



● INKJET MULTIFUNCTION DEVICE

HP PhotoSmart 2610

PRICE £226 (£265 inc VAT)

DELIVERY £5 (£6 inc VAT)

INTERNET www.hp.com/uk

SUPPLIER www.simply.co.uk (code: YD99518)

VERDICT If you need an MFD with LAN, and want one that's quick, easy to use and produces great quality prints, don't be put off by the price.

The HP PSC 2510 PhotoSmart has held off all challengers to its throne for over a year now. With integrated wireless, fabulous quality, speed and low price on its side, it's a tough machine to better. The new PhotoSmart 2610 is the next model up in HP's MFD range, so has a lot to prove.

The PhotoSmart 2610 lives up to HP's enviable record for print quality at high speeds. The FastDraft setting produces office documents at 19ppm – quick enough to beat slow laser printers. Quality isn't too compromised either, as we saw only occasional errors in misalignment between print head passes, while text was dark and well defined. Upping the quality rectifies the misalignment problem and darkens text but more than halves speed to 8.3ppm. Nevertheless, that's still fast for the quality of the output.

Photo printing is also quick. Standard 6 x 4in photos emerge in under two minutes, and full A4-sized prints in just over four. Both times are around a minute quicker than the current average. These speeds are largely thanks to HP's Gen II cartridges, which feature double the amount of ink nozzles, theoretically doubling the amount of ink sprayed onto the page with each pass of the print head.

Our test photos were reproduced with great sympathy; skin tones were natural-looking and colours vibrant and well defined. The optional photo cartridge (£16 inc VAT) is worth the investment if you're after quality, as it adds



Impressively quick at mono and colour jobs, the PhotoSmart 2610 won't loiter around for long.

richness and minimises dithering problems when compared to the supplied tricolour cartridge. The 2610 can also utilise the optional grey photo cartridge (£17 inc VAT), which holds three tones of grey, producing less grainy mono images, and greatly increasing the range of shades on offer. It won't make a vast difference, but those wishing for top-quality, complex monochrome images will notice – just beware of the 20.6p per page running cost (and that's just the ink).

Elsewhere, the PictBridge support and comprehensive array of media card slots make printing your photos easy, and PC-independent. The 2.5in LCD screen allows for quick navigation of images, as well as some basic editing functions. The more demanding photo editor

will appreciate the ease with which photos can be taken from inserted media cards (over USB or through the network). However, any changes need to be written back through Windows. The supplied HP Director software is well integrated and useful collection of MFD apps, although they take up over 500MB of disk space, take an age to install and don't offer any customised installation option.

The 2610 has an impressive 48-bit 2,400 x 4,800dpi scanner, making photocopies and scans rich and accurate. The integrated fax is also child's play to configure.

HP has taken the decision not to include the integrated 802.11b of the PSC 2510. It's possible to plug in a Bluetooth dongle through a USB port on the back, but this is inelegant, adds more cost, and offers less range and flexibility.

But print speed is greatly improved, with the 2610 outpacing the 2510 by about 33 per cent. If this is a priority, and you don't mind sacrificing the WLAN and a further £42, then this is the MFD for you. Otherwise, stick with the PSC 2510.

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PC PRO RATINGS

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|-------------------|-------|
| PERFORMANCE | ★★★★★ |
| FEATURES & DESIGN | ★★★★★ |
| VALUE FOR MONEY | ★★★★★ |
| OVERALL | ★★★★★ |

SPECIFICATIONS 600 x 600dpi 6-colour A4 inkjet; 48-bit colour in, 48-bit out flatbed scanner; 2,400 x 4,800dpi resolution; 220 x 297mm maximum document scan size; 150-sheet input tray; USB 2 interface; CompactFlash/Microdrive, Memory Stick/Memory Stick Pro, xD-Picture/SmartMedia, SD/MMC slots; PictBridge; 2.5in LCD screen; drivers for Windows 98 onwards.

RUNNING COSTS High-capacity mono cartridge (800 pages), £19; high-capacity tricolour cartridge (450 pages), £21; photo cartridge (135 6 x 4in photos), £16; grey ink cartridge (80 6 x 4in photos), £17. Overall cost per A4 page: mono, 2.4p; colour, 4.6p; per 6 x 4in photo, 11.6p (colour); 20.6p (grey).