

Major regional hospital eliminates 2.4 million sheets of paper annually by streaming and storing encrypted patient-care reports to Lexmark multifunction printers for on-demand printing in the event of a planned or unplanned system downtime.

Lexmark Downtime Reports provides instant, on-demand access to critical information even in the midst of unplanned IT systems downtime

The Organization

Among the largest nonprofit healthcare organizations in the United States, this major regional healthcare system has more than 6,400 physicians and 26,000 employees staff throughout the organization's 13 hospitals and community health locations.

The Challenge

To deliver world-class patient care, even the best physicians and nurses require access to continually updated patient care information. The reports containing this vital information typically become unavailable in the event of a systems outage – a scenario that did not meet this healthcare organization's high standards.

"We all know it can happen without prediction, but we always have to be prepared," said the hospital's IT Director.

To guard against this situation, the organization had adopted an expensive strategy of physically printing patient reports every day on an armada of more than 70 printers, then locking these 5,000 to 10,000 pages in protected locations. Needed only in the event of a systems outage, these back-up reports were rarely used.

Generating the reports represented only a portion of the cost. Owing to HIPAA privacy requirements, each day's entire output was shredded within 24 hours as fresh reports were printed. Averaging 6,500 pages per day, paper consumption for one year was an astonishing 2.4 million sheets. The additional costs of maintaining and administering the printers, along with toner and electrical consumption raised the overall price of this policy to exorbitant levels.

"These reports were discarded 99.5 percent of time without ever being used, and it cost us several hundred dollars per day due to the necessary confidential shredding," said the IT Director.

As medical staffers pushed for a four-hour window that would require updating and printing the entire range of reports six times daily, the breaking point, monetarily and technically, was not far away.

A better way was needed. Complicating matters, a new solution needed to be selected and installed within a four-month window.

"Lexmark had a deep healthcare industry competency, asked us intelligent questions from the outset, and showed us how their solution would work for us. We didn't get that level of confidence from other vendors."

– IT Director
Major Midwest Healthcare Organization



The Solution

To eliminate the daily printing – and subsequent shredding – of thousands of just-in-case pages, while still guaranteeing instant access to back-up reports containing information no older than four hours, the healthcare organization implemented Lexmark Downtime Reports along with Lexmark multifunction printers (MFPs).

Lexmark Downtime Reports ensures 24/7 access to critical patient information in the event of an IT systems failure or network outage. Continuously, as documents are updated, they are streamed to the secure, encrypted internal hard drives of designated Lexmark printers or MFPs.

During a downtime event, an authenticated user can select and open a folder from the color Lexmark eTask™ touchscreen panel on the MFP and choose which documents to print. All that's needed is electrical power. Lexmark Downtime Reports can be optionally configured to store barcoded forms containing personalized patient data. After the downtime has ended, patient records can be quickly updated or scanned through the MFP back into the hospital's electronic medical records system.

“Lexmark proposed a multifunction printer that would allow us to physically store secured copies of our reports on the device,” said the IT Director. “If the reports are needed, a user can quickly print them by navigating the touchscreen menu. It was really perfect for our scenario.”

To ensure compliance with federally mandated privacy requirements, Downtime Reports stores documents and reports on the printer's encrypted hard drive. It is fully compatible with a variety of authentication options to prevent unauthorized access. Documents cannot be accidentally erased or lost if the device is powered down. Downtime Reports can be configured to upload or overwrite documents on any Lexmark eTask device at specified intervals with expired documents deleted automatically.

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The Results

Today, while system outages remain a rarity, this major Midwest healthcare organization is more fully prepared for one than ever. Instead of printing up to 10,000 pages of standby reports once a day, Lexmark Downtime Reports streams them securely to Lexmark MFP devices every four hours.

Costs have been reduced dramatically and medical staffers are better prepared for extraordinary circumstances. The number of printers has been slashed to just several dozen, with corresponding cuts in electricity, paper, and toner use.

“The difference with Lexmark was the commitment to our needs and the service they provided presale, during the rollout, and after the sale,” said the organization's IT Director. “The Lexmark team was very helpful – I never had a problem getting feedback from them quickly when I needed something.”

For one of the world's foremost medical institutions, nothing is more important than delivering patient care of the highest order. With Lexmark Downtime Reports, this organization is better prepared, has information available at all times, and is doing it at a lower cost.

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