

THE SIMPLE GUIDE TO PURCHASING A  
**MULTIFUNCTION  
PRINTER**

"THE RIGHT DECISION IS SIMPLE!"

Having the right equipment is paramount to maintaining a productive office space. If your employees lack the tools they need to do their jobs properly, there will be delays, wasted man hours, and even added expenses if you have to constantly be outsourcing printing, photocopying, and scanning jobs. Perhaps you lack the equipment all together, or maybe it is constantly shutting down, or is in need of a repair. The cost of re-pairing or running your current equipment might also be so high that you're considering investing in a new setup.

Whatever the reason is, if you've come to the conclusion that a multifunction printer is the right option for your business, the purchasing process is really only the beginning. That's because there are literally hundreds of options on the market when you consider all of the different makes and models. And, when you start getting into the various features and add-ons, figuring out which one is best for you can become quite a difficult task.

Fortunately, you can narrow down your options quickly if you follow three key steps: determine what you need, determine your budget, and look at your options. This guide will walk you through the process of doing just that. It will also help you keep in mind certain considerations that you may not have thought about before, like the cost of maintaining your current equipment, and the on-going operating costs of any model printer you are looking at (which factors in the warranty, the average repair price, and the cost-per-page figure).

Once you are armed with this information, you'll find that choosing the right multi-function printer for your business actually won't be that tough of a decision at all. And, if you devote a bit of time up-front to researching what you really



## HERE'S WHAT THIS GUIDE WILL COVER:

### **Considerations To Make:**

How often will you be using the printer? How much does your current equipment cost? What aspects are most important to you? By answering these questions, you'll get into the right mindset so that you can begin narrowing down your options.

### **Weighing Your Options:**

What features do you require, and what features are available? This first section will show you your options within the full range of multifunction printers so that you can begin narrowing down which ones to consider and which ones to avoid.

### **Making Your Decision:**

With the research complete, the final section will help you make your decision by giving you some final tips and thinking points, and reviewing the industry's top choices.



## THINGS TO CONSIDER

Like any business expense, you should consider your printer to be an investment. Whether you intend to be using it daily, or just a few times a month, it will be part of your business' routine in printing, filing, and scanning documents. In order to avoid downtime, delays, and expensive repair costs, it's important that you choose a printer that is dependable, but the things that will factor into your decision go far beyond that.

### You also need to keep in mind:

- The upfront cost
- The manufacturer warranty: How long does it last? What will it cover?
- The availability of supplies: Going with a well-known manufacturer will help lower supply costs, and make them easier to find
- The cost-per-page: How much will the cost of using your printer be?

When you begin considering these aspects, you can already start smartly narrowing down your options to only include:

New in-the-box printers with a warranty. Avoid refurbished or open box deals as something is more likely to go wrong, and the factory warranty is typically void.

New models from big name manufacturers so that you can easily locate brand-ed supplies (which does factor into your printer's overall life). Choosing a popular model will also lower the costs of any needed repairs.

You might end up paying more up-front, but if you choose a printer that you know will have a better warranty and/or a lower CPP (cost-per-page), it might be worth it to you, especially if you plan on high volume usage rather than just occasional jobs.



## Multifunction vs. Single Function

As you start out on your search for the right multifunction printer, you might start questioning your need for one at some point. Generally, you need a multifunction printer (for cost-effectiveness and convenience) if you need three or more functions that can be found within a multifunction printer. Typically, these three functions are: printing, copying, and scanning. However, any combination of features that can be found within a multifunction printer justifies the search because buying the equipment you need separately will cost you more up-front, and with long-term maintenance and supply costs.

With that in mind, you can start diving into the long list of features that can be included in a multifunction printer, and circle the ones that really matter to you.

## WHAT DO YOU NEED?

Multifunction printers have come a long way in recent years. They're now more affordable and more versatile than ever before, and they also commonly incorporate smart printing features and apps for remote printing abilities. But, what features do you really need and which ones are just "extra"?

Here's a list of the features most commonly found in multifunction printers so that you can begin circling the things that are critical to your search:

**Printer:** The obvious cornerstone of a multifunction printer is its ability to print a wide variety of jobs. Most multifunction printers are inkjet, meaning many of them can also print beautiful photos, graphics, and charts as needed. This could be essential to your marketing, presentations, or labeling.

**Copier:** Every multifunction printer out there comes with a copying function so that you can easily duplicate any document you feed-through. Whether or not you intend to use it, expect to pay for the option in any multifunction printer you buy.





**Scanner:** Scanning is also an essential feature found within multifunction printers, and it enables you to take your paper filing process to the next level using digital storage. This can be critical to backing up and securing your business files.

**Fax Machine:** While most people have moved away from faxing in light of email and other virtual solutions, fax machines are still a necessary piece of equipment for many businesses, and they are oftentimes more convenient than email.

### The Extras

In addition to the above “four corners” of a multifunction printer, just about every model out there also comes with some extras that might not be necessary, but you might find yourself using often. This means you might want to look for a multifunction printer that includes one or more of the following features:

**Automatic document feeder:** Most multifunction printers will feed documents for you automatically. But, do you need this? What’s the capacity?

**Touchscreen display:** For ease of operation, this is most likely going to be on your list of must-haves. Without it, you and your staff will be frustratingly punching buttons with limited feedback.

**Smart apps:** Most printers now feature smartphone apps to go along with them. This app might allow you to “scan” paper documents and print them instantly, and it should also let you control some settings for your printer so that maintenance is that much easier. Most also feature an inventory of ink and paper levels so that you can re-order with ease.

Now, out of all of these features, which ones are really important to you and which ones would just be nice to have? Once you answer that question, you can start sifting through your options.

## BUSINESS GRADE VS. RETAIL

Since you've listed out all the features you absolutely have to have, it's time to begin making your selection. However, there is one final consideration that will help you narrow down your choices into a proper list of options, and that is seeking out a business grade printer over an "office printer" that you could find at any retail store. If you're not sure of the differences, it's important you quickly get informed on what exactly makes it so essential to have a business grade printer over the typical "office" printer that is likely being marketed towards you.

### What Is The Difference?

If you are unconvinced that there is a difference at all, you'd be surprised. Compare a true business grade printer to an "office printer" makes for a land-slide victory for the business grade model. That's because business grade printers are manufactured to meet significantly higher quality standards. An "office printer" is primarily sold for home office use, or for occasional use. It simply will not meet the needs of the typical business in terms of:

- Print speed
- Print quality
- Page capacity
- Useful lifespan
- Toner volume

All of these aspects factor into the overall efficiency of your printer, and how much return (usage) you can receive from your investment. While the typical office printer will only run you

All of these aspects factor into the overall efficiency of your printer, and how much return (usage) you can receive from your investment. While the typical office printer will only run you about \$300 to \$500 at your local office store, if you try to use it to the extent that you will use a business grade printer, it will begin causing delays due to low page capacity, slow print speed, and low toner capacity. It will also cause problems due to lesser printer quality. And, most of all, regular usage on such a printer (which it isn't built for) will quickly lead to maintenance and repair problems, and even cause the printer to overheat all together.

Business grade printers, on the other hand, are made for high volume regular usage. They are made from higher quality components, and offer essential office features that retail-type printers simply don't need to account for. This may include a page capacity upwards of thousands of pages, extremely high toner capacity, printer security software (to protect sensitive documents, and your office's network), and especially faster processing and print speed.



A key to business grade equipment is the service upkeep. With most business grade purchases, you are offered a maintenance contract. This is an agreement in which you pay a set cost per page. The supplier will then deliver toner to you when you need it and most importantly, they will provide service and parts for the machine with a re-sponse time of an average 4 business hours. If your business relies on the device be-ing up and running all the time, this level of support simply isn't available on the re-tail machines.

With these things considered, it's obvious that the features and build quality of a true business grade printer simply don't compare to even the highest model that you could purchase at your local office supply store. So, keep this in mind when determining your budget.

## MAKING YOUR DECISION

Now that you've got a good overall snapshot of your options and the choices you'll likely be considering, it's time to make your decision. Here are some final tips and thinking points before you decide to buy:

### Up-front vs. On-Going

If you are planning on using your multifunction printer regularly, the on-going CPP (Cost-Per-Page) can really begin to add up on retail grade machines.

As one very straightforward example, Cartridge World looked into the up-front and CPP costs of printers. They found that the average single-function printer that was sold as "budget friendly" cost about 5.5 cents per page for black prints, and 8.9 cents per page for color prints. This is for the ink only. This is high when compared to busi-ness grade multifunction printers with a cost per page that checked in at only 1 cent per page for black prints, and 6 cents per page for color prints and this includes any parts and servicing the device might require through its lifespan.

The difference might not seem huge, but considering that you will likely keep your multifunction printer in operation for years to come, and since you will be using it often, these pennies can add up.

If upfront cash is an issue, consider discussing the option to finance a machine with your accountant and print supplier. This will allow you to take advantage of better technology and features today, with no upfront costs.





This gives your business a higher quality, more productive and reliable printer that could change the way your business produces and uses paper documents.

### **Savings Opportunities**

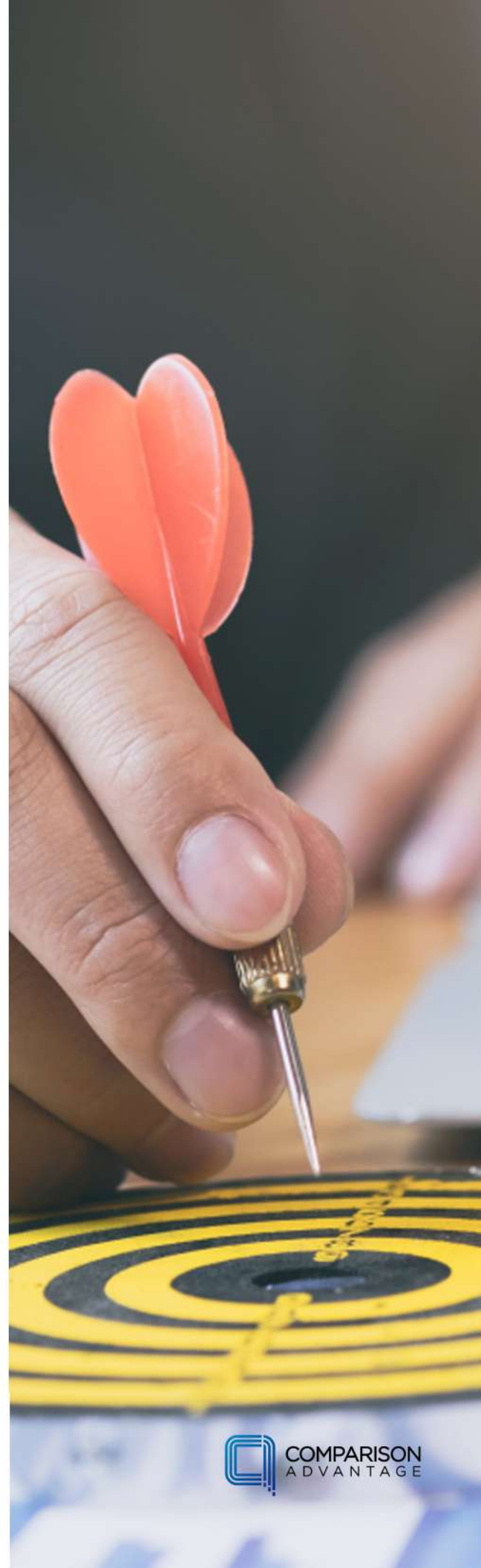
So, buying a refurbished or open box printer is likely not always a cost-saving option simply because it can cause you bigger problems later on. On retail grade equipment, toner usually becomes more expensive each year and parts are simply not available after a few years. Office grade machines although can be as much as 50% cheaper to buy, again, the cost to manage them moving forward as "used" can be double that of a new device. However, there are many savings opportunities for you to consider so that you can get a few dollars marked down off the retail price of your printer.

First, once you pick a model that fits your needs, if retail grade, you can shop around at multiple outlets and online to see if any store is having a sale or coupon event. This means you could save off the list price or qualify for free shipping and similar up-grades.

Secondly, you can likely save money if you join a rewards program. Most office supply stores have some sort of membership program (often they have an option specifically for businesses) that will give you a slight discount on your purchase. Finally, if you have a business credit card with a cash-back option, using it to purchase your printer could get you a few dollars back in your pocket.

When it comes to business grade equipment, negotiating with the supplier is normal. Typically you can expect between 15-20% discounts off the price when you compare multiple suppliers though a comparison site such as [comparecopiers.com.au](http://comparecopiers.com.au). Why? When suppliers know they are competing for your business, they typically work hard-er to win it. A platform like compare copiers has suppliers already aware they are competing with others and will typically lead with a solid price to start (but our suggestion is to still push harder). As a platform that uses the direct manufacturers, you know that they haven't added any further costs like dealers and resellers do to survive.

|





In short – Office grade equipment will be more efficient over time, it provides a great-er reliability of the business and much higher quality of prints, features and benefits.

If you employ these tips, you'll be able to find the right printer for your business and save a few dollars off the price tag.



COMPARISON  
ADVANTAGE

<http://comparecopiers.com.au>

[info@comparisonadvantage.com.au](mailto:info@comparisonadvantage.com.au)