

PAPER ISN'T PAPER?

By Bruce Pierson

You'd think A4 copy paper would be pretty much the same, no matter what you bought, wouldn't you? Well, you'd be wrong. There is a **BIG** difference between buying good quality Australian made paper as compared to spending a little less on imported paper.

This fact came to my attention recently, when I was printing out some artwork that contained a large area of black. Normally, I don't do a lot of printing, mainly just a few letters and other documents occasionally, so I hadn't noticed any major problems with printing this type of document.

I'd printed this particular artwork on my ink-jet printer, but I wasn't happy with the quality of the artwork, because the black area was very patchy and uneven. I decided to reprint it on my laser-jet printer, using the same paper, because I knew the laser-jet printer would do a better quality print. In this case, I was wrong.

The print from the laser-jet printer was just as bad as the print from the ink-jet printer. At first, I wondered what was going on, so I decided to try a different batch of paper. The result was a massive improvement and the artwork now looked much better. The black area was no longer patchy and uneven, but it now looked like it should.

So, what was going on? Well, the first paper I'd used, was some cheap imported paper that my wife had picked up a while ago on special, that I'd been using to print on my ink-jet printer. I'd noticed that after printing, I had to lay the paper out, in order to let the ink dry. I hadn't really thought much about it at the time, but now I knew the cause.

It would seem that this imported paper does not absorb the ink properly, so therefore, it needs time for the ink to dry. As a comparison, I used an Australian manufactured paper in my ink-jet printer and I found that there is no drying time needed for the ink.

Just after experiencing this situation, I was talking to my interstate friend on Skype and he just happened to mention that he was having problems with his printer, as it suddenly had a problem with the ink taking a long time to dry on the paper after he printed it. I immediately asked him what type of paper he was using and he said that he'd run out of his regular paper and he'd just picked up some "Supermarket Brand" paper when shopping, because he needed to print something that night.

I asked him what paper he normally uses and he said he normally gets his paper from Australia Post and buys an Australian brand of paper. I got him to check the packet of the new paper he'd just bought and sure enough, it was imported. I related my recent experience to him and explained the difference between the Australian made paper and the imported paper, so he said he will now only buy his paper at his regular source.

I've also explained this situation to my wife, so she will now only buy Australian made paper, even though it costs more. It simply isn't worth saving a dollar to buy cheaper imported paper, which is sub-standard to the Australian made product. This cheap, imported paper gives very poor quality results, both in ink-jet printers and laser-jet printers, so it just isn't worth using it, when for a little more, you can have good quality Australian made paper.

LESSON LEARNED!