Excess Toner Consumption

How dealers handle this with contract customers

Compiled by: Elizabeth Marvel, Office Technology Magazine

Following is a question submitted by a dealer member as part of BTA's Dealers Helping Dealers resource and many of the answers received. These answers and others can be found in the members-only section of the BTA website. Visit www.bta.org/DealersHelpingDealers. You will need your username and password to access this member resource.

How do you handle excess toner consumption by contract customers?

"We handle excess toner consumption through a combination of contract structure, monitoring and customer education. Our approach:

- **Set clear contract parameters up front** — Define expected coverage levels and usage assumptions (typically 5% coverage) to avoid surprises
- **Monitor usage closely** — Use remote monitoring tools to flag accounts with unusually high toner consumption
- **Address root causes** — Work with the customer to identify issues like heavy graphics printing, incorrect settings or misuse
- **Adjust pricing when necessary** — Implement overage charges or renegotiating contracts for accounts consistently outside normal usage
- **Recommend right-sizing equipment** — Ensure devices match the customer's print volume and application
- **Promote print management policies** — Encourage defaults like duplex, black and white, and draft mode where appropriate

"The key is being proactive, not reactive, catching the issue early and working with the customer before it becomes a margin problem."

Keith Anselmo, territory manager
Appalachia Business Communications, Johnson City, Tennessee

"That is what we are doing with Predictive InSight — finding out who is doing it. Then we just have to adjust on the next contract. It is a big issue right now with some of our production accounts."

Tim Stanley, owner
TDSiT, Lowell, Arkansas

"Our service manager explains how their printing exceeds normal consumption and gives them the option of raising their cost per print or paying for extra toner. So far when this has happened it is kind of split down the middle — some choose the higher rate and some pay for the extra toner (this is typically someone who had an extra temporary project running a heavier coverage)."

Marti Gibson, sales administration manager
Central Business Systems, Louisville, Kentucky

"We charge for excess toner based on copies/prints made and toner yield. We bill for additional toner based on [what is] shipped for the volume produced."

Stephen Valenta, president/owner
OFFIX, Gainesville, Virginia

"We are working hard on this one, scrutinizing DCA autotoners. We put incentives in place for sales, service and delivery personnel to pick up excess toner. It is $3 each and the customer gets $5 each."

Nick Lioce, president
The Lioce Group, Huntsville, Alabama

"We now have the techs ask to see the area where the toner is stored (on the pretext that there is defective toner). If there are extra toners, we take them back."

Sal Altavilla, president
Advanced Office Technology, Brewster, New York

"We use EKM to track toner consumption and if the client misplaces its toner, it must pay to replace it."

Dan Detrick, vice president
CopyLady Inc., Fort Myers, Florida

"We try to anticipate [toner use] based on application and industry (e.g., marketing, advertising, print for pay) and bump up click costs."

Clint Feybusch, president
Office Concepts, Pipersville, Pennsylvania ■

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