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28th June 2006

European third party ink jet inks dealt major blow by latest Wilhelm tests

by Ian Burley

Image permanence researchers at the renowned Wilhelm Imaging Research organisation reveal third party ink jet cartridges perform very poorly

At a seminar today held in Paris as part of the annual HP Lab University event for journalists and analysts in Europe, Henry Wilhelm, founder of the Wilhelm Imaging Research (WIR) organisation, revealed damning test data concerning the permanence of commercially re-filled HP ink jet printer ink cartridges available in Europe (see table below). Some cartridges achieved a permanence rating of just 0.1 years (that's not a typo!) compared to original the original HP product's rating of 73 years.

A question I get asked a lot is: "what do you think of third party inks?" and my stock answer has been: "there is too much evidence that some third party inks are no good but I guess there are some good ones out there, but there isn't enough information to separate the good from the bad." The fact is that I have yet to see irrefutable evidence that there are risk-free alternatives to original manufacturer inks, apart from some specialist fine-art inks aimed at the professional market.

Wilhelm is fiercely independent and reminded us on more than one occasion that although he was present as a guest of HP this week, he was not being paid to present to us. But his tests on remanufactured HP ink cartridges, rebranded with big names like Tesco and Jessops, among others, demonstrate that the likelihood is that buying third party cartridges is likely to be a very poor false economy. It's not just inks, either – his results

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also show that a combination of third party inks with third party papers can lead to even worse permanence.

WIR Display Permanence Ratings for Genuine HP Photo Inks and Papers Compared

With WIR Ratings for European Store Label and Other Aftermarket Photo Inks and Papers

	Displayed Prints Framed Under Glass (450 lux/12 hours per day)
HP Genuine Type 57 & 58 Photo Cartridges Printed on HP Premium Plus Photo Paper	73 years
Tesco refilled HP 57 & 58 Photo Cartridges Printed on Tesco Premium Photo Heavyweight Glossy Inkjet	0.1 years
Tesco refilled HP 57 & 58 Photo Cartridges Printed on HP Premium Plus Photo Paper	0.9 years
Jessops refilled HP 57 & 58 Photo Cartridges Printed on Jessops Photo Inkjet Paper Paper, Glossy	0.9 years
Jessops refilled HP 57 & 58 Photo Cartridges Printed on HP Premium Plus Photo Paper	4.5 years
Embatex Emstar refilled HP 57 & 58 Photo Cartridges Printed on Kodak Ultra Premium Photo Paper	0.6 years
Embatex Emstar refilled HP 57 & 58 Photo Cartridges Printed on HP Premium Plus Photo Paper	4.5 years
KMP refilled HP 57 & 58 Photo Cartridges Printed on KMP Photo Paper	1.2 years
KMP refilled HP 57 & 58 Photo Cartridges Printed on HP Premium Plus Photo Paper	4.4 years
WeCare refilled HP 57 & 58 Photo Cartridges Printed on WeCare High-Quality Photo Gloss	1.2 years
WeCare refilled HP 57 & 58 Photo Cartridges Printed on HP Premium Plus Photo Paper	2.1 years
Ink Tec Refill Kit for HP 57 & 58 Photo Cartridges Printed on Ink Tec Premium Photo Paper	0.4 years
Ink Tec Refill Kit for HP 57 & 58 Photo Cartridges Printed on HP Premium Plus Photo Paper	2.3 years

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www.wilhelm-research.com