



The Ins and Outs of Copier Repair

What You Really Need to Know

Copier Repair Guide

Copiers and printers break. All the time. You don't have to worry so much about them though.

When it comes to figuring out what to do about the copiers and printers that seem to always be broken, you can get overwhelmed with everything that's out there. This guide breaks up what you should know about copiers and how to find the right partner to help you care for them.

Key Subjects

Here's what you can expect to find:

- Copiers – It's the Service That Makes the Difference
- Digital Copier Repair – Expertise and Knowledge Matter
- Copier Repair – Sometimes It's YOUR Fault (though we'll still try to fix it)
- How to Fix and Avoid Common Copier Problems

We hope this is a helpful resource for you.

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Copiers – It's the Service That Makes the Difference



The brand(s) that your office equipment supplier partner provides has less to do with your businesses success than your partner's ability to provide excellent service for that equipment. We have five numbers on our website's homepage that represent our commitment to service – 30, 58, \$10K, 120, and \$3.8M.

Let me explain why these numbers are important.

First, I'm going to let you in on a not-so-secret secret: **multifunction copiers**, regardless of manufacturer, all do essentially the same thing.

Of course, there are differences. After all, you could say the same thing about cars – they all do the same thing. There are 4 wheels, an engine, seats, and a steering wheel to transport you from place to place. We all know that cars aren't the same – some get better gas mileage, you might need a minivan if you have a large family, and if you go camping then 4 wheel drive is a great thing to have.

Similarly, copiers vary in capabilities – speed, color or just black and white, a variety of extras (additional paper trays, folders, cutters, and more), different software, etc. Still, when you're looking to buy or lease office equipment, once you decide on the mix of equipment you need, there's an even more important consideration – the level of service you can expect from your copier service and maintenance or MPS (managed print strategy) partner.

You're probably thinking to yourself, "Who cares. It's just hardware, anyone can fix it."

If you are thinking that; you're wrong.

A Multitude of Manufacturers

Like cars, there are many copier manufacturers. And, while the equipment all performs the same task, the machines do differ. You wouldn't take your Ford to a Mazda repair shop – they wouldn't have the parts or expertise to do the best repair job possible.

Under the "hood," once you get beyond paper jams and cleaning the glass, troubleshooting for copiers is often manufacturer specific

Fast, Accurate Service

My point here is that you want a partner who is an expert at servicing the products that you buy and/or lease. Because here's another secret that's not a secret, copiers will break – they'll jam, they require regular maintenance, and software and network connectivity add an additional layer of complexity (and another playground for Murphy to mess things up for you).

Those five numbers are directly tied to our ability to deliver fast, accurate service to our customers.

The Value of Experience and Training – 30 and 58

We have 30 factory-trained service technicians with 58 (and sometimes more) factory certifications EACH. This is an investment we make that has a direct impact on your productivity.

When our technicians look "under the hood" of the equipment they service, they know exactly what they're doing.

Warehouses on Wheels – \$10K, 120, and \$3.2M

We stock \$12,000 in parts and supplies in each tech vehicle, more in some of the larger vehicles. This means we have the parts on hand to fix your issue in a single visit.

Across our locations in Las Vegas, Palm Desert, O.C., San Diego, Los Angeles, and Riverside; we maintain 120 days of stock in our warehouses for a total of \$3.2 million in equipment and supplies.

Here's why we make that investment – it means if your equipment breaks, we'll have one readily on hand for a quick replacement so that your business doesn't lose productivity. It means enough parts and supplies so that we can get your office operational again in hours or within a day rather than a few days or a week.

All of this comes together to create a great first call resolution rate for our customers (we come out and fix it in one visit). That means better productivity for you.

Digital Copier Repair – Expertise and Knowledge Matter



Practice makes perfect, right? The more you do something, the better you are at it. The popular shorthand version of this is from Malcolm Gladwell's book *Outliers*.

In *Outliers*, Gladwell points out that 10,000 hours of practice seems to be the threshold to mastery of a skill. That practice needs to be matched by skill and even innate talent – I was never going to be an NBA player no matter how much I practiced! The examples Gladwell used included The Beatles and their ability to hone their stagecraft by playing German strip clubs; Bill Gates and his access to programming opportunities before others had a chance; and others.

Even if you aren't the Fab Four or creating one of the largest software companies in the world, the basic idea remains – practice a lot and you'll get better.

This is certainly true for copier service technicians.

Training and Knowledge Matter

Have you ever looked under the hood of your car, immediately gotten confused, and called the mechanic to save yourself time and aggravation?

Digital copiers are similar. The larger models have thousands of parts (and can cost more than a car). Not only do they have mechanical parts; there's also embedded software and hardware that needs to work correctly.

Staring inside the inner workings of a digital copier is as confusing as staring under the hood of your car if you haven't been trained to understand what you're looking at.

Let's go back to the 10,000 hours to become an expert idea. Let's say for the sake of argument a service tech works 50 forty-hour weeks in a year. That's 2,000 hours of work. Let's subtract time for driving to customers and the warehouse, coffee breaks, lunch, chit-chat, and other ways time is spent at work. Let's say that's 1,500 hours actively working on copier repair. It's right around seven years that the service tech approaches mastery.

Does your in-house IT team have that level of expertise when it comes to troubleshooting copiers?

We do.

With 30 factory-trained service technicians who have nearly 60 factory certifications each, we focus on regular service tech training so that they know exactly what's "under the hood" when they crack open your copier to repair.

And different manufacturers have different parts and different "tricks."

All of this knowledge, expertise, and training means **our customers receive better copier repair and maintenance service.**

Expertise Equals Uptime

What's this mean to you? Expertise equals uptime and uptime equals better productivity for you. Your equipment is repaired faster and more often on the first call. Our first-call resolution across our service area in Las Vegas, Palm Desert, O.C., San Diego, Los Angeles, and Riverside is better than the industry average.

We invest in training because it makes a difference for our customers.

Let us make a difference for you.

Copier Repair – Sometimes It's YOUR Fault (though we'll still try to fix it)



I've been in this industry for a . . . let's just say while.

I've built my business on customer service – and we pride ourselves on doing right by our customers.

And we have a record of customer loyalty that we are proud of.

So the following may come as a little bit of a shock:

When your copier or printer breaks or just won't work, sometimes it really is your fault.

Yes. Really.

Office equipment today is complicated. There are hundreds to thousands of parts. Copiers are essentially workstations with hard drives, a touch screen interface, and onboard software. Between the gremlins that gravitate to the hardware parts and we've all experienced Murphy's Law relative to software by now; it's no wonder that the equipment breaks down at times.

But there's a difference between normal wear and tear and refusing to take basic steps to keep machines working. And while our managed print services and maintenance contracts don't strictly limit the number of visits our service technicians will make to you to take care of copier repair; we will eventually bill you for fixes we have to make because your employees keep doing odd things to the copier.

So, let's set a few expectations about copiers today.

Paper Jams Happen

As copiers have improved over the years, they've become victims of their own success. Many of our customers seem to expect that jams should never happen at all – regardless of how many torn documents or staples they send through the machine. Inside of the copier is an array of rollers and gears that move paper through the machine – if you leave a stapler (or paper clip or tape or a sticky note) on a document and then try to scan or copy that document, there's a good chance something bad will happen.

Practice common sense paper handling:

1. Watch out for tears and dog-eared pages
2. Remove staples, paperclips, binder clips, etc.
3. Remove Post-It notes
4. Try to “batch” similar sized documents together for bulk scanning or copying (Dedicated scanners can often handle multiple document sizes and paper types in a single batch – stack – of documents. Copiers, not so much.)

Networking Issues

Check your network connection when you can't send a print job to the copier! Many times, the machine is working just fine, but your internal network is the issue – and our copier service technicians aren't responsible for that (though they often do stay and troubleshoot).

However, we have had some customers call with this issue so many times that we've had to say that the next time will be billable. Let's not get to that point in our relationship, check your network.

The bonus is that if it is a network connectivity issue, you'll be back to being productive faster than if you called us, we come out, tell you we can't help with that, and THEN you have to talk to your IT folks.

Copiers and Printers Aren't Created Equal

Color copier quality is fantastic these days and functionality is better than ever. However, most copiers aren't capable of production-quality printing. One of our customers was angry that they couldn't print a poster from their copier. Had we known that was their goal in the beginning, we could have steered them in a different direction. If you want to produce large posters that are colorful and on nice paper stock; you're going to need a different machine than a copier (possibly a wide-format printer) or it could be more cost-effective to outsource those specific printing needs.

This is why it's crucial that you tell us what documents you really need to produce (four color, full bleed, posters, booklets, packets, different paper stocks, etc.). We're good, but we're not mind readers.

We'll Still Help!

Even when you aren't right, our goal is still to help you make it right by doing it ourselves or helping you find the right answer.

Just remember:

1. All copiers aren't created equal – tell us what you really need to do as a business so we can guide you to the right office equipment.
2. Be nice to your copiers – practice good paper hygiene and don't spill drinks or food on them.
3. It's not always the equipment's fault – check that your network is working before cursing your copier.

I'll leave you with a pointer to a post I just updated that will help you troubleshoot a few common copier problems; [How to Fix and Avoid Common Copier Problems](#).

And remember that copiers and printers need regular maintenance, like any piece of equipment. If you don't want to do that yourself, consider contacting us about a maintenance or managed print services contract.

How to Fix and Avoid Common Copier Problems



Everyone hates the copier and printers in their office, right? If not every day, everyone has wanted to kick their copier at LEAST once. Heck, you can find multiple videos on YouTube showing people doing exactly that; taking out their frustrations on their printer – many of them are homages to the great scene in Office Space.

Anyone who's worked in an office can relate. Before you take your bat to your copier though, here are a few common copier frustrations and quick fixes for each.

Understanding these common copier and printer fails will help you prevent them from happening and make your days in the office easier. So put down that bat and learn how to identify and fix common copier problems.

Lines on Paper

Nothing is worse than when you need to make copies of an important document, but it prints out with lines and other deformities. This can be caused by foreign substances on the glass or the mirrors within, or can be due to a drum blade malfunction. The first step is to clean the glass. If the black line persists, make a copy, place the paper on the glass, and align the line – then look for any residue on the glass to remove by gently scraping with a fingernail and then wiping with a cloth.

If that doesn't fix the problem, call for service because there's likely an issue within the device.

Paper Jams

Some of our service technicians think Bob Marley's "Jammin'" should be the theme song of copiers – EVERYONE has experienced a paper jam. There are many reasons for paper jams, a few of the most common, and quick fixes, are:

- Paper – You need to handle your paper properly:
 - Humidity and old paper – paper sitting in the tray for long periods of time can absorb moisture from the air and become "sticky" (yes, even in Las Vegas). Remove old paper and fan the edges. If that doesn't work, replace the paper.
 - Wrong paper size – use the right size for the print job at hand
 - Wrong paper settings – adjust your copier settings when using different paper stocks
 - Drawer alignment – be sure the drawer guides are tight against the edges of the paper
 - Torn edges, dog-eared corners, and forgotten staples can all create jams. It's often faster to copy torn pages one at a time rather than trying through the paper feeder
 - Right side up – ever noticed the arrow on a ream of paper? It's there for a reason. To load new paper:
 - Find the arrow on the end of the ream of paper's packaging
 - Add the paper to the copier with the top of the paper in the same direction as the arrow
 - Worn rollers – these help move paper through the machine. As they wear, the paper can "slip" and cause jams. Call your copier repair partner – don't try to fix yourself!

Wrinkled Pages

Wrinkled pages for working documents are annoying, but usable. A wrinkled presentation to the the board or a wrinkled proposal to a potential customer is unacceptable. Wrinkled or crumpled pages are usually caused by worn out feed rollers or moisture within the fuser assemblies. These are two fixes that we don't recommend you try yourself; call your copier repair expert.

Copies Aren't Dark Enough

If the print on your document output is too dark or too light, check the density setting on your copier. Also, double check that you're not trying to print the document at a default draft setting. If both of those settings are correct, check the toner and add new toner. If you just need to eek out a few more copies for internal use, you can try removing the toner cartridge (if your copier or printer has one) and shaking it like a Polaroid picture

Misfeeds and Skewed Pages

Check the paper in the drawer you're printing from. Remove any crumpled, curled, or torn pages and set the paper guides tight against the paper. If misfeeds or skewed pages still happen, try printing from a different drawer. If that works, continue to print and call your copier repair service provider to fix the other drawer. If the problem continues from the 2nd drawer, call your copier repair service.

Spots On Page

Spots (called speckling) on the copied pages can be a result of smudges, dust, or grime on the copy mirror or the platen glass. That's an easy fix – clean it (you should clean the glass on your copier at least once per month).

Spots on scanned pages can be automatically removed with imaging software, most packages have an automatic “despeckle” feature.

Spots from laser printers can be caused by a damaged photoconductor unit. Remove and inspect for damage. If damaged, replace. If only dirty, gently clean with a lint-free cloth. DO NOT touch the roller assembly when removing the unit.

You

Yes. You. You're not blameless. One of the most common causes of copier repair and frustrations is that everyone just expects them to work. This is partly because technology advances have made these machines increasingly reliable over the past 20 years. Cars are more reliable too, but you wouldn't put gas in a diesel vehicle, never change the oil, or expect to be able to drive on a flat tire.

Stop mistreating your copiers – keep food and liquid away from them, have your employees actually pay attention to the suggestions in this post, and do basic preventative maintenance (every copier's instruction manual will have a few tips to follow). I find it amazing that companies will buy or lease a \$20,000 machine and then treat it like a disposable MFP that they picked up at Wal-Mart on the way to work. Treat your copier investment well, and it'll treat you well.

All that said, copiers do break. When that happens and you need copier repair in Las Vegas, San Diego, Los Angeles, and Orange County; get in touch with us.



PRINTER NOT WORKING?

Copiers and printers break... all the time. Let's talk about when to know your copier needs a tune up, how much repair might cost and how we can help.

Let's talk.

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