

# Maximizing Efficiency: The Use of Inkjet Copiers to Transcribe Historical Inscriptions

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**Abstract:** Preserving historical inscriptions is a constant need in archival practice permeating the boundaries of academic, governmental, and scientific institutions. Often times many hours and dollars are spent having staff manually copy historical inscriptions from their original enclosures onto new archival storage materials. And commonly, necessary rehousing projects are indefinitely postponed due to labor cost or fear of transcription error. By utilizing an inkjet copier, transcription error is eliminated and overall costs are greatly reduced.

In a trial project at Harvard University Library, a 3-in-1 inkjet copier was implemented, specifically the Epson Stylus CX6000, to efficiently copy 1700 historical inscriptions from original negative enclosures onto archival storage envelopes. The 3-in-1 inkjet copier system is commonly used in household printing when connected to a personal computer, but by using the inkjet copier independently, without a computer component, a more user-friendly machine is adapted for streamlined institutional use.

By using the pigment based system to scan and copy the original enclosures, approximately 7 cents was added to the cost of each envelope while saving staff roughly 20 hours of labor during the duration of the trial project. This poster will provide an introduction to the methodology and permanence of the pigment-based ink system while highlighting its promising uses in a variety of archival needs. The pilot project that implemented this system will be outlined, focusing on both positive aspects and some drawbacks of the system.

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