

Case study

Optical Express is saving £200k per year with new flexible print solution



354 HP printers are delivering clinical-standard prints within a predictable, cost-effective contract

Industry

Retail

Objective

Optical Express wanted to replace its disparate printer fleet which was difficult to manage, expensive and inefficient. It needed a reliable, cost-effective alternative that could provide clinical-grade prints.

Approach

After careful consideration, the company turned to local specialist Simple Digital Solutions Ltd. and HP which together deployed 354 devices across 88 locations. A range of models cater for the different needs found in the office, store and clinic.

IT matters

- Improved reliability, self-managing toner and service fulfilment relieve burden on IT team
- Easier management and maintenance saves 40 man hours per month

Business matters

- Optical Express expects to save £1m over five years thanks to increased efficiency
- Seamless security and firmware updates help the company meet General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliance guidelines
- HP print quality meets the high standards required in a clinical environment



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– Andrew Vint, head of IT, Optical Express

OpticalExpress

Optical Express makes substantial savings with robust and easy-to-manage print platform

Optical Express had a large fleet of printers with different vendors and terms of lease. There was little visibility of print costs and managing consumables was time-consuming. The company wanted to introduce a reliable, cost-effective and transparent print platform. It turned to IT partner Simple Digital Solutions Ltd. and HP to deploy 354 printers across 88 locations, saving £1m over five years.



Challenge

Simplifying print management and security

Optical Express was founded in 1991 and is now a world leader in selected eye care services. Its portfolio has developed to include laser, lens and cataract eye surgery, as well as maintaining the core optics division of glasses and contact lenses. The group currently operates in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Croatia, and Germany and employs over 1,500 people.

Optical Express had a large fleet of printers scattered across its 88 locations with different vendors and terms of lease. There was little visibility of print costs and managing consumables was a manual and time-consuming affair with the potential for human error.

“In some cases, if printers were not reporting home, we were making estimates which could be inaccurate, leaving us prone to excess charges,” explains Andrew Vint, head of IT, Optical Express. “We would much rather have fixed costs and reliable toner management. Furthermore, in some of our branches, there is no IT support, so we have to rely on service subcontractors, which brings additional costs.”

The company was also anticipating the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which aims to strengthen and unify data protection for all individuals within the European Union. It therefore wanted to bring in printers that would store zero data locally and would be inherently secure.

“We wanted a fleet of easy-to-use, manageable and reliable printers with predictable costs and automated toner replenishment,” adds Vint. “We also needed devices that could handle the precise printing required in a clinical environment.”

Solution

Robust performance, high quality results

Optical Express reviewed several solutions from suppliers and service providers and after careful deliberation, chose to partner with local IT reseller Simple Digital Solutions and HP. Built on the principles of trust, professionalism and integrity, Simple Digital Solutions has earned a reputation as a leading name in office solutions and services, including print management, printers and photocopiers and VOIP phones. It also specialises in IT support, hosted solutions and security.

It has since deployed 354 HP printers, across its network of 88 stores, head office and call centre - a process which took Simple Digital Solutions five weeks.

Customer at a glance

Hardware

- HP LaserJet Enterprise M605 series
- HP LaserJet Enterprise M553 series
- HP LaserJet Enterprise MA880z series
- HP LaserJet Enterprise MFP M630 series
- HP PageWide Color MFP E58650 Series

Software

- PaperCut (via partner)

“HP was the best fit for us – we already use HP servers and HP laptops and know that it provides well-built, solid and high-performing equipment,” continues Vint. “In addition, I used to work on a building site where a HP LaserJet survived for ten years, sucking in dust and grit. That gave me great confidence in their reliability.”

One hundred and two HP LaserJet Enterprise M605 and 40 HP Color LaserJet Enterprise M553 series printers were installed and provide the pin-sharp accuracy demanded in-clinic, where they connect to a Pentacam. Twenty-three HP LaserJet Enterprise MA880z series printers were installed in the head office and call centre where they cope with high volume printing, while 101 HP LaserJet MFP Enterprise M630 series printers were deployed in-store. Sixty-seven HP PageWide Color MFP E58650 Series printers were also installed across the estate. Print management software PaperCut tracks and monitors jobs.

“If you’re looking at surgery images, you can’t afford blurry prints. You have to reassure the patient. HP’s pin-sharp prints do just that. HP has given us a reliable, cost-effective and flexible print platform that will cater to all our printing needs for years to come.”

– Andrew Vint, head of IT, Optical Express

“From a security perspective, PaperCut relies on PIN access so we have an audit trail when GDPR comes into force,” says Vint. “At the same time, HP is an enterprise company that provides security and firmware updates seamlessly whereas other vendors require manual intervention.”

Benefits

Significant savings in time and money

Even though Optical Express had to pay a premium to exit its previous contractual commitment, it is still making substantial savings. The company expects to save at least £1m over the next five years through increased efficiency, reduced toner consumption and less maintenance requirement.

Moreover, because the HP devices are intuitive and easy to use, there are fewer calls to the IT team asking for help. And because management and maintenance are much less demanding the IT team is saving 40 man hours per month – time that can be spent more strategically.

“The contract is more efficient and we gained further savings from better toner management and fewer repair demands, which used to be the bane of my life,” comments Vint. “We are not wasting time firefighting minor print issues anymore, freeing up our time to focus on proactive tasks.”

From a clinical perspective, the HP printers deliver the accuracy and precision required in a surgical scenario. This is critical in showing patients exactly what is wrong with their sight and how it can be repaired using laser surgery for example.

“If you’re looking at surgery images, you can’t afford blurry prints. You have to reassure the patient. HP’s pin-sharp prints do just that,” concludes Vint. “HP has given us a reliable, cost-effective and flexible print platform that will cater to all our printing needs for years to come.”

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