

First Edition
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THE ULTIMATE



PRINTER & COPIER BUYER'S GUIDE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Assessing Your Needs	6
New Equipment	7
Repairing Equipment	8
Where To Go	10
New Equipment	11
Used/Refurbished Equipment	14
Repairing Equipment	16
Getting A Quote (and a Great Price)	18
Retail vs Authorized Dealer	19
The Importance of Service	23
Finding the Right Service Company	24
The Importance of Warranties	27
Purchase vs. Lease	29
Removing Your Old Equipment	37

INTRODUCTION



Welcome to your Ultimate Printer and Copier Buyer's Guide, we're glad you're here! This guide is here to help make your process of buying or leasing a printer or copier easy and manageable, regardless of the type of business you own or work for. We take you through the steps of your individualized buyer's journey by assessing your specific needs, directing you to the most qualified service company, tips on obtaining fair and honest quotes as well as explaining the importance of purchasing a warranty.

After completing this guide, we guarantee you will be more satisfied and knowledgeable purchasing the best printer or copier that suits your business needs.

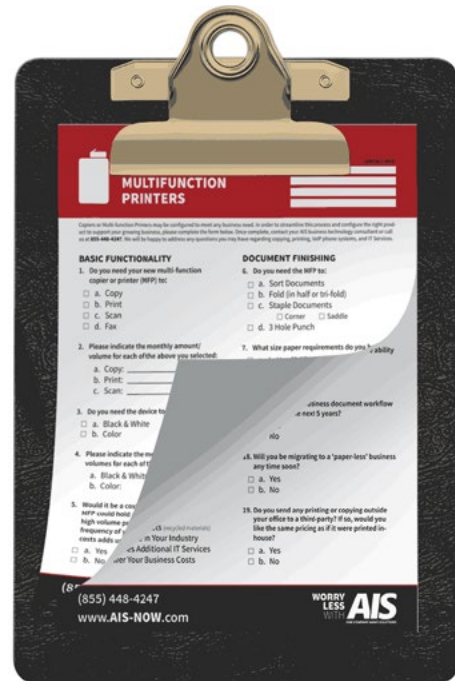
ASSESSING YOUR NEEDS



NEW EQUIPMENT

We've created a Free Copier and Printer Checklist that provides you with the resources you need when purchasing a copier or printer. The Free Copier and Printer Pre-Purchase Checklist is designed for you to get a better understanding of what you need out of a copier or printer. This checklist helps you assess basic functionality, document finishing, and financing. As well as the most important characteristics of your purchase.

Want to learn more about how copiers and office technology can provide you peace of mind and win more business? Download our checklist below and we can help you purchase, lease, and install the right copier for your business in days, not weeks!



Document Solutions

FREE DOWNLOAD

COPY MACHINE / PRINTER / MFP

PRE-PURCHASE CHECKLIST

» CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD NOW «

REPAIRING EQUIPMENT

If you own a printer or have a company that has printers, you have probably considered hiring a printer repair professional. Like any other type of machine, printers can break down and develop mechanical problems. Although you or your staff may be qualified to operate a printer efficiently, random problems such as paper jams or toner malfunctions may necessitate the need for hiring a professional to solve the problems.

However, many people don't know what to look for when hiring a printer service professional and that's why we're here to tell you.

1. Response Time

Response time is one of the most important considerations when hiring a printer repair professional. Many businesses cannot afford to have their printers down for multiple days while waiting for the printer repair professional to show up.

The best printer repair professionals offer same-day or next-day service. In addition, competent printer repair professionals usually carry the printer or copier parts with them. It's important to consider the response time of the printer repair professional you are considering to avoid delays and ensure you get same-day service. Although some repairs may take days to solve, your printer repair professional should provide same day service for common problems.

REPAIRING EQUIPMENT

2. Expertise

Although many printer repair professionals can repair basic printer types, not all professionals can repair specialty printers. If you own a QR code printer or a large format printer, consider hiring a professional who has the skills and knowledge to handle problems with specialized printers. Printer specifications vary significantly and require different repair techniques. If your company has a wide range of printers, consider hiring a printer repair professional with experience dealing with your specific printer models.

3. Warranties

When choosing from a multitude of companies offering printer repairs, select the company that stands out from the rest. One of the things that can set a printer repair company apart from the rest is its warranty offerings. Printer repair companies offer different warranty offerings that can serve as a good measure of the companies' confidence in their team and services. It will help you save substantial amounts of money on return visits to fix the same problem.

WHO SHOULD YOU GO TO?



NEW EQUIPMENT

You have a couple of different types of companies to choose from. First, there are copy machine manufacturers. If you live in a fairly large metro area or city, you will probably find that most of the manufacturers have some type of business presence with a sales office including installation and support personnel.

Here's a list of some of the best copy machine manufacturers:

CANON

A Japanese company with headquarters in the U.S. as Canon, USA. Canon was an early maker of copy machines. They specialize in optical, imaging, and camera products. They are one of the most popular brands in photocopying.

KONICA MINOLTA

Another Japanese company that began, and is well known, in the photo or camera imaging business. All of their photo copy machines use a single platform called "Bizhub."

KYOCERA

Based in Japan with sales offices all over the US, Kyocera began as a ceramic company that has adapted its ceramics to the manufacturing of copiers based on their ceramic drums. These drums allow Kyocera to offer longer warranties and longer periods between service.

RICOH

A Tokyo, Japan based company with regional headquarters in the US as Ricoh USA, Inc. for the last 50 years. They introduced the fastest digital color printer (15 pages per minute) in 1990.

SHARP

Known for their consumer electronics. Began making belt buckles in Japan long before copiers. In 1962 they established their first overseas subsidiary in New York City selling home appliances. They are now a leading manufacturer of TVs, microwaves, and copiers.

XEROX

A USA brand and company with headquarters in Norwalk, Connecticut. They are a household brand synonymous with the name "copy machine." They have one of the widest range color copy machine models.

NEW EQUIPMENT

Depending on the size of the city you live in you may also have authorized copy machine dealers. These local companies may represent one or more different copy machine or multi-function printer brands of equipment and have built their business on servicing local businesses providing exceptional price and service.

A recent study of hundreds of businesses detailing purchasing decisions for a new copy machine or multi-function printer (MFP) found the perception was they could receive a better price from a manufacturer than their local dealer, which just isn't true.

Authorized local dealers and manufacturers all receive the same wholesale price, and in most cases, you can achieve more competitive pricing from a dealer since they have lower overhead.

And when it comes to service, depending on the size of your business, you may find their overall service is better since you may be considered a small fish to the larger businesses in your city.

You most likely have expectations when looking for the right copier and printer service such as getting the best bang for your buck by trusting the company you're paying for. This is a service that comes directly from your monthly budget, and you deserve to feel assured that your

copying and printing needs will always be taken care of by a reliable team of professionals who know exactly what they're doing.

In order for you to save time sifting through websites, here are 7 quick tips you can use that will help guide you in selecting a professional and effective printer and copy service repair provider that will be the best fit for you and your company.

THE 7 MUST-HAVES OF SERVICE:

- 1. Reliable Support and Resolution**
- 2. Instant Response Times and Communication**
- 3. Proactive Upkeep of Parts and Machines**
- 4. Easy Access to Your Company Account**
- 5. Multi-skilled and Experienced Technicians**
- 6. A Service Call Should Be a Pleasant Experience**
- 7. Awareness of Contract Obligations and Service Level Agreements**

For a more in-depth description of these tips, read our blog [here](#).

NEW EQUIPMENT

How Much Does a Copier Cost? This is the question every client asks! We know our clients and potential clients sometimes become frustrated when we say, “it depends.”

To begin with, we should add printers into this conversation, to better answer this question. Since copiers are based on printer technology and if you use a computer, you probably have a printer too. It's a device that you're probably a lot more familiar with. Not to complicate this matter even more, but let's answer, the bigger question, “How much does a copier, MFP (multi-function printer), or printer cost?”

Here is a breakdown of what you can expect a range of color and black and white copiers to cost. Please note, when you see “MFP”, think “copier”. PPM (pages per minute) is the fastest print speed for each device. IPM (images per minute) is the fastest scanning speed for each device.

Black & White and Color Printers:

\$300–\$2,500

This size of printer is generally for individual or small workgroup use. In this range, you can find a B&W printer with speeds of 62 ppm. Color printers in this range output up to 50 ppm (in color and B&W)

Color Desktop MFP/Copier:

\$800–\$2,600

Again, a small device for individual or small workgroup use. Color speeds approach 32 ppm. Wireless printing capabilities are also often available at this price range.

Black and White MFP/Copier Desktop:

\$500–\$2,100

If you need one small device to copy, scan, print, and fax; there are a variety of options at a reasonable price point. A good choice for low-volume use.

Business Class MFP/Copier:

\$2,000–\$11,000

These are the copiers that you find in 90% of all businesses. The workhorse of the business world. They carry the largest load of copy and print volume. And also the conduit between the scanning of documents and your line of business applications.

USED/REFURBISHED

Purchasing a pre-owned or refurbished office printer isn't necessarily a bad thing, in fact, it could work wonders for your small or medium-sized business. However, it would be foolish to think a refurbished office printer works just as great as it did the second it was unpackaged from the box it first came in.

Before you make the purchase of a pre-owned or refurbished copier or printer, follow these steps:

1. Check the Counter / Odometer

Business printers have an internal counter that is a lot like the odometer in a car. Checking the counter, or odometer, on the refurbished office copier/printer you're considering buying is one of the smartest moves you can make. This counter keeps track of pages printed, and in some machines it keeps track of other information like amount of toner used.

You can use this data by comparing it to the duty cycle, life expectancy of the fuser, and so forth. A six-year-old machine can actually be newer in terms of usage than a machine that's just two years old. It all just depends on how frequently that particular copier/printer has been used over the years.

2. Inspect the Interior For Dust and Toner

This may seem a bit silly to do as you scope out the right refurbished office copier/printer for your business, however this easy trick could really prevent you from buying a bad printer. You want to make sure the previous business owner of the printer cared for your office printers and copiers.

As you look at the pre-owned copy machine, open the main doors and use a flashlight to visually inspect the components. Dust buildup and toner stains are an indication of a machine has not been very well-maintained.

Due to the pricy costs involved, you should never agree to a purchase a printer or copy machine until you've visually inspected it. If you don't feel comfortable performing the inspection, consider hiring a printer technician to do it for you.

USED/REFURBISHED

3. Look for the Word “Certified”

There really is a difference between a certified and non-certified refurbished office printer, and it's important you pay attention to this. Even though certified pre-owned office printers tend to be more expensive than their non-certified counterparts, they provide you the added confidence of having undergone professional quality control.

And remember, even though they are a little more expensive than a non-certified office printer, they are still less expensive than a brand new office printer. In addition, certified printers often come with a money-back guarantee or something of that measure. Consult with the pre-owned manufacturing company to make sure they have a guarantee system or extended warranty in place before you make your purchase.

4. Consider a Warranty From the Manufacturer or Service Provider

Warranties are (and should always be) available on used and refurbished office printers and almost every warranty is different. Warranties do come at a cost though, but wouldn't you typically buy one if it was for a pre-owned vehicle or a kitchen appliance for your home?

At the end of the day, you will be happy you chose to pay more upfront for a warranty if a problem does surface with your refurbished printer or copier down the road.

Even if you choose to skip the warranty in the end, knowing how much coverage is available and what the cost would be is a good indication of how confident you should be in the long-term performance and durability of the machine.

REPAIR

It's a fact, eventually your copier or multi-function printer (MFP) will break down and need repair. It's just a matter of time. If you own it, it's out of warranty, or you just neglected to purchase a service contract, you're going to need to contact a repair service.

So how do you go about finding the right company to service your copier or printer equipment—when you need it most? Let's take a look at each of your options when choosing the best copier or printer repair service.

The Manufacturer

This is the right way to go if you have the time and the money. Manufacturers are the direct source to go to since they are one of the most knowledgeable sources for your copier or printer. They should be able to troubleshoot or do a quick diagnostic of your machine, find the parts and get it fixed in a timely manner. But there are a few things you should watch out for.

Sometimes, the manufacturer has hired a third-party service organization to be responsible for all of their copier or printer repairs over a geographical territory. This could be more economical for their business, but if they aren't watching their service performance or monitoring customer feedback closely, this can quickly become a problem. Also, if you've purchased a low end model, or small or single device, you may be considered a "small fish" to their organization and may not get the attention you need or expect.

A Local Authorized Dealer

These companies are mainly focused on service and support. They are good to go to if they are authorized to work on your manufactured device. They have great relationships with the manufacturers so they usually have an inventory of parts. Their staff is well trained on the device, so they can usually repair your copier or printer quickly and some carry a large inventory of parts for your benefit.

In order for them to be an "authorized dealer" they have to meet certain requirements by each manufacturer including purchasing volumes, support resources, training requirements, customer service levels, etc. They can also be aggressive on pricing since they have lower overhead and work on different margins so they can pass these benefits on to you.

REPAIR

Copier and Printer Repair Business

These businesses typically fix many types of office equipment. They may be quick to service you and are great at many simple repairs. Most of the time they have general knowledge of many different types of equipment, but are not experts on each device. Knowledge does matter. Another item to consider is that they will need to go back to the manufacturer to order parts, this can take more time and cost you more money than the other options for repair or service.

You may opt for service from the company you originally purchased it from, but this could be any of these companies above or a retail store or even a third-party. Whatever the case, your best bet is to use one of the options discussed as these will save you headaches, time, and money.

GETTING A QUOTE



RETAIL VS AUTHORIZED DEALERS

So your laser printer just failed, and now you have a decision to make. Do you buy a new printer or repair the old one? The decision may be easy if you want something new and shiny because the old one wasn't cutting it. Or you think you may be saving some extra money by just repairing it.

What do you get with a \$100 laser printer?

Toner: A laser printer with toner for printing the first 700 pages

Print drum: It comes with a print drum that is rated to last up to 12,000 prints and a recommended print volume of 250–2000 pages per month

Speed: Up to 32 PPM (pages per minute) but watch out for the words “up to” before any claim because this is usually based on printing a page with 5% coverage (a four-sentence paragraph)

Print quality: 2400 x 600 dpi (dot-per-inch) print resolution

Networking: Ethernet ready

Duplex printing: It can print on both sides of the page automatically

What's hidden in the specifications of the \$100 laser printer?

First of all, what are you getting for the price? A laser printer with a small toner cartridge. The laser printer is pretty “low end” or cheaply made to keep the costs down. How do you know? Just take a look at the printer's specifications.

Replacement toner: The cost to replace toner each time is approximately \$55 for a toner cartridge that will allow you to print approximately 2,600 pages. This will cost you approximately two cents (\$0.02) per page. This information is based on online pricing we gathered for the printers we reviewed.

Replacement drum: Every time you print approximately 12,000 pages you will need to replace the printer drum which will set you back about \$100. This may seem a bit odd, but the drum costs the same price of the printer you originally purchased. You may want to consider purchasing a new printer each time.

RETAIL VS AUTHORIZED DEALERS

What's an alternative? How about an authorized reseller printer for \$300?

Why would you even want to consider this? Well, you can spend more money upfront on a laser printer from an authorized reseller, and don't forget a service and supplies contract. That doesn't sound like a viable alternative. Does it?

What do you get when you purchase a \$300 laser printer?

Toner: A laser printer that comes with enough toner to print the first 2,300 pages

Print drum: comes with a warranty for 200,000 pages and a recommended print volume of 2,800 pages per month

Speed: 37 PPM (pages per minute); again, they use the words "up to" before any claim because this is usually based on printing a page with 5% coverage (a four-sentence paragraph)

Print quality: 2400 x 600 dpi (dot-per-inch) print resolution

Networking: Ethernet ready

Duplex printing: It can print on both sides of the page automatically

Future supplies and costs:

When purchasing from an authorized printer reseller, the pricing is configured a little different. Make a note of these cost as we compare it to the \$100 laser printer. The results will surprise you.

Replacement toner: With this type of printer purchase, replacement toner is bundled in with your service contract for supplies and maintenance. It is charged to you based on monthly print volume at a cost per page. Typically, it should be half the price (about one cent per page) of what you would pay for the toner for your printer if you purchased from the retailer as we've reviewed above.

Replacement drum: The cost associated with this item does not even need to be considered since the printer's drum has a manufacturer's warranty of 200,000 pages.

RETAIL VS AUTHORIZED DEALERS

How can an authorized reseller afford to provide a supply and maintenance cost that is half the price of the retail store's printer toner?

For starters, the drum doesn't have to be replaced as frequently. Practically not at all for the lifetime of the printer. Second, they didn't offer you the price (\$100) of the printer at such a low-profit-margin, so they don't have to make up their costs in order volume or consumables. Plus some other areas that they aren't counting on you to consider.

To read more on these comparisons, read our article [here](#).

Summing up the specs of the two printers:

All in all, the two printers are very similar when comparing them feature to feature. The big differences are the initial purchase price, operating costs (toner, drum, and warranty), speed, and longevity of the product.

So how do we determine which of these two alternatives is REALLY cheaper and best for your business? The best way to do this is to create a real-world type situation, put some assumptions to it, and see how they pan out.

When we are looking to replace our laser printer for our small business, we take the path of least resistance. What's the fastest way to get a new printer at a low price? We go right to Google or an online retailer, pick one out, and click. It's way too easy. But before we do that, there are some costs we should consider first.

To do a real comparison of what these will cost you to run your business, let's begin with how much you will be using a printer in a small office.

RETAIL VS AUTHORIZED DEALERS

Real Office Example: Small Office with 3 Employees Needs a New Printer

With more and more business being performed online today, there is still a need for paper to be printed. Let's take a look at a small business office with three employees that needs a new affordable laser printer. They each print on average about 25 pages a day. Which is 125 pages per week, 500 pages per month, and 4,800 pages per year. Multiply that by the three employees, and you are printing about 18,000 pages per year.

In the first year, after purchasing both printers, using the toner that came with the initial purchase of each device and replacing it throughout the year, then replacing the drum on the \$100 printer vs. paying your monthly service contract for 12 months, the \$300 printer would cost you about \$90 less in overall operating costs.

In the second year, the same type of purchases would need to be made. For the \$100 retailer printer, more toner and a new drum. And for the \$300 authorized reseller printer, you would just need to purchase a supply (toner) and maintenance contract. But now the gap widens even further due to the supply costs and drum for the \$100 printer. At the end of year two, you would save approximately \$220 in lower operating costs if you purchased the \$300 reseller's printer—and save nearly \$250 for your business over two years.

This doesn't even take into consideration the amount of time you save in labor costs for your employees waiting for printing. If you use these same numbers, you will save about an hour in labor time each year between the two printers we reviewed. It's not much, but it does add to additional cost savings.

What's best for your small business, a \$100 big box retailers printer or buying a \$300 reseller's laser printer?

The answer to this question really lies in how much volume your office does in printing each year. If you are a small business office that only prints altogether a total of 25 pages per week, then a \$100 laser printer will be just fine for your office. And you may just want to buy a new one each year. The cost of the replacement drum is about the same price, and you will get a little extra toner built into the price. But if your office is printing contracts, sales orders, communications, flyers, etc. and you're printing any more than that, you should consider buying a reseller's entry-level laser printer with a service contract since it will save you money year after year.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SERVICE



FINDING THE RIGHT SERVICE COMPANY

Just like any other equipment, like your car or even home appliances—your multi-function printer (MFP) will tell you when it needs a copier repair service.

Is it flashing a warning message that says it's in need of repair? Are you unsure what that means or who you should call to have it serviced? Or maybe your copier hasn't been performing quite the way you would expect.

You need to listen to what it's telling you or just know what to look for. Where do you find the best copier or printer service? If it has moving parts, they need to be cleaned, checked, serviced, and maintained on a periodic basis so that they are in good working order.

The “Call for Service” Indicator

Check your machine, it may have a warning sign on its LCD display or screen. It may have a simple warning message like, “Call for service”. If it does, then you need to do just that. Do you have a number to call your copier service company? Check with your copier repair service and maintenance provider. They may have put a label on the front of your copier or printer for easy reference. Be aware, there may even be important information you need to provide them, like the ID number or Model number when you contact their service dispatch so they can provide you faster service.

Is it Time for Preventive Maintenance?

Most copiers and multi-function printers have strict manufacturer preventive maintenance guidelines and recommendations for your device. These should be performed by an authorized dealer's technician. Their technicians should be updated by the manufacturer on a regular basis on all software and hardware updates so that your copier is maintained and always up to date on its service.

Your prints or copies can tell you a story...

Sometimes it's as easy as looking at the output of your printers and copiers to see potential problems before they arise. By being on the lookout for any of the following issues regarding the quality of your prints or scans, you can identify issues with your copier.

FINDING THE RIGHT SERVICE COMPANY

Machine needs toner all the time

If your copier or printer is eating toner like it's going out of style you probably need someone to look at this. Your contracted service organization should be on top of this, but you need to make sure you are watching out for this too. This could lead to other problems or a complete mess because if that toner is not being outputted on your prints or copies, it must be collecting somewhere. So make sure you contact an authorized dealer to check out your machine.

Long wait times warming up

A copier or printer that is operating normally usually takes some time to warm up each time you turn it on. A minute or two. If your machine is taking 5 minutes or more to warm up, it's time to put in a service call. Additionally, a device will run or cycle throughout the day. This is usually due to it needing to keep the drum heated up so it's ready for its next use. This is normal for most copiers except for the Kyocera brand of copiers. They use a ceramic drum in their copiers and printers and also have faster warm-up times.

Unable to scan

One very important part and feature of any copier or multi-function printer is the scanner. The scanner is used not only for scanning paper documents and converting them into electronic files, but they use this same capability to initiate the copy process. Today's copiers provide very fast scanning mechanisms. These all have a number of moving parts, not only in feeding paper to the scanner, but the scanner itself is constantly moving to image the original.

Features have stopped working

One thing we have not touched on is software or firmware. This has to do with programming code of your copier or multi-function printer—and it's equally important to all of the other parts. There is software that controls all of the functions of your copier, firmware (software that is usually provided as updates) and third-party or manufacturer software that provides added features important to the use of your copier. All of this software is constantly working in unison or integrated together.

FINDING THE RIGHT SERVICE COMPANY

So, if all of a sudden your copier or printer features are working differently or not at all this could be due to a recent change in one of the other software packages. If you see any of your copier features stop working, there may have been a recent firmware update. You might also want to test all of your copier's current features right after a firmware or other software update. Doing this immediately after can save your organization time and resources than trying to troubleshoot or solving the issue after the fact.

To learn more, please see our blog article [here](#).

THE IMPORTANCE OF WARRANTIES



HOW IMPORTANT ARE WARRANTIES TO YOU?

When buying a copier, you are planning on owning this equipment for some years, right? If so, you should know what the hardware's warranty is before you buy it. Each warranty is slightly different, covers different items, and has different names for each of the different items they cover.

A copier warranty usually includes or excludes the following:

Product: The manufacturer's product warranty is typically 90 days to 1 year or the number of copies, whichever comes first. This part of the warranty protects against any of the manufacturer's defective parts. It usually also disclaims any mishandling, use, alteration, etc. of the original product. If the product is found to have been altered or damaged in any way, you could be accountable for damages and the warranty could be voided.

Consumables (ink and toner):

Manufacturers prefer you not to put ink, toner, or other consumables into their equipment, except for their specified or recommended products. They know their consumables have been fully tested for their products and it's a good way to keep your product in good working order. Don't think you're saving money by cutting corners by using inferior products- you might actually be causing damage.

Routine Maintenance: The manufacturer of a copier or MFP requires the equipment to be maintained on a regular basis. As part of your warranty program, you will need to subscribe to a routine maintenance program.

Options / Upgrades: These may be in the form of software or hardware and usually come with their own set of warranties. Read their warranty information separately as it may be different than your copier's warranty as they may have been developed by a third-party. In this case, be sure they are approved for use by the manufacturer. You will also want to review their warranty as it pertains to your equipment and purchase.

Accessories: You may also purchase additional accessories with your copier like a finisher/stapler, booklet folder, mail sorter, hole punch, etc. These too, may come with their own set of warranties for each specific part or be included in a bundle deal.

The Copier Drum: The copier drum is one of the most integral parts of a copier or MFP. It is like a rolling stamp that statically charged toner sticks to and then is placed on each page of paper to create an image.

Learn more about the importance of a copier warranty [HERE](#).

PURCHASE VS LEASE



HOW DO YOU WANT TO PAY FOR IT?

Here at **AIS**, current and potential clients ask us lots of questions about our selection of copiers. One of the most frequent (and important) questions we receive is, “Should I purchase or lease a copier? Which is going to be best for my business?”

The process, the characteristics of the purchase, and the details for buying a new car and a new copier are closely related. Both a copier and a car can be test driven and seen in a showroom. They both are a significant investment. Both are built to last and will be used for a significant amount of time. And, they both (cars and copiers) need to be maintained.

This is can be a very important decision for your business. For instance, if you decide to purchase a copier and over the next few years, you discover a great business opportunity, and take advantage of it if you had the extra capital (cash). A lease would allow you to do this. Conversely, if you have plenty of cash on hand in your business, you can save money by eliminating interest payments on your next copier by purchasing it.

Years ago, the buy vs. lease ratio for a business was about half and half. Half leased their copier, and the other half purchased these new devices for their office. Back then, a copier just copied.

Today they print, copy, scan, fax, fold, sort, staple, send and more. They have become an integral part of managing the paper flow and electronic files of a business; the cornerstone of an overall document management strategy. That's why they are referred to as multi-function copiers or multi-function printers (MFPs). If you plan to move toward a paperless office in the future, you're going to need an MFP.

Today, over 90% of our clients lease their copiers. The following pages outline the differences between a purchase and a lease to help you make a more informed decision.

HOW DO YOU WANT TO PAY FOR IT?

LEASING A COPIER FOR MY BUSINESS

1. 100% financing of your copier into one low monthly payment.

Leasing can offer your business the flexibility of meeting your cash flow needs while wrapping all the other costs like setup, installation and sometimes service contracts. Leasing offers you the productivity of the equipment/technology you require while meeting cash flow needs. Additionally, “soft” costs such as installation, freight, or equipment setup and service contracts can be included in the monthly payment. These are referred to as “soft costs.”

2. Purchase the best product and don't let your budget dictate your purchase.

When you lease a copier, you don't have to choose whether to purchase yesterday's technology or a reconditioned model as a matter of cost to fit your budget. It's much easier to buy today's equipment and take advantage of the latest technology since you are wrapping this into a longer-term payment program.

3. Taking advantage of the economy and betting against inflation.

When you enter a lease, you sign up to a fixed rate. This means the rate is fixed for the lifetime of the lease agreement. Even if lease and loan rates rise in the future, you are still paying the same rate you originally agreed to at the signing of your lease.

4. Cash flow and credit lines.

A lease is a proven financing option to conserve your business' capital when purchasing office equipment or technology. This allows you to place funds in other important areas of your business like labor, inventory, and marketing.

5. Option to buy

Many times, the buyout is only \$1 at the end of your lease you own the equipment. And the way these machines are designed today and depending on your business usage, you may have a device that can be used in a different capacity in your organization while you upgrade to the latest device.

HOW DO YOU WANT TO PAY FOR IT?

LEASING A COPIER FOR MY BUSINESS (Cont'd)

6. Better than a conventional loan

Another type of financing that some businesses look at is a conventional loan from their financial institution or bank. A lease is more attractive since there's no down payment, won't tie up your credit lines and (quite often) has a lower monthly payment. Conventional loans can also have a variable interest rate so this can also affect your financing decision.

7. Upgrades are easier

When you enter into a lease for office equipment like a copier, you can easily add to your copier lease by upgrading your equipment and building it into the term or keeping the same payment amount of your lease.

HOW DO YOU WANT TO PAY FOR IT?

BUYING A COPIER FOR MY BUSINESS

1. Who's the leasing company?

There are many companies to choose from, and if you're purchasing from an authorized dealer, they will typically put you in the best program to suit your needs. It doesn't hurt to ask who the company is, how long they've been around and how long your dealer has been doing business with them.

2. What's the term of the lease?

There are a variety of options from the length (month and years). Typically, they are between 3-5 years, and the term can have a direct effect on the interest rate and your monthly payment.

3. What's the rate?

How much will you be paying on top of the price of your copier over the lifetime of the lease?

4. Can you save extra cash flow by extending the lease a few months?

Did you know you can dramatically reduce your monthly payment by adding a few months to your lease? For example, if your offer is for a 3-year lease (36 months), and cash flow is important to your business, ask your dealer to configure the same copier for a 39-month. You'll be surprised at the difference.

5. What's the buy-out at the end of the term of the lease?

Will there be a fee at the end of the lease? Will you own the device once you've paid off the lease? These are good questions to ask before entering into any leasing program, so you aren't surprised at the end of your agreement.

6. Are there any other "special conditions" like upgrading before the term is over?

What happens if you've nearly completed a 5-year lease, your business is growing and you need to scale up to a device that can support your new business needs. Do you have to buy out your old lease, before entering into a new lease on the new copier? Find out from your dealer what types of options they can afford you to win your business.

HOW DO YOU WANT TO PAY FOR IT?

ACTION PLAN

1. Decide what type of multi-function copier or printer you need.
2. Do your homework and find out who the best copier companies are in your area and what type of support they provide.—The Best Copier Companies!
3. Get a bid from multiple companies in order to get the best price. Just make sure you are comparing apples to apples (keep the playing field level and match feature sets).
4. Look at all the financing options like we've described above to make the best decision and matches your business goals.
5. If you want to learn more about how to be a more informed buyer for copiers, printers, phone systems or out sourced IT services, subscribe to our blog by adding to your email in the right margin, view our social media links at the top of our page, visit our YouTube channel , or call us and we will be happy to have one of our subject matter experts contact you and discuss all your options.

If you'd like to take a look at a quick action plan, we've got the perfect one for you to reference [here](#). This action plan will aid you in looking at the pros and cons of leasing and purchasing a copier that will best suit your business needs.

HOW DO YOU WANT TO PAY FOR IT?

COST & PAYMENT OPTIONS

You've done all the right things: You've figured out what type of copier or multi-function printer (MFP) you need. You've met with manufacturers and/or authorized dealers, and they've provided you bids.

Now, how are you going to pay for it?

We've mentioned this before, buying a copy machine is just like buying a car. It's an expensive purchase. You don't go through this process very often (every 3 to 5 years), but this is a sizable capital purchase for any business. Depending on the size of the copier and all of the various options you've decided on, this could be over \$10,000.

The bids that you've received likely have a total purchase price or a low monthly lease payment. If you're interested in learning more about leases, then read our article: [Purchasing vs. Leasing a Copier: Which is Best for My Business?](#) If your business is growing, you may opt for the lease so you can keep your capital for other business needs. You're not alone.

What about the banks? Are they a viable alternative for copier financing?

You can get what is called a conventional loan for your copier from your bank or your favorite financial institution, but they come with a down payment (a lease won't), they may tie up your other lines of credit, and the monthly payment is usually higher.

Another downside to a conventional bank loan for a copier is that most of the time they have a variable rate. This will fluctuate with the economy, good or bad. With a lease, you usually have a fixed rate so even if the interest rates go up, you are still paying the same rate.

HOW DO YOU WANT TO PAY FOR IT?

HIGHLY REPUTABLE FINANCING COMPANIES

The following finance companies do a great job in providing lease financing for office equipment.

Great America

Founded in 1992, Great America is based in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. In 2009, they surpassed over \$1 billion in assets and have a variety of leasing programs. They are a popular leasing company with many authorized copier dealers.

Wells Fargo

Wells Fargo has been ranked as the largest bank in the U.S. equipment finance industry. They are managed by a holding company based in San Francisco, California. Most recently, they acquired the Equipment Leasing division from GE Capital in 2016. They have very stringent borrowing guidelines, and once you meet them they can get the financing you need for your business.

Marlin

Marlin Business Services Corporation is a publicly traded bank holding company. Their funding comes from their wholly owned subsidiary Marlin Business Bank. They have provided \$4.5 billion in financing to small businesses with a variety of financial programs.

LEAF

LEAF Commercial Capital, Inc. was purchased last year by People's United Bank, N.A. making them the sixteenth largest bank-owned equipment finance business in the U.S. LEAF is headquartered in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. They provide financing for office products, telephony, technology, medical, and light industrial.

What is an in-house leasing program?

Sometimes, your local authorized dealer or manufacturer may have their own in-house leasing program. This provides the flexibility to support local businesses that may not meet the requirements of commercial based programs. If your business credit is a little low and you don't meet the requirements of one of these programs, ask your authorized dealer if they have an in-house program.

REMOVING YOUR OLD EQUIPMENT



WHAT'S YOUR PLAN FOR REMOVING OLD EQUIPMENT?

There is a small part to this entire process that many forget to look into, but just because it's not talked as often doesn't mean it's not just as important. That is removing your old or used office copiers and printers. There are a few important pieces of information that we feel is important for you to know.

Partner with a company that handles logistics with end-of-life copier return

If you have decided to switch office repair companies, that's ok! This just means you need to stay organized with the process of removing your old machine as well as understanding the process of the new machine.

Make sure you are fully aware and understand the following aspects of removing your old printers and copiers:

Time Frames: Since you are completely getting rid of your copier, you want to make sure you time it correctly with the delivery of your new one. It would be extremely problematic if you had to wait a week or even longer for your new machine to arrive once your old one was gone. Make sure that you order your new machine **before** your old machine has been returned.

Packaging your old machine

accordingly: In order for you to get your money's worth from your old copier, you

need to make sure it is returned in great condition. To do so, review your contract with your old service provider or even set up a call with them to discuss how you are supposed to wrap and ship off your copy machine. Copy machines are huge pieces of equipment and you want to make sure you won't get charged for any mishandling in the return process.

No extra fees: Let's face it... no one likes extra and unexpected fees. It is highly important that you are communicating with your service provider **before** you cancel their service. You may be in the middle of a contract with them or they may have added fees when they come to pick up your old copier. The last thing you want is an unexpected invoice in the mail from them.

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