

The Total ID Card Printer Guide



Call Total ID today 0800 588 4000 or visit our website www.totalid.co.uk to place your order



Card Printers | Ribbons | ID Bureau | Accessories
Lanyards | Visitor Systems | Software & Systems
Name Badges | Detectable/Hygiene Products
Blank & Technology Cards | Card Readers
Name Badges | Detectable Products | Wristbands

Welcome to Total ID's Guide to ID Card Printers

Buying a plastic Card printer isn't something that you do every day and choosing the right one can be tricky. Customers often get conflicting advice from different resellers. The aim of this guide is to help you identify your requirement which will, in turn, help you better understand the different machines. Most card printers can be upgraded to enable magnetic stripe encoding, chip encoding or work on the network via Ethernet port instead of the standard USB – so for now let's focus on the different types of printers and the computer you'll be using to print the plastic cards.

Single or Dual Sided Printer?

To decide if you need a single or dual sided card printer you need to answer this simple question – are you printing variable information on the reverse of the card or is the reverse of each card the same? If each reverse is the same ie, "If found please return to..." then despite the need for print on the reverse of the card you can save a considerable amount of money by buying a single sided printer and pre-printing the reverse of the cards using a monochrome ribbon (available in black and various colours) or full colour, dependent upon your design.

Cards can also be bought with the generic design pre-printed so only the personalisation needs to be done by the card printer. This can improve the quality of the overall card and save money, although it is more relevant to membership, loyalty or discount cards where the personalisation is in black.

ID cards must be printed using a full colour ribbon regardless so savings are harder to achieve using pre-printed cards. If the reverse of your cards contain variable text or barcodes then you will need a dual sided printer. All printers come in dual sided versions of the single sided so read on and decide which printer you like and go for the dual sided version of it.

System compatibility:

Printer Manufacturer	PC?	Mac?
IDP Smart	Yes	Yes
MagiCard	Yes	Yes
DataCard	Yes	No
Fargo	Yes	No
Zebra	Yes	No
Javelin	Yes	No
Evolis	Yes	Yes

Dye Sub or Re-Transfer Printer?

Plastic card printers can print using dye-sublimation or re-transfer technology. Most popular is dye-sublimation; the ins and outs of these two technologies isn't very interesting but in a nutshell dye-sublimation is much more popular due to lower costs, quicker printing speed and prints directly to the card.

Re-transfer printers print to the overlay which is then transferred to the card. This re-transfer technology enables an improved print quality, edge-to-edge printing and also enables printing to cards that aren't perfectly flat such as access control cards (because of the contactless aerial in the card). Re-transfer printers are more expensive than dye-sublimation printers but you have the budget you won't get a better print! There is plenty of choice ie, Fargo HDP5000, MagiCard Prima 4, Zebra Series 9.

With regards to thermal plastic card printers the choice is huge, however it is worth mentioning all printers print to 300 dpi so print quality is similar across the board. There are single feed printers available from most manufacturers which, whilst offering a fairly low purchase price, can be annoying having to feed a single card each time you need to print a card. Grease from your fingers can often affect the print quality.

A printer with an input hopper to hold a small stock of cards is a much more practical option for little additional cost. Special mention should go to the Magicard Rio Pro 360 for its UltraCover three years printer replacement service.

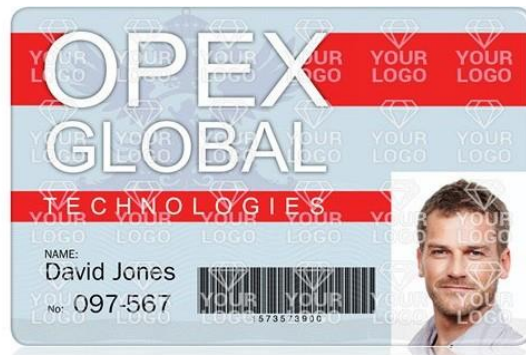
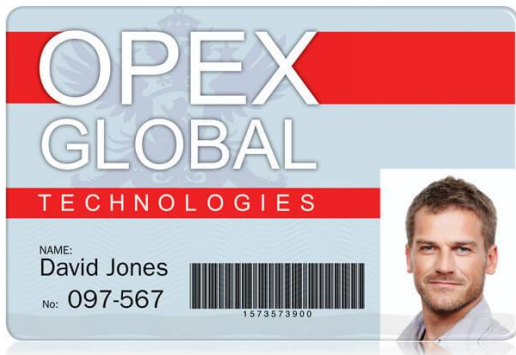
We would also strongly recommend for ID, Membership and Loyalty card printing the IDP Smart card printers. As low cost printers with top-end specification, no other printers come close to the reliability, low cost consumables, print quality and retrospective dual-sided printing upgrade options.

Special Features

GDPR Compliance – Since the introduction of GDPR IDP Smart have introduced a secure printer (IDP Smart 51 Secure) which takes card printing to the next level of security with enhanced features that aren't found on any other card printer. It stops unauthorised personnel from accessing your cards and used printer ribbons containing confidential data. Available in single or dual sided models.

If you're looking at other ways to ensure your ID cards are as secure as possible you can look towards the IDP Smart with the option to print a UV feature with its unique UV ribbon. Or the Magicard Rio Pro 360 with the facility to include a HoloKote overlay of your own design. All Matica printers come with a built in erase panel to easily obscure personal data.

If you wish to preserve your ID cards for longer, as well as adding an extra level of security you can of course look at printers that also laminate – again most manufacturers offer this option.



Software



You may wish to print to your card printer from existing software applications such as word or pdf. For those of you that wish to print photo ID cards, a database solution will make card production easy and hassle free. Again most manufacturers offer free basic software with a printer purchase.

To discuss your plastic card printer requirement please don't hesitate to contact our friendly team directly.

Call Total ID today **0800 588 4000** or visit our website www.totalid.co.uk to place your order