

Title:

Inkjet Vs Laser Printer

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Summary:

In the early days there was a vast difference between an inkjet printer and its laser version but with time the difference has narrowed down to point where it is sometimes difficult to differentiate between the two.

Keywords:

inkjet printer, colour laser printers, bubble jet printer, duplex unit, Ethernet, wireless network card

Article Body:

In the early days there was a vast difference between an inkjet printer and its laser version but with time the difference has narrowed down to point where it is sometimes difficult to differentiate between the two. Most individuals continue to use the Inkjet printers, as they are less expensive and nearly all of them are colour capable. The quality of the inkjet printers has improved over time and now there is not a huge difference in printing quality with the Laser printers. It's for this reason that small or home business can use an inkjet printer without having to worry about documents looking unclear or looking cheap.

The laser printer is capable of printing much faster and usually produces better quality image, it is far more expensive as compared to the Inkjet version. Laser printers are usually used for black printing but there are colour laser printers available now.

Having pointed that out, it is also useful to note that the general rule of the thumb for printers is 'the lesser the cost of the printer, the more expensive the running cost'. This could however depend on the volume of printing the printer is being used for. If the printing volume were minimal, it would be more cost effective to use an inkjet printer. It is very easy to get carried away by the initial price of an inkjet printer but people buying them are often not aware that the running cost of the machine would play a huge part and should be factored into the decision making.

This would be better understood with an example. Let us consider a Canon i320

colour bubble jet printer. It usually does not cost more than £30 obviously subject to the discounts applicable at your store. The cost of a cartridge is usually in the £10 range and on an average it prints 170 pages. Even if you print as few as 7 pages a day that works out to 2100 pages over the year. This in turn works out to an annual expense of approximately £135. The amount one spends on cartridges is approximately 4 times the price of the printer in the first year itself. This is the reason the subsequent expenditure needs to be taken into consideration while buying a printer.

Inkjet printers come with some added problems that need to be looked at and taken into consideration.

1. To begin with they are not as fast as the Laser printers. This is one reason why Inkjet printers are not recommended when printing needs to be done in large volumes.
2. They are known to throw up cartridge error messages even though the cartridges might be working just fine. This is not to say that Inkjet printers are always problematic but these are just a few errors that do crop up once in a while.
3. The print can also start going haywire sometimes and it may start printing in endless loops.
4. It is often difficult to minimize and regulate the amount of ink being used in the Inkjet printers.
5. There is a difference in quality of an Inkjet print and a laser print. Often the laser print is of better quality.

It is for these reasons that the laser printers sales have taken off in a very big way in spite of being a more expensive buy.

However, in comparison to the laser printers, there are a few positives about the inkjet printers, which are more suitable to the requirements of a small or home business where they do not need to print as many in terms of volumes.

Colour laser printers have been around for some time but they were frightfully expensive a few years ago. A recent study found that last year nearly 1.85 million colour laser printers were sold, a substantial growth from the previous year. A large number of offices are going in for the colour page printers. This is however not recommended if you do not need to print fliers or brochures in large volumes consistently.

There are a few other advantages that come with a laser printer, for example:

1. Using a duplex unit: This would enable the user to print back to back.

This is particularly useful for creating brochures and leaflets.

2. Add a paper drawer: This would reduce the number of user interventions and in turn reduces the printer errors

3. Assigning different paper trays for different drafts can be used to print different documents without messing about with the tray each time.

4. An Ethernet or a wireless network card can be added to the printer to attach it to a network. This functionality can be availed in the laser printer.

This is just to outline the benefits of using each kind of a printer. This is aimed at helping the user to weigh the pros and the cons before buying a printer.