

Computer & Networking

Technologies, LLC



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Name Brand Vs. Generic Printer Ink

Buying new ink cartridges is an ongoing expense that can add up over time when you own a printer, especially if you purchase name-brand ink from the printer manufacturer. Less costly generic inks sold by third parties can be a tempting alternative, but they may not produce the best print quality. In addition, using generic cartridges may void the warranty on your printer and could even damage the printing mechanism. Generic inks or manufacturer cartridges refilled by third-party vendors may be appropriate for your business in only a few limited situations.

Cost

Most inkjet printers are sold based on the "razor/razor blade" business model, where the manufacturer provides a product that will be purchased only once for a relatively low price. Supplies for the product tend to be much more costly, providing the manufacturer with a steady stream of income. The cost of generic ink cartridges is often more than 50 percent less than that of name brand cartridges for the same printer.

Print Yield

In addition to low cost, generic cartridges frequently contain more ink than name-brand models. In tests performed by PC World magazine, generic cartridges produced more printed pages than

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those sold by manufacturer-approved sources. That brings the overall cost per page even lower on most printers.

Print Quality

While generic ink may offer a cost savings, it tends to produce lower quality prints, especially for photos and artwork. Generic inks come with an increased likelihood of blurred lines, banding during color transitions, overspray and other problems. Decreased print quality can show up in black-and-white printing, too; prints made with generic inks tend to have more jagged diagonals and reduced sharpness. These problems make many cheap cartridges suitable only for draft printing and tests.

Print Longevity

Even third party inks that provide acceptable print quality may not last very long. In the PC World study, prints made with generic inks faded more than twice as much when exposed to ozone and ultraviolet light. Generic cartridges therefore should not be used for prints intended for long-term use but may be acceptable for short-term, disposable printing.

Potential Hazards

Besides the possibility of reduced printer quality, generic and refilled ink cartridges may perform unreliably. A 2009 study by Quality Logic found that name-brand cartridges refilled with generic ink failed about 33 percent of the time. Even non-refilled generic ink exhibited a higher rate of failure. In some cases, the printer refuses to accept the cartridge entirely. Generic products also cause more clogs and overspray, which can damage the print mechanism. If your printer has been damaged by generic ink, most manufacturers will not repair it under warranty.

HP INK

GENERIC INK

**VAN WERT LOCATION:
706 W. Ervin Rd. Suite C
Van Wert, OH 45891
419-238-9728**



**CELINA LOCATION:
918 N. Main St.
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