ENERGY STAR Digital Duplicator Buying Guide

Buying a digital duplicator that meets ENERGY STAR requirements can result in significant energy and paper savings for businesses. This digital duplicator buying guide will help you determine the type and features that will meet your business needs and enable you to save on energy and paper costs. Key savings mechanisms include:

- **Choosing the right size digital duplicator**. Purchasing a digital duplicator that can't manage your paper loads will result in increased wear and tear and a short product life, and force you to replace it sooner, while purchasing one that is far too large for your needs is a waste of financial and energy resources. Determining your actual usage and building in a cushion for growth is one of the most important aspects of choosing a digital duplicator.
- **Sleep mode and automatic shut off**. Features that automatically place the machine in a reduced power state after a specified period of inactivity can result in significant energy savings.
- **Automatic double-sided duplicates /duplexing**. Digital duplicators that can produce images on both sides of the paper by flipping the paper inside the machine (i.e., without a person needing to manually manipulate the paper) make it easier to produce double-sided duplicates, which cuts down on paper use.

These and other features that reduce energy and paper use will be discussed in the buying guide.

Consider the Digital Duplicator Types

Digital duplicators are designed for high-volume print jobs and typically provide significantly lower per duplicate price than copiers. They are extremely reliable because they do not use heat or traditional copier components, such as toner. Digital duplicators create a stencil (master) and ink is pressed through microscopic holes in the master using a thermal imaging process.

A4 Duplicators: This is the most common type of duplicator. It is suited to high volume uses with a maximum page size of A4 or A5 booklets.

A3 Duplicators: These duplicators are capable of printing A4 booklets and posters.

Friction Feed V Air-feed: Designed for the highest-volume users, these duplicators use air to feed paper into the machine and are often used to print on envelopes and carbonless paper.

Duplex: Some models of digital duplicator are able to print or copy on both sides of the paper in a single pass; without re-feeding.

Consider Your Primary Digital Duplicator Needs

The primary factors to consider when choosing a digital duplicator are: copy speed, paper size and capacity, ink and color needs, and scanner specifications.

How fast does the digital duplicator need to be to meet your demands?

Speed is measured in duplicates per minute (dpm) and varies among models from 60 to 240 dpm. Consider your usage levels during a typical month and whether usage is generally consistent throughout the month. Make sure your unit can handle the expected volume of commonly-experienced high use peaks. Time to first copy is an important factor, though the successive duplicates come out faster, better models have a time to first copy speed of 26 seconds or less.

What types of paper will you be using?

You should consider the size, weight, and volume of paper that you will be using when choosing a duplicator. Different types of duplicators, and different models within each type, may be better or worse at working with certain paper types (e.g., letter, legal, envelopes).

Paper size standards runs from a minimum of 3.6" x 5.9" to a maximum of 11 x 17". Standard minimum and maximum paper weights are 13 lb. and 110 lb., respectively.

Another important consideration is paper feed capacity, or the amount of paper the machine can hold without needing to be reloaded.

Do you need to make color duplicates?

Digital duplicators can print many colors, but most can only print in one or two colors for each pass through the machine. Ensure the machine is able to print in the number of colors and combinations that you may need.

What are the key scanner specifications to consider?

It is recommended to choose a duplicator with a ***scanner resolution***, measured in dots per square inch (dpi), of at least 300 dpi.

The most versatile ***scanner surface*** is flatbed glass platen, which allows you to copy pages from bound material.

Evaluate Digital Duplicator Features

Sleep mode: A reduced power state that the digital duplicator automatically enters after a period of inactivity or at a user-set time of day (after business hours). An important consideration when purchasing a digital duplicator is the amount of time it takes a digital duplicator to achieve an active state from sleep mode.

Automatic shut-off: Similar to a sleep mode, an automatic shut-off option saves energy and decreases wear on a digital duplicator. However, an automatic shut-off options powers the machine off completely rather than putting it in a reduced power state. This saves more energy, but the machine will take longer to achieve an active state if the automatic shut-off has been activated and an unexpected copying need arises.

Automatic duplexing: Automatic duplexing enables a digital duplicator to produce images on both sides of an output sheet without manual manipulation in an intermediate step. Automatic duplexing makes it easier for users to produce double-sided/duplex duplicates and reduce the amount of paper used.

Paper delivery wings: Paper delivery wings enable paper stacking that reduces ink run-off and make it easier to organize and handle high-volume jobs.

One-touch resizing: A re-sizing function enables the user to make duplicates of a different size than the original.

References

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