



### **Tech Coach Corner – Inkjet or Laser Printer?**

**by LTCL Tech Coach, Jeff Lazar**

So, you've read Coach Bryan's last column on buying a new printer. In response to Bryan's challenge, I'm going to write the shortest column ever!

#### **Do you need or want to print pictures/photographs?**

If yes, then you need an inkjet printer because a color laser printer costs much more. But you need to be aware that unless you purchase a professional-quality inkjet printer, the results will never be as good as taking your device with the picture to your local drug store and printing on photographic-quality paper. You also should remember that the total cost of ownership (TCO) of an inkjet is more than a laser, although the initial outlay is typically lower. Ink refills and any special paper you will want are expensive consumable supplies.

#### **Do you print text and black/white diagrams, graphs, etc?**

If yes, then a laser printer is what you want. While the upfront cost is higher than an inkjet, maintenance costs are low unless you are printing hundreds of pages a week. The cost will be driven by several factors, nearly all of which were reviewed in Bryan's last column. The bells and whistles are the same as change orders during construction of a new home – adding a disproportionate expense. In other words, you'll pay for convenience. My laser printer is a workhorse for my consulting business; although we are using less paper and more electrons these days, it does print two sides. It is also connected to my desktop via a cable, not Wi-Fi. If I am working on something on the road (laptop) and I need to print it when I get home, I'll transfer with a thumb (USB) drive.

The best printer is the one that serves most of your needs. That's why you need to go back to Bryan's column, as it will help you identify those needs and wants.

**Tech Coach assistance**

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