

The REAL BENEFITS of Print Management

By Trevor Hofer

Despite the fact that print management has become a ubiquitous term, there is still considerable confusion about what exactly it is and what its benefits are. There are many people who confuse print management and fleet management solutions, but the two perform very different functions.

Fleet management (or device management) solutions are used to collect meter reads on imaging devices and perform service functions such as supplies management and service history tracking.

In contrast, a comprehensive print management solution allows organizations to capture and control every print job that occurs in an environment. Print management solutions also enable organizations to control who can print to where and can be used to alter user behavior by setting printing limits, restricting color usage and forcing duplexing.

Is your dealership stuck in a rut and offering print management solutions strictly to cost recovery customers? These solutions are no longer just a value-add to offer to professional service firms. As this article will explain, a print management solution can be a powerful revenue generating and cost saving tool that can benefit any dealer and organization by performing three key functions: Workflow analysis, cost reduction and cost recovery.

WORKFLOW ANALYSIS – Sell more equipment. Optimize your customer's print strategy.

Many dealers are already conducting rapid assessments using scanning software on USB drives and are under the impression that this is all that is needed to perform a thorough print analysis. Rapid assessment is very useful for capturing instant snapshots of the print environment and this

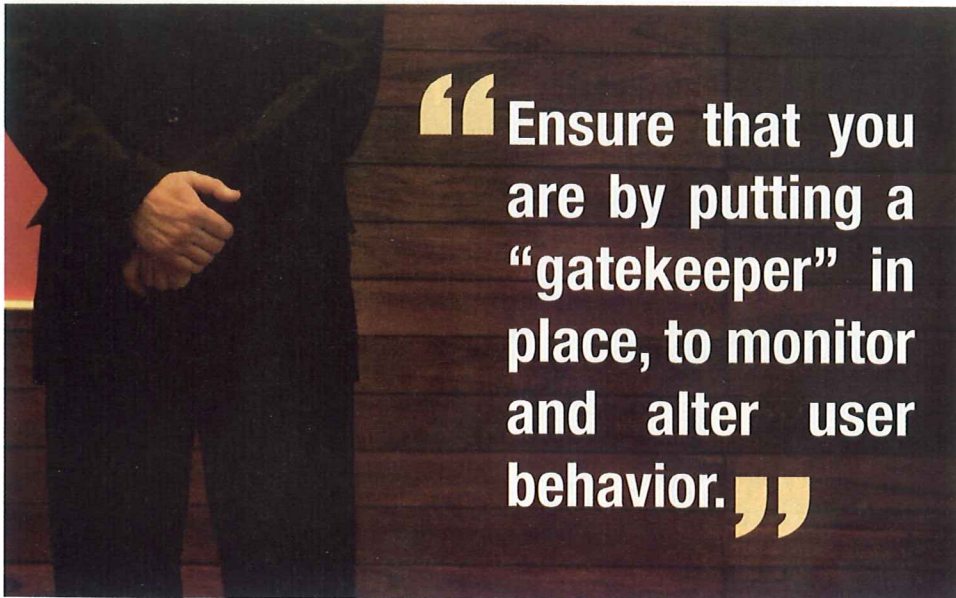
capability is valuable for opening doors. However, it only scratches the surface when it comes to uncovering equipment sales opportunities.

There are analysis tools available that are designed specifically to allow office equipment dealers to perform a more detailed, time-limited silent print analysis. This is best accomplished using software which is installed onto individual workstations at a customer's site to enable ongoing tracking.

Some people are intimidated at the thought of having to install software onto their client's workstations. However, most large organizations already have mass installation methods in place that will make this process painless and relatively non-intrusive compared to software solutions that must be installed to print servers. ➔

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Analyze all printing

Tracking printing at the desktop level will allow you to analyze all of the devices at a client's site, including local, networked and direct-to-IP printers. Since desktop printers are the most expensive to run, it is important to monitor how these devices are being used. Some of the biggest surprises come out of an analysis of this type of printing.

Are your customers printing to their inkjet printers instead of your multi-function device? A rapid assessment tool won't reveal this type of information, but a comprehensive print analysis using a client-based tool such as the Print Audit Assessor will.

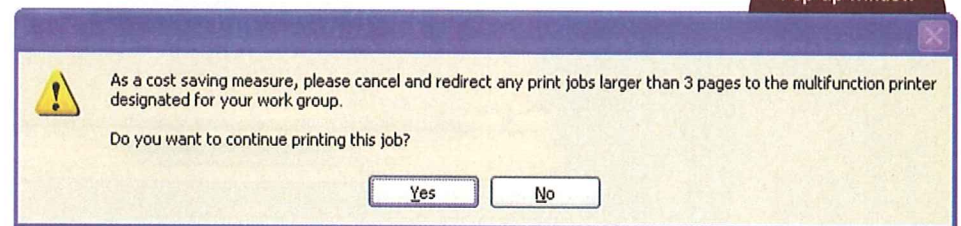
Gather critical workflow data

A comprehensive analysis tool will gather valuable workflow information to help answer questions such as: Who is printing the most? Where are they printing to? What size and types of jobs are they printing? When are they printing and are there any bottlenecks?

Without this workflow information, it is very difficult to determine which devices are currently being misused. Having a clear picture of the current state will help reinforce your proposals regarding new equipment and any other changes that are warranted.

Prove the need for new equipment

Assessment provides reporting that details what the current state of printing looks like in your client's environment. This can then be used to calculate what would be gained (saved) by implementing changes. Dealers



are able to make proposals based on their clients' real print data, rather than generic, one-size fits all, industry stats.

COST REDUCTION – Direct volumes to your devices, reducing your client's costs.

After a print analysis has been completed and new devices have been placed, are you taking measures to ensure that the new devices are being used to their full potential? Is your cost per copy program getting the majority of your customer's volumes?

Many dealers drastically underestimate the amount of volumes they are losing to their competitor's devices. After a thorough print analysis, one of the largest office equipment dealers in the United Kingdom

recently discovered that their printers were only receiving 20 percent of their customers' volumes. Prior to the analysis they had assumed that number to be closer to 60 percent.

The problem as they understood it was one of human nature – people will print to their convenience printer, rather than the device best suited for the job. Instead of assuming that you are getting most of a client's volumes – ensure that you are by putting a “gatekeeper” in place, to monitor and alter user behavior.

Redirect print volumes to your devices - A print management tool with reduction features can help to change the printing habits of users and encourage them to make better printing decisions. For example, if a user tries to print a large print job to their personal printer, a pop-up window can encourage or force them to print to your more efficient, multi-function device instead.

Pop-up window:

Give your customers control and increase their ROI - Your clients will be more likely to buy a color device if they know that it won't be abused. A reduction tool will give your customer a variety of cost saving options. For example, they could configure the print management software to force users to print on both sides of the page when printing to certain devices. It could also be configured to disallow color printing from specific individuals or to disallow black and white printing to color devices.

Clearly cost reduction tools are a win-win situation for the dealer and the customer. For this reason, many dealers have begun bundling print reduction tools with their devices to ensure that they are being used to their fullest. Those

dealers who are utilizing print management tools are quickly taking over entire accounts.

COST RECOVERY – Overcome sales objections. Add value to your proposals.

Many dealers are already familiar with cost recovery solutions. Cost recovery is most common in professional service firms such as architects, engineers, law firms, realtors and advertising agencies. These firms typically charge their users or clients for printing and photocopying expenses.

Surprisingly, many of these companies still calculate out-of-pocket expenses by manually logging print jobs with a clipboard kept by the printer/plotter. This method has been proven to be very inaccurate – case studies have shown that people simply forget to record the data up to 80 percent of the time.

Any dealership can take advantage of cost recovery opportunities to overcome sales objections and add value to proposals:

Facilitate equipment sales - Cost recovery solutions tend to be an easy sell since they usually pay for themselves in a matter of weeks or months. In many cases the ROI is so significant that in providing these solutions the dealers are helping to generate additional revenues that the customer can use to literally pay for new equipment.

Simplify your client's chargeback process - Manual print or copy tracking is a time consuming process that companies will gladly give up. Most companies can greatly simplify and increase the accuracy of their bill back process by installing a print management solution. Cost recovery solutions can automate a company's chargeback process by automatically recording printing and photocopying costs and integrating the data with most accounting and billing packages.

Getting Started

Have you been missing out on many of the benefits a print management solution can provide? The good news is that there are powerful solutions available that are easy to get up and running, without any formal training. A complete solution with the workflow analysis, cost reduction and recovery features discussed in this article will reward both you and your customers.

A word about support

Your reputation is on the line when you sell or promote any product. Make sure that you are fully satisfied that your client will be in good hands with the print management partner that you choose. Try the software in your own offices and test the support yourself. ☺

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