# IN-HOUSE PRINTING SAVINGS GUIDE

How to Compare Print Shop Costs vs In-House Production Printing

# COMPARING IN-HOUSE TO PRINT SHOP COSTS

If your organization prints weekly programs, booklets, event materials, training packets, flyers, or other recurring documents, outsourcing may look convenient on the surface. You send the file, wait for the job, pay the invoice, and move on. The problem is that the invoice is rarely the full cost. Turnaround time, rush fees, reprints, minimums, waste, and last-minute changes all add up fast.


Bringing printing in-house changes that equation. For organizations with steady print volume, in-house production printing can lower per-piece costs, speed up turnaround, reduce waste, and give your team more control over quality and timing. That does not mean it is the right move for everyone. But if you are ordering recurring print jobs from a local print shop or national print chain, it is worth running the numbers before assuming outsourcing is still the cheaper option.

The most obvious cost is the price you pay per order. Retail and quick-print providers often charge significantly more per page than a managed in-house environment, especially when jobs need color, better paper, binding, folding, or other finishing. Staples currently advertises simple print starting at 24¢ per black-and-white page, while FedEx Office promotes full-color or black-and-white document printing with options like binding, hole punching, and lamination that can raise the total project cost further.

# WHAT OUTSOURCING REALLY COSTS

The less obvious cost is the penalty for not controlling the process yourself. Outsourced jobs come with vendor timelines, production queues, and limited flexibility. If your quantity changes, your content changes, or you catch an error late, you may be forced to reorder, pay rush pricing, or live with an outdated piece. That is why in-house printing tends to become more attractive for short runs and recurring materials. Konica Minolta cites an InfoTrends study showing that, for lower run-length jobs, printing in-house is less expensive, takes less net time, and produces less waste than commercial outsourcing.

# WHAT IN-HOUSE PRINTING USUALLY COSTS

In-house production printing is not “free printing.” It simply shifts the cost structure. Instead of paying retail prices for each outsourced order, most organizations pay for equipment plus a service or cost-per-click agreement. These agreements often bundle maintenance and supplies into a predictable per-page rate, with paper usually billed separately. Ohio’s state cost-per-copy program describes this model directly: cost-per-copy pricing can combine equipment, service, and supplies into one fixed rate, excluding paper and staples.

For general managed print environments, published cost-per-page ranges can be dramatically lower than retail print pricing. LDI Connect says managed print services can range from $.003 to $.05 per page, with enterprise and production environments generally falling at the lower end because of volume and device efficiency. Even when real-world production color clicks run higher than office black-and-white output, they are still often far below the effective per-piece cost of outsourced recurring jobs.

# THE TWO BIGGEST PLACES ORGANIZATIONS SAVE

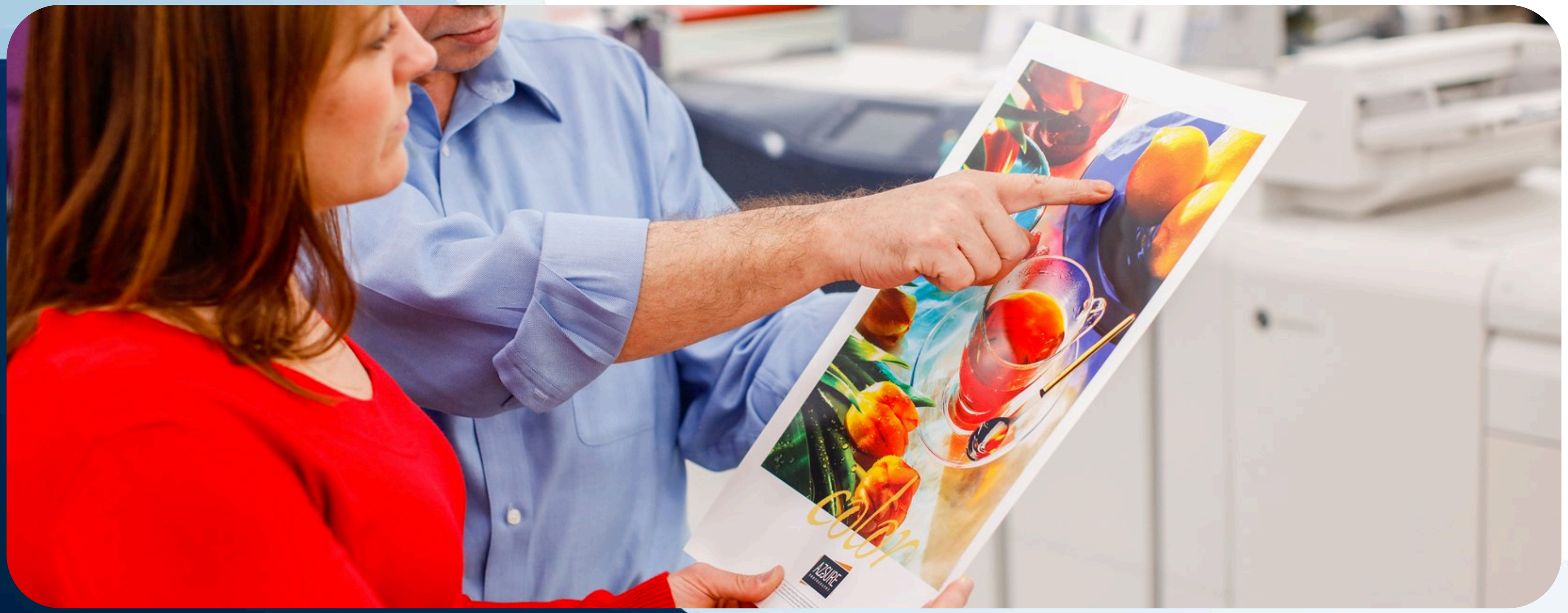
1. **Lower per-piece Production Costs**

This is the savings everyone notices first. Once you stop paying retail or commercial markup on every recurring job, your cost per booklet, packet, or program usually drops. That is especially true when you are producing the same kind of materials week after week.

# 2. FEWER WASTE COSTS

The second savings category is operational. In-house production lets you print what you need, when you need it. That means fewer over-orders, fewer outdated pieces, and fewer reprints caused by schedule changes or content edits. Xerox also positions digital production printing around print on demand and short runs, which is exactly where unnecessary outsourced waste tends to show up.

When your growth potential depends on the ability to produce more jobs with shorter runs and fewer highly skilled people, you need presses that come with time saving, quality-assuring, step-eliminating automation built in, so production can be less of a production.



# A SIMPLE COST COMPARISON

| Outsourced Print Costs | In-House Print Costs |
|---|---|
| Per-page or per-piece print charges | Equipment payment or lease |
| Color Premiums | Service/click charges |
| Binding, folding, trimming, or finishing charges | Paper |
| Rush fees | Operator time |
| Pickup or delivery time | Finishing accessories if needed |
| Reprint costs from errors or updates | Training and setup |
| Over-ordering to avoid running short | |

# PRACTICAL ROI THINKING

A lot of organizations make this harder than it needs to be.

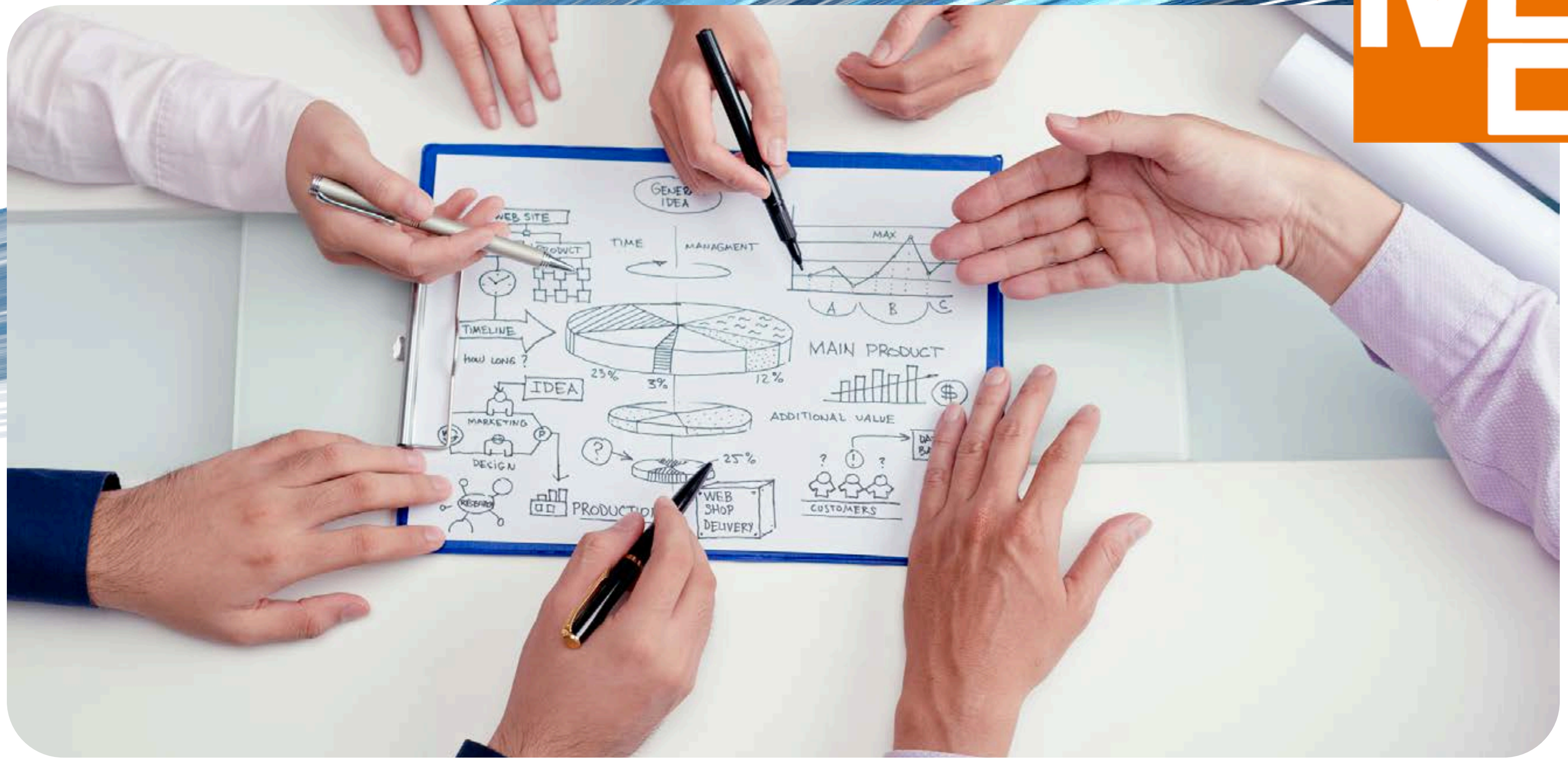
The cleanest way to evaluate ROI is this:

**Monthly Savings = Current Outsourced Monthly Cost – Estimated In-House Monthly Cost**

**Payback Period (months) = Total Upfront Investment ÷ Monthly Savings**

If the equipment is financed or leased, use this instead:

**Net Monthly Impact = Monthly Savings – Monthly Equipment Payment**



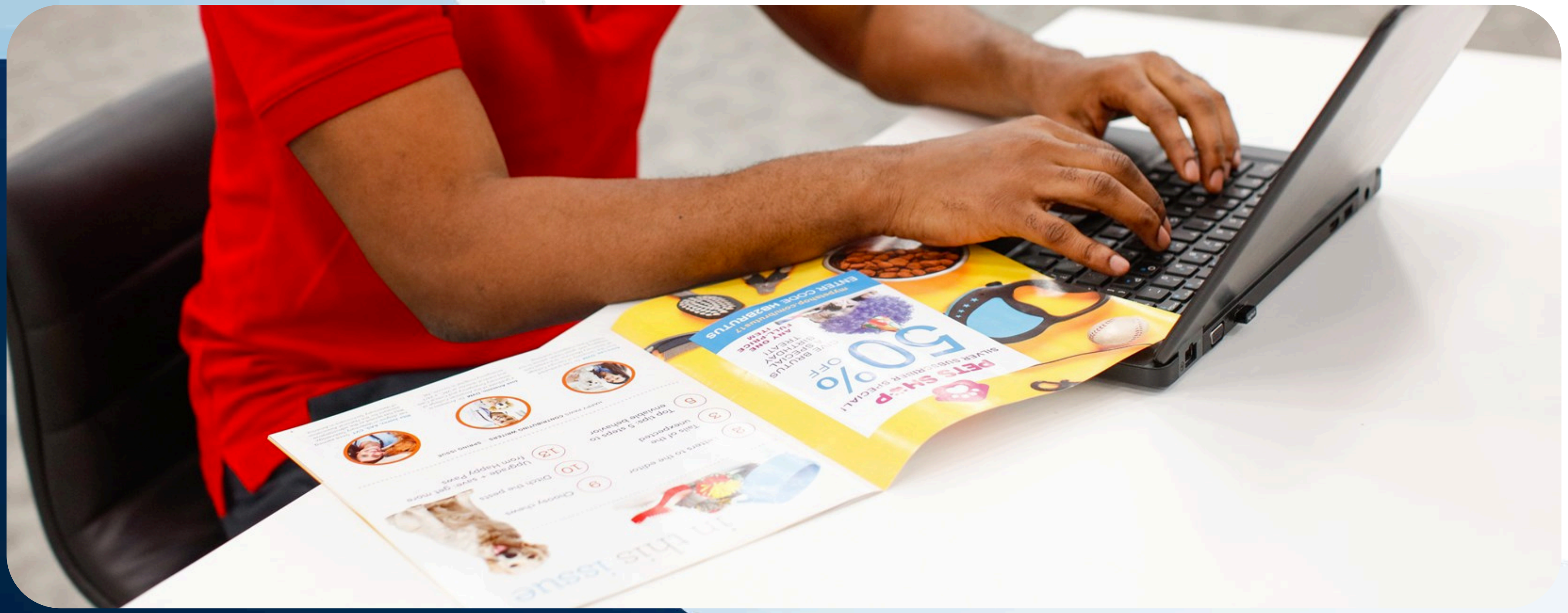

If the number is positive, the equipment is helping cash flow immediately. If it is slightly negative at first but eliminates rush fees, reprints, and delays, the “real” payback may still be faster than the spreadsheet suggests.

# COST SAVINGS CALCULATOR

Use this simple calculator to estimate savings if bringing a recurring print job in-house saves you $1 per page or finished piece compared to outsourcing.

Cost Savings Calculator

Scan the QR code or visit the link to see how much money you could be saving by bringing your production printing in-house. Whether you print small runs or high-volumes, in-house printing can quickly pay for itself.



# FINAL TAKEAWAY

The smartest move is not guessing. It is comparing your actual outsourced costs to a realistic in-house model and seeing where the break-even point really is.

For low-volume one-off jobs, outsourcing may still be perfectly reasonable. But for organizations with recurring print needs, in-house production printing often becomes more cost-effective faster than expected. Retail-style print pricing can climb quickly, while cost-per-click or managed print models are designed to make ongoing production more predictable.

# THANK YOU

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