

*Ninestar*



# PIONEER

PIONEER THE INDUSTRY KEEP YOUR **INSIGHT**

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# CO-INNOVATING TOMORROW

**Ninestar**

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# Highlights of Ninestar Booth at RemaxWorld Expo 2019

At RemaxWorld 2019 from October 17 to 19, Ninestar and its own brand G&G showcased new products and solutions under the “Co-innovating Tomorrow” strategy. Just take a quick glimpse of all the awesomeness that was on display!

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• Firmware Upgrade Speech

Mr. Ding Li, CTO of Ninestar Corporation, was invited as a keynote speaker to deliver a speech of firmware upgrades on the first day of the Expo. Ding analyzed the current situation of firmware

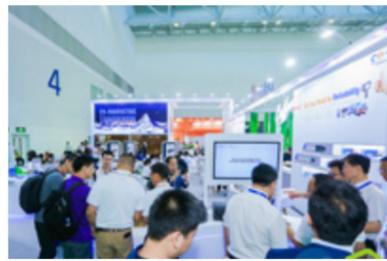
upgrades. He pointed out that firmware upgrade is gradually becoming a problem of the whole industry. In addition, he introduced Ninestar’s total solutions to firmware upgrades. He emphasized that Ninestar’s continuous R&D investment on solving firmware upgrade problems, which aims to help partners minimize their loss.



• “Meeting the CEOs” Panel Discussion

Mr. Jason Wang, General Manager of Ninestar Image Tech Limited and Senior Vice President of Ninestar Corporation, was invited by RT Media to “Meeting the CEOs:

Dealing with Industry Crises” panel discussion. Jason shared his unique insights to current hot topics such as OEMs’ firmware upgrades, the battle between reman manufacturers and new-built manufacturers, HP’s acquisition strategies, and the emerging China printing market.



- Firmware Upgrade Solutions Zone

As the firmware upgrade is the hottest topic in aftermarket

right now, Ninestar’s firmware upgrade solutions zone attracted a lot of attention.

During the show, Ninestar also showcased G&G RoHS & Reach compliant products, Eco-saver series reman ink cartridges, full set of solutions to mainstream copier products and MPS and so on. All these products and printing solutions boosted traffic at Ninestar booth.



## SGS Verified: G&G Products Comply with RoHS & Reach

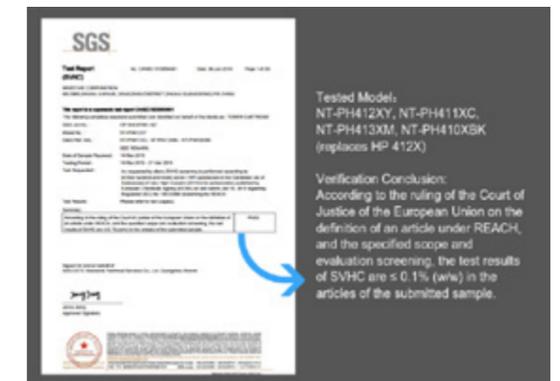
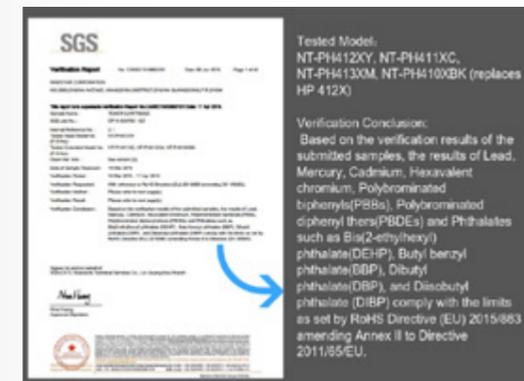
Recently, SGS verified that all tested G&G products comply with Restriction of Hazardous Substances Directive (RoHS), REACH Regulation, and Electromagnetic Compatibility (EMC), which means G&G delivers safe, environmentally-conscious products that customers feel safe to buy and use.

G&G submitted products include replacement toner cartridges for HP 17A, HP 26X, HP 412X, Brother TN-247, Samsung 404 and etc.; and replacement inkjet cartridges for Canon 580/581, HP 950/951 and etc.; covering 10 mainstream OEM brands.

Mr. Ni Ming, Director of Ninestar Quality

Management Department, said, “Ninestar aims to provide customers with safe, high-quality products. So does G&G, Ninestar’s own brand. SGS is the world’s leading inspection company, we are happy to know all submitted G&G products successfully passed the tests. Our future objective is to comply with, or exceed all applicable and anticipated environment regulations.”

Ninestar is one of the few manufacturers in aftermarket that has passed the IECQ HSPM QC 080000 certification. This certification means that Ninestar's control of hazardous substances is in line with international standards.





## G&G Raises Fund for Children in Need

**The first G&G International Padel Tournament ended perfectly on July 14, 2019. The 7-day games attracted 372 padel players and over thousands of audiences to the courts, raising over 10.400€ for the Children's Oncology Unit of the Hospital of Alicante.**

Alvaro Cepero Rodriguez, ranking 29th of the World Padel Tour, expressed it was his pleasure to attend the game sponsored by G&G. "This was a great event, combining the sports and charity. I would like to attend again if G&G has more games like this in the future." He added.

"G&G not only provides good products and good service, but also takes social responsibility and initiative to benefit the society and community. G&G International Padel Tournament in Spain was a good try. G&G will continue to bring healthy, eco-friendly life to our customers." Mr. Jon Chan, Global Branding Manager of G&G, commented, "By this chance we G&G sincerely thank for the support from our distributor, local government, media friends and our customers. This event would not be such a success without their help and assistance!"



## G&G Wins Global Brand Award

**It's pleased to announce G&G has won Global Brand Award at RemaxWorld Expo 2019 held in Zhuhai, China.**

The Global Brand Award was presented to G&G by RT Media for "maintaining its envied, long-term, global brand position that promises and delivers premium quality, non-infringing, toxic-free consumables and professional printing solutions to more than 200 million consumers in more than 170 countries."

Commenting on the award, Ms. Jackie Zhang, Vice General Manger of Ninestar Image Tech Limited, said, "G&G is honored to receive such an award among a pool of competitors. This award

means a lot to us. It represents users' trust and industry's recognition to G&G. G&G has been providing good products and good service for our clients since its establishment in 2000. Technologically backed by Ninestar, the only manufacturer with OEM background in aftermarket,

G&G has been recognized as a brand of reliability and integrity for all these years. In today's fierce market, a good brand represents differentiation and differentiation creates competitiveness. I believe G&G is the brand with competitive edge enabling our partners win big in the market."





## Win-Win Strategic Collaboration Deepened between Ninestar and Konica Minolta



On August 28th, 2019, Ninestar and Konica Minolta held a strategic meeting in Zhuhai, China. The two parties have reached strategic alignment to further cooperation in products, markets, and other areas, which shall strengthen product competitiveness for both parties and help fulfill customer demand in

all perspectives. Since 2016, Ninestar and Konica Minolta have formed a strategic alliance and have had close collaboration on A3 copiers, A4 printers, 3D printers, as well as integrated circuit products. The majority shareholder of Ninestar owns two well-known global printer brands: Lexmark and Pantum, whose full product lines cover the

high-, mid- and low- end markets, with sales in most of the countries across the world. Konica Minolta is a global industry leader in A3 copiers and Production Printers, among other areas. The senior management from both Ninestar and Konica Minolta expressed that a close strategic collaboration will create win-win results to both companies.

Looking forward, Ninestar and Konica Minolta will continue to work together as strategic partners, and contribute further to the development of printing industry by launching innovative products and offering effective printing solutions to our customers.



\*Mr. Jackson Wang (right), the Chairman of Ninestar Corporation, received the awards on behalf of the company.

## Ninestar Wins CCIA Corporate Achievement Gold Award

On September 11, 2019, Ninestar won Corporate Achievement Gold Award and Printer Industry Development Achievement Award from China Computer Industry Association (CCIA) for its development and great contribution to China's printer and printing industry.

CCIA said, "Ninestar developed China's first laser printer with independent core technology and rapidly realized its industrialization. It made China the fourth country to

develop and manufacture laser printers only after the United States, Japan and South Korea. After nearly 20 years of development, the company has mastered the development technology of laser printer imaging, machinery, hardware, software, embedded software and core components. So far, Ninestar's printer product layout covers A3, A4, mono, color, single-function, and multi-function. It has greatly promoted the development of China's printing industry."

The Corporate Achievement Award was set in 2010 by CCIA to commend and reward advanced enterprises that have made innovative, outstanding contributions to industrial development. Ninestar is the only company in China winning the Gold Award from CCIA.

# HP Leads the Firmware Wars



**In 2018 nine OEMs issued 989 firmware upgrades. That is an average of 2.7 every single day of the year. HP alone issued 371 firmware updates. Problems with firmware updates have been in the press on an almost weekly basis. Every firmware update can cause huge problems for consumers that prefer reused, or non-OEM cartridges. In 2018 HP issued 120 firmware updates on its range of laser printers and a further 251 firmware upgrades to their range of inkjet printers. Meanwhile, Epson issued 274 firmware upgrades on their range of inkjet printers.**

firmware download breaches laws as did their last big update a couple of years ago.” In May 2018 HP’s Australian subsidiary has got itself into hot water over the sale of 220,000 printers designed to prevent the use of third-party cartridges. As ARN reports, as a result of this lack of transparency, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has stated that “HP has agreed to a court-enforceable undertaking to compensate customers who were unable to use non-HP ink cartridges due to an undisclosed technology in

## 2018 firmware updates by OEMs

LaserJet	Brother	Canon	Dell	HP	Kyocera	Lexmark	Samsung	Xerox
No of updates	30	10	16	120	6	30	61	31

Inkjet	Brother	Canon	Epson	HP
No of updates	136	24	274	251

Between January and May this year the OEMs have collectively issued a further 366 firmware upgrades. That is 2.4 per day. In April this year in response to another HP firmware upgrade Australia based Ink Hub advised consumers they needn’t bother with the upgrades even if they use genuine HP cartridges as the updates “won’t make any difference as to how your printer performs.” Commenting that the sole purpose of the update “is to stop the end user from being able to use generic cartridges” and then offered technical advice, using diagrams, demonstrating how to disable the updates. In May Ink Hub took to Social Media to inform its customers that the company is “currently in talks with the ACCC over HP’s latest printer firmware updates. They are going to see if this latest

its printers.” This technology is a dynamic security feature (DSF), which either already came with one of the printers or would have been installed in a later firmware update. The purpose of the DSF is to “prevent non-HP ink cartridges from being used in HP printers.” “Consumers were not made aware of the restriction on using non-HP ink cartridges when buying the printer or downloading the firmware update, and were denied the choice to accept or reject it.” ACCC deputy chair Michael Schaper said. “The ACCC was also very concerned that HP used technology to change these printers’ functionality after purchase, without alerting consumers to the restriction on the use of non-HP ink cartridges which was being installed.”

HP has admitted to the likely breach of Australian Consumer Law “by engaging in false, misleading or deceptive conduct.” In December 2016 Readitquick.com added HP Inc to its annual technical disasters list. The article said that “without the knowledge of its customers, in September 2016, HP introduced a security update in its Officejet Pro printers which stopped the printing if a third-party ink cartridge was detected”. The company was inundated with complaints, and it was noted that they were “taken to task for not being more transparent” about their updates and for their statement defending their actions, which said they wanted to “ensure the best consumer experience and protect them from counterfeit and third-party ink cartridges,” although HP Inc did apologise by saying: “We should have done a better job of communicating about the authentication procedure to customers, and we apologise.” But it is not just HP in the legal wars over firmware. Epson too have had their share of legal actions. ETIRA President Javier Martinez said: “Firmware updates are necessary to keep devices working. However, way too often surprise overnight firmware updates also have the nasty side-effect of blocking the remanufactured cartridge, that happens to be in the printer at the time of the firmware update,

from continuing to function normally. This should not be allowed. OEMs should have an instant “roll back”-facility, that is: if a firmware update blocks a legally remanufactured cartridge, or adversely impacts on the printer or cartridge performance, the user should be able to revert back to the previous firmware setting instantly. If they cannot offer that facility, firmware updates should not be permitted.” Why so many updates and the open challenge of locking out competitors? The printer market is a competitive space and we all know print volumes are declining year on year. More so in the domestic consumer inkjet market where delegates at the recent The Recycler live conference were briefed that year on year sales are declining by 7.7 percent. It is a fight for market share and Canon and Epson are fighting for a slice of the HP market and at the same time using all the tools in their arsenals to dominate the consumables sector. Every time a firmware upgrade is issued individual companies producing reused or new cartridges respond by having to check that their version of the aftermarket chip work with the upgrade, or the chip manufacturer has to reverse engineer to firmware upgrade to determine the changes. One expert we spoke with said, “sometimes it is a simple change that can be corrected, but sometimes it is a big change that takes time.” Is there a more sinister reason?

On the laser printer side there is a plethora of aftermarket MPS programmes all collecting data on the efficiency of consumables. Not something the OEMs would like to see in the public domain? While the pace of firmware updates continues HP and the other OEMs are raking in the cash and the microchip producers are busy working out how to create a new microchip which overcomes each and every firmware update. Since just about every cartridge is a single use cartridge the environmental degradation continues, and the consumer loses a fair choice. Is it time for collective action? The US based I-ITC has recently launched a firmware warning label campaign on their website “Firmware Warning Label, Hewlett Packard has been aggressively locking out the competition with its new firmware that stops the printer at various times if it detects a cartridge with an aftermarket chip. The firmware upgrade that causes this is vexing both consumers and chip makers alike. What can we do about this problem? One way is to stop the customer from downloading the firmware in the first place with firmware warning labels.”

(Source: <https://www.therecycler.com/posts/hp-leads-the-firmware-wars/>)

# THE RECYCLER

Trade magazine for the toner and inkjet remanufacturing industry ~ making waste work

## I-ITC and UKCRA file lockout complaint against HP

October 7, 2019



**The Int'l ITC and UKCRA have joined forces in the fight against firmware updates which lock out the aftermarket and filed a complaint with EPEAT against HP Inc.**

The International Imaging Technology Council (Int'l ITC) announced it filed a complaint against HP Inc. with the Green Electronics Council over HP's new "killer chip" firmware. The Int'l ITC is challenging their claims to meet criterion 4.9.2.1 for their printer products currently listed as "active" on the EPEAT Registry. The Int'l ITC was joined in this action by the United Kingdom Cartridge Remanufacturing Association (UKCRA).

EPEAT stands for Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool, and its registry lists products that meet its criterion, which currently includes the HP printers affected by the firmware.

The EPEAT criteria was developed by a group of stakeholders over a two-year period, including government officials, the OEMs, including HP Inc., and members of the aftermarket including

the Int'l ITC and UKCRA. This team developed the IEEE 1680.2 Standard for Environmental Assessment of Imaging Equipment, as well as the following subsections, which direct that all EPEAT imaging equipment will:

"4.9.2.1 Allow use of non-manufacturer cartridges and non-manufacturer containers

"4.9.4.1 (Provide) Documentation that the cartridge or container is not designed to prevent its reuse and recycling."

In the complaint, the Int'l ITC asserted that HP's aggressive firmware, which locks out aftermarket cartridges, violate these provisions.

"HP, Inc.'s outrageous new firmware shuts off printers when it detects a non-HP cartridge, which frustrates consumers and their cartridge suppliers alike," said Tricia Judge, Executive Director of the Int'l ITC. "This is clearly contrary to the EPEAT criteria. They shouldn't get to claim to adhere to a higher environmental standard."

For more information on EPEAT, see [www.epeat.net](http://www.epeat.net).

# THE RECYCLER

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## Epson in class action lawsuit for firmware updates

October 22, 2019



**The class action lawsuit was filed against Epson alleging that the complainants suffered harm as a result of Epson's firmware updates that locked out third party supplies.**

The class action complaint was filed on 18 October in the United States District Court, Southern District Of California against Epson America Inc., on behalf of William Mondigo and Richard Famiglietti, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated, alleging that Epson's firmware updates are anti-competitive, unfair, fraudulent and oppressive and illegal conduct, stopping the use of third-party consumables.

The papers seen by The Recycler state that "this is a class action brought to seek redress on behalf of all persons and entities who purchased an Epson Printer and suffered harm as result of Epson's anti-competitive, unfair, fraudulent and oppressive and illegal conduct."

Specifically, the complaint alleges that "Epson engaged, and continues to engage, in a systematic campaign of disabling Epson printers when the

owner attempts to use non-Epson ink cartridges in an effort to improperly and illegally quash competition from third-party manufacturers."

The papers go on about how Epson, in its 2018 report, acknowledges the third-party consumables could "result in its losing market share", however never "discuss disabling printers to increase market share."

The complaint alleges "Epson never informed Epson printer owners that the Updates would prevent their printers from working if they had third-party ink cartridges installed" and therefore accuses Epson of violating the federal Computer Fraud and Abuse Act ("CFAA"), 18 U.S. C. § 1030, the Connecticut Unfair Trade Practices Act ("CUTA"), the California Unfair Competition Law ("UCL"), Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code §§ 17200, et seq., the California False Advertising Law ("FAL"), Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code §§ 17500, et seq. and California Computer Penal Code § 502 (Unauthorised access to computers, computer systems and computer data).

The plaintiffs demand a jury trial.



**ECO-SAVER**  
Remanufactured Inkjet Cartridge  
A Green Way to Save Money



**GO-INNOVATING TOMORROW**  
GOOD PRODUCT A GOOD SERVICE

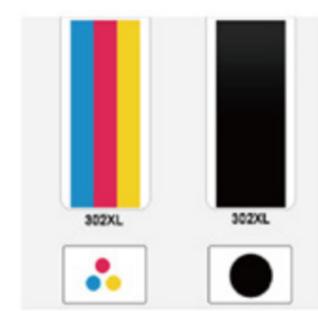


What is **ECO-SAVER**?

Eco-Saver is a series of remanufactured inkjet cartridges featuring 1 reusable print head and multi-pack replacement ink cartridges.

**ECO-SAVER** Prints 3 Times More Than OEM Product Page Yield

Eco-Saver, exhausting the lifecycle of print head, prints 1440 page yield in total; OEM product's print head is used only once, totaling 480 page yield. Reusable print head, greener, save more!



**ECO-SAVER** Shows Ink Level

Teamed up with the industry-leading chip company-Apex, Eco-Saver series products featuring reusable print head also show ink lever from start to finish as same as OEM.



**New Patented Solutions for Brother Series Products**

- First-to-market new version patented solutions
- Stable printing performance



Non-OEM Replacement Toner Cartridges for:  
Brother TN-420/450 series, TN-630/660 series, TN-730/760/770 series, TN-221/225 series, TN-223/227 series products