Grand Prairie Independent School District

Grand Prairie Independent School District saves jobs by optimizing its output infrastructure with Lexmark multifunction products (MFPs) and print release

Challenge

Facing the same budget constraints that are challenging schools nationwide, Texas has become a leader in maximizing the value of each dollar it spends. “Like other districts, we’ve had a tough K-12 budgeting year,” said Jason Bowerman, GPISD’s director of IT. “We had a choice of removing thousands of locally connected, non-networked, desktop printers or losing teaching positions.” Though the choice was clear, the district recognized that instead of removing printers arbitrarily, it needed to partner with an output-solutions provider to develop a comprehensive forward-looking strategy. Acknowledging Lexmark’s long track record of providing solutions for K-12 institutions that save money while improving productivity, GPISD selected Lexmark as its partner.

Before implementing any new solution, the district needed to understand its current condition, analyze existing usage patterns and then develop new guidelines. An inventory conducted jointly by the district and Lexmark K-12 industry consultants revealed a combination of personal, non-networked laser printers and inkjet printers. Dozens of single-function fax machines were tallied as well, along with the expensive dedicated phone lines they require. The laser printers encompassed many different makes and models, requiring GPISD to maintain an extensive inventory of toner cartridges. To document the results its onsite discovery analysis, Lexmark indicated the location of each device on floor plans maintained with the district’s CAD software. “The floor plans ended up with a blue dot in nearly every office identifying these standalone printers,” said Bowerman. “It was clear that we were greatly over-deployed.”

Solution

GPISD and Lexmark developed a course of action to retire aging single function personal printers and fax machines and replace them with Lexmark departmental MFPs. The team also worked to institute policies to reduce paper consumption. Based on usage and demand analysis throughout the district, various MFPs from within the same product family were specified for each group of workers. Units were centrally located within each group to ensure convenient access. “We’ve gone from a blue dot in every office to just a handful of red dots, indicating the location of each networked MFP,” said Bowerman.
To address its paper-consumption concerns, GPISD implemented Lexmark Print Release, a solution that queues print jobs centrally, releasing them only when job owners authenticate themselves at any designated Lexmark device connected to the network.

Using an employee’s PIN or identification card for authentication, print release eliminates the time gap between document printing and pickup, ensuring that forgotten print jobs do not pile up and thereby reducing paper and toner waste. Jobs not printed within a specified timeframe are deleted from the queue automatically. Print release also enhances security by guaranteeing that confidential jobs print only when the document owner is present. To further cut paper use, GPISD also now encourages duplex (two-sided) printing whenever possible.

“We like the convenience of Lexmark Print Release and the paper savings,” said Bowerman. “For offsite district meetings, staffers submit print jobs at their desks but actually print the jobs at the meeting site. There’s no need to carry hundreds of pages to the destination.”

**Results**

Implementing an all-Lexmark output environment has generated an immediate impact. At GPISD, more than 2,000 personal printers and fax machines were replaced with 150 networked, remotely managed MFPs. Faxes now flow through the network, eliminating the monthly expense of dedicated fax telephone lines. Paper consumption and waste is down, thanks to Lexmark Print Release and duplex printing. Standardization on products with a consistent user interface has also simplified training and administration. “Device standardization has been key in cutting costs and simplifying our operations,” said Bowerman.

GPISD is now working with Lexmark to leverage additional capabilities of its MFPs. Among the first is the Lexmark Testing and Grading solution for printing, scanning and scoring student exams. As sheets are scored, results will be sent automatically into the district’s recently implemented D2SC™ data-management system from Data Driven Software Corp. For the Grand Prairie Independent School District its output infrastructure environment makeover has saved teacher jobs, reduced expenses and improved reliability.

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