

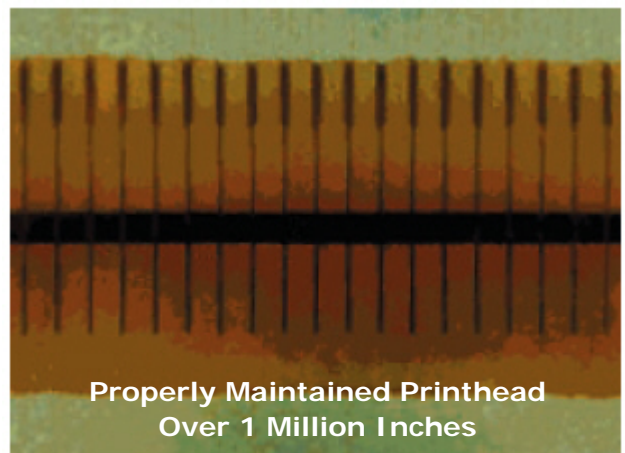
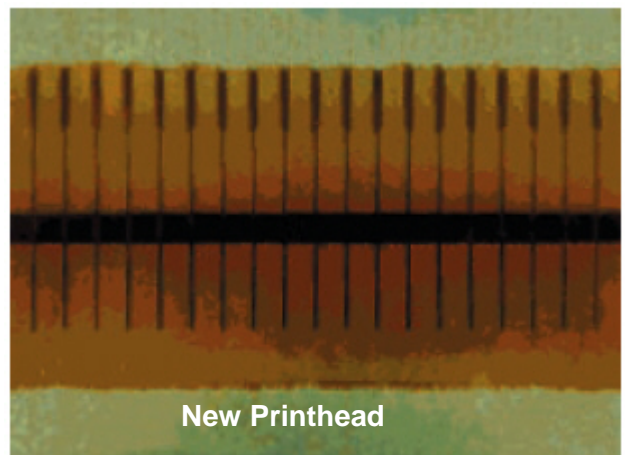
## 5 Easy Ways to Extend the Life of your Printer

*by Paul Trumm, Electronic Repair Technician*

Your thermal label printers are an investment in your corporate productivity. To maximize your investment, it makes sense to keep your printers running in top form. A poorly maintained thermal printer slows production, creates shipping and receiving errors and increases the total long term cost of your printer investment. A well maintained printer will decrease lost production time for repairs, produce clean crisp bar codes and text, increase bar code read reliability and decrease total cost of ownership for your printer investment

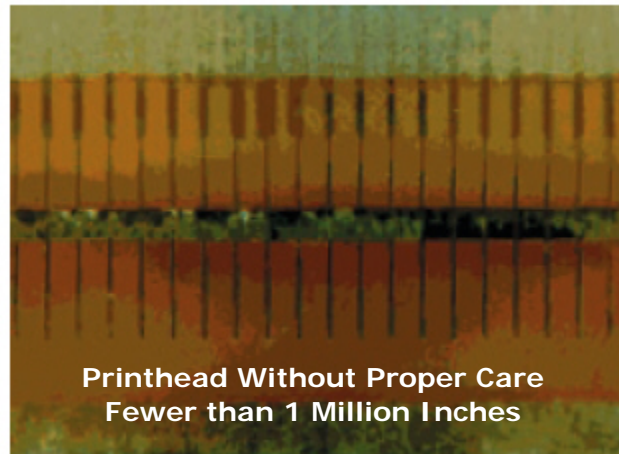
Here are five quick and easy ways you can reduce your costs and add life to your thermal printer:

- 1. Clean the printhead every time you change the ribbon.** Printheads get dirty from carbon buildup, ribbon dust, adhesive gum, residue and ambient dirt and dust. A dirty printhead has a much shorter life than one that is regularly cleaned (see illustration). Also, a dirty printhead can produce unreadable labels and bar codes that can introduce errors and affect bar code readability. To save potentially thousands of dollars over the life of your printer, clean the printhead according to the manufacturer's directions at every ribbon change.
- 2. Use the printhead cleaning solution and processes recommended for your printer.** Using the wrong materials or procedures can damage your printhead. Most cleaning solutions are inexpensive, and most printheads are simple to clean. Check the manufacturer's instructions and treat your printhead with care when cleaning.
- 3. Keep your media clean.** Dirty media contributes to the causes of dirty printheads. You can reduce the dirt by storing your labels and ribbons in their original packaging, or in a cabinet. If your printing environment is dusty, keep the printer cover closed while printing. This keeps your media clean, and clean media helps to keep your printheads cleaner.



**4. Avoid scratching the internal mechanisms or the printhead.**

Wearing jewelry when loading labels can damage the printhead, platen roller or other parts, as can using a letter opener, paper clip or other object to remove a jam or in an attempt to remove label adhesive. To prevent damage to your printer and printhead, keep sharp objects out of the printer and remove bracelets, watches, and rings and roll up your sleeves before loading media or cleaning the printhead.



**Follow the manufacturer's schedule for professional preventive maintenance.**

Similar to the preventive maintenance you do for your car, when you invest in printer preventive maintenance, you can forestall an expensive repair and make your printer last. Preventive maintenance tasks vary by manufacturer, but usually include:

- Thorough cleaning of media and electronics compartments
- Check, replace (if necessary) and adjust main drive belt
- Check and adjust spindles for optimum registration control
- Check and adjust print mechanism for optimum print quality with minimum head pressure and burn temperature/darkness

Compsee offers on-site and depot services. Our technicians are factory trained to perform preventive maintenance quickly and inexpensively. We are a Zebra Authorized Service Provider (ZASP), and hold Zebra's highest services ratings: Full Service. Contact us today to schedule your preventive maintenance, and extend the life of your printer.