

COPIER



BUYING GUIDE

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This guide is designed as a sequence of steps to help provide you with the means for choosing the right copier, assessing the best terms, the right supplier and the best service considerations for your business.

What to look for in a photocopier is more than copier speed and warm-up time, however, before you begin looking at print specifications a few simple preliminary steps are worth taking to find out what you need at a basic level, minus any advanced feature considerations and accessories.

First Steps

- The first important step is to work out what you need on a basic level before looking at extras. (The next section covers basic spec considerations.)

What is the minimum that would get the job done before any advanced features or accessories could provide a justifiable benefit?

- Become familiar with some of the latest digital copier technology and then review some of the latest machines available from each manufacturer before buying or leasing a new machine.
- Many of the latest office copiers are also multifunction devices and therefore incorporate devices that you may otherwise purchase separately. Highly popular is the option for network fax, a common photocopier upgrade that takes advantage of in-built high speed scanning.

What copier does your business need?

The most fundamental requirement in an office copier is copy and print speed. This is controlled by your copy and print volume, either present or expected.

What is our monthly copy / print volume?

Copy speed is measured in cpm, or copies per minute (print speed is ppm). The main factor governing productivity, and ultimately efficiency, is the speed of the copier or printer. A slower machine will cost less but turnaround time for individual print runs may not meet your level of satisfaction. You should factor this over projected monthly volume.

Bear in mind, a faster photocopier machine will be able to handle:

- a higher print volume,
- use by more personnel,
- the times of peak use
- the higher rate of productivity as a result.

It is worth assessing your current usage by conducting a quick print audit of average pages copied per month, A4 or A3 requirements, black & white usage and colour usage. Take a long-term view and consider the potential growth of your company.

If you are upgrading, then the on-board counter on an existing copier will tell you your average current monthly volume. If you are buying or leasing your company's first photocopier you will be able to get a rough idea from copy shop receipts. If you are going to use the copier as a network printer, then the figure for your expected copy and print volume should be raised by 30% to 50%.

If you're looking to account for future growth and also to ensure a more reliable machine, then increase this figure again by at least 15%.

A simple guide to copy and print volume

Up to 2000 per month: - 16-25 ppm
 2000-5k per month: - 35-45 ppm, 55 ppm
 5000+ per month: - 65-80 ppm

Remember that if general use is for long print runs a slower machine, despite an average low monthly volume, will take considerably longer and the turnaround time may fall short of requirements.

A higher ppm is recommended to handle higher peak time use.

Three points to consider:

- Manufacturers often radically exaggerate their monthly maximum print volume. Our experience reflects the above as a realistic estimation for a more reliable machine.
- A modest ppm is not recommended if your priority is high turnaround for minimum workflow interruption; you may therefore find a higher speed copier the better choice.
- Never underestimate your needs over cost, the result is only ever a machine not built for the job.

About Copier Networking for print functionality

Network printing is now a staple function of the modern photocopier to the point where it is now increasingly regarded in the modern workplace as the office printer. As it is still a copier, you can still use all its trademark features: make double-sided, collated, and stapled sets of documents from your office PC or Mac.

Having members of staff able to print from their desktop computers directly to an office copier will save money - the costs per page are significantly lower than laser printers which means you have one less machine to purchase and maintain. This functionality lets your staff quickly produce dozens of collated, stapled, high quality documents without leaving their desks. You should consider however that, as with any MFD (multifunction device) solution, periodic service is necessary and therefore a simple backup printer for emergencies is recommended.

Why Colour is becoming more popular

A recent significant development for business (some are calling it the colour revolution) is colour copiers, or printers (current range of Canon colour copiers are network-ready as standard), are now more affordable. They also take up less space and are faster too.

Until recently, buying a Colour Photocopier would still cost around 20-30% more than its black-and-white same-speed equivalent. However, the margin in price difference is becoming ever less and less. The colour toner will always add to running costs (when not included in the service plan), however, with a hybrid or colour-capable machine this is only so when colour is used. Businesses of all sectors and size are now increasingly buying or leasing a new copier with colour capability, and reaping the inherent benefits - namely: impact of colour over simple black and white, professionalism in campaigns and corporate image, money and time-saving and convenience of in-house colour printing.

Hybrid Colour Solutions

Because not all businesses will use colour all the time and could not justify the running costs of a one-pass dedicated graphic colour system, Canon and Toshiba both manufacture what we describe as hybrid colour-capable or colour-enabled machines: colour is only used as required. You only use black toner for black and white printing.

Many businesses are finding this is the ideal solution. Their printing is mainly black and white, yet colour is proving especially useful for colour graphs, datasheets, coversheets, headings, proposals and presentations for example. If colour is only used occasionally then a colour machine's black and white printing is no more expensive than with a mono-only copier.

For the business with a very small but definite need for colour copying, a decision must be made between a colour-capable digital printer or a black and white digital printer complemented by a [smaller multifunctional all-in-one colour printer](#). To decide this you should consider the human effort involved where both machines are necessary for a single print job.

Professional Full Colour

If your business regularly out-sources large amounts of colour copying for sales brochures, promotional literature, or other business projects, then you may actually save money by purchasing a dedicated colour machine that is capable of printing in full calibrated colour, like the [Canon IRC5255i](#) and [Canon imagePress C1+](#). These machines are typically used in graphics design environments for print proofing and where needs are for high quality, versatility with media, and consistent colour reproduction.

Call for sales advice

A sales advisor can be just that. If at any point rather than reading this buyer's guide you have more specific queries that need addressing, then speaking directly to a sales advisor may provide quicker and more personalised answers. If impartial assistance is offered then use it, ask questions. You may no longer need this guide or you may refer back with a different perspective or a better idea of requirements.

Colour Photocopiers and how they work

All colour copiers are digital and work much like a computer scanner connected to a laser printer. The copier scans the original then transfers the information via laser to a charged image drum. Colour toner adheres to the charged areas of the drum before being transferred to paper. The final step, as with a laser printer, is to heat the toner on the page and fuse a permanent image.

High-end models apply all four colours in a single application. Low-end machines take four passes of the same image, rolling the paper around the drum four times to apply each colour. While low-end technology is less expensive, it also makes for slower copying speeds.

Colour Copier - Editing Features

Standard features on digital colour copiers include border erasing, image centring, colour adjustment, and colour balancing.

The Canon imagePress C1 is able to print consistent high quality colour on 64-256g/m², coated, uncoated and textured media. Because of an advanced fusing process, the texture is not ironed out; images also appear shiny on glossy paper, and matt on plain paper. The Canon C1 is the right choice

if colour accuracy and consistency is your highest priority; pages from the imagePress C1 are often at a standard higher than commercial printers can offer.

How useful are some advanced printer functions?

With a better idea of your monthly volume, speed, colour and network connectivity requirements you can start looking at specific copier machines by trusted manufacturers. Remember though that buying a copier with plenty of features does not mean you will be paying for unnecessary options – many will be built into digital machines as standard, bearing little to no impact on price. Just be sure to stick to the outline.

A Multifunctional printer/product/peripheral, including much of Canon's office copier product range, that is connected to your internal network, can do or help with many of the following tasks:

- Print
- Scan to File and e-filing
- Copy
- Send Faxes
- Email Scanned Documents from their PC or MAC
- Print or Send Files via Bluetooth for wireless printing (from PC or phone), Scan to USB
- Utilise Advanced Security Functions
- Utilise Document Management and Restricted Use Management
- Email and Fax Notification for Service
- Scan to .jpeg, .pdf, slim pdf, .tif and .xps.

The key point in evaluating these advanced features is – efficiency. Keep an open mind as to how some of the latest functions may benefit your business' productivity and efficiency. How much time would essentially be wasted without these features? Compare the matter with a more traditional copier option – extra paper capacity: the distraction of refilling a paper cassette 500 times more in a year when a LCU (large capacity unit) that can hold up to 3000 sheets is an available accessory.

Traditional office Photocopier features

[See the Photocopier Glossary of Terms](#)

Automatic Document Feeders

An automatic document feeder (ADF) allows you to copy multi-page documents without having to lift and lower the cover for every sheet you copy. Instead, the stack of originals can be placed into the feeder and, by pressing start, the ADF automatically pulls each page through.

A reverse document feeder (RADF) is used for double-sided or duplex copying Pages are flipped inside the feeder to scan the other side.

Duplex Copying

Duplex, or double-sided, is a useful feature that enables printing on both sides of every sheet. The benefits also include saving paper, lowering cost, reduced filing and the time involved if you were to produce double-sided copies manually. On an environmental level, you're using less paper. If our dependence on paper is reduced, then less trees need to be felled for our business consumption as is the energy involved in paper production.

Sorting and finishing

The latest digital copiers and printers by Canon can sort copied sets electronically without the use of sorter bins. Instead of separate bins, the copies are placed in a single tray at a right angle or offset from each other, allowing you to easily identify where one set ends and another begins. Bin-free sorting allows you to make unlimited sets at one time, rather than only as many sets as you have sorter bins.

You may want a finisher if you want your office copier to copy many sets of multi-page documents. The most familiar type of finisher is the automatic stapler, which can save an immense amount of

time. More advanced versions include three-hole punches, saddle stitch binding, folding, and more. Finishers are optional on many machines, and vary in price according to functions.

Paper supply

Each paper tray, cassette, pedestal, or paper feed unit is a separate paper source. The number of sources is important if you want to be able to copy onto different paper stocks, such as A4, letterheads, A3, coloured paper or transparencies and for reduction and enlargement purposes, without reloading the machine. Paper sources typically hold a minimum of 50 to 100 sheets, and the largest-capacity units can hold up to 3,000 sheets.

Typically, office copiers include at least one fixed-size and a couple of adjustable-size paper trays. Most Canon copiers make double-sided copies as standard and all have a bypass tray, a special tray that provides a straight paper path for heavy paper and labels.

Digital multifunction (MFP, MFD) devices

Much progress has been made since the first GP215 digital copier by Canon in 1996.

Most, if not all printers and photocopiers today in 2008, at least in the Canon and Toshiba ranges, are Multifunctional: they have added functionality and the convenience of several office machines in one: copier, printer, scanner, pdf writer, fax machine...

Some advanced document managing features are integrated such as: scan to file - a document is scanned either to a shared folder on the network or to a specified workstation or PC; scan to email - a document can be scanned and sent directly to an email address; and recently, scan to .doc (Word) and scan to .xls (Microsoft Excel).

Some capabilities that used to be expensive or simply not available are now standard on today's digital multifunction products. Remember that with the right copier you can upgrade many of these features later.

Some machines can be upgraded with a "plug and play" type of upgrade, like a USB print dongle, while others require more extensive hardware fixes. If you are considering adding printing or faxing modules later, ask about the specifics of the upgrade process.

Digital Photocopier Features

[View The Photocopier Glossary](#)

Photocopier Printing

Add a printer module and network card to a digital copier and it can double as an office laser printer, working at the same speed it makes copies. A copier can allow your employees to produce dozens of stapled copies of a five-page, two-sided proposal - without leaving their desks. These same facilities are transferred by its use as a printer. Most offices can benefit from using a copier as a printer as per-page costs can be as little as 20% of laser printer printing costs.

Most copiers run standard networking protocols, but you still need to make sure the model you choose is compatible with your network. Involving your IT department with the copier company's IT is advisable.

Photocopier Faxing

With the addition of a fax module, you can send and receive faxes through the copier. You can easily send multi-page faxes using the document feeder, or you can use the copier glass to fax single pages or parts of books or catalogues. Incoming faxes printed as they're received, sometimes into a separate output tray. With a network interface, users can even send faxes from their computers.

Image editing

Digital copiers can edit your documents while duplication is happening. This can include automatic page numbering or annotation, adding watermarks such as "confidential" or "copy", or adding date

stamps. They can rotate scanned images to match the orientation of the available paper supply, saving on wasted time and paper from unanticipated errors.

They can also combine images in creative ways, such as copying a two-sided original — say, a check — onto one page for better filing, or reducing and combining originals to put 2, 4, or 8 pages onto one.

Stackless duplexing

Digital copiers can support stackless duplexing by storing each side of the original page in memory, then printing both sides of the copy. This means the number of two-sided copies you make is no longer limited by the capacity of a duplex tray. You will get your duplexed copies much faster, too.

Automatic re-sizing

Digital copiers usually offer an automatic sizing function on their machines. This enables the copier to note the dimensions of your original document and adjust itself using present reduction/enlargement settings, even if your copying paper is a different size than your original.

Automatic shut-off

Almost all copiers now have an automatic shut-off option — it saves energy and decreases wear on a copier by turning the machine off if it has not been used for a set period of time.

Security

Many digital copiers allow you to require that users enter a code before they can make copies. This provides a level of security — preventing unauthorized usage — as well as allowing you to analyse current usage patterns by department. Some machines can also hold faxes or network documents in memory until the correct code is entered, then print them. This prevents confidential documents from being left in the output tray for any passer-by to view.

Research and review: the best copier for my business

Small or Home Office (and Large Office Backup)

The best copier or printer for a small or home office with a copy/print volume expectancy of less than 2000 copies / prints per month: low volume, recommended 16- 25ppm.

Low Volume Photocopier

Best copier or printer for a department with copy/print volume expectancy of 2-5k copies/prints per month: 30-45ppm, 55ppm is suitable, the higher speed would cover expected peak use. Examples are [Canon iR3235N](#), [Toshiba eStudio455](#) and to benefit from the occasional splash or colour: [Canon iR3180Ci](#), [Canon iR5880Ci](#), .

High Volume Photocopier

Best copier or printer for a department with copy/print volume expectancy of 5-24k copies/prints per month: Print speed: 55-80ppm, the higher speed would cover expected peak use.

Office Backup Copier

The best copier to be used as a backup or small home office desktop printer for a small monthly volume expectancy, with backup or SoHo multifunction features: we can recommend

Professional Full Colour Photocopier

Best printer for a professional graphics department is a dedicated high quality fully calibrated colour printer system.

Copier prices and how to buy

Prices for digital copiers have come down remarkably in recent years. However, there is a very large variance in pricing, even among similar or identical models. Some vendors overcharge simply because they can get away with it, while others price their base machines far below market value

— even below cost — to lure you in, then charge considerably more for service contracts and add-on features. Before signing a contract, make sure you understand all current and future costs. Speak to an Office Technology Ltd sales advisor who will be familiar with all the different kinds of photocopier contracts used in the industry and will be able to advise on a genuinely good deal.

Copier Pricing Advice

Be just as meticulous with a special offer.

If it's too good to be true it probably is, although not always. Many offers are often finance options worded differently and often not the most cost-effective or suitable option overall for your business. What you should be looking for is honest pricing with a competitive edge from a company that can deliver.

Have a direct approach: Every company is different, with different expected income patterns. Finance solutions can be set up in a variety of ways, each geared towards the customer's best interests. Your business may benefit from various leasing options for example, from 1 year up to a maximum of 5 years. Work out the best option and then ask for the best deal. A sales advisor should be able to help you with budget advice.

You may find it useful at the time to purchase or lease a new printer at a low overall price but be careful to check other obligatory payments like cost per copy and, in the service agreement, whether toner is included, consumable and non-consumable parts (some circuit boards can cost in excess of €1000 to the photocopier service and repair company). Make sure you're all covered.

Cash back offers may be very inviting, certainly useful. Check though that it's a genuine offer -that repayments are not advertently too high. Some businesses are good at hiding compensation plans to their price structure. It may be the real thing but check or consult with an advisor to be sure.

Buy or lease a copier?

The cash flow and tax relief benefits of leasing provide a very strong case against an upfront cash purchase. If you buy equipment outright the capital invested becomes, in effect, tied up in a depreciating asset. [Photocopier Leasing](#) on the other hand allows you to save resources for other purposes or opportunities. In addition, because the technology changes quickly, a lease makes it simpler to trade up to a newer model, allowing you to upgrade without buying anew. Speak to your accountant who can advise upon what is best for your company financially.

Evaluating and choosing a copier dealer

When it comes time to choose a dealer, "service" is the most important aspect you should consider. A great company photocopier with bad service can cause more headaches than a so-so copier with excellent service. Since you will need to be comfortable with your copier vendor for the duration of any agreement it is in your best interest to be particular when evaluating them.

Get to know the dealers that carry the copier you're interested in well. Ask questions like:

- How long have you been in business? Who are your major accounts?
- How long have your employees been working for you?
- Are you an authorised dealer?
- Do you sell multiple brands or do you specialise, providing a better level of service?
- What is the policy on breakdowns? Is there a time limit for repair responses?
- How many in-house technicians are available for this model?
- Do you have your own well-stocked storeroom to ensure quick and efficient repairs and can I see it? Locality of parts resources can play a big part in service efficiency.

One of the best ways to get to know a vendor is to take a tour of their facility. You will be able to see service technicians at work and take a look at their repair facilities. This can also help you make sure a potential vendor is large enough to meet your needs — but small enough to value you as a customer.

Does the company have its own spare parts and consumables storeroom?

Consider the importance of a self-sufficient company with its own well-stocked storeroom of replacement parts and consumables. Is it accessible to the company for same day despatch and repair? What happens when your copier breaks down, how long is inconvenient? If you want to be sure of a fast and efficient service, it is essential that this ground is covered. You could ask to see the storeroom or at least where it is for total assurance...

Because of our location and large well-stocked storeroom Office Technology Ltd is able to cover all instances of emergency to all of the Greater Dublin Area

Copier Service Agreements Service Agreement Guide

Copy volume

Service contract pricing is based on estimated copy volume. However, your copier usage is likely to fluctuate month to month due to regular business cycles or summer vacations. Be wary of contracts that stipulate an annual or monthly copy volume that is unrealistically large. While it may be tempting to overestimate your expected copy volume to get a lower per-copy rate, if you do not meet that maximum, you will not be reimbursed for the difference. Similarly, if the volume estimate is too low, dealers often charge a per-copy fee above and beyond that limit, which can end up being quite costly.

If copy volume is something you are still trying to assess, Club Copying can supply a service plan that charges you only for the copies you make (pay as you go) or one based on your estimated annual, not monthly, number of copies.

Final word of advice:

Please call Office Technology Ltd 01 460 44 44

Call us with any office equipment related query. We are a Dublin-based authorised supplier and maintenance provider for a wide range of Canon photocopiers and multifunctional printers, fax machines, and high quality professional colour systems. We are also specifically dedicated to businesses in and around the Greater Dublin Area (Dublin, Wicklow, Kildare, Meath, Louth).

We have 23 established years' experience in the industry, a high quality of service and a large client base built through recommendation, honest pricing and advice.

Office Technology Ltd - 23 years of Service to Greater Dublin – 01 460 44 44