

## Managing Ink Cartridge Imports From Overseas Suppliers

The big four ink cartridge manufacturers are Canon, Epson, Hewlett-Packard and Lexmark and the margins they are making on their ink cartridge products is a multi-billion dollar global industry. Many printer buyers fail to ask why the high technology hardware they are buying is relatively so cheap and that is usually because they do not take into account the total cost of ownership of the hardware. Ink cartridges are to printer users what cigarettes are to a nicotine addict and once you have been hooked on a particular printer you have to then buy the compatible ink cartridge. The big four have gone to great lengths to make their ink cartridges protected by both legal and design features to make copying as difficult as possible. This protects their revenues and the effective monopoly they have had on the supply for ink. However, there have been rapid developments in the ability to duplicate the technology as well as a relaxation by some of the manufacturers who have allowed third party licenses for clone cartridges. Most of the third party manufacturers are located in the Far East, especially China which has a huge international enterprise zone situated at Shengzhen, but you will find many suppliers in Malaysia, Taiwan and Singapore if you take a brief look in an export/import directory. There are major issues with using a third party manufacturer of ink cartridges and if you are looking to import your cartridge needs directly there are issues you need to be clear on or the huge savings you can achieve will be false economies. First of all, the engineering quality of the ink cartridge itself needs to be sufficiently high enough to ensure that the cartridge will operate effectively and without causing any damage to your printer. Some brands such as Hewlett-Packard have an integrated printer head and cartridge assembly so the risk to your HP printer is minimized but then the cartridge itself is more complicated and there is more to go wrong with a clone if it is not manufactured to a sufficiently high standard. Other ink cartridges rely on a printer head that is part of the printer itself and the cartridge mates with that assembly on the printer. If the clone cartridge in this case is not of the correct specification then damage can result and you will have to replace the printer itself which is very expensive and defeats the object of buying a clone ink cartridge. You also need to look at the print capacity of a clone cartridge as the ink may not be of the same quality from a clone manufacturer as that of the branded manufacturer. If the ink is of a poor quality then you will probably see this in the quality of the printed document that is produced as well as a need for more, poorer quality ink to be used to produce the same quality of print finish as the branded ink. In other words, it may be cheaper but you need more of it and that affects the total cost to you as the consumer. Finally when you are looking at importing a clone ink cartridge from a third party supplier, ensure that you know what the actual ink content of the cartridge actually is. Some ink cartridges, especially recycled cartridges do not hold as much ink as the branded cartridge or a brand new product. If the cartridge is cheap but does not contain comparable levels of ink as the branded version then you have simply paid money for a piece of engineered plastic.

### About the Author

Our company <http://www.easyinkz.co.uk> is an enterprise specializing in developing and manufacturing print consumables like inkjet cartridge compatible for EPSON/HP/CANON series printers.

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