

1. Should You Bring DTF In-House?

Check the statements that are true for your business. More checked boxes generally strengthen the case for owning equipment.

☐ DTF orders arrive every week, not just occasionally.

☐ Outsourcing is causing missed deadlines or long lead times.

☐ You regularly need custom or same-day transfer production.

☐ You have suitable space, power, ventilation, storage, and a heat-press area.

☐ Someone can handle routine cleaning, nozzle checks, supplies, and troubleshooting.

☐ Your expected production volume can reasonably recover the complete setup cost.

Quick decision: Mostly unchecked = keep outsourcing for now. Mostly checked = continue with the equipment and vendor checks below.

2. Complete DTF Setup Cost Checklist

Printer	Quote: \$ _____
Shaker / curing equipment	Quote: \$ _____
Heat press	Quote: \$ _____
RIP / software	Quote: \$ _____
Initial ink, film, adhesive powder, cleaning supplies	Estimate: \$ _____
Workspace, electrical, ventilation, tables, storage	Estimate: \$ _____

Estimated complete startup investment: _____

3. Maintenance & Workflow Checks

☐ White-ink circulation / agitation method verified

☐ Automatic cleaning and wet-capping functions verified

☐ Idle-printer procedure documented by manufacturer

☐ Daily / weekly maintenance tasks understood

☐ Replacement printhead and common service parts availability checked

☐ RIP compatibility, license terms, and computer requirements checked

☐ Powdering and curing workflow sized for expected print volume

☐ Manufacturer or dealer support hours match your operating schedule

4. Before You Pay a Deposit

☐ Warranty length and exclusions

☐ Whether the printhead is covered

☐ Required inks / consumables for warranty

☐ Dealer vs manufacturer support responsibility

☐ Replacement-parts shipping location and lead time

☐ Electrical, temperature, humidity, and ventilation requirements

☐ Training included with purchase

☐ Sample print of your real artwork / gang sheet

Notes / deal-breakers: _____

DTF Printer Vendor Comparison Worksheet

Compare complete working systems, support, maintenance, and installed cost. Do not compare printer price alone.

Comparison Item	Vendor 1 Name / dealer / model	Vendor 2 Name / dealer / model	Vendor 3 Name / dealer / model
Printer / model			
Quoted printer price			
Complete installed cost			
Maximum print width			
Printhead configuration			
White-ink circulation			
Automatic cleaning / capping			
RIP software included?			
Shaker / oven included?			
Warranty length			
Printhead coverage			
Local / on-site service			
Parts availability / lead time			
Support hours / response			
Training included			
Idle-printer procedure			
Maintenance workload			
Electrical / ventilation needs			
Expected production fit			

Final Decision

Best-fit vendor / model: _____

Why it wins: _____

Final check: Can this system handle your real workload while leaving enough cash for supplies, maintenance, and downtime?