

TOP 8 QUESTIONS ANY BUYER SHOULD  
ASK BEFORE LEASING / PURCHASING

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF AN MFP'S OVERALL  
OPERATING COSTS ARE SERVICE RELATED?  
FIND OUT INSIDE

# THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO BUYING AN MFP





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TODAY'S CHALLENGING ECONOMY IS PUSHING US TO MAKE SMARTER DECISIONS, TO THINK LONGER-TERM, BE MORE EFFICIENT—AND TO BE MORE COST-CONSCIOUS. THIS GOES DOUBLY SO WHEN PURCHASING OFFICE EQUIPMENT; BUYERS NEED TO DUCK, DIVE AND BE CREATIVE WHILE NOT FALLING INTO MONEY TRAPS SET BY VENDORS THAT ENSNARE THEM INTO MORE EXPENSIVE CONTRACTS WITH UPFRONT DISCOUNTS, SPECIAL OFFERS AND BUNDLES. BUYERS HAVE TO DO ALL OF THIS WHILE ENSURING THEY GET THE BEST TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGY TO EMPOWER THEIR USERS.

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INDUSTRY INSIDERS AND PROCUREMENT VETERANS KNOW THAT OFFICE EQUIPMENT PURCHASING COMES IN CYCLES OF THREE TO FIVE YEARS. OVER THE COURSE OF THAT TIME SPAN ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY AND PAST DECISIONS SHOULD BE REVIEWED FOR EFFECTIVENESS.



# THE MOST IMPORTANT CHANGES AND ADVANCES TO THE OFFICE EQUIPMENT PURCHASING CYCLE ARE:

## EQUIPMENT / TECHNOLOGY ADVANCEMENTS

Office equipment hasn't escaped the technological growth curve. Like other technologies, they have advanced in features and functionalities, grown in processing power and added a plethora of new capabilities.



## CONTRACTUAL CHANGES

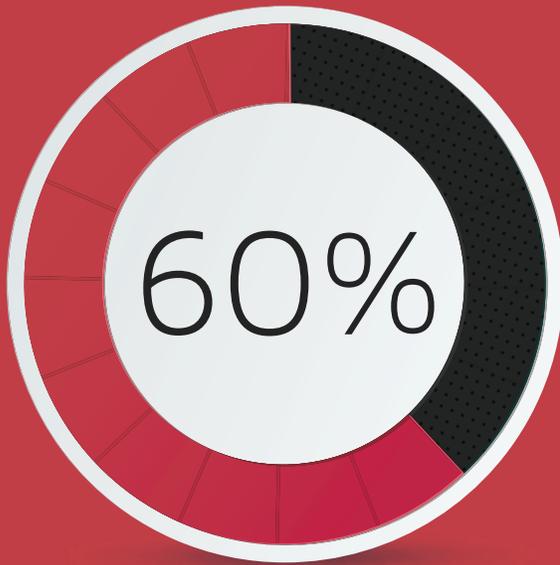
Nothing hurts vendors like a bad economy, so to remain competitive many vendors and service providers are forced to offer their customers attractive sounding deep discounts. The problem is that these losses or discounts need to be recouped somewhere in order for the seller to stay out of the red. The most common place to recover these losses is in the contract terms and conditions. By changing their terms and conditions, equipment vendors and service providers are able to rework their service contracts and agreements to make up for losses from upfront discounts and special offers.

## SO... NOW WHAT?

Most companies understand the above, but how do you sort through the vendor jargon and get a good deal on equipment that will keep your company on the cutting edge? We asked the experts (those industry insiders and procurement veterans) what they would ask suppliers when looking to purchase or lease a new multifunction printer (MFP). Our talks with the pros each yielded the same result; that you need to ask the right questions. Before you ask us "...and what are the right questions?" here they are...



DID YOU KNOW?



OF AN MFP'S OVERALL  
OPERATING COSTS ARE  
SERVICE RELATED

HERE ARE THE "TOP 8" QUESTIONS EVERY DISCERNING BUYER SHOULD ASK BEFORE LEASING OR PURCHASING A NEW MFP:

WHAT TYPE OF PARTS WILL BE USED TO MAINTAIN THE SYSTEM, OEM OR AFTERMARKET?

1

Will the service provider use genuine Original Equipment Manufacturer parts, which can be 30-40% more expensive than aftermarket parts? Using aftermarket parts can negatively impact any warranty and guarantee from the equipment manufacturer, which can end up costing you more in the long run.

WHAT TYPE OF SUPPLIES WILL BE USED FOR THE LIFE OF THE CONTRACT, OEM OR AFTERMARKET?

2

Many of today's buyers have no idea what type of supplies will be used in their MFP. It should be known that the use of aftermarket supplies will in most cases void the equipment manufacturer's warranty. If that's not enough, aftermarket supplies can adversely affect the system's overall performance and output quality requiring more service and equipment downtime.

## WHO DETERMINES WHEN FAULTY EQUIPMENT IS TO BE REPLACED?

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If a new MFP is installed, has problems and needs to be replaced, who makes the decision to replace it? Is the decision up to you the customer to replace a faulty system or is up to the equipment service or lease provider? Another good thing to know when it comes to the equipment warranty or product guarantee – is the replacement policy included in the actual terms and conditions of the service and lease contract? And if so, how long is the warranty good for? These are answers you should know before you sign on the dotted line.

## HOW WILL YOUR COMPANY'S SENSITIVE DATA BE HANDLED?

5

New office equipment rollouts and on-going security aren't the only concerns when switching over to new office equipment. You should also know how the hard drives are swapped in and out, how they will be disposed of and who has access to this information in the interim. Will you the customer, the service supplier or a third party lease provider be responsible for the costs associated with handling the removal and destruction of your company's sensitive data?

## WHAT SECURITY SAFEGUARDS ARE OFFERED?

4

Security is a hot button topic these days; not even your MFP is safe from security concerns. Ask questions that will help you determine whether this potential new office equipment acquisition will conflict with your company's current network security protocols. Also, inquire as to whether single-component or full-system security is offered to understand what your system's security portfolio will include.

## WILL THE PRINT DRIVER OFFER TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION WITH THE MFP?

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This means that the print driver will have the ability to communicate directly with the device and then provide the end user with updates back from the MFP. For example: you receive a notification at your desktop that your print job has been completed. Now you can get your document and not have to wait by the printer unproductively. Alternatively, you may be notified that the printer you have selected is out of paper, toner or other resources that are required to finish your print job. Now you won't arrive at the MFP only to find nothing in the output tray. By receiving a notification that the printer is currently not available you can send your print job to another device. Having a print driver that communicates with the MFP and then back to the desktop helps to improve employee productivity and eliminate a lot of end user frustration. Ask for a print driver that can provide updates and communicate directly with the MFP, your end users will appreciate it!



## WILL A FREE USED PRINT CARTRIDGE RETURN PROGRAM?

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Given the importance of the environment these days, keeping old used print cartridges out of landfills should be top of mind for all responsible business professionals. The question becomes will the service provider responsible for the MFP offer a free cartridge return program for all used print cartridges from your office, regardless of the make and model? Or will they just offer this type of service for their own products and consumables?

## ARE THERE ANY HIDDEN FEES THAT YOU MAY NOT BE AWARE OF?

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Have you ever signed a contract or paid for a service only to find out that there were additional fees that were not brought to your attention up front, at the time that you bought the product or service? This is frustrating isn't it? With this in mind, you should ask all suppliers what fees and/or charges may not be included in the MFP agreement you are about to sign. Here are some common questions you may want to consider to avoid any unwanted financial surprises.

- Are all toner shipping and delivery fees included in the rate per copy?
- Will the same service rate be applied to all paper sizes? (letter, legal, ledger)
- Will financial credits be provided for all impressions, black and white and color, that are run by a technician when servicing the system?
- Will all scanning of hardcopy documents be done at no additional charge?
- Will there be any additional charges for the installation of print drivers?
- If leasing, will the property tax (if applicable), be included in the lease amount quoted?

# IN CLOSING

THE ANSWER TO THESE 8 QUESTIONS SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION BEFORE ANY NEW MFP IS PURCHASED OR LEASED. THESE ANSWERS WILL HELP YOU GET A GOOD DEAL AND AVOID UNNECESSARY HEADACHES BY ASKING SUPPLIERS THESE PROVEN QUESTIONS BEFORE SIGNING ON THE DOTTED LINE.

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WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW MUCH UNSUSPECTING INDUSTRY MFP HIDDEN FEES COULD BE COSTING YOU AND YOUR BUSINESS? ASK US ABOUT COMPLETING A THIRD PARTY HIDDEN FEE REPORT FROM [WWW.HOWTOBUYMFPS.COM](http://WWW.HOWTOBUYMFPS.COM).

