Reviewed: This Is the Best Printer Ever Made, Hands Down

No printer I've ever tested has worked so well. It made me want to print more, and that's the ultimate win.

BY JOHN BRANDON

I thought something was wrong when I printed out a FedEx label. "Must have been clearing a blank sheet," was my second thought.
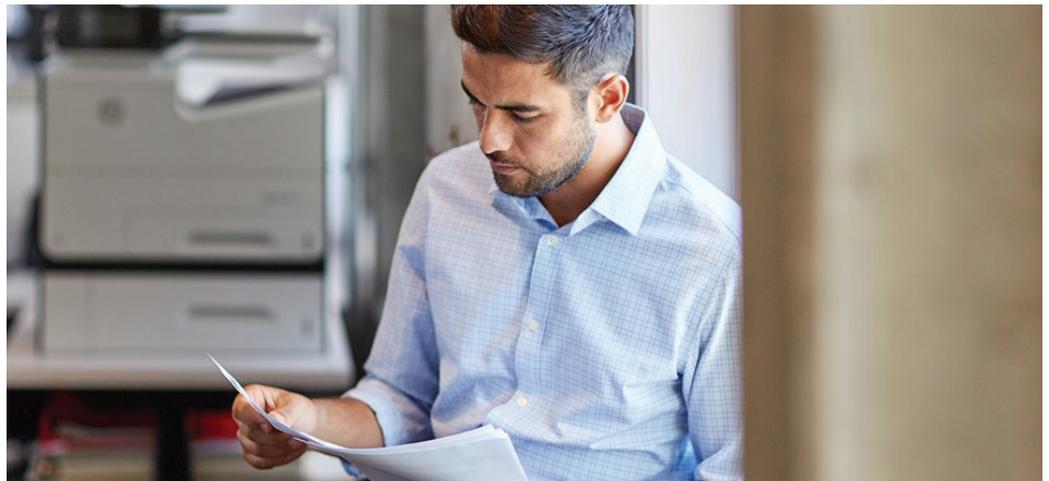
Then, I realized it was no accident.

As you may know, I've been testing gadgets, laptops, phones, and everything in between for 15 years since becoming a full-time writer. It's always surprising to me when something surprises me (ahem). New iPhone, same as the last iPhone

HP PageWide *CREDIT: HP*

but faster? Not a big deal. New printer? Usually not that exciting.

Surprisingly, the HP PageWide Pro 577dw is one of the most powerful, fastest, and maintenance-free office products I've tested in the past 15 years. I printed an entire manuscript. I printed my taxes. I printed pictures of my kids just for fun. Not once did the PageWide 577dw seem slow. In one test, the printer seemed to stall out—then I realized it was my a problem with my own Wi-Fi network.

HP claims this is the fastest printer in its class for the first print, which seemed pretty much instant to me. The print speed is rated at 70 pages per minute. Most of the innovations have to do with Page-Wide technology, which moves an entire sheet through the printhead in one pass instead of moving the printhead itself. It means fewer moving parts, something I noticed right away. The 577dw is much quieter than laser printers or inkjets. In fact, it works more like a combination of both.

One of the things I hate about most printers is that they tend to need a lot of maintenance. The ink cartridges need to be replaced, the paper trays keep depleting. Another first for me after so many years of testing is that HP sent two extra paper trays (for a total capacity of 1,550 sheets) so once you fill up the entire "tower" you

might not have to add paper for a month. HP claims to have the lowest cost of ownership for its class, mostly due to the high-yield cartridges. If you're a business, you can sign up for a service contract so someone comes and replaces the cartridges. For me, it meant not having to worry about replacing the ink.

Since this is a multi-function device, I also tested copying and scanning. For copies, the color display on the front of the printer makes it easy to select whether you want one color or black sheet, double-sided copies, or choose from a few other options. Scanning also worked perfectly from a high-end Digital Storm Vanquish 5 desktop computer I'm testing. I liked how the 577dw can scan only an ID or passport automatically when you place it in the corner of the glass.

I also noticed something else interesting. During my testing, I used several different Windows 10 laptops and a desktop. In each case, I was able to find the printer using a quick printer search function. This never works quite this smoothly, to be honest. Windows loaded the driver and I was able to print over Wi-Fi without ever touching the printer or searching for extra updates and drivers. I also set up the HP ePrint feature and used a Google Chromebook Pixel

to print over Wi-Fi. HP makes an iPhone/iPad and Android app to make this easier from tablets and phones.

So why is this the best printer ever made? Seems like a bold claim, right? Yet, it's rated as the fastest in this price range (up to $1,000). It's faster than the previous HP OfficeJet Pro X, which won fastest printer honors from the Guinness World Records. (HP chose not to pursue the fastest rating award for the new model.)

The 577dw costs $899 for one 500-sheet tray (or $1,499 for the 577z that has extra trays and a stand) but works more like one of the monstrous beasts you have to store in a back storage closet. It's fast, quiet, sits on a stand with wheels so you can move it around, has a ton of storage capacity, never jammed up, and printed, scanned, and copied perfectly without any problems. In terms of my tests, it's the best ever.

But the real reason I say it's the best is that I wanted to print more documents during my daily routine. I decided to print out articles and edit them with a pen. I printed color photos. Because of the speed and the fact that I had so much paper loaded and didn't have to think about changing out cartridges, I chose to print more often than usual, even in an age of digital signatures and online document processing.

It's a remarkable printer—the best model I've ever tested. ◉

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