



Maximizing Your Operation: with High Ribbon Capacity Printers

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OVERVIEW

Many consumers are unaware of the variety of label and ribbon roll sizes for thermal printers. The maximum label and ribbon capacities are important specs when selecting a printer. This white paper will identify the benefits of thermal printers engineered to handle larger rolls, including the financial and operational efficiencies.

HOW MUCH VARIATION IS THERE WHEN IT COMES TO ROLL CAPACITY?

Thermal printers come in a wide variety of sizes, from portable printers small enough to wear on your belt to industrial tabletop printers almost too heavy and big to carry alone. The proper size printer for an application often depends on the volume of media being printed. As a general rule, the larger the printer the larger the price tag, but the cost benefits of choosing a smaller printer can be offset by sacrifices in efficiencies. It's important to choose a printer that adequately meets your needs without paying for unnecessary capabilities.

Thermal ribbons can range anywhere in length from less than 100 feet to over 3,000 feet, but most printer groups standardize on a common outer diameter of the rolls. Most of the newer desktop printers typically use 5" diameter label rolls and ribbons anywhere from 244' (74 m) to 984' (300 m) in length, and tabletop printers typically use 8" diameter label rolls and ribbons from 984' (300 m) to 1,476' (450 m) in length. Labels are much thicker than ribbon, so the footage allowed on a ribbon roll is much greater. As a general rule of thumb, the roll of labels needs to be replaced about twice as often as the ribbon roll.

WHAT DO RIBBON SIZES REALLY MEAN TO ME?

Of course you'll need enough memory, the proper print width and resolution, but many similar printers are mainly differentiated by the size of their ribbon roll compartment. Changing a printer's ribbon is probably the most cumbersome task required by the user, so anything that reduces the frequency and simplifies this process is appreciated.

There are 2 main benefits to using a larger ribbon roll:

1. The ribbon manufacturer is able to use economies of scale to keep the cost per foot lower.
2. The ribbons need to be changed less often, which results in more uptime and less operator intervention.

Desktop printers with the ribbon capacity of tabletop printers can also help simplify purchasing and inventory for customers who use a mixed fleet of desktop and tabletop printers. They are able to consolidate their part numbers and purchase the same ribbons for all their printers.



CP-214OZ printer with external unwinder



A GREAT (AND OFTEN OVERLOOKED) PRINTING SOLUTION

Desktop printers capable of handling label and ribbon roll sizes of tabletop printers are a great way to keep your capital expenditure low and maximize your operational efficiencies. The best option is a desktop printer capable of handling 984' (300 m) or greater ribbons, paired with an external label unwinder capable of handling 8" or greater diameter label rolls, like the one shown on the previous page.

TAKEAWAY

This white paper has identified 3 ways to maximize the efficiency of your printing operation:

1. Purchase printers with higher ribbon capacity.
2. Use additional accessories to maximize the size of label rolls.
3. Purchase the same ribbons for all your thermal printers if possible.

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