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distribute. In the same section of the Web site there is information on how to order a DVD that was made by leaders in the aftermarket. The DVD, "reuse: the better way to recycle," was produced to promote and educate home and business users as to the benefits of recycled printer cartridges.

For more, shall we say, objective market research, *Recharger Magazine* in the last year teamed with Lyra Research and other industry leaders to publish two reports, *Business Users Talk Toner: Laser Cartridge Brands and Buying Habits* and *Think Ink: The 2005 U.S. Ink Jet Cartridge User Survey*. The reports document end users' awareness, perception and satisfaction of aftermarket products. The full reports are available for sale at Lyra's Web site (www.lyra.com).

Q) What impact does printer cartridge remanufacturing have on the environment?

There are many environmental statistics regarding the biodegradability, consumption and recycling (or lack thereof) of printer cartridges — one of our favorites being that every year the total weight of printer cartridges that are thrown away in landfills is equivalent to more than 30,500 African elephants. (For the record, an average male African elephant weighs about

15,000 pounds, so you can do the math.)

Here are a few statistics that we have attributed to a reliable source and might add some punch to a remanufacturer's environmental message:

- More than 300 million printer cartridges every year end up dumped in landfills worldwide.

- The plastic in each toner cartridge takes three-and-a-half quarts of oil to produce, and each new inkjet cartridge requires two-and-a-half ounces of oil.

- Every remanufactured cartridge saves nearly three-and-a-half pounds of solid waste from potentially being deposited in landfills.

The point is that there are a lot of statistics floating around, some attributed to a source and some not. The importance of these statistics might not be the numbers precisely but rather the overall message. For instance, we couldn't find the biodegradability timeframe for a printer cartridge or the grade of plastic it is made from specifically, but looking at how long it takes for some commonly used products to biodegrade (when they are scattered about as litter), the information is still impactful. See Figure 1.

Q) What are the prospects of entering the remanufacturing industry now?

The traditional method of entering the industry is thought by most to be impractical in today's remanufacturing environment. There have been a few trends, however, of people entering the industry in recent years.

Many new entrants, faced with the demands of today's cartridge development, are starting as resellers of aftermarket products. While learning the business as resellers some are getting up to speed and slowly ramping up cartridge production on popular and profitable models.

Entering the industry today as a recharger is happening as the retail refill franchise model in the U.S. is currently one of the fastest growing sectors. According to Lyra Research, worldwide non-OEM inkjet cartridge shipments (compatible and refilled) were 296 million in 2004 and are projected to almost double to 593 million by 2009. Driven mostly by the increase of refilling franchises, refilled inkjet cartridges are estimated to go from 55 million in 2004 to 175 million in 2009 worldwide. □

Product	Time to Biodegrade
Cotton rags	1 to 5 months
Paper	2 to 5 months
Rope	3 to 14 months
Orange peels	6 months
Wool socks	1 to 5 years
Cigarette butts	1 to 12 years
Plastic coated paper milk cartons	5 years
Plastic bags	10 to 20 years
Leather shoes	25 to 49 years
Nylon fabric	30 to 40 years
Tin cans	50 to 100 years
Aluminum cans	80 to 100 years
Plastic 6-pack holder rings	450 years
Glass bottles	1 million years
Plastic bottles	Forever

Figure 1.

If you have questions, contact *Recharger Magazine* at (702) 438-5557, e-mail info@rechargermag.com or visit www.rechargermag.com.