

LASER v. INK JET

All right you techies, here's a question for you:

A what point does it make sense to use a laser printer instead of an ink jet?

I'm trying to figure out if this will actually save money in the long run.

I currently have an HP OfficeJet all-in-one that drinks ink like crazy. Based on the supposed yield from a black cartridge, it costs 4.6 cents per page.

I'm looking into buying a LaserJet: <http://bit.ly/9HNOTK>

We estimate that it's toner would cost 1.4 cents per page.

We print a fair amount, due to sending out direct mail. But we certainly aren't the biggest printers.

What say you? Should I stop buying an ink cartridge every couple of weeks and get the LaserJet?

Thanks for your thoughts,
Andrew

PS: I'm happy with the printing quality of the ink jet. I'm mostly looking at this from the cost angle. And I wouldn't mind speeding up big print jobs.

Andrea Cannavina (LegalTypist) told me I had to get a Brother MFC something 6 months ago, and she was totally right. I can't cost it out for you but it is SO much faster. It feels cheaper too. I print much more than I used to with the HP InkJet because it is faster and I have never changed the toner cartridge. Not scientifically sound.

Ellen Victor, New York

If you are just printing black (text), laser the way to go. If you price out the cost of ink, it comes to like \$8,000+ per gallon. That's why many retailers give away ink printers--they know they will recover the cost and then some selling ink.

Chris Bumgarner

Considering how cheap laser printers are these days, you will see a savings immediately. It makes no sense to use an inkjet as your primary printer. You will never go ink again.

Lesley Hoenig, Michigan

For reference, the price of ink a few years ago surpassed quality wine(!) on a per ounce basis. So long as you don't need color, lasers are much faster and cheaper per page after the (now short) laser warmup time. They also tend to last longer than the equivalent generation of inkjet although not as good as the HP LaserJet II's of years past. I hear those things just keep going so long as you can get toner cartridges.

Regards,

Vincent Kan, Illinois

I use a Samsung All in one (4725FN). I do change toner, but I have to print several reams before I have to change it.

Lesley Hoenig

My laserjet III lasted about 15 years before I replaced that thing. Though, it's a lot easier to lift modern laser printers!

Lesley Hoenig

I got a great deal on a Canon MF4370dn - all in one laser with network at Staples, after coupons and their trade-in program. Much better text quality than my inkjet and far cheaper to operate.

Scott J. Goldstein, New Jersey

I have a Dell Color Laser at home, that is used by She who Must be Obeyed plus two very computer literate kids. With all that usage, last toner replacement lasted two years. Not inexpensive to replace - about \$400 for 4,000 page cartridges and \$700 for 7,000 page replacements.

I think this way:

1. One B/W Laser Jet with three paper drawers for Letter, legal and

envelopes;

2. One Color Laser for all things color.

The only use in my book for an ink jet is photo quality pictures — as an amateur photographer, nothing beats a high end ink-jet on glossy paper for pictures to be framed, or for color proofs to a printer, or for self-printing covers to presentations or reports.

Michael A. Gort, Florida

If you're just doing black ink, laser is probably cheaper in the long run. And maybe it's worth pricing sending some jobs out.

(I can tell you NOT to buy the Lexmark E250dn. I've gotten THREE lemons in a row, and Lexmark wouldn't just send me another model.)

Ann Vetter-Hansen, Washington

I'm pretty sure the toner replacements for an HP color laser are in the \$80-\$90 realm You can get a whole new color laser printer for less than the cost of a 7k page toner replacement...

Lesley Hoenig

Are you sure about that? I got my Samsung 4725FN (which is black and white mind you) for \$200, it has built in networking capabilities, I'm not sure what speed your printer prints, but I think my printer prints around 30 pages/minute if not more, though certainly color prints take longer on a color laser. Though, just looking up your printer to see the specs (which didn't seem out of the ordinary to me) I did find your color cartridges on amazon for quite a bit cheaper: <http://www.amazon.com/3110cn-3115cn-Capacity-Compatible-Bundle/dp/B001CR8UYI>.

Lesley Hoenig

A few months ago, I posted a question on this list about which printer to buy. Based on the Sezzzer input and (yes, I'll admit it) Amazon.com ratings, I purchased a wireless Brother 3070 color laser printer. I was torn between black/white vs. color, laser vs. ink, wireless vs. irritating cord, and all-in-one vs. printer.

I absolutely love it!!! Crisp, clear, fast. Downside: it is noisier than I'd like when printing.

The one caveat is that it was hard to connect: I'm not sure if that was because of the office wireless (which I don't control), the age of my laptop (it's going next ... please, God, just get me to June first), or the time-honored tradition of Brothers being hard to connect. My computer guy did it for me in about half an hour, which mostly involved wireless connection problems.

The computer guy wholly seconded the choice of the Brother.

YMMV,

Lisa Babcock, Michigan

The last 4 printers I've bought have all been brothers. The next printer I buy will be a Brother. Over the last 20+ years, I've had or used Epson, Panasonic, HP, Canon, Okidata, Xerox, Lexmark and probably brand names I can't even remember any more. Dot matrix, laser, inkjet, multifunction. I've been happy with my Brother printers. They just seem to work for me. I wouldn't use them for a multi-person office but for a small office or home use, I've had good luck with them.

My main work use computer is a Brother MFC-8890DW. I only use the scanner for items requiring a flatbed; for most scanning I use my ScanSnap. I wanted a laser with ADF, duplex, wireless connection, reasonable speed. I haven't had any issues with connecting it wirelessly but I control the wireless network so that may be the difference. In the corner of my office I also have a color Brother inkjet I use for the rare occasion when I need to print in color. It is also wireless, and also connected easily using WPS.

Stephanie Hill

So, of course, the day after I posted glowing praise for my Brother, the black toner went out, without warning, rendering me completely printless and leaving me to schlep to Staples (\$82) or Office Max (\$74).

Oy vey. Wonder if my neighbor Sezzler has any beer in his office?

Lisa Babcock

I just bought a Samsung ML-2851ND b/w, prints on both sides, \$120 delivered, small. I'm quite pleased. But I still have my inkjet attached for just such an occasion, i.e., the laser fails or runs out of toner. Plus I use the inkjet for the occasional color print job.

Andrew Weltchek, New York

I know lasers are better because of quality and I've used HP for years. But I also like the inexpensive color all-in-one printer-copier-scanner by HP for various tasks. I have one of each in the office and the all-in-one at home. The laser toner is expensive but so convenient when it prints so many copies!!!!

Reta McKannan, Alabama

Reliable sources, so I'm told, say that laser toner is much cheaper per page than inkjet ink. Not to mention you're not schlepping out everyday to refill it.

Andrew Weltchek

I hope you bought two toners, so that when the next one goes out you don't have to do the Staples run. You should always have the next toner in the office.

Also, toner is much cheaper online. Try ChiefValue for Brother-brand toner at about 1/2 the price. If you didn't buy two yesterday, order a 2nd online today.

Robert M. Love

I posted this to twitter earlier today:

Using Times New Roman or Gothic Century fonts (vs. Arial) will save you toner & money: <http://ow.ly/1vuZd>

Thought it might be of interest.

Regards,

Andrea Cannavina, Not an attorney

> I have a paper somewhere from a practice management/tech consultant

> (neither Ben-who-is-not-a-lawyer nor Ross-who-is) that suggests inkjets are
> not appropriate for a law office because the ink runs. I suppose it depends
> on what you are printing, but I wouldn't do an original will, for
> example, on an inkjet. Things like that get lasered for sure.
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> Anne Pohli, Texas
