IBM's ThinkPad 755CV Projects a New Image

By Brian Nadel

Like a Transformer toy, IBM's ThinkPad 755CV folds open to reveal a new personality—a notebook whose lid can be removed so that it can work with an overhead projector. At $6,799, the 755CV is expensive, but it lets you give a group presentation at the spur of the moment.

The 755CV's quick change starts when you unsnap its lid and fold the hinge over. In an arrangement that would have made Rube Goldberg proud, the 755CV is then strapped to an overhead projector. It takes about 5 minutes to set up the unit and lock the system's seat belt in place (with its straps secured, the PC remains precariously perched on the overhead projector). The hardest part is positioning the notebook's display panel so that it is exactly parallel to the overhead projector's glass bed—necessary if the entire screen is to be in focus.

The 755CV only works with transmissive projectors, and if you use one whose output is above 6,000 lumens, the panel may temporarily overheat and turn brown. While you can't write directly on the panel, IBM provides the next best thing to annotate your presentation: Mind Path Technologies' Presentation F/X infrared (IR) remote control (First Looks, September 13, 1994), which can beam commands to the ThinkPad's built-in IR window. Included special effects software gives you the ability to circle or under-contortions to maintain a line-of-sight connection between the remote control and the notebook.

The 755CV weighs 7 pounds and 6 ounces. It uses a Futureapart card; the viewed came quad-speed CD-ROM Millennia drive (inset) brings data to the screen quicker.

The unit garnered some of this roundup's best scores on our benchmark tests. The P133 Millennia's Winstone 95 result of 207 tied with the Dell Dimension, but it was slightly off the mark with a 22.6-million-pixel-per-second Graphic WinMark 95 result; the

portable PCs

line portions of a slide and even...