



The

Broadcasters' Desktop Resource

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... edited by Barry Mishkind – the Eclectic Engineer

Checking It Out

Brother INKvestment Tank Printer J995DW

[August 2018] Selecting the right printer for your needs is not always easy. While the shelves of office supply stores are full of options, careful buyers have had to balance the costs of the printer and consumables.

If you are looking for a solid new printer that will not cost you an arm and a leg, you will like what you will read here.

THE OLD WAY

Way back, when personal computing was a Radio Shack TRS-80 with 4 kB of RAM and a cassette to “save” programs, my first printer was a Heathkit dot matrix unit that I built myself.

Even then, it cost \$500 plus my time, but at least it was a lot cheaper than office machines in an era when 16 kB of RAM might be \$700. A few years later, I spoke to some of my friends who were buying inkjets for something like \$99 to \$199 for the printer, but then had to buy consumables every 700 pages or so, at something like 7 to 10 cents a page (color was way more expensive, as much as \$1 a page).

Worse, if you needed a lot of copies, not only might your ink run out mid-job, but the machines themselves often were not built for quantity.

Office inkjets and laser printers were available, but significantly more expensive. For small home offices, it was hard to justify those costs. At least the consumables were less than inkjets, usually in the range of 3 cents per copy – even less if you found a good cartridge refiller.

The trick was finding a machine that handled small and large loads – and would run well over the years. I bought a Brother laser printer and then a Brother laser multifunction.

A BROTHER IN MY LIFE

No machine has lasted longer in service for me than those from Brother International. I finally had to retire my first one after 10 years of active use, when the rollers had dried out and occasionally “slipped” while feeding paper.

Once in a while, I would need a color print, but hesitated buying a color machine as it usually cost more to buy a single set of color cartridges than a new machine.

Now, things have changed again.

J995DW INKVESTMENT TANK PRINTER

The ultimate answer now seems to be a printer line Brother is unveiling this Summer – the INKvestment Tank printers. For this article, I have been testing the MFC-J995DW for the past several weeks, and can report this machine is ideal for almost perfect for home, small and mid-sized business offices.



The J995DW is about half the height of my previous multifunction printer, so it sits nicely on the countertop in my office.

Capable of duplex (double-sided) printing the ink cartridges in the box will yield up to a year's output, approximately 150 pages a month at 60% black and white and 40% color copies. for the average home office user. Need more? The XL version will give you 150 copies a month for two years – or 300 a month for one year.

INSTALLATION

I found installation quick and easy for either Windows or Mac: Open the box, insert the ink cartridges (which transfer to the internal ink tank), fill the 150-page paper tray, run the setup utility that walks you through setup – it even looks for updates to the firmware and opens a registration page – and print!

Overall, printing is supported via Ethernet, Wi-Fi, USB Port, SD card, or NFC, so you can easily grab documents, photos, etc, from your cloud accounts and print separate from your PC..

“At Your Side” customer support is free for the life of the printer. A call to their 800 number found knowledgeable and patient support folks willing to take the time to walk me through any question I asked.

OPERATING THE PRINTER

Using the printer is easy. Setup links it to your applications on desktop, laptop, smartphone or tablet, or right from the 2.7-inch touchscreen.



Front Panel quick selections

Brother also provides utilities and the Control Center 4 to help do things you might not do all the time.

Print speed is great. Black and white is rated for up to 20 copies a minute, the first page comes out almost as soon as you hit the print key – less than 5 seconds, and faster than you might expect from most inkjet printers. Color pictures look good, especially with the shiny stock.

As befits a multifunction printer, the J995DW scans to a pdf or other graphic file type – or right to email – and can do OCR (Optical Character Recognition) with the included Paperport software. Faxing is as simple as hooking up the phone line and entering the number.

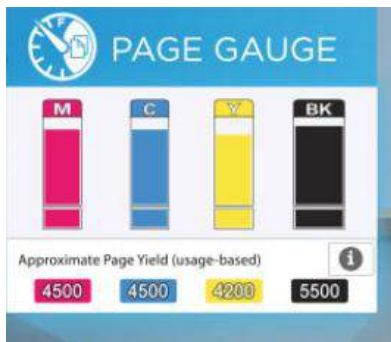
LONG TERM COST

Of course, the long-term cost of any printer is in the cost of inks and the convenience of replacement.

Unlike some printers where the manufacturer's replacement cartridges are so expensive that users feel the need to try off-brand cartridges or refill kits, Brother takes different approach. For INKvestment Tank products the cost of ink will run about 1 cent a copy (for B&W, Color will be about 5 cents), less than for laser printers.

An advertisement for Nautel's real-time built-in instrumentation. The background is dark blue with a glowing light effect. On the left, a computer monitor displays a software interface with a graph and various data points. Text on the right reads 'REAL TIME BUILT-IN INSTRUMENTATION' in large white letters, followed by 'Comprehensive Monitoring & Control' and '100% Remote Access'. At the bottom, the website 'nautel.com/AUI' and the Nautel logo are visible, along with a 'Learn more »' link.

Brother utilities let users check the status of the ink wells quickly, and the touchscreen panel's Page Gauge even gives a visual clue to ink status as well as a calculated number of pages remaining.



In fact, the J995DW will give a warning to users when the ink is nearing the need for replacement. There are even programs that will send

you new ink cartridges almost before you know you need them.

GOODBYE LASER

This printer is light enough that you could take it to different transmitter sites, but I would not recommend leaving it in place where you do not visit for months at a time. This is, perhaps the one situation where a laser is better, as its toner will not dry out and clog.

But for home office, even at the studio or a busy transmitter site, this is a well-built, good quality printer, and an inexpensive model to operate.

If the J995DW continues to work as it has during my testing, it may well be another ten year before I need a new printer. –**The BDR**

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