

Printer Search: decision memo

Data as of **2026-09-06**, revised **2026-09-07** · 67 configurations scored · 629 sources
· budget \$1,300.00 all-in including 6.25% Massachusetts sales tax

Decision memo

Buy the Bambu Lab P2S Combo with Bambu's own \$19.99 External Exhaust Fan Kit. It is \$817.05 all-in as of 2026-09-06: the \$749 Combo, the kit, free shipping, \$48.06 of Massachusetts sales tax at 6.25%, and nothing to buy later. Buy it because it is the machine here most likely to work every time you press print, and because your two bulk materials are the ones it is best at. It ranks first of 67 scored configurations and leaves \$482.95 of the \$1,300 budget in your pocket.

This memo recommended the QIDI Q2 until 2026-09-08, and one answer from you moved it. Asked whether acrylonitrile butadiene styrene reinforced with glass fiber (ABS-GF) was routine or occasional, you said occasional. The 2026-09-07 reframe had assumed routine, and on that assumption Bambu's own exclusion of carbon and glass fiber from the Automatic Material System (AMS) was close to disqualifying: the best-built filament magazine in this study would not hold the material you most wanted loaded. On a material you reach for now and then, the same exclusion is a limitation you work around with an external spool. That single correction moved the QIDI Q2 from first to third and put the P2S on top.

The result is closer than the one it replaces, and you should know that before anything else. Under the old assumption a QIDI won all six weightings this study runs. Now the P2S wins two, the QIDI Plus5 wins two, the Q2 wins one and the X2D wins one. The P2S wins the weighting as briefed and the one that tightens the budget; it loses to the Q2 whenever openness is pushed to the front. The gap between first and third is 0.155 of a point.

What each option costs

Configuration	Pre-tax (USD)	MA tax at 6.25% (USD)	All-in (USD)	To buy later (USD)	Rank of 67
Bambu P2S Combo + exhaust kit	768.99	48.06	817.05	0	1
Bambu P2S Combo (AMS 2 Pro)	749.00	46.81	795.81	0	2
QIDI Q2 Combo (Q2 + one Box)	649.00	40.56	689.56	0	3
Bambu X2D AMS Combo (AMS 2 Pro)	899.00	56.19	955.19	0	4
QIDI Plus5 Combo (Plus5 + one Box)	899.00	56.19	955.19	0	5
Bambu P1S AMS 2 Pro Combo	579.00	36.19	615.19	49.48	6

Prices retrieved 2026-09-06; shipping is free on all six. "To buy later" is the hardened nozzle and extruder gear the P1S needs before it can run fiber. One soft number: shipping on the \$19.99 exhaust kit, which Bambu's policy pages do not settle for a small accessory, a few dollars at most.

Why the exhaust kit, and not the bare Combo

The bare P2S Combo is second at 7.145 and saves you \$21.24. The kit buys ducted extraction for acrylonitrile styrene acrylate (ASA) and ABS, which is the difference between venting fumes into a room people use and venting them out of it. In a shared family home that is worth more than \$21.24, and the study scores it that way: practicalities 8.3 against 8.0, materials 7.2 against 6.8. If the printer ends up somewhere nobody sits, buy the bare Combo and save the money.

The weakest point, before anything good about it

Openness drops from 9.0 to 4.6 against the QIDI, and that is a real cost you are choosing to pay. Since January 2025 any slicer other than Bambu Studio must start prints through Bambu Connect, on your own network as well as in the cloud. Developer Mode is the documented escape and Bambu has called it unsupported. There is no browser interface, no published application programming interface (API), and the firmware is closed. Home Assistant works through community integrations that Bambu does not sanction and has acted against tooling it considered cloud impersonation as recently as May 2026.

You said plainly that "it just works" outweighs ideological purity for this purchase, and this memo takes you at your word. But you also design in OpenSCAD and run a homelab, so read that 4.6 as the thing you would most plausibly regret. If you would rather not be inside Bambu's fence at all, the answer is the QIDI Q2 Combo at \$689.56, third at 7.085, and it is a defensible buy: it scores 9.0 on openness with real Klipper, Moonraker, Fluidd in a browser, secure shell (SSH) login and published

firmware under version 3 of the GNU General Public License. It costs you 0.155 of a point and the open-lid habit described below.

The second cost is the magazine, and it is smaller than it was. The AMS 2 Pro scores 7.0 against the QIDI Box's 7.5. It refuses any filament containing carbon fiber (CF) or glass fiber, so an ABS-GF spool feeds from an external holder or from a \$139 single-slot AMS HT dry box. On an occasional material that is a workaround rather than a wall. Two faults are its own: feeder slots intermittently grind filament on first load and need a manual nudge, still open on 2026-09-06, and it cannot dry while it prints, which the QIDI Box can.

What you get for it

Reliability of 7.5 against the Q2's 4.0, on the heaviest judgment in the study at weight 25 and your own stated first criterion. PCMag's lab measured a 48 decibel (dB) average while printing, uptime above 99% over 100-plus hours, and parts repeating within 0.4 mm, which is the repeatability your polyethylene terephthalate glycol (PETG) work actually needs. Hardened nozzle and extruder gear are fitted from the factory, so fiber costs nothing at the printer end. Bambu warrants 24 months against QIDI's 12, sells 40-plus spare parts individually, and ships from a United States warehouse with 30-day returns and 30-day price protection.

The Q2, by contrast, jams. With the enclosure shut, retained heat softens filament above the heat break, most often polylactic acid (PLA) and PETG, and QIDI's own wiki tells owners to run the top cover open. 3dwork.io jammed repeatedly through its first week, Thomas Sanladerer lost over an hour picking bulged PLA out of the toolhead, and PCMag lost two days to a PLA jam. That is documented normal operation, not a bad unit, and the fix is a procedure rather than firmware. It is also not quiet: 50 to 60 dB measured over several weeks, about 65 dB with the Box attached, against the P2S's measured 48.

Is the X2D worth \$138.14 more than the P2S with its kit?

No, and the reason is simpler than it was. The X2D AMS Combo is \$955.19 all-in and finishes fourth at 6.980. It has the best chamber in this study, confirmed by CNC Kitchen at a real 65 °C in about 20 minutes with thermocouples, and materials scores 9.5, top of the field. You are paying \$138.14 for chamber heat you now need occasionally, on a machine that is worse where you said it matters: reliability 6.0 against 7.5, on under five months on sale, and about 55 dB at one meter against the P2S's 48. One AMS 2 Pro also has a single filament outlet, so on two nozzles it feeds one, and four-color work behaves exactly like the cheaper machine.

One condition still flips it. If ABS-GF turned out to be the whole reason for the purchase after all, raise materials to 35 and the X2D takes first at 7.325. You have just told me it is not, so that is the counterfactual rather than the recommendation.

The best non-Bambu answer

The QIDI Q2 Combo, \$689.56, third at 7.085. It is \$127.49 cheaper, it is the most open machine here short of a Prusa, its magazine accepts everything you print including ABS-GF and dries at 65 °C while printing, and it has the only actively heated chamber under \$700. What you give up is the 4.0 on reliability, the open lid for PLA and PETG, 50 to 60 dB in a shared room, a 12-month warranty against 24, and a documented pattern of QIDI being generous with parts and resistant to returns. Buy it from somewhere with its own returns path.

The QIDI Plus5 Combo at \$955.19 is fifth at 6.960 and answers the open-lid problem specifically: 3dwork.io rates PETG on it five stars with the chamber optional, and QIDI claims active toolhead cooling for this exact fault. No tester has confirmed that claim. It is \$138.14 more than the P2S with its kit, three months old, and 29 kg shipped from China.

Should you wait?

No, and nothing here has changed that. Nothing announced can be delivered, and your own ruling excludes pre-orders and crowdfunding. Prusa's CORE One INDX eight-tool changer is a \$2,082.41 pre-order over your stretch ceiling. AtomForm's Palette 300 was shown at CES 2026 with pre-sale pushed past Q2 2026 and no price. Sovol's M1D is a \$1,499 pre-order and HeyGears' G1X a \$1,999 Kickstarter. Only 24 of 102 printers have any sale history captured, none of it Bambu or QIDI. Bambu's store terms on 2026-09-06 include 30-day returns and 30-day price protection, so a sale next week costs you nothing on this machine, which was not true of the QIDI.

What would change this

One: openness turns out to matter more to you than you said. Push it to 30 and the Q2 wins outright at 7.652, its largest margin anywhere in this study. This is the trigger most likely to fire, because it depends on your own tolerance rather than on new evidence, and you have a homelab.

Two: a reviewer bench-tests a V2 QIDI Box and it passes. The Q2's magazine already scores 7.5 on owner reports at 450 to 792 hours rather than a test, so a good result would not move it much. A bad one would push the Q2 further down and widen the P2S's lead. This trigger now protects the recommendation instead of threatening it.

Three: the printer goes somewhere nobody sits. Then drop the exhaust kit and buy the bare Combo at \$795.81, second at 7.145. Nothing else changes.

The verdict on your lean

"P2S with an AMS": correct, and now first. It was the right call on the requirements you first gave, it stopped being the right call for one day on a requirement that turned out to be overstated, and it is the right call again. Buy it with the \$19.99 exhaust kit.

"The X2D at about \$100 more": still not supported. The gap is \$138.14 against the P2S with its kit, more than you had in mind, and it buys chamber heat for a material you print occasionally on a machine that is measurably less reliable and louder.

"The P1S is poor value": not supported, and it is now sixth rather than seventh. At \$615.19 all-in it holds the highest reliability score in the study, 8.0, on three years of field record and owner threads out to 11,000 hours where the named failures are consumables. It costs \$201.86 less than the recommendation. What it cannot do is ABS: a passive chamber owners measure near 40 °C, materials 4.6, and \$49.48 of hardened parts before fiber. If you strike ABS from the list entirely it is the best value here, and your instinct about it was wrong on value even so.