

UNITED STATIONERS

War on waste continues with help from HP Managed Print Services



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HP CUSTOMER CASE STUDY:

Office products distributor continues to cut costs, refine workflow with HP Managed Print Services

INDUSTRY:

Distribution

OBJECTIVE:

Improve printing and document output while reducing costs

APPROACH:

United Stationers has implemented a Managed Print Services agreement with HP

IMPROVEMENTS:

- Standardization on a few HP MFPs, compared to 160 makes and models previously
- Remote management of printers and MFPs with HP Web Jetadmin software
- Outsourcing of responsibility for maintenance, hardware support

BUSINESS BENEFITS:

- Cost savings of roughly 30% during the initial MPS agreement, and another 20 to 25% targeted savings goal during the second agreement
- Improved output quality
- Electronic workflows (scan-to-email, etc.) enhance document distribution, storage capabilities
- Outsourcing management of central reproduction center to HP enhances efficiency



When something works, you keep doing it. And if you can improve it even more, so much the better. That's why United Stationers not only renewed its HP Managed Print Services agreement after three years, but also expanded the number of facilities it covers.

"Our initial goal was to drive the cost of printing down by 30% by moving to network printing and better managing how we print," explains Frank Arvidson, senior manager for IT customer service at United Stationers. "We achieved that with HP Managed Print Services. Now we're working on driving down that cost by another 20 to 25%. And with the help of HP, we expect to achieve that, too."



A few examples of how the company's pared down print costs include duplex mode—routing the larger print jobs to the HP-managed central reproduction center where high volume HP 9000-series MFPs boast the smallest “click charge” in the company; and re-examining workflows for the company's heaviest print users.

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MPS UNVEILED IN NEW HQ

United Stationers is a leading distributor of business products throughout North America, with 2009 sales of \$4.7 billion. The company stocks some 100,000 items from over 1,000 manufacturers—ranging from technology products to office supplies, office furniture, janitorial supplies and industrial products.

The first HP Managed Print Services agreement was implemented as United Stationers was moving into a new corporate headquarters building in Deerfield, Ill. It would cut printing costs significantly. But United Stationers didn't simply want to take devices away in order to save money. It sought to give employees the tools they needed to do their jobs more efficiently, and that meant providing reliable, convenient printing.

In planning the way employees would print and output documents in the new space, United Stationers and HP worked together to eliminate personal printers, standardize on multifunction printers (MFPs) with faster speeds and higher quality, launch a fully managed copy center, and develop and implement an efficient output strategy.

WAR ON WASTE

Saving money with MPS was part of a corporate-wide initiative that United Stationers calls its ‘war on waste.’ Reducing waste wherever possible would naturally include environmental benefits. The company spent 16 weeks evaluating vendors to implement a managed print approach, and chose HP as the best-in-class collaborator. “HP was a great fit with us, because their technology was just what we needed, and MPS was dedicated to the service model,” says Arvidson.

Under the MPS agreement, United Stationers pays a monthly fee that covers toner, on-site maintenance and support. Part of the fee is a “click charge” for each page printed or copied. The company purchases its printers.

In the new headquarters building, the company replaced more than 160 different makes and models of printers and copiers with just a few HP models, primarily the HP LaserJet 4345 MFP, 9050 MFP and Color LaserJet 4730 MFP. Each model of MFP provides everything from networked printing to duplex printing, scanning and copying capabilities; and in the case of the 4730 MFP, all that in full color.

Using a pay-per-use pricing model enabled United Stationers to slash its printing costs by some 30%. That savings was due not just to device consolidation, which reduced equipment and maintenance costs, but better supplies management.

“HP Managed Print Services not only gave us a low hardware cost, but a very reasonable per-page click charge to lower our overall costs,” says Arvidson.

CUSTOMER SOLUTION AT A GLANCE

PRIMARY APPLICATIONS

Printing, copying, faxing

PRIMARY HARDWARE

- HP LaserJet 4345 MFP
- HP LaserJet 9050 MFP
- HP Color LaserJet 4730 MFP
- HP LaserJet 9000 MFP

PRIMARY SOFTWARE

- HP Web Jetadmin
- Equitrac

HP SERVICES

- HP Managed Print Services



BUILDING ON SUCCESS, EXPANDING MPS

Based on the initial successes of HP Managed Print Services, United Stationers chose to expand the scope of the MPS contract. The expansion includes the company's general offices and distribution centers. It places HP LaserJet 9000 MFP and 9050 MFP multifunction printers in an additional 30 locations where they produce some 5 to 6 million impressions each month.

"Some of those machines have already produced more than 2 million pages each, one has run 6 million, and they're all still running just fine," Arvidson notes. "They're real workhorses." The high-volume MFPs are being used to print labels and large reports, among other things.

Statistics on usage are generated by HP each month through HP Web Jetadmin software. Arvidson uses those statistics in a quarterly internal newsletter for United Stationers explaining how the company is improving its print management. He also has HP rotate MFPs through the company so that printers in heavier-usage areas don't exceed targeted page counts identified in the MPS agreement and that printers are optimized for demand.

In addition to the new locations, United Stationers worked with HP to fine-tune printing in the headquarters facility, too. Now, the HP Color LaserJet 4730 MFP models default to black-only

printing and also are routinely set to duplex print mode (though users can specify single-sided printing if they want to).

In some ways, changes under MPS are targeted at smarter printing. "We're using the old 80/20 rule," Arvidson says. "Twenty percent of our users are responsible for the heaviest usage. So we're going back to them to re-examine how they're using printing, and perhaps come up with ways to work smarter and reduce paper waste."

One example is the large reports that come from batch processing jobs. When the company moved into its headquarters, it changed the print workflow so that those reports were routed to local printers. That reduced the number of pages that people routinely chose to print. Now Arvidson's team is hoping to reduce that page count further.

"We're always asking, is there a better way of doing it? In some cases, we're making the data available online instead of routinely printing the report. In other cases, we change the report so that it's only going to show the data that people really use—like the summary statistics that usually appear on the last few pages," he says.

More documents are also being uploaded to internal FTP sites. Some are being output as PDF documents that can be shared internally and printed when needed.



MAINTENANCE INCLUDED

HP continues to be responsible for maintenance and for running the headquarters central reproduction center. MFPs are managed using HP Web Jetadmin software, which maintains page counts on every device and sends alerts when printers aren't running within specifications. That helps HP and United Stationers head off print quality problems early and reduce downtime.

Employees in the central reproduction department, which is run by HP, are trained to install standard maintenance kits, replace toner, do minor adjustments and other servicing.

Looking ahead, United Stationers is looking for new opportunities to improve print and document management even more. "Right now, our main initiative is to take greater advantage of electronic options," says Arvidson. That includes helping employees make greater use of scan-to-email or scan-to-folder options using the existing HP MFPs.

The company is also beginning to track which employee groups do the most printing, and what kind of printing they do, using Equitrac software. That could lead to implementation of an internal chargeback system to departments for printing and copying, which tends to increase awareness of printing volumes and spending. Arvidson says he continues to rely on key HP contacts for all such initiatives. A technical representative visits weekly or participates in a conference call to discuss hardware details and progress on new initiatives. Arvidson also meets each quarter with his main HP account representative.

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