



WHITE PAPER

5 WAYS YOUR PRINT-ON-DEMAND SOLUTION IS NO BARGAIN

Assessing the True Costs of Printing Warehouse Labels In-House

Many operations use on-demand printing for certain barcode label applications. It can be a convenient way to include a variety of your pertinent product information, especially if your printing volumes are low and manageable.

But in-house, on-demand printing has its drawbacks.

"The downsides that we hear most often are that it's time-consuming, error prone and can be a real drain on your resources," said Gregg Schiltz, ID Label's chief operating officer. "We encourage our clients to do a true cost/benefit analysis to fully understand the pros and cons of printing LPN labels on-demand."

This white paper explores five areas associated with on-demand printing where you may be investing more time and resources than you're aware of.



Printing labels in-house? Do a cost comparison to understand your best option.

If you're tracking products or assets through your distribution center, there's a good chance you're using labels with barcodes. But a key consideration is how best to produce your labels. It may seem like printing your own labels in-house would be a smart way to save time and resources. What's the reality? We encourage our clients to do a cost analysis to determine the most cost-effective solution.

There are five key areas where a print-on-demand approach may be costing you more than you realize. Let's explore them in a little more detail.

1. Operating a printer vs. operating a warehouse

As a skilled and experienced warehouse professional, you are focused on managing your team and helping your company be more efficient. You shouldn't be spending your time tinkering with printers, design software and finicky computer systems.

After all, is your job to print barcode labels or lead a warehouse team to success?

Expensive maintenance programs, software and equipment depreciation aside, the value you bring to your company is finding and resolving inefficiencies in your processes, not in dealing with barcode printing challenges and issues.

2. When there is a label misprint, the outcome can be devastating.

In one memorable anecdote we heard from a now-loyal customer, he noted how, through a simple mistake, their entire operation had to be shut down for a full day. To save time, an employee printed a run of LPNs all at once for a handful of skids he was working with. He forgot to log it correctly in the system and one of his colleagues printed duplicates. By the time anyone realized what had happened, the pallets had been put away. Thankfully, the error was caught, but combing through the warehouse to find all of the erroneous numbers was not exactly the best use of employee time.

3. Being "penny-wise" can be "pound-foolish" when it comes to quality.

Free labels! Sounds very appealing. All you have to do is buy several \$1,500 printers, a \$1,000 software license, a case of wax ribbons at \$25 each and start printing your very own "free" labels.

We realize not everyone needs to be concerned with durability, adhesive strength or environmental resistance. If you do, though, finding the right material on which to print can be tricky. Will my ribbons work? Will the adhesive stay strong if this sits in my freezer too long? How good are these labels you're getting for all this extra hassle anyway? These are the things you need to consider before you can even start printing your labels.



Compared to printing labels in-house, ID Label's preprinted LPNs are an efficient and cost-effective solution, especially for higher volume print requirements.

4. Time is money.

Under normal circumstances, it may only take a couple of seconds to print each label. Provided there are no misprints or voids, you shouldn't have many problems. As we know, though, this business is all about shaving off microseconds.

Print-on-demand can be good for manageable volumes. But when you start getting into tens of thousands of labels, how much down time accumulates while employees walk back and forth to the printer or stand idly waiting.

Even wearable printers can have drawbacks, though the technology is appealing. To make it lightweight enough to carry around all day, many features are lost. Your roll size for your blank labels can only be a fraction of the size a desktop printer can hold, which means more time spent switching out rolls. These types of printers also use a special thermal paper, which can be pricey.

5. Cost.

Last but not least — and really the main point — is the cost comparison between preprinted labels and DIY print options. Your job is to manage a warehouse or distribution center with hundreds, if not thousands of pallets, cartons, bins and totes representing your company's inventory.

The success of a distribution center is measured by the profitability it brings to the company. If you total the cost of your blank labels, ribbon, the software updates, the maintenance plan for the printer, your time and energy — as well as the extra time it takes to print, collect and apply the labels you use — is it cost-effective when compared to a preprinted solution from an industry leader like ID Label?

Your job is to manage warehouses or distribution centers. When you look at the time, investments and headaches of printing barcode labels in house — what are the true costs to you and your organization?

Ready for a cost analysis?

A good manufacturer of preprinted labels will have many inspection points and quality-control practices in place to mitigate any potential print issues, specifically watching for duplicate numbers. With a preprinted solution, the labels can be run quickly and correctly and shipped to your building, ready to go. They will be the right labels and will keep your distribution center moving. Your number sequences are stored in our database for easy and error-free reorders.

Interested in learning more? Call today for a free cost comparison. We are confident we will exceed the demands of your business.

