

Case study

University of Bradford takes control of print to cut costs



Managed Print Services from HP and DTP Group ensures less waste and greater reliability

Industry

Higher Education

Objective

Consolidate 200-plus printers under one management contract to reduce cost, cut waste and improve efficiency

Approach

Built a test environment that then went through a vendor selection process to find suitable test software

IT matters

- Improved reliability of print devices means fewer breakdowns, saving IT team involvement
- Created an appropriate Managed Print Services solution, 'right-sizing' the print environment

Business matters

- Reduced the number of printers from over 200 to 11, cutting costs and improving efficiency
- Created a print management system, requiring users to 'activate' print jobs, cutting paper use by 40 per cent
- Met University's green policy, with more efficient printers and less paper wastage helping halve carbon footprint
- Ensured a single line of responsibility for print function, cutting management time



“There's less tech' support needed. Rather than working reactively with printer problems on a daily basis, I'm now able to concentrate on IT projects which directly benefit medical teaching.”

– Harvinder Singh Panesar, technical services officer, University of Bradford



Fit-for-purpose print

University of Bradford is growing and investing. It wants to provide a modern teaching environment for students, and a professional workplace for staff. A move to a new £10m School of Health Studies facility prompted a review of its print estate. An MPS solution from HP and The DTP Group lowers costs and delivers a more efficient print environment.



Challenge

Need to protect sales and growth

University of Bradford is a mid-sized university in the north of England. Founded in 1966, it has created a reputation for innovation and practical relevance: it was the first UK university outside of London to offer part-time courses, it is home to the first Modern Business School, and the first to offer a degree in Peace Studies.

Like many higher education providers in the UK, University of Bradford has grown significantly over the past 10 years. It currently numbers 17,000 students across two campus sites in the city. This growth has been accompanied by investment in new facilities.

“Bradford is a research-intensive technology university,” says Graham Hill, director of IT Services, University of Bradford. “In terms of technology, our key objective is to enhance the quality of the campus and its facilities, in particular the IT infrastructure. Bradford has a 50-year heritage as a technology university, and we want to be known worldwide as The Technology University of the North.”

The School of Health Studies moved to a new £10m facility in 2011. The building provides students with the closest possible ‘real-life’ practical experience, including two fully equipped clinical wards, two physiotherapy rooms, a movement laboratory, and a practical room for student midwives. It is fully BREEAM certified, the recognised standard for environmentally-friendly building design – and in line with the University’s ‘Ecoversity’ green policy.

Ahead of the move, the School of Health Studies wanted to rethink its approach to print. Previously, the faculty’s 150 staff each had their own printer. This resulted in a mixed estate of 200-plus desktop laser printers; this proved inefficient to run, hard to maintain and difficult to monitor.

“There was a lot of technical support,” says Harvinder Singh Panesar, technical services officer. “We were replacing toners nearly every day and constantly having to deal with paper jams or lost connectivity. It was a mess.

“Because there was no management on the system, there was no control. There was a lot of wastage. People were printing from the internet, private information and we had no control over it. There were piles and piles of paper on every floor.”

Solution

Consolidate and control

The University had already implemented a new Managed Print Services (MPS) solution in its library building. Panesar says this would be the model for the School of Health Studies. DTP Group, HP’s partner specialising in higher education, was responsible for introducing the MPS solution to the library. It was brought in to help plan the appropriate solution.



“I was impressed by the speed, reliability, confidentiality and the number of services provided with the library solution,” says Panesar.

The DTP solution is to rationalise the print count from over 200 to 11 networked printers, with a single line of management and complete transparency across the print function. It sees two HP laser printers and two HP MFP (multifunction printers) on each floor of the new Health Studies building, plus SafeCom Pull Printing software to provide management control. Instead of a printer on each desk, users activate a print job and go to the nearest printer. Each print job is held on a virtual server, users then scan their ID and ‘pull’ the print from the printer. If a user doesn’t activate the print job within two weeks, the print is cancelled.

“The higher education sector is looking for outcome-based investments,” says Howard Hall, group managing director, DTP Group. “In other words, they want to spend money but they need a return on that investment in cash. Failing that, they want to see improvements in students’ perception of the University or in efficiencies or productivity gains.”

DTP Group provides a full end-to-end solution, including staff training, remote monitoring of devices, maintenance and consumable replenishment.

Benefits

Lower costs, less waste, greater reliability

The benefits are immediate and obvious. Fewer printers means more space, more efficient printers means fewer breakdowns and less waste.

“Previously we were putting in cartridges nearly every day,” says Panesar. “Some cartridges were costing about £100 each. Now we’re only replacing cartridges once a month, some of them every couple of months.”

There are no piles of paper stock and toner as DTP Group replenishes consumables as and when required. DTP says more efficient devices has seen the carbon footprint halved, meeting the University’s green aspirations.

“There’s less tech support needed,” says Panesar. “Rather than working reactively with printer problems on a daily basis, I’m now able to concentrate on IT projects which directly benefit medical teaching.”

Panesar admits there were initial concerns from staff (having to get up from their desks to walk to the printer was not immediately popular) but they were soon won over by the performance and reliability of the new printers. SafeCom print management means users print less indiscriminately, making more efficient use of paper stocks; the pull-print feature has improved document security and cut waste. Panesar estimates 40 per cent fewer pages are being printed.

He says the next step is to introduce a cost management system to monitor usage across departments: "It might help to see who is printing in colour, who is printing too much. We'll be able to show examples of print best practice."

Graham Hill says the HP MPS solution satisfies user requirements and corporate strategy: "Social networking and mobile technologies with pervasive access are now familiar tools to many students and staff. Today's university enables collaboration and communication without barriers, to deliver services and information in a learning and research context."

"The University of Bradford has already demonstrated leadership in the sector through significant investment programmes in IT. We're currently working with specific technologies such as Computer Aided Assessment, Mobile Apps development and shared virtual data centres in the Yorkshire and Humberside Region."

"Our ambition is to provide levels of IT performance across all key services which surprise and delight as well as provision of utility and 'always on' capabilities."

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