

Reading up on process efficiency with Hogeschool Utrecht.



“This project has been a real success across the board. We’ve saved a lot in terms of people, space, wasted material and pre-investment in unnecessary copyright payments.”

– Jan Dekker
IT Project Leader
Hogeschool Utrecht

Background

Hogeschool Utrecht, the Utrecht University of Applied Sciences, is one of the largest further-education institutions in the Netherlands, with some 35,000 students enrolled across over 70 degree courses – including marketing, journalism, business, communications and engineering. Although it’s a large institution, it is committed to maintaining an environment where students get close contact with their teachers and can broaden their educational horizons.

The Challenge

Printed “readers” are fundamental to the teaching process at Hogeschool Utrecht, just as at many universities. These black-and-white bound documents, created by each module’s teachers, give students a valuable pool of text and image material garnered from all kinds of reference sources.

Until recently, teachers had to do much more than select interesting sources to create a reader. They also needed to estimate how many students were going to enroll that semester, and commission their faculty’s in-house reproduction department to print enough readers for every student to get a copy.

“This way of working was incredibly costly,” says Jan Dekker, IT project leader at Hogeschool Utrecht. It required the faculty to maintain a fully staffed, 50m² repro shop.

And overestimating the quantity of copies needed meant that not only did the faculty waste thousands of readers each year, it also overpaid the national copyright agency in per-copy licensing fees for the source materials it used.

So when the university’s education faculty set about moving to a new building at the start of 2008, it was the perfect opportunity to find a less wasteful and more convenient publication process.

The Solution

Xerox already managed the faculty’s reproduction department, and the relationship had been a great success. So Dekker didn’t hesitate to bring Xerox in to discuss options. His decision was rewarded: “I encountered a real willingness in the Xerox people to listen and learn.” The two organisations collaborated closely on a unique electronic ordering system that would eliminate the need for an on-site print shop and instead deliver professionally bound readers directly to students.

Teachers now bring their source material to the on-site Xerox-run service point for images and text to be cleaned up, scanned and converted into a PDF for uploading to a Xerox® print server. The electronic file is automatically sent directly to the national copyright agency, which checks it against a list of copyright sources provided by the teacher to work out exactly what copyright fees are due.

