



First Look at Colortrac SmartLF Ci 40 Wide-Format Scanner

Colortrac finally revealed its fourth generation contact image sensor (CIS) wide-format scanner at end of October 2008. The new SmartLF Ci 40 scanner does not replace Colortrac's existing Cx 40 scanner, but rather complements and adds new features aimed at the CAD, AEC, and GIS marketplace as well as the technical document copying market.



Features - Models	Ci 40-m	Ci 40-c	Ci 40-e
Scan Width	40"	40"	40"
Monochrome Speed @200dpi	10 ips	10 ips	10 ips
Color Speed @200dpi	N.A.	0.83 ips	3.33 ips
Optical Resolution	600 dpi	600 dpi	600 dpi
Scanning Technology	CIS	CIS	CIS
Field Upgradable	Yes to -c & -e	Yes to -e	No
Price*	\$6,725	\$7,795	\$8,875

*Price does not include optional stand (\$520) and optional ScanWorks Scanning Software (\$574)

Features and Technology

The Ci 40 has embedded copy logic that enables it to be used as a walk-up copier and connected to a computer either by a USB 2.0 interface or directly to the network using a built-in gigabit Ethernet connection. The operator panel is placed on the top of the scanner and allows the operator to perform simple copy



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functions. Furthermore the Ci 40 introduces face-up scanning — the first Colortrac scanner with that feature. Face up is a new feature that allows the operator to see the drawing as it goes through the scanner. Although several other manufacturers have introduced face-up scanning this year, the benefit is more on the physiological side. After scanning, the paper exits to the front, thereby enabling the operator to remain in the same position.

The Achilles' heel of CIS scanning technology is the very narrow focus depth of the scanning technology that makes wrinkled material look blurred. Colortrac has gone back to the original CIS design from the 1990s with a single precision-engineered drum to force the document gently down to the sensor to avoid blurred scanned images.

Another innovative design feature is the use of two bi-directional LED lights to light up the CIS rod lens from both sides, enabling more light coming into the CIS sensors to reduce exposure time and increase scanning speed. Using LED yields another advantage because that type of light source is instant on, meaning you realistically can start scanning less than 30 seconds after it's powered on. In this environmentally green time, this is a welcome option, as is the Ci 40's Energy Star rating.

The new Ci 40 is rated at 10 ips monochrome scanning speed and between 0-3.33 ips in color, dependent on the scanner model, and with an optical resolution of 600 dpi and a maximum interpolated resolution of 9,600 dpi — more than enough for any CAD, AEC, or GIS needs. The scanner comes in three different models that can be field upgraded if needed.

Available Models

The entry model is the Ci 40-m — a monochrome scanner for only \$6,725, which includes a 3-month, on-site warranty. The on-site warranty can be expanded for an additional annual fee. The Ci 40-c is a color entry-level scanner priced at \$7,795, and finally the Ci 40-e is \$8,875.

The Ci 40 is Colortrac's fastest color scanner across all models. The Ci 40 scanner comes standard with the SmartLF scanning software for easy scan-to-file and scan-to-print operation. The SmartLF software is entry-level software, and more professional users will most likely add Colortrac ScanWorks software with added features and more control for the scanning process.

The Ci 40 has an optional scanner stand for an additional \$520 and the optional professional scanning software, ScanWorks, for additional \$574. Yet even adding the optional stand and professional software still give you a complete solution for less than the critical \$10,000 mark.



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Market Position

Colortrac is the only wide-format scanner vendor that has chosen to offer a 40" wide scanner to the market. Other manufacturers sell both 36" and 42". This gives Colortrac some tactical options. First of all, priced less than comparable 36" competitive scanner, the extra 4" wider scanning capability plus built-in copy features could add up to a competitive advantage. Secondly when compared with Colortrac's own higher price 42" scanner series or competitors' 42" scanners, the Ci 40 can be a less expensive alternative for the price-conscious buyer.

We did wonder about Colortrac's third generation CIS scanner, the Cx 40, which will be kept as a product for the foreseeable future. The Cx 40 is priced higher with comparable performance, but it less feature rich. So we are unsure about the rational of keeping this scanner active. It could be a conservative position to keep the Cx 40 in the game until any initial problems have been iron out on the new Ci 40 scanner.

Stanley Adams Group Recommendations

For the price-conscious buyers Colortrac Ci 40 is definitely a must-see product with specifications and features at the higher end of the scale. The target market of CAD and AEC (where the focus is more on the monochrome scanning capability) or the GIS segment (where fast color scanning and high geometric precision are important) can benefit from CIS scanner technology's strengths. We have previously evaluated the SmartLF software that comes with the scanner as good and intuitive for the occasional scanner user. Colortrac's professional ScanWorks software has all the features a professional scanner operator needs. We recommend that potential buyers favor the new fourth generation Ci 40 over Colortrac's third generation Cx 40 scanner.





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Pro	Con
Price	No thick media scanning
Weight	New scanner usually requires a ½ year to iron out all bugs.
Monochrome & color speed	
Energy Star compliant	
No warm up time	
Gigabit interface	

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About the Author

Henrik Vestermark is an independent consultant and professional who has worked in the wide-format scanner and printer industry since 1988. His expertise includes all aspects of the wide-format digital capture market, and particularly focuses on the wide-format scanner industry.