



Real People Reviews by Daniel M. East
Product: Stylus Photo 2200 Professional Ink Jet Printer
Manufacturer/Vendor/Developer: Epson
MSRP: \$699.00

Review date: December 01, 2004

PULL QUOTE: "if you are looking for outstanding professional grade output, this is your printer"

DESCRIPTION (What's it do? What's it got?): The term "industry's standard" is thrown around a lot, but living up to that reputation can be another thing altogether. While the Epson 2200 is not their newest member of the Stylus Photo family, with all of the attention being given to digital photography these days it seems appropriate to review a product that is just "that good." After overcoming a few early issues with OS X, Epson has a winner for those who really need an excellent archival ink printer. There is a price for this quality, but if you are looking for outstanding professional grade ink jet output, this is your printer.

MIN. SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS: OS 8.6 - 9.x and OS X 10.1.3 or later with USB, FireWire or Parallel connectivity support.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS: This is not the printer for everyday home use by most people's standards. It is, however, a truly outstanding professional-grade device that, when configured properly and used with the correct papers, produces extremely lifelike output from nearly any good quality source. It is important to note that downloading the ICC profiles from Epson is a must, in my opinion, unless you are comfortable enough with the task of creating your own. The 2200 is capable of many things in a variety of sizes, but you must have the right tools in order to produce the quality output of which this model is capable.

LIKES : First and foremost, and when using the appropriate ICC profile, the prints look excellent. Proofing, photo prints and nearly anything you can send to it comes out looking equal to the source. When all of the elements are there (ICC, good paper, good source image), it is challenging to create a bad print. The 2200 can produce output in a wide range of sizes from 4X6" to 13X44" with excellent results. The only slightly off area I found was in the center third of the 11" and 13" papers after prolonged use; however, this was easily remedied by a simple recalibration with the software provided. Another nice feature of the 2200 is the range of connectivity options as it comes with USB, FireWire and Parallel port options. In addition, the roll feed/cutter option allows for 4X6" proofs to be produced with ease, but roll paper in this size does not uncurl easily.



DISLIKES : On the down side, the 2200 is hardly a swift printer, but that is not what this printer is meant to be. Epson claims that the 2200 can print an 8x10" image in just over 2 minutes, but when all of the settings for quality output are in place, I found this to be about 40% of the overall time. Even as a professional seven separate color ink jet printer, it may be cost prohibitive for some people given the \$699.00 US MSRP and archival ink pricing averaging 10 - 12.00 each color. While choosing the right paper is paramount (I preferred the Moab Kokopelli pro-glossy), some brands of ink jet papers don't perform as well with the 2200 compared to often excellent results from, for example, the Epson R800 (and is essentially the same printer shy of maximum paper size and the addition of a "gloss" colorless ink for sheen). I also found that the 2200 would simply not print from some consumer applications, like iPhoto, with any regularity and that the best way to print those images was to export with printing from Photoshop.

FINAL THOUGHTS: This is simply not the printer for everyday use and/or the average consumer. This is a pro's tool for creating professional quality output from digital photography and 2D/3D applications. The Epson Stylus Photo 2200 raised the bar for ink jet printers across the board and, again, sets the standard by which all future ink jet printers will be compared.

OVERALL RATING: 4 out of 5 stars VERY GOOD

For more information, visit: <http://www.epson.com/>

Daniel East is a freelance writer for several Mac-specific publications; a co-host of "PC Talk Radio/Levin Communications and a presenter/speaker/consultant. East is also the founder and president of The Mid-Atlantic Apple & Macintosh User Groups Team (MaMUGs).

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