

HP Blocking 3rd Party Ink Cartridges?

Written by Marco Attard
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Dutch printer ink vendor 123inkt accuses HP of reprogramming printers to reject 3rd party cartridges, effectively forcing customers to stick exclusively with official inks.



123inkt says on 13 September 2016 it received a "large number" of complaints involving the same error message-- "Problem with cartridge. One or more cartridges seem damaged. Remove the cartridges and replace them with new cartridges." The company insists nothing was wrong with its cartridges, and the official line from HP claims it is due to a firmware update unintentionally stopping 3rd party cartridges from certain printers.

Printers showing the problem come from the HP OfficeJet Pro and OfficeJet Pro X lines.

However, 123inkt says the affected printer models have not received a firmware update since March 2016, and in any case printers with older firmware versions are also experiencing the same problem. Making things more curious is the fact even printers not connected to a network (meaning they receive no firmware updates) are affected by the issue.

"The problem is not the result of a recent update, but the manner in which printer firmware has been programmed some time ago," the company states. "The (un)intended result usually is that the operation of lower-price private-label cartridges is disturbed and error messages are triggered. This time the problem was not the result of an update to improve the operation of the printer, but the HP firmware was apparently programmed in such a manner that this problem started at 13 September 2016."

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In turn, HP repeats its statements that the issue might be caused by cartridges lacking a proper Original HP security chip, particularly since the printer firmware related to the security chip in Officejet, OfficeJet Pro and OfficeJet Pro X printers has been receiving updates since 2015.

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