

Title:

Inkjet Printers: A Brief Overview

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Summary:

Inkjet printers are an affordable and satisfactory option for printing documents and other images from computers. They were originally placed on the market in the late 1980's and have improved greatly in production and cost since then. Today, high quality inkjet printers are available for as low as \$70.00. The reason for the low cost is the higher cost of keeping the printer supplied with ink. This is where the real profits are for printer manufacturers.

An inkjet printer...

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Article Body:

Inkjet printers are an affordable and satisfactory option for printing documents and other images from computers. They were originally placed on the market in the late 1980's and have improved greatly in production and cost since then. Today, high quality inkjet printers are available for as low as \$70.00. The reason for the low cost is the higher cost of keeping the printer supplied with ink. This is where the real profits are for printer manufacturers.

An inkjet printer uses millions of tiny dots of ink to make a word or picture. For photo printing, different variations of colored dots are integrated to create images with true-to-life color. A higher resolution of dots directly relates to increased quality of printouts.

There are two major technologies at work in the choice of inkjet printers, impact and non-impact. Impact printers offer dot matrix or character printing. A dot matrix printer has a bunch of tiny pinheads that touch an ink-covered ribbon. When the pinheads impact the ribbon, the ink moves to the paper.

Character printing is similar to an electric typewriter, but with more control and sharpness afforded to the printing job. Character printers are rarely used anymore because they can only print words and not other images.

Non-impact printers are much more popular than impact printers, because of the

advanced technology behind them. Both the widely used inkjet and laser printers belong in this classification. Non-impact printers do not actually contact the paper directly when printing.

The way inkjet printers do this is by emitting jet sprays of ink to form images on the paper. This is where the name "inkjet" gets its meaning. Laser printers, the second most purchased printer after inkjet, use toner and other ingredients combined with heat to apply the ink to the paper.

What is going on inside the inkjet printer? The center of the machine is the print head, which holds a multitude of ink spray nozzles to create the intricate dots on the paper.

Ink cartridges contain the ink for the printer and are replaced according to frequency of use. Black ink and color ink typically comes in different cartridges with color sometimes appearing in three separate cartridges - cyan (blue), magenta (red), and yellow. Another part of the printer is the paper feeder, a tray that holds the paper to be printed and feeds it into the printer one page at a time.

The choice of paper is instrumental in the resultant quality of the print. Regular copier paper will not provide as sharp a print as paper with a higher brightness level. Brightness in printer paper means being extra white, which showcases the black and colors of the ink better than a duller white. Brightness also indicates a higher level of smoothness to the paper.

Another factor is the level of absorption, which is helped by pre-coated paper covered with a light film to prevent feathering caused by too much absorption. Many different qualities and finishes are available in paper intended for inkjet printer use.

Inkjet printers are widely used by everyone from the common man to huge corporations. For everyday use, there are countless amounts of specialized sticker labels, invitations, fine stationery, and trifold brochures to be used specifically with inkjet printers. Whatever the printing need, the inkjet printer is likely to handle the job with excellent results.