

PC Club speeds service and saves money by replacing its aging dot matrix printers and expensive tractor-fed forms with Lexmark laser technology that uses affordable plain paper.

Computer retailer upgrades its image, reduces costs with Lexmark laser technology

The Organization

With 40 stores located in eight Western states, PC Club, founded in 1992, provides built-to-order computing equipment to information technology professionals, systems integrators and individual users.

The Challenge

PC Club's pioneering business model, building computers to order for its customers, almost guarantees that no two systems are identically configured. For that reason, a simple sales receipt just won't do. For each system it builds, PC Club prints a multipage sales form and invoice detailing the computer's exact configuration, the hardware components it contains and all of the systems and application software installed.

From the company's earliest days, these customer-facing sales sheets were generated on dot matrix printers. "The dot matrix printers were loud, slow and required expensive pre-printed multipart tractor-feed forms," said Joe Lam, PC Club's Director of Finance and Administration.

Though the surviving printers in this aging fleet continued to churn out the necessary forms, the results no longer measured up. Simply put, the forms looked outdated. "These dot matrix sales forms no longer conveyed a professional, technically advanced image, especially for a company in the business of selling computer equipment," Lam said.

PC Club decided the time was right for a technology – and image – upgrade. Slow, noisy and unattractive dot-matrix output would be replaced with the speed, quiet and high quality results that only a laser printer can provide. At the same time, the retailer was also upgrading its point of sale system to capture customer signatures automatically. These signatures would need to be printed legibly on the new customer receipts.

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—Joe Lam
Director of Finance and Administration
PC Club
City of Industry, Calif.
www.pcclub.com

The Solution

By virtue of its line of business, PC Club was already familiar with the latest laser printers from several different manufacturers. After a review of its options, the company chose output technology from Lexmark.



PC Club of City of Industry, Calif.

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Based on the analysis performed jointly by Lexmark retail-industry specialists and with store and home-office personnel from PC Club, the company is now in the midst of deploying 80 Lexmark monochrome laser printers, gradually retiring its dot matrix units in the process.

Now, Lexmark printers are being installed at the sales counter. In addition to generating high-quality sales forms, the new point of sale system is capturing customer signatures electronically and printing them on the receipts. This was simply not possible with the old dot matrix technology. The second phase will see additional laser printers installed in each location’s technical support area, providing technicians with the ability to print illustrated documentation and to generate repair work orders.

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PC Club can now maintain a minimal inventory of toner cartridges, each rated for thousands of pages. To assure top-quality results, PC Club decided to purchase high-yield genuine Lexmark supplies so that changing toner would be needed just once each month. Additional savings has come from replacing several dot matrix printers in each store with just one Lexmark laser printer.

The Results

By replacing its aging fleet of standalone dot matrix printers with networked monochrome laser printers from Lexmark, PC Club immediately boosted its corporate image while simultaneously

eliminating the high expense of pre-printed tractor-fed multipart forms. The use of standard plain paper allows PC Club to print fully formatted detailed sales receipts that merge the forms template with data from the sale and print the customer’s signature right on the receipt.

“The positive impact to our image is remarkable,” said Lam. “We now present a much more professional image to our customers which really makes a difference in how they view the value, product and service we provide. Together with our new signature capture devices, the speedy Lexmark laser printers greatly reduce checkout time for our customers.”

Doing away with finicky tractor-fed dot matrix forms requiring careful alignment is saving significant time in its stores, according to Lam. “We load plain paper and these printers just continue to work,” he said. “Instead of constantly attending to the printer to clear jams out of the dot matrix printers, our store personnel have more time to devote to making sales and providing customer service.”

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Looking toward the future, Lam sees a place within the retail and back-office environment for multifunction printers to help the retailer streamline its workflow and further leverage Lexmark technology. That’s next on Lam’s list.

Working with computer hardware all day long forms the core of PC Club’s business. And though the company could have partnered with any printer supplier, it chose Lexmark. “The level of involvement from Lexmark in proposing a forward-looking solution, and the continuing support we’ve had long after the sale, set this company apart from all others,” said Lam.