

How to Choose the Right Business Copier

When you have the right business copier in your office, you can drastically improve the way your company operates. If you have the right copier, you won't find employees lined up waiting for jobs to be completed, or wasting time doing tasks manually that could be automated. Essentially, with the right copier, your employees spend less time copying or printing, and more time doing tasks that significantly affect your bottom line. When choosing which copier is right for your business, ask yourself these questions:

What Will The Machine Be Used For?

Make a list of tasks you need your business copier to perform. For example, many businesses use their copy machines for copying, scanning, faxing, printing, folding, stapling, binding and saddle stitching. Essentially, the idea is to automate any type of task your copier could have the ability to handle. It's a good idea to separate this list into two columns: must-haves and wants. Your copier must be able to print, and you might want it to be able to handle saddle stitching, but the latter may not be essential. This will assist you when determining the final configuration and investments required for your equipment.

How Much Volume Is Printed Every Month?

Essentially: how much are you using your copier? Are you printing off thousands of documents, or are you only printing a couple pages each day? How many employees are using the copier to print documents? Higher-end copiers typically handle volume better than lower-end varieties.

Once you know how much volume you're printing each month, you'll better be able to answer the next question, too.

How Fast Do You Need To Print To Keep Up With Demand?

If you've ever noticed a line forming at your copier, or people complaining about how long it takes to print something, then your copier is not printing enough pages-per-minute to keep up with your office's demand. Or, your machine may be tied up producing a large, complicated print project. This one is a bit trickier to gauge, but the best way to answer it is to pay attention to your copiers during the busiest time of the day. Are the machines backed up? If so, they either need to print faster, or you need to add copy machines to your fleet.

How Many Machines Are Needed?

Many factors need to be considered when you're determining how many machines your business needs. First, look at the volume. How much are you printing? Next, consider the number of employees that need to use the printer on a regular basis. Finally, think about the layout of your office.

Specifically, how far does each employee have to go to get to the nearest printer? If they have to wander through a maze of cubicles or go to another floor in your building, the device may be too far away and your employees' time is being wasted.

What Are Your Current Costs?

You'll probably need a spreadsheet for this one. List every type of cost associated with your current copier solution. Are you spending money on repairs? What do your supplies – toner, paper, staples, etc. - cost? How much are you paying for service? How much is it costing you to print documents? Make sure to factor in supplies, paper and toner, maintenance, troubleshooting, etc.

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Answering these questions will undoubtedly help you make the correct business decision, but it is easier said than done. Unless you've been consciously paying attention to your costs and print volume, for example, up until this point, it may be difficult to get an accurate measurement without some help.

Fortunately a managed print provider can help you collect this information. Once they have the data, they can then assist you through the process of figuring out how to analyze that data and translate it into answers. Once you have the answers, choosing the right business copier is simple.