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Quiz Of The Week: Printers

Are you an expert on these paper-munching devices?

Printers are wonderful.

Yes, they jam, freeze and have to be fuelled by expensive ink.

And yes, they just might be one of the biggest sources of stress and anguish in the office.

And yet, they are the only class of devices that can take something digital and transform it into an object that you can touch and hold in your hands.

Ink and paper Since Gutenberg first invented the book press, humanity always wanted to make the printing process simpler and cheaper.

The world's first computer printer was a 19th century apparatus invented by Charles Babbage for his "difference engine", to print out the output of a giant mechanical calculator.

From then on, the devices grew smaller, and more convenient.

1969 saw the invention of the laser printer by Xerox, transforming the mid-size company into a global business worth billions.

But it was the inkjet printers in the late 1970s that truly democratised the technology, and made printers available for all.

Although there are many more ways to print on paper, the next big challenge is to create more affordable 3D printers.

Some progress has already been made.

The screenshot shows the TechWeek Europe website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for NetMediaEurope, TechWeekEurope, ChannelBiz, and TechEye. Below that is a search bar and a main navigation menu with categories like HOME, NEWS, REVIEWS, OPINION, IT LIFE, WHITE PAPERS, WEBCASTS, EVENTS, QUIZ, POLLS, SECURITY, CLOUD, MOBILE. A secondary menu lists topics such as Security, Infrastructure, Servers, Mobile, Green IT, Cloud, Networking, Management, Open Source, Big Data, Software, and Virtualisation. The main content area features a 'Managed Laptops' advertisement by Dell KACE, a 'NEWS' section with the article 'Quiz Of The Week: Printers' by Max Smolaks, and an 'IT LIFE SERIES' section. The article text is partially visible, discussing the history of printing and the challenges of 3D printing.

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Enthusiasts can pick up a DIY printer kit for as low as £600 , or buy a complete machine for around \$2000 (£1287).

If you want to test the technology before investing such a big chunk of cash, companies like French Sculpteo will print out your design for a very reasonable fee.

So how much do you know about printers? And if you like it, consider trying some of the others .

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