

# Associated Bank

A corporate-wide assessment of Associated Bank's printers, fax machines and scanners found more than 2,000 varieties of aging devices. It doesn't take a formal analysis to recognize that this infrastructure is extremely inefficient. Just imagine trying to support and maintain such a wide variety of equipment.

## Our vision

To reduce costs, improve productivity and streamline processes, we looked for ways to utilize more innovative technology solutions. Our priorities included:

- ▶ Standardizing and connecting these devices
- ▶ Transforming printers from just printing and copying capabilities to a strategic platform that could drive back-office automation, eliminate costly couriers and improve customer service

## Vendor selection process

After a lengthy evaluation of several vendors, Lexmark was selected as the bank's strategic output vendor. Lexmark was selected due to its wide range of products, ease of integration, flexibility, process automation workflows and superior proof-of-concept demonstration.

## Deployment

We quickly got to work replacing the existing, outdated mix of devices with a standardized fleet of Lexmark Smart Multifunction Printers (MFPs). This included hundreds of devices across nearly 300 locations. After the successful deployment, we immediately looked for ways to utilize the new output infrastructure to become more efficient.

## Technology streamlines new account opening and reduces error rate

Due to its high volume, the first process we reviewed was new account openings. "Associated is opening thousands of accounts each month," said Paul Ho-Sing-Loy, Senior Vice President and Business Solutions Director. "In the deposit area of our bank, we have more than 100 forms used in opening an account. An unacceptable error rate existed in handling the forms resulting in inefficiencies and backlogs. The Lexmark technology allowed us to both enhance our customer service excellence and improve branch operations."

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## Success story for finance

Branch colleagues are now able to scan new account paperwork on an MFP where it is routed to the Lexmark Smart Document Capture System (LSDC). The documentation is immediately verified against the company's core banking system while the customer is still in the branch. This allows our retail colleagues to confirm that a new account has been successfully opened or obtain additional information, if necessary.

Since deploying this new solution with the deposit account opening process, a significant percentage of documents are now automatically identified and this percentage continues to grow. This allows the Account Contracts department to process documents entering their queue in less than a third of the time it took before. In addition, with the integration and auto-verification capabilities of LSDC, the Customer Information File (CIF) department has been able to save hundreds of hours each month on manually validating deposit documents.

With this successful automation project complete, the bank is turning its attention to similar processes that could benefit from this type of technology, both within the retail division and other areas of the bank. By leveraging innovative solutions, our colleagues are able to provide solutions more quickly and simplify the customer's experience.

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