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How long should a copier last?

Generally if properly placed, a copier should be capable of lasting you about five years. Don't be trapped into upgrading early and competitively shopping.

Rule #1: If a copier company wants to put you in a 60 or 63 month lease then they should be able to make it last for that long, especially if you have purchased a maintenance agreement. A common way of locking up your account is to force you to upgrade early by telling you that you are exceeding the Manufacturer's Maximum Duty Cycle. This is a typical tactic for some copier companies and will prevent you from obtaining competitive quotes or trying to compare their new offering because the competing vendor will need to account for what you still owe on your existing lease. The best approach to protect your company against such tactics is to clearly spell out to competing vendors what your current monthly volume is and that you should always anticipate an additional 20% for growth over 5 years.

Rule #2: There are many sources for verifying what volume the machine you are considering is capable of producing. This is called the "Manufacturer's Maximum Monthly Duty Cycle" and can often be obtained from either the potential vendor or any copier manufacturer's website. Without going into technicalities of the Maximum Monthly Duty Cycle, you should never buy a machine if your current volume is at or near the maximum rating. I know this might sound odd but you should stay within about 10 to 30% of the published maximum. Why so low? Because you will find that there are many desktop copiers today that are rated at 15,000 to 20,000 copies/prints per month that would never be capable of doing such volumes over an extended period of time. The other reason is, many of these ratings are for Consumer and Government purposes that put copiers into what we call "Segments" which generally have very little to do with the average copier purchase.

Rule #3: Get a guarantee in writing from your potential vendor. This will protect your company from unforeseen expenses and the ability to competitively shop should they be making the argument that your volume is too high. Most reputable copier companies already include such guarantees in their proposals.

Good Luck,

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