

United Stationers' 'War on Waste' deploys HP Managed Print Services, LaserJet fleet

Move to new headquarters spurs drive to streamline, standardize equipment



"United Stationers as an organization wanted to embrace efficiency and take complexity out of the system. We call it the 'War on Waste.'"
—David Haugh, Director of Strategic Procurement, United Stationers

Objective:

Streamline print environment, increase workflow efficiency, cut costs and support excellent customer service.

Approach:

Deploy HP Managed Print Services outsourcing solution and LaserJet MFP fleet.

IT improvements:

- Standardize platform
- Streamline equipment fleet
- Outsource fleet
- Improve output quality

Business benefits:

- Cut print costs approximately 30 percent
- Increase workflow efficiencies
- Concentrate on core business
- Ensure uninterrupted core service

HP customer case study: United Stationers cuts costs, increases efficiency, ensures uninterrupted product flow with HP Outsourcing Services and HP LaserJets

Industry: Wholesale business products distribution



While preparing to move into sleek new corporate headquarters, United Stationers Inc. took advantage of the coming change to streamline its printing infrastructure, cut costs and increase efficiency. It accomplished these goals with HP Managed Print Services and HP multi-function printers.

"As a result of partnering with HP, United Stationers was able to eliminate personal devices, standardize on MFP printers, launch a fully managed copy center, and develop and implement an output strategy that perfectly fits our needs," says David Haugh, United Stationers' Director of Strategic Procurement.

United Stationers is a \$4.5 billion wholesale distributor of business products such as office furniture, janitorial supplies and technology products. Its clients primarily are commercial and contract office products dealers, which in turn sell to a diverse market of small to

medium size businesses. Based in Deerfield, Illinois, United Stationers offers approximately 46,000 products from 550 manufacturers—and maintains operations in Hong Kong and Mexico as well as the United States.

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David Haugh, Director of Strategic Procurement, United Stationers

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A rigorous formal process

Knowing that the headquarters move was the perfect time to revamp the company's print infrastructure, United Stationers executives formulated two key priorities. One, they wanted to support personnel throughout the new building to do their jobs effectively and efficiently. Two, they wanted the company's distribution centers—34 in the United States and approximately 29 within other subsidiaries—able to reliably print the forms and box labels that keep product moving without delay to customers.

"Any disruption to those two priorities is a disruption to the organization and to customer service," Haugh says.

A third priority was to cut costs.

Keeping these objectives in mind, United Stationers executives conducted a formal 16-week process that included a rigorous vendor-selection review. HP was identified as their "best-in-class partner."

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Preparing for a new print environment, United Stationers took stock of its existing equipment—and found more than 160 differing makes and models, many lacking network connections.

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"There were a large number of devices out there, all of which created this massive management and service issue for our IT organization," Haugh recalls. "The old environment clearly was not optimizing our assets or our associates' time."

Customer solution at a glance

Primary applications

Enterprise printing and copy-center operations

Primary hardware

- HP LaserJet 4345mfp
- HP LaserJet 9050mfp
- HP Color LaserJet 4730mfp

HP Services

- HP Managed Print Services

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United Stationers was revamping not just infrastructure, however. It also was changing its corporate culture. For example, workers accustomed to having their own desktop printers would walk elsewhere to take output from network printers. Employees used to pulling supplies off the shelves with no tracking system in place would live in a more controlled environment.

“Two-thirds of the cost literally happens after you buy the hardware, with consumables including toner and paper. When we looked at HP, we said, not only is HP coming in with the right hardware costs, but the per-click charge really made HP stand out from a total-cost-of-ownership standpoint.”

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To encourage employee buy-in to the new ways—and to ensure the new infrastructure was optimally designed—United Stationers involved all levels of the company in planning. They surveyed employees about their work output needs, device feature requirements and preferred equipment locations. All this not only gathered the data needed to design a worker-friendly system, it also sent a message throughout the company that United Stationers was serious about cutting costs.

“The project created visibility throughout the company, so that associates realized how we were taking out cost—not just at one level, but across the organization,” Haugh says.

Today, United Stationers enjoys what Haugh calls a “sleek and efficient” new print environment that slashes costs, improves efficiencies, generates positive



operational results and minimizes risk. Its two key components are a fleet of HP laser printers and HP Managed Print Services for “repro center” copying and fleet management.

Cutting costs per click

Throughout the company, United Stationers deployed HP LaserJet 4345mfp, HP LaserJet 9050mfp and HP Color LaserJet 4730mfp devices. These provide everything from network printing to fax, scanning and color. The output from these devices is faster and sharper than anything the company had before, Haugh says. What’s more, the pay-per-use service model United Stationers chose has cut printing costs approximately 30 percent.

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HP Managed Print Services not only deploys United Stationers’ printer fleet efficiently, it also takes care of all maintenance, repair and supplies management. In addition, HP outsourcing staff run the company’s in-house repro center, where larger print jobs are run, three-hole punched, bound and ready to use within hours. United Stationers meanwhile is free to concentrate on its core business and assign print management to HP.

“It makes our jobs, whether we’re presenting to a customer or to the board, easy and seamless—and at a lower total cost,” Haugh says.

Lower costs, greater efficiency, satisfied end users

United Stationers wanted to know: After all that planning, did the HP solution pay off as expected? The answer was a resounding, "yes." Printing costs are about 30 percent lower; networked workflows are more efficient. And, a number of employees have indicated that they actually enjoy getting up from their desks to walk a few feet to retrieve output from their network printers.

"We jokingly add now that it's part of our health and wellness program," Haugh says.

Looking to the future, United Stationers in particular appreciates its "high-touch" access to HP expertise, including ongoing support of continuous operational improvements.

"HP has done an excellent job of following up and sharing intelligence on the next area of opportunity," Haugh says. "There are always new devices emerging that can make us even more efficient."



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