

Digital Printing Insights #4: "My prints are too dark!"

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Call me a dinosaur if you like, but I still prefer working with and editing images on my LaCie CRT, although it seems the rest of the world has switched over to LCD displays. I do not know of one manufacturer producing higher end CRT's today.

Even in a accurately color-managed environment, photographers who edit their images on an LCD and output inkjet prints are quite possibly familiar with the scenario of prints that appear too dark relative to their display. As a CRT user, this is not a problem that I have experienced, but I've heard it from friends and acquaintances and have ready about it in online forums quite a bit. Are you experiencing a similar issue? David Brooks of Shutterbug magazine has written an excellent and informative article (http://www.shutterbug.com/techniques/digital_darkroom/0809prints) that addresses this problem and offers a few possible solutions. In short, this problem is caused by luminance differences between CRT's and LCD's (LCD's are often about 25% brighter), with many lower end LCD's not offering the ability to reduce the luminance to CRT levels. Check out David's article.

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In the February 2010 issue of Shutterbug magazine, [David tells us about the NEC MultiSync P221W LCD display with NEC's SpectraView II colorimeter](#), which currently appears to be a viable and lowest-cost solution to the LCD calibration issue (the LCD display provides a large color gamut that is 95.6 percent of the Adobe RGB color space!). As of July 2010, this 22" LCD display and colorimeter/calibration system is currently listed on Amazon.com for under \$710 USD. If this is an issue you have dealt with and you're still looking for a solution, I would definitely recommend reading David's article and placing your order!

If you have any questions or comments about this topic, or suggestions for future Printing Insights, I would love to hear them! Thanks for reading.

Michael E. Gordon is an award-winning fine art landscape photographer and respected digital print maker. Michael leads photographic workshops and tours and provides printing services and custom printer/paper profiles for photographers. He lives in Southern California with his wife Shauna and their menagerie of rescued animals.