

# The Active Consumer

## Buyer Beware: Remanufactured Inkjet And Toner Cartridges Cost Small Businesses Time and Money

(NAPSA)—Small business is the epitome of the American dream, and entrepreneurs are using technology to level the playing field. With a good Web site, color printers, a high-speed Internet connection and cell phones, entrepreneurs can build successful small businesses, while keeping overhead costs at a minimum.

When it comes to saving money on office printing, small businesses may turn to remanufactured inkjet and toner cartridges. Remanufactured cartridges are actually used cartridges that are cleaned and refurbished, and then repackaged and sold at reduced prices.

Small business owners shouldn't be fooled by these seemingly less expensive print supplies because low purchase price doesn't necessarily translate into savings. Unreliable remanufactured inkjet and toner cartridges can continue to cost small businesses money after the initial purchase. Whenever employees have to intervene in the printing process or deal with a printer problem, it takes time away from work. This lost productivity, combined with wasted supplies, costs money.

Rather than focusing on price alone as the main indicator of value, small business owners should consider the hidden costs associated with "bargain" toner and inkjet cartridges, which include:

- **Technical support and downtime.** Problem cartridges lead to tech support calls and more downtime. For example, Quality Logic, an independent quality assurance testing company, compared HP original supplies with a variety of remanufactured cartridges and found that original HP monochrome LaserJet and black inkjet print cartridges were nine times more reliable, on average, than the leading remanufactured cartridges tested. This research also showed original HP color inkjet print cartridges were 50 times more reliable, on average, than leading remanufactured brands tested.

- **More user interventions.** Clearing paper jams, checking documents for smudges, reprinting unacceptable pages, cleaning the printer frequently, and conducting printer maintenance reduce productivity and waste supplies.

- **Poor print quality.** Remanufactured cartridges can result in lower print quality than original



**And I thought I was getting a good bargain when I bought these remanufactured inkjet cartridges.**

name-brand cartridges. They may be less vibrant in color and can tend to bleed into other colors, making images appear muddy. Inks and toners found in remanufactured print cartridges also may run when they come into contact with moisture.

- **Poor cartridge reliability.** Cartridges that don't work as promised, stop working prematurely or fail to produce as many pages as claimed, drive up the total cost of printer ownership for small businesses. In fact, some businesses that try to get by with remanufactured ink and toner cartridges may find their employees spend more time replacing faulty cartridges and end up purchasing more cartridges than planned.

- **Printer damage.** This crops up less frequently, but it can be serious. It's usually a result of extreme defects such as ink or toner leaks from print cartridges obtained through unreliable sources. Most printer manufacturer warranties exclude damage caused by remanufactured printing supplies, so repairing or replacing a damaged printer can be expensive. For this reason, it's best to use the supplies recommended by the manufacturer.

Instead of losing money on remanufactured inkjet and toner cartridges, small business owners can save money on printing by simply making an informed assessment of their printing environments. Small business owners should first determine how much they are actually spending on printing, and then look for ways to reduce that expense. Small businesses can quickly determine how much they've been spending on printing by using HP's online printing cost assessment calculator found at: [http://h30194.www3.hp.com/assessment/index.aspx?jumpid=ex\\_R295\\_go%2fassessment](http://h30194.www3.hp.com/assessment/index.aspx?jumpid=ex_R295_go%2fassessment).

### No Bargain:

#### Remanufactured Ink and Toner

Attempting to save money by purchasing remanufactured printing supplies could actually cost small businesses more in the long run. While remanufactured inkjet and toner cartridges may be less expensive at point of sale, they may perform poorly when measuring reliability and print quality.

An analysis based on data from a recent study conducted by QualityLogic, Inc., an independent quality assurance testing company, shows that small businesses using remanufactured inkjet and toner print cartridges might spend twice as much money on supplies as small businesses using original HP inkjet and toner print cartridges. For example, the study also suggests that using 100 typical remanufactured toner cartridges, rather than original HP cartridges, could result in:

- Up to five extra support calls to diagnose and fix problems.
- As many as 23,000 extra reprints of poor-quality pages.
- Up to 5.5 extra cartridge purchases due to out-of-box failures.
- Extra labor costs of up to \$11,500.

Analysis also shows that using 100 typical remanufactured black inkjet cartridges rather than new could result in:

- Up to 20 extra support calls to diagnose and fix problems.
- As many as 1,400 extra reprints of poor quality pages.
- Up to 11 extra cartridge purchases due to out-of-box failures.
- Extra labor costs of up to \$700.

2003 Inkjet Cartridge Reliability Comparison Study test results provided by QualityLogic, Inc., and commissioned by HP. Tests were performed under laboratory conditions and actual performance may vary.

See [www.hp.com/go/suppliesreliability](http://www.hp.com/go/suppliesreliability) for full details, or call 402-334-2932.