

## Review of the Best Industrial Thermal Label Printers for Less Than £1,000

Updated Feb 2020

### Honeywell (Datamax-O'Neil) M-Class Mark II M-4206

£689.70



#### The Good Points

Datamax-O'Neil - now Honeywell - have decades of experience with Thermal printers - gaining a popular and dependable reputation.

- This printer comes with Serial/Parallel/USB as standard. Ethernet LAN interfaces are an option.
- Modular design so you can upgrade it without specialist tools or skills.
- Quality die cast aluminium frame and case. Lightweight and strong.
- LCD screen for easier set up.
- Thermal transfer and direct thermal in one printer.
- 300m or 450m ribbon lengths - for fewer ribbon changes.
- 200mm label roll diameters for fewer roll changes.
- Includes a 1 year warranty including printhead (unless it's printed more than 24KM of labels).



## The Bad Points

Honeywell/Datamax seem to have lost their way recently. They didn't even have the correct printer image on their website.

- The M-4206 doesn't have a network connection as standard.
- No bundled label design software (Though the free edition of Seagull Scientific's BarTender will allow you to design and print labels with this printer).
- No colour or touch screen display on this model.
- Not as widely stocked as most printers.

## Sato CL4NX Label Printer

**£999.99**



### The Good Points

- Sato are a huge brand in Asia, but haven't been as successful in Europe (yet). Sato are well established, with a competent and helpful support centre in the UK.
- Lots of connections - Bluetooth, USB, Ethernet, Parallel and serial.
- Large, colour LCD display that plays videos to help you with common tasks.
- 10" label roll capacity compared with 8" with almost everyone else.
- 104mm print width
- Powerful programming language - so it can print without a computer, communicates with the cloud and integrates with scales and other devices
- Tough cast aluminium frame and metal case
- Space saving bi-fold door.
- Fast printing - up to 254mm/sec.
- Comes with a free version of NiceLabel Label design software but will work with BarTender
- Top quality high performance printer at a competitive price.

## The Bad Points

- Not many shortcomings.
- Not as widely available as other models.

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## Zebra ZT230 Metal Cased Industrial Label Printer



**£728**

## The Good Points

- Comes with Zebra's reputation for quality and ease of use.
- Market leading brand with widespread support and availability of printers and consumables.
- Solid, durable construction.
- Bi-fold door to save space
- Thermal Transfer and Direct thermal
- Up to 450m ribbon capacity
- Excellent aftercare cover (at extra cost)
- Versatile internal printer software (ZebraLink) for programming and support
- 104mm print width

- Comes with Zebra Designer label design software included for free.

## **The Bad Points**

- No Ethernet connection as standard.
- Average print speed 6" - 152mm per second.

## **Honeywell I-Class Mark II I-4212e Industrial Label Printer (Datamax-O'Neil)**



**£804.00**

## **The Good Points**

- Datamax-O'Neil - now Honeywell - have decades of experience with Thermal printers - gaining a popular and dependable reputation.
- Made from Cast Aluminium for long last reliability.
- Uses internal gears instead of belts - for more reliability.
- This printer is twice as fast as entry level industrial printers
- Has the Option of SDIO, Wifi, Ethernet and GPIO communications ports.

- Modular design so you can upgrade it without specialist tools or skills.
- LCD screen for easier set up
- Thermal transfer and direct thermal in one printer
- 300m or 450m ribbon lengths - for fewer ribbon changes.
- 200mm label roll diameters for fewer roll changes
- Includes a 1 year warranty including printhead (unless it's printed more than 24KM of labels).

### **The Bad Points**

- Slightly dated, more than 7 years old.
- No colour, touch screen
- Doesn't have the support that Zebra has

## **Toshiba TEC B-EX4T1 Industrial Barcode Label Printer**



**£999.99**

## The Good Points

- Super-fast - 14 inches per second. Fastest printer for less than Â£1000
- USB and Ethernet as standard.
- Ribbon-save - stops the ribbon feeding if there's nothing to print.
- Near edge printhead - lasts longer, copes with thicker labels and tags.
- 800m ribbon - yes - 800m! Nearly twice the length of the competition - so you can leave it unattended longer.
- Attention to detail - so it's easy to use.
- Energy efficient printer - from a company that has offset all it's carbon emissions.

## The Bad Points

- Uses a higher grade of thermal ribbon (so slightly more expensive).
- Smaller distribution base so stock and support less widespread

## Toshiba TEC B-EX4T2 Low Cost Industrial Barcode Label Printer





**£807.89**

### **The Good Points**

- Toshiba Tec's high quality build.
- Can print up to 12 inches per second.
- Uses a 'flat' printhead like 95% of other thermal printers - so ribbons are cheaper and more widely available.
- Thermal Transfer or Direct thermal only models.
- 600m thermal ribbons mean fewer ribbon changes.
- 200mm outside diameter label roll means fewer label changes
- Network (Ethernet) is standard, as well as USB

### **The Bad Points**

- Fewer distributors so availability might be a problem.
- LCD display looks a little dated as it's not colour or touch sensitive.

## **Printronix T6000 Thermal Label Printer**



**£989.70**

### **The Good Points**

- Nice large colour LCD display that provide instructions on how to use set up the printer.
- Really fast - up to 14" per second - and maintains print quality.
- Comes with ethernet (network) as standard.
- Has remote diagnostic software to warn if there are problems, enable configuration and remote management
- Widely available printer ribbons
- Option of a barcode check camera that stops the printer if there's an error in the label

### **The Bad Points**

- Not widely available - limited distribution (and therefore stock)

## **Honeywell PM42 Industrial Label Printer**



**£702.40**

### **The Good Points**

- Latest printer in a long line of industrial label printers from Honeywell.
- Speedy printing at up to 300mm per second.
- 203dpi, 300dpi and 400dpi models in the PM42 range.
- Comes with Serial, USB and Ethernet as standard.
- Durable metal case and frame.
- Colour display panel
- Internet connected - so it can be remotely managed and monitored.

### **The Bad Points**

- Slightly smaller screen than other printers
- Not as widely available as other printer brands.

**Zebra ZT411 4 inch Industrial Label Printer**



**£999.99**

### **The Good Points**

- Latest, improved, industrial printer from Zebra, the dominant manufacturer of thermal label printers in the world.
- Super fast - 14" (350mm) per second print speed.
- 203 to 600 dots per inch print resolution options.
- Uses 450m ink ribbons means fewer ribbon changes.
- Comes with Ethernet and bluetooth connectivity as standard " in addition to USB and Serial.
- Large colour touch screen
- Easy to change printhead and platen roller
- Metal case and space saving bi fold door
- Built-in printer management and security software
- Excellent support options - telephone support, return to workshop and on site options
- Readily available stock (usually)
- It's very difficult to find fault with this printer.

### **The Bad Points**

- Other brands can be found at lower prices
- Doesn't have ribbon save like some TEC printers
- If you're over-printing multipage booklet labels the thickness of these printers is limited compared to Sato printers.

**TSC MH240 Series Mid-range Industrial Printer**



**£959.40**

### **The Good Points**

- TSC make printers for other better known brands so you're getting the same quality for a better price.
- The MH-240 is fast printing at 14 inches (350mm) per second.
- Comes with 200, 300 and 600 dots per inch print resolution options.
- Comes with Ethernet network connection as standard.
- 600m thermal ink ribbon.
- Comes with 'ribbon & label running low' warning device - so you can prepare to change the ribbons and labels before it runs out
- Comes with an SD card slot
- Optional large colour touch screen display
- Metal case and frame with a bi-fold door for use in small spaces
- Comes with a Two year warranty

### **The Bad Points**

- Limited distribution network.
- Doesn't seem to have the remote management and security software that other brands have.
- Doesn't come with label design software but can be used with BarTender's free edition.
- 600m thermal ribbon lengths are rare and might need to be made up specially, though you can use more commonly available 450m rolls

## Toshiba TEC BA400



**£787.05**

### The Good Points

- TEC have been making printers for decades and the BA400 is the next generation of a proven design, but launched late 2019 with updates.
- Metal case
- Unique design with a top that hinges up so labels can drop straight in. Useful if you don't have space at the sides of your printer.
- Bluetooth and Ethernet as standard
- 200mm per second print speed - a little faster than the other entry level industrial printers.
- Near Field Communication - for ease of printing from mobile devices.
- Optional 5G wifi
- Comes with BarTender Ultralite label design software - BarTender limited to TEC printers.

### The Bad Points

- Stock availability is not as good as other brands.
- No colour touch screen as with some of the industrial printers.

