

## Case study

# MicroK12

## Leveraging HP MPS solidifies relationships, builds business



### Industry

Computer Services

### Objective

- Increase sales potential of existing customers
- Educate customers on need and benefits of HP MPS
- Overcome customer fear of long, cumbersome deployment process

### Approach

- Engage as agent partner for HP MPS
- Leverage strength of HP in MPS sales discussions
- Meet K12 customer needs from “manage-as-is” to full HP MPS deployment

### Customer benefits

- Cut customer time spent managing print environment to make more time available for other responsibilities
- Help reduce costs for supplies, support, future printer purchases
- Simplify print management with a single destination for toner, support and service
- Leverage supplies savings to move from trouble-prone remanufactured cartridges to HP Original Supplies

### Partner benefits

- Demonstrate solutions approach of HP MPS to deliver customer benefits never before pursued
- Leverage HP MPS to adopt role of trusted advisor to customers
- Can increase sales potential with printing-related software solutions (workflow, accounting, pull printing)
- Complete a sales portfolio with HP MPS and similar services to become a customer’s one-stop shop for technology
- Increase sales opportunities of additional technology products and services



**“Delivering a successful HP MPS program helps to make you a trusted advisor. It demonstrates to the customer that you’re there to do more than sell them a computer or a printer; you’re there to help solve problems.”**

—Melanie Wood, account manager, MicroK12

MicroK12 is a leading HP partner in northwest Washington specializing in technology for K12 schools and education organizations. The company offers professional services, asset tagging and staging for deployment. After years of simply offering schools printers and supplies, the company realized it was missing out on a golden opportunity to strengthen its customer relationships and grow the business by offering Managed Print Services. MicroK12 now successfully offers customers HP Managed Print Service solutions with a wide range of options—from “manage-as-is” to full MPS deployment.



## “Completing the loop” with MPS

When Account Manager Melanie Wood joined MicroK12, she was surprised to find the company offered customers full access to HP printers and supplies and sold lots of both, but didn't “complete the loop” by offering HP Managed Print Services.

“As far as I'm concerned, HP MPS gives us regular contact with the customer and helps us with every other opportunity,” she says. “HP MPS is the most powerful tool I have in my belt. And I've got the full backing of HP, the market leader in printing.”

Wood begins the MPS discussion by simply asking her customers how they manage printing for their district. “If they don't have an answer immediately, I know there's likely a mess and they need us and HP MPS,” she explains. “They may not know how many printers they have, the supplies they use, or how much they're paying for them. And they probably don't have a straightforward process for dealing with break/fix. HP MPS can address all those issues.”

She typically starts with a simple approach including a “manage-as-is” program featuring Original HP toner for the customer's existing HP LaserJet printers, which eliminates the risk of running out of toner, and typically reduces downtime and increases print quality compared to remanufactured versions.

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When the time comes to replace aging printers, the customer automatically qualifies under HP MPS for the lowest available pricing on HP printers. MicroK12 can work with HP experts to study actual usage and choose the right device for each location, consolidate multiple devices by replacing them with HP multifunction printers (MFPs), and lower total cost of ownership.

As the HP MPS program moves forward with the customer, MicroK12 can also offer software solutions such as PaperCut, DocuWare and HP Access Control to improve security, reduce costs and help manage document workflow.

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“MicroK12 would not be able offer all of these strong document solutions on our own,” Wood acknowledges. “Partnering with HP gives us access to resources we don't have. That, in turn, gives MicroK12 a lot of credibility with the customer.”

## Overcoming customer reluctance

When Wood first proposes that her customers consider HP MPS with MicroK12, some respond, “I don't have time to deal with that.” She overcomes that objection by pointing out that MicroK12 will do all the up-front work to launch MPS successfully.

“We do all the heavy lifting,” she says. “We download the data collection agent onto their server and let it run for 4-6 weeks. The software pulls together all the data we need to plan an effective HP MPS deployment. It's very valuable data even if they choose to delay a decision.”

The print data tells MicroK12 how much is being printed, what devices are being used, and how much toner the district is using. Customers see the hard costs of toner and on-site support, and become more aware of the soft costs of downtime.

“Some people realize immediately where they're using the wrong printers and driving up printing cost. They realize they can take steps on their own to optimize their print environment. Others need our help to make it happen,” Wood explains.



“The key is that the data is taken right from their environment. So when we use that data to structure a proposed MicroK12 delivered HP MPS program, there’s a lot of integrity in our proposal,” Wood explains.

### No up front costs

Another concern raised by some customers: up-front costs. Again, Wood has a simple answer, “It doesn’t cost them anything up-front to go on the base program. We do all the work, all the management, and we know that implementing an HP MPS program is going to give them a lower cost per page so they will save money immediately.”

Of course, MPS works best when it expands beyond the base supplies program to include device planning/optimization and other elements that improve document workflow. Often Wood can illustrate the potential for additional savings by targeting a single, older printer for removal or replacement.

“We talk about what it costs them to use that printer, including supplies and maintenance and everything else. And when we do that, we can show them their current costs compared with potential cost savings.”

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### Saving time & money, solidifying relationships

Wood says most school districts have simple goals when it comes to printing: saving time and money. “They want their help desk freed up to be able to do more than just fix printing problems. And they want to cut costs. So it all comes down to time and money.”

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MicroK12 providing HP MPS delivers both, she says. The program can cut costs with a predictable, lower cost per page for printing. It reduces the management burden by ensuring supplies are delivered “just-in-time” and, if the customer wants, on-site hardware support that reduces printer downtime and ensures optimum print quality. It offers customers the opportunity to optimize their print environment, based on research and recommendations from MicroK12 and HP.

So what is the benefit to MicroK12 for aligning with HP MPS? “Supporting a customer with a successful HP MPS program helps to make you a trusted advisor,” Wood explains. “It demonstrates to the customer that you’re there to do more than sell them a computer or a printer; you’re there to help solve problems.”

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As a result, Wood says, the district is more likely to reach out to her for its next purchase of technology—notebook PCs, tablet PCs, a desktop PC refresh or more. “They also know from their experience with HP MPS that our relationship with HP opens doors for them in terms of pricing and access to expertise.”

## Best Practices for selling HP MPS

Wood has some straightforward advice for other HP partners who want to use HP MPS to solidify customer relationships and grow their business:

- **Create the opportunity, don’t wait for it.** Bring up HP MPS with every customer, because the customer will never think to ask for it.
- **Be enthusiastic.** Get excited when you talk about how simple HP MPS is to set up, all the things it can offer your customer over time, and the benefits of leveraging your HP partnership through HP MPS to help your customer.

- **Be delicate with positioning.** Protect your customer’s ego. Don’t suggest the existing approach to print management is a problem. Simply point out the various improvements and benefits HP MPS can deliver moving forward.
- **Emphasize time savings.** Customers are always interested in saving time. If the customer says he or she doesn’t have time to implement HP MPS, that’s a clear indication that HP MPS is exactly what they need.
- **Keep it simple.** Your goal is to simplify print management for your customer, so start by proposing a simple, straightforward program that your customer will understand easily.
- **Deliver immediate benefits.** Nothing sells like success. Start with a base HP MPS program that will deliver cost and time savings, and your customer will trust you to expand it in the future.
- **Build momentum.** Demonstrate the potential of HP MPS with a Proof of Concept for similar clients in your market.

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