

# Document Imaging Report

Business Trends on Converting Paper Processes to Electronic Format

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## Visioneer Ready To Go Toe-To-Toe With Fujitsu

**V**isioneer smells blood and the gloves are off. Decidedly unimpressed with **Fujitsu's** recent upgrade to its workgroup segment leading fi-4120C, Visioneer recently released its second duplex workgroup scanner under the **Xerox** brand. With a rated bi-tonal speed of 33 ppm/66 ipm at 200 dpi, the new Xerox DocuMate 262 is the fastest document scanner available for less than \$2,000 [list price: \$1,299].

Murray Dennis, president and CEO of Visioneer, admitted the 262 was originally conceived as a response to last month's introduction by Fujitsu of its fi-4X20C2 series [see *DIR* 11/19/04]. "When we heard Fujitsu was releasing a new workgroup scanner, we figured it might be something in the sub-\$1,000 range that was faster than 25 ppm," Dennis told *DIR*. "After seeing Fujitsu's specs and price, it turns out the DocuMate 262 was not as necessary as we first thought it would be. The DocuMate 252 still stands up very well against the fi-4120C2."

Shown at March's **AIIM** show, Visioneer's Xerox DocuMate 252 began shipping in May. At a list price of \$999 and rated at 50 ipm, it offered double the duplex speed of the original fi-4120C for a list price of close to \$200 less. The 252 was also the first workgroup scanner to bundle **Kofax's** popular VRS image processing



*Released in March, Visioneer's DocuMate 252 helped raise the bar in the workgroup scanner segment.*

application. (VRS is available for the fi-4120C, but at a list price north of \$500.) Predictably, the 252 met with favorable reviews.

Fujitsu acknowledged that market pressure was at least partially behind last month's launch of its C2 models. With those models, Fujitsu addressed duplex performance issues by matching the output speed of the DocuMate 252. Fujitsu also added VRS to its software bundle. One thing Fujitsu did not address was the pricing difference. In fact, at \$1,395, the fi-4120C2 actually lists for \$200 more than its predecessor.

"If that's the best Fujitsu can up with, I think they are in trouble in the distributed desktop capture segment of the market," said Dennis. "We now have two viable competitors to the fi-4120C2. The DocuMate 252 is rated at the same speed and lists for \$400 less,

while the 262 is 30% faster and lists for \$100 less."

The DocuMate 262, which has a list price of \$1,299, utilizes essentially the same body as the 252. However, it offers more than a 30% increase in bi-tonal rated speeds. In color, at 150 dpi, the 262 is rated at 33 ppm/42 ipm—a 50% improvement in simplex and a 5% improvement in duplex over the 252. "The hardware is pretty much the same," acknowledged Dennis. "We've made some adjustments to the firmware and lower-level drivers to increase the speed."

The software bundle on the 262 is essentially the same as the 252—except that it will ship with the latest version of VRS, 3.5, which is also shipping with Fujitsu's C2s. The DocuMate 252 currently ships with a previous version of VRS but will be upgraded to 3.5 early next year.

The DocuMate software bundle includes **ScanSoft's** *Omni Page 12* and *PaperPort Pro Office 10* for OCR capabilities and PDF creation, as well as desktop document management. The Fujitsu fi-4120C2 includes **Adobe Acrobat** and **Kofax Capio**, which provide similar functionality—minus general purpose OCR.

"Why would educated document imaging users be willing to pay a 40% premium for a Fujitsu scanner

with the same capabilities as a Xerox-branded scanner?" asked Dennis.



**"It turns out the DocuMate 262 was not as necessary as we first thought it would be. The DocuMate 252 still stands up very well against the fi-4120C2."**

**Murray Dennis, Visioneer**

Fujitsu, of course, can argue that *Acrobat* is the de facto standard for creating PDFs, so it is a more valuable application than the ScanSoft package. The Fujitsu scanner also has some intriguing card-scanning capabilities, long document capabilities, a selectable black-or-white background, an optional imprinter, and infra-red double-feed detection—none of which are included with the DocuMate. Visioneer can counter with its unique One Touch technology that enables users to preprogram workflow tasks specific to certain types of documents. (i.e. document type 1 is a contract - scan it at 200 dpi in black-and-white, save as full-text searchable PDF; document type 2 is a draft of a print ad - scan at 300 dpi in color and attach to an outgoing e-mail file, etc.) Fujitsu can counter by saying the C2s don't slow down at all at 150 dpi in color, while the 252 and 262 do... you can see where this is going. And let's not forget, Kodak also introduced a workgroup scanner earlier this year.

The bottom line is that Visioneer has created a compelling case for buyers to look a little deeper than the market leader in the fast growing workgroup scanner segment. When you throw in recent initiatives by Visioneer to improve both its support and channel program, its case becomes a little stronger. However, let's not forget that vendors like Kodak and Fujitsu have invested quite a bit in the document scanning space over the years. As a result, they have built up brand loyalty and established their own service and VAR programs that are nothing to sneeze at. Further, the fact that each offers a wider breadth of scanners than Visioneer, and that those scanners can be used to flesh out installations that involve workgroup scanners, is also an advantage.

Visioneer has come a long way from its roots in the consumer and mobile document scanning space. Are they going to beat Fujitsu and Kodak on every workgroup deal, like we get the impression they'd like to? No. However, they deserve kudos for a bold strategy that has enabled them, in less than a year, to get to the point where they are competitive with these two document scanning titans. Visioneer has definitely shaken up the workgroup segment, and we expect them to initiate a similar rousting in the departmental segment next year.

For more information: <http://www.xeroxscanners.com>

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