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Reducing Your Cost Per Copy

One of the most misunderstood concepts of printing to copy machines, laser printers, inkjet printers and similar devices is cost per copy and toner yield.

An average letter size 8 1/2 x 11 typewritten page contains what is called 5% black. If all of the black letters on this page were compressed to a solid black block it would cover 5% of the page or in other words you would have about a 1-inch black square. This is extremely deceptive and not something you would expect when looking at average documents. **A fully typewritten page is still 95% white!**

Most toner and ink cartridges express a number called yield. A cartridge that yields 10,000 copies will make 10,000 copies at 5% coverage. This measuring standard was created when most output was done with typewriters. With the computer age upon us giving the capability of desktop publishing, bold headings and picture inserts our documents have changed but the standard of toner yield measure has not.

It is very common to hear "I'm just not getting 5000 copies from this cartridge and it says it's good for 5000 copies". Upon inspection of the documents being printed we find a giant bold title, bold sub titles and maybe a photo or two thrown in whereas every copy being produced is consuming the equivalent of 10 (or more) typewritten pages. That 5000-yield copy cartridge is only going to yield 500 copies of this type of page.

Of foremost importance is that your document looks like you want it to. At the same time realize how much this document is costing you to produce and take into consideration ways to reduce your cost per copy. Most notably would be to keep bold print, headlines and subtitles to a minimum. Keep photographs and graphics to a minimum. Doing so will keep your toner consumption and your cost per copy to a minimum.

One solid black page is equal to almost 17 typewritten pages.