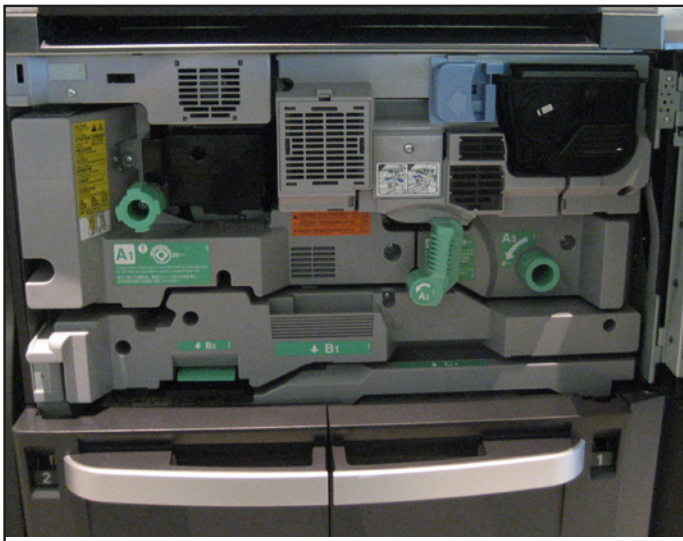
Drawers three and four feature squeezable release levers, as well as sliding length and width guides and electronic paper sensors to automatically detect paper size changes, which is more convenient than a making a selection from the touch-screen display. Technicians noted that it is easy to load paper in all drawers. Loading paper in the large capacity tray (LCT) is also easy; the tray automatically lowers when loading ream by ream. When users load different paper sizes in the bypass, the size is automatically detected and users are not required to make a paper selection on the touch-screen display.

Technicians noted that removing misfeeds from the TASKalfa 620 was easy. Misfeeds are accessed from the front of the unit and not from the sides. When removing misfeeds, the drum is not exposed, thereby reducing the chance that the drum can be damaged. The touch-screen display features an illustration of a misfeed location and also features step-by-step instructions on how to access the misfed paper. Toner removal and replacement is also easy.

Users open the front cover and slide a blue release lever to remove the toner cartridge. Users then install a new cartridge and slide the blue lever to lock the toner cartridge in place.



The display provides step-by-step instructions for removing misfeeds.



Users open the unit's front cover to remove misfeeds.



Removing and replacing the toner cartridge is clean and simple.

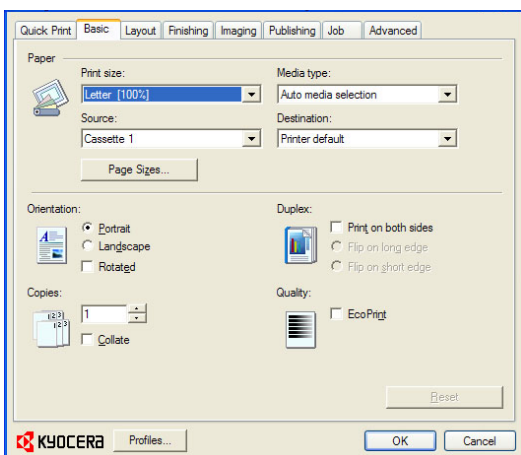
Print Drivers

Optional on the TASKalfa 620, the print function features a 600-MHz print controller. Unlike with other units BLI has tested in which users must install more than one print driver to complete different tasks, the controller supports Kyocera’s proprietary KX Driver, which is an all-in-one driver that is bundled with a KPDLL driver (the PostScript equivalent), PCL 5e and PCL XL (the PCL 6 equivalent). The controller also supports Kyocera’s proprietary PRESCRIBE. The print controller includes 64 MB of standalone memory (upgradeable to 576 MB) and shares the 40-GB hard drive with the system.

Although the KX driver encompasses three different PDL versions, technicians noted that 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.

All the drivers within the KX driver are identical in appearance and layout, making navigating their screens easier for users who need to switch between them for different types of jobs. In addition, all the features required for a typical print job are available from the Basic screen, such as paper size and source, duplex, orientation and quantity. Also, 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.

The three drivers are graphical, but do not feature a point-and-click interface or consumables feedback. 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. In addition, from the driver’s Publishing tab, users can select cover mode (front and back) and page inserts for a total of three paper sources per print job.



The Basic Tab of the All-in-One KX Print Driver

Some advanced features of the KX Driver include Eco Print (Basic tab), which allows users reduce the amount of toner per job. The Profiles button allows users to create and import commonly used settings for print jobs. 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, users can create and save custom profiles that contain selections for different types of documents. 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.” Other advanced features include secure print and proof print.

▲ **Copy Productivity** ★★★★★☆

First-copy time ★★★★★☆

Copy efficiency ★★★★★☆

First-Copy Time

The TASKalfa 620's first-copy times from both the platen and document feeder, at 4.5 and 7.2 seconds, respectively, are competitive among similarly equipped models tested to date.

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 test original with 6% page coverage, using normal contrast and standard resolution and with all auto features off.

Copy Efficiency

The TASKalfa 620's copy efficiency is competitive for similarly equipped models tested to date in all three modes (1:1, 1:2 and 2:2), at 84.6, 76.7% and 87.9%, respectively.

BLI tests a unit's copy efficiency (the percentage of the rated speed at which the unit operates when producing real-world jobs) by making one, five, 10 and 20 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.

▲ **Print Productivity** ★★★★★☆

Print efficiency ★★★★★☆

Job stream ★★★★★☆

Print Efficiency

The TASKalfa 620's print efficiency is competitive among similarly equipped models tested to date in both simplex and duplex modes, at 72.7% and 73.1%, respectively.

BLI tests a unit's print efficiency by printing one, five, 10 and 20 sets of a 10-page document. Print jobs are sent using the PCL 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 620's efficiency rate when printing BLI's job stream using the PCL driver is competitive for similarly equipped models tested to date, at 49.8%. The unit completed the job stream in 36.94 seconds, running at 30.9 ppm.

The unit's efficiency rate when printing BLI's job stream using the PostScript driver is the second lowest for the group, at 24.8%. The unit completed the job stream in 1 minute, 14.15 seconds, running at 15.4 ppm.

BLI's job stream includes 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. All of the files are sent 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.

▲ IMAGE QUALITY



Copy

Text was rated good overall. Darkness and sharpness, as well as smoothness of lines, were deemed average, but character formation was below average. Line art was also rated good. There was an average amount of stair-stepping to diagonal lines, and circle formation, consistency of line thickness and the separation of closely spaced fine lines were all deemed average. Halftone range was very good, with grayscale visible from 15 percent, which is the minimum coverage level of the original, to 100 percent, and distinct separation between most levels. Halftone fill displayed an average amount of graininess, but no banding was evident. Solids were rated very good, displaying above average darkness and average consistency of coverage.

Print

Text was rated very good, as darkness and character formation were above average, while sharpness and smoothness of lines were average. Line art was also rated very good. There was an average amount of stair-stepping to diagonal lines, but circle formation, consistency of line thickness and the separation of closely spaced fine lines were all deemed above average. Halftone range was good. Grayscale was visible from the 4 percent to the 100 percent levels, and distinct separation between most levels. Halftone fill displayed more than an average amount of graininess, but minimal banding was evident. Solids were rated very good, displaying above average darkness and average consistency of coverage.

MULTITASKING

Reserves

The TASKalfa 620 allows nine copy jobs to be reserved while a copy or print job is in progress. Some competitive models BLI has tested offer copy reserves limited only by memory capacity.

Interrupt

To pause a copy or print 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, the Start key on the control panel had to be pressed for an interrupted copy job to resume. However, the unit automatically returned to non-interrupted print mode after 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 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

The TASKalfa 620 offers optional scanning. The unit features a 260-sheet dual scan document feeder (DSPF) that scans both sides of a document in one pass. The DSPF scans at speeds of 100 images per minute at 300 dpi and 82 ipm at 600 dpi to e-mail, folders and FTP in PDF and TIFF formats. Internet faxing is not supported, but the unit does support LDAP, which allows an administrator, either at the control panel or remotely via the unit's embedded Web utility, to configure the unit's address book with e-mail addresses stored on the user's e-mail server. Standard scan software includes Nuance PaperPort and a TWAIN driver. The optional KYOcapture Express and KYOcapture solutions allow users to scan and route documents to document management solutions such as SentryFile, Laserfiche, Documentum and SharePoint. According to Kyocera, KYOcapture will be able to "communicate" with RightFax via a new connector.

Security and Environmental Features

The Secure Print and Virtual Mailbox features require that users enter a password before they can print documents at the device. In addition, from the KX Driver, users can add secure watermarks to prevent the unauthorized copying of documents. Also, the Secure Job Release component of the server-based PrintQ Manager feature enables users to access their secured documents stored on any PrintQ Manager-enabled TASKalfa MFP. The optional Data Security Kit enables users to overwrite data on the 40-GB hard drive.

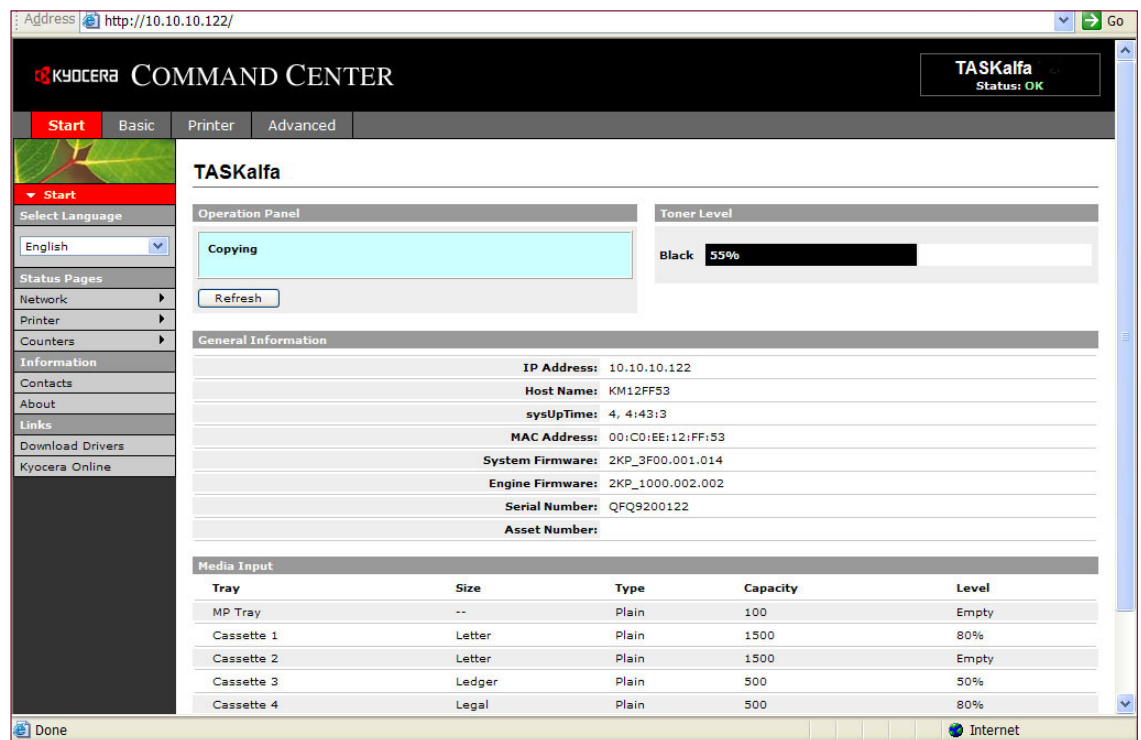
To help reduce environmental impact, the TASKalfa 620 features long-life components and consumables. The unit's amorphous silicon drum has a

rated yield of 3.6 million impressions. The unit also features a fast warm-up time, power-saving sleep mode, duplex and combine copy modes. The unit is also ENERGY STAR-certified and RoHS-compliant. According to Kyocera, the company was awarded the 2008 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.

Administrative Utilities

The PC-based KM-net Viewer utility provides centralized network device management of all Kyocera connected MFPs. In addition, administrators can install and update firmware for all Kyocera connected devices from the utility. Also, the utility is password protected, which prevents unauthorized users from making changes. KM-net Admin is a unified device management tool that uses a Web-based platform that enables administrators to monitor every device. The Device Manager component of KM-net Admin allows administrators to organize devices into logical groups and view their status. The Print Job Manager job component provides a print queue and job control. An accounting plug-in provides for user account and device account management.

PrintQ Manager is a device management solution that incorporates print queue monitoring and server-based security for output of documents.



The TASKalfa 620's embedded Web utility.