



# EPSON STYLUS CX5900

Another capable, well-priced multi-function printer

This new multifunction unit aimed is aimed more at the home digital photography fan. It has print functions, can read most digital camera cards, it scans and copies – Epson calls it a 'more-in-one'. The left-top-mounted colour LCD viewer is for operation and image selection, and below that is a simple control panel with clear selection buttons. This means you can scan, copy and print from images on flash cards without even turning your Mac on. The CX5900 also support PictBridge, the camera industry standard facilitating fast digital printing of high-quality photographs directly from digital cameras.

Epson has stuck with a laborious software install process which requires typing in your administrative password several times at different stages, OK-ing this and that, and even having to turn the unit on when prompted. If I don't click 'Customize' and go for the full kahuna 'Easy Install', I really only want to type in my password once. That's what I call 'easy install'.

The card readers would be handy for households with several different digitals – the slots sit behind a sprung smoked-plastic door at left front to keep dust from the contacts. The five slots cater to Smart Media, Compact Flash and Micro Drive, Memory Stick, SD card and MultiMedia Card.

The Stylus CX5900 can produce true borderless prints, with just 28 seconds sufficient to print a perfect 4x6 photo. At the fastest setting for document printing, Epson claims an impressive 27 A4 pages per minute.

This printer only uses four inks (cyan, magenta, yellow

and black), unlike the more photographically-inclined Stylus Photo RX650 we reviewed two issues ago (*Mg 29*, p48) which uses six. The RX650's additional two colours fill in the tricky areas in photographic images that four colours can't reach. But the print heads are similar precision Intellidige 90-nozzle types, and I was impressed with the photographic quality of the DURABrite Ultra resin coated pigment ink, which means smudge- and water-resistant prints. Colours were vibrant and sharp on Epson's excellent Premium Glossy and Ultra Glossy paper stocks – Epson claims 120 years lightfastness on selected Epson papers and I don't plan on sticking around that long to prove the company wrong.

The scanner is good, too – not with pro-style 48-bit output, but impressive nonetheless. It can take up to A4-size originals and scans at 48-bits, then outputs at 24 (8 bits/colour) at a reasonable resolution of 1200 x 2400 dpi. Scans are quick and Epson's software is excellent, having Auto, Home and Professional modes. There is no transparency scanning feature. Photographic scans were very good; more than ample for producing further prints, for web work and for things like newsletter production.

## VERDICT

For a home unit, this device is very capable – printing images on Epson's good photographic paper is a treat, and the scanner is good. Copying is cheaper on a photocopier, but this is a useful function for occasional use. The CX5900 is well-priced, handy and easy to use.

**EPSON  
STYLUS  
CX5900**  
**RRP \$249**

### DESCRIPTION

➤ Multifunction printer/  
scanner/copier/  
card reader

### SYSTEM

➤ Mac OS 10.2.8+  
(and Microsoft Windows  
98SE/2000/ME/XP/XP 64-bit  
with relevant drivers)

For

- + Handy features
- + Good photo printing
- + Useful scanner/  
copier

Against

- × Imposing
- × Time consuming  
install

|              |     |
|--------------|-----|
| AESTHETICS   | 75% |
| NEW FEATURES | 81% |
| STABILITY    | 94% |
| PRICE VALUE  | 97% |

**OVERALL 87%**

Available from  
electronics retailers  
and Apple resellers;  
[www.epson.co.nz](http://www.epson.co.nz)