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How to maintain thermal printers by [Gary Ernstzen](#)

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For in-house on-demand label printing , thermal printing is the most efficient system these days. Both retail and various industries use thermal printers to handle short run, variable detail printing. When it comes to low volume variable label printing applications like pharmacy labeling, pre-packed sandwich labeling, courier labeling, batch number ordering and processing, thermal printers are now widely used. Since these printers are very useful, it is very important to maintain these printers. Let's take a look at how to maintain thermal printers.

Before delving deeper into the topic, let's take a look at how the thermal printers work. There is a heat activated print head which is made up of a row of hundreds of small ceramic pins. This print head is mainly used for thermal printing. The print head is heated up and it leaves a thermal impression on the print material. For a 203 dpi print output a print head consisting 203 print pins per inch is used. Thermal printers are mainly used in two ways – "Thermal Transfer" printing and "Direct Thermal" printing.

In order to maintain thermal printers , one can consult printing services companies. Many companies offer excellent service at a very reasonable price. But there are also many simple things that you can keep in mind for maintaining good health of the printer.

Since the print head is the most important component of a thermal printer, utmost care needs to be given to keep it clean. It is always recommended to go through the operator manual and follow their suggestion to clean the print head.

Whatever precaution you take, you cannot stop dust from being accumulated in the printer over time. This normally cause sensor issues and users face print quality problems. It is suggested to use a dry source of compressed air for cleaning the printer. You can use a can of air or air from a compressor to perform the cleaning task.

You need to clean the platen roller of the thermal printer with alcohol at least once a week. Never use sharp objects for removing label jams. The platen roller of the thermal printer is made of a rubber compound. So, if the roller gets damaged, the quality of the printing will dwindle. Even there might be faded spot in the label.

Following aforementioned tips, you can maintain good health of your thermal printer. The maintenance task might differ a bit based on the model and manufacturer of the printer. So, it is always recommended to go through the instructions that are listed in the user manual and perform the maintenance task accordingly. You may always get in touch with professional printing services companies for better print quality and maximize the life of the components of the thermal printer.

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