

Why MFPs Matter to IT

Part II: Managing the Print Environment

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August 2008

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Why MFPs Matter to IT

Part II: Managing the Print Environment

Executive Summary

In today's business environment, there's no question that multifunction printers (MFPs) can offer companies increased return on investment (ROI) and opportunities to contain and even cut costs for maintenance and management over traditional office devices. In many cases, MFPs, with their document printing, routing and storage capabilities, create a "print area network" that can replace the need for disparate devices and streamline business processes across the enterprise. In addition, networked MFPs can provide IT with new ways to simplify, optimize and improve their own work through the use of robust management tools.

And there's a strong case for better management of the printing environment. With workers spending almost half of each day dealing with documents, printing devices must do more and perform more efficiently. But for every dollar spent on assets, almost ten times that amount is spent on soft costs—IT support, administration and document management.

The problem is, IT departments are constantly asked to do more without the concurrent increases in their budgets. According to a 2008 CIO survey by Gartner, "IT budgets are still growing, even in the U.S., but growth rates are muted slightly. Historically, the revised numbers are in keeping with the past four years where IT budget increases have averaged 2.4 percent."

Recent research shows that managing IT effectively can boost a company's capabilities and profits, in addition to delivering bigger returns on technology investments. So why are so many IT budgets flat...and why is IT's potential overlooked by so many businesses?

According to Amit Basu and Chip Jarnagin of *The Wall Street Journal*, there's "a metaphorical glass wall that separates IT from the rest of the business at most companies. The wall prevents IT from being part of the discussion at the highest levels of company planning, robbing a firm of its full potential."

Basu and Jarnagin state that there are five main reasons this "glass wall" exists—chief among them, the different mindsets between management and IT staff and the difficulty in managing rapidly changing technology. But they also emphasize that in a global economy, success depends to a large degree on the strategic role of IT. With technology increasing the speed of change in business and agility a true asset for any company, IT needs to not only play a stronger role in business decisions, but also needs the kind of tools that will help them provide their company with key competitive advantages.

Paper and electronic documents, along with knowledge workers who are increasingly mobile, are the lifeblood of most businesses today. And businesses and workgroups need devices that adapt to the way they work, and not the other way around. Companies can truly benefit if they let their IT department choose print-management tools that help employees get more work done, more quickly than ever—while also making IT's jobs easier. More networked printer and MFP uptime and less IT staff time simply equal more work done, with greater competitive advantages for businesses.

"Managers at all levels across the organization need to be convinced that innovations in IT-related areas, such as knowledge management, business intelligence, information security, change management and process integration are essential to the success of the company."

—Amit Basu and Chip Jarnagin
"How to Tap IT's Hidden Potential," March 10, 2008, *The Wall Street Journal*

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Today's networked printing environment

In 2010 alone, according to *CR80News*, organizations around the globe will print an estimated *53 trillion* pages. Just as the number of pages printed continues to skyrocket, the number of MFPs and printers continues to grow throughout North American businesses. For a business of about 1,000 employees, there may be 150 printers throughout the organization. And for many organizations, the devices are a mix of manufacturers, models and output capabilities. How do IT managers handle all those devices to make sure they're not only up and running, but also allocated to do the appropriate kinds of work in the right areas?

More than likely, the IT staff is busy handling all types of problems—from qualifying a new device before it's deployed onto the network, to answering Help Desk calls and even making the trip to add ink or toner to a printer that's stopped in its tracks. This adds up to a significant amount of lost time...expensive staff hours...and downtime on the part of devices and the people that need them in order to do their work. And all this is because most businesses are not using network-printing device-management tools.

However, it is clear that most businesses should be very interested in improving efficiencies across their output fleets through the use of enabling tools. The key is for IT professionals to gain insights into how their organizations can use technology to address business challenges and improve operational efficiency.

And because producing, printing and sharing documents are core requirements of any successful business, the intelligent management of a company's networked printing devices is a key area that offers significant benefits.

By using the right print-management tool—one that can effectively work with virtually any printing device on the network and from any location via any Web browser—IT staff can install, configure, manage, monitor and get reports on any networked printer or MFP in the enterprise.

“In our experience talking with customers around the country who work in a wide variety of businesses, the time it takes for their IT support staff to fix printer problems equals downtime and lost productivity for the business. That has a definite negative impact on a company's bottom line.”

—David Bates, V.P., Product Marketing, Xerox Office Group

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Identifying the financial consequences of IT investing

One of the most perplexing challenges faced by IT leaders has been to convey the business value of IT in terms readily understandable by business executives. As a discipline that conveys the business performance and results to internal executives and personnel only, management accounting could offer business advice and recommendations that would quantify the consequences of a particular IT deployment. Unlike financial accounting measurements, which are standard across public companies, the particular management accounting metrics could be different for each company. This Grand Challenge would be considered conquered when a request for an IT project was argued with the following certainty: "If you invest in our IT proposal, you will see an additional \$0.03 earnings per share directly attributable to this project by the third quarter of next year."

—From the April 9, 2008 press release, "Gartner Identifies Seven Grand Challenges Facing IT"

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Essential print-management features on the network

Businesses today demand fast availability and output from their printing environments. And because multifunction devices are doing more than ever, and faster than ever before, they are becoming increasingly popular in businesses of all sizes. MFPs now easily coexist with other networked printers in many enterprises.

Print-management tools for the enterprise: a tall order

In order for a print-management tool to be a good fit for an enterprise and its IT department, it also has to do more. There are several tools available today, but IT will want to make a careful selection based on their particular printing environment. HP's Web JetAdmin is a widely used print and imaging peripheral management software tool that helps companies optimize their device utilization, control color costs, secure devices for document confidentiality and streamline supplies management, but it is not an ideal solution for companies that utilize devices other than HP's.

Among the essential functions of print management on the network, IT demands immediate access, status and understanding of all its products, so a device-management tool that can operate in a mixed environment is key for greater effectiveness and return on investment.

In addition, an enterprise-wide device-management tool should provide IT with remote management and problem diagnosis to quickly resolve issues that arise. This not only greatly increases overall device uptime but also cuts IT overhead and support costs. This is why a Web-based print-management solution is ideal from an IT perspective.

Through a Web-based solution, IT administrators have a reporting portal and dashboards available to determine what is happening on their networks, allowing administrators to immediately check on any reports of problems and device availability—from any location with Internet access. They can also receive reports on each device's performance, automatically. And with configuration change management and controls at their fingertips, administrators can easily put select devices to work, producing specific types of output, based on point of need. See the following box on Xerox® CentreWare® Web for more information about this type of solution.

In addition, with devices that can report back to IT—Web-enabled networked printers and MFPs—companies of all sizes can take advantage of better uptime. For example, Xerox Smart Kit™ technology, available on many Xerox printing devices, is designed to predict and prevent downtime, with built-in indicators that notify users when it's time to replace a robust, all-in-one cartridge. The Xerox SMart eSolutions Client for Windows, featuring Automatic Meter Reads and Automatic Supplies Assistant, eliminates the manpower to administer meter reads and supplies usage, with hands-free, secure data transmission. It provides multiple levels of messaging and reports to keep any size enterprise up and running.

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Essential print-management features on the network, continued

IT system administrator benefits of Xerox® CentreWare® Web

- Using CentreWare Web with any Web browser allows system administrators to set up, configure, check system status, troubleshoot problems, track print usage, change settings and determine supply requirements of the enterprise's networked printers and MFPs—from virtually any manufacturer.
- CentreWare Web simplifies device integration—administrators can install, configure and view settings for all network protocols and set device defaults from a centralized location.
- Administrators can easily identify, diagnose and troubleshoot problems for quick action.
- Proactive problem identification.
- Configuration sets provide the ability to establish a template to define standard network protocol and scanning settings across like devices.
- The “clone” feature applies settings from one cloning supported device to other like devices—a significant time- and energy-saver.
- Administrators receive email alert on printer and queue alerts.
- Query of MS Active Directory allows printers to enhance print discovery and queue management.
- Enhanced device discovery handles non-IETF MIB-compliant printers (such as HP® JetDirect-based printers).
- CentreWare Web distinguishes fleets of devices by placing them into default or custom-defined groups.
- The group-polling feature sets polling intervals so that groups are polled by priority.
- Administrators can manage SNMP printers in the enterprise from anywhere—the office, on the road or from home.

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Essential print-management features on the network, continued

It's equally important that the device-management tool be an "open" one, not only from a print-management perspective—so that the tool can "see" and report on all makes and models of printers and MFPs on the network—but also to enable future applications. The rate of change in technology today requires open architecture for the network and in the development of new devices. While some manufacturers are very stringent about property rights and charge high fees to enable device-management programs, Xerox does not. Its Web browser-based software, Xerox CentreWare Web, installs, configures, manages, monitors and reports on networked printers and MFPs in the enterprise, regardless of manufacturer.

An "open" device-management tool also allows an enterprise to get altogether more value from its IT infrastructure. While many users, including many senior managers, think of IT as almost a utility or simply the "pipes" of an organization, it is in fact central to every facet of the organization's core business. Simplifying the management of the printing assets on a business's network is a win-win, for IT and especially for the people who depend on the network to get work done.

"Xerox is the only MFP supplier currently able to provide a single global face to the customer across the full range of MFPs and printers..."

—Gartner, March 22, 2007, "How Well Are MFP Technology Providers Meeting Gartner's 'Big Six Criteria'?"

Xerox Device Manager (XDM) for larger enterprises

To receive the optimum advantage of the services provided by Xerox Global Services (XGS), a Web-based enterprise-output device-management application can be installed on the enterprise's network. The device manager sits behind the firewall, and Xerox ensures security measures are in place by taking active steps to build its device manager model with a full range of security and backup security measures.

The installation of on-site network device management software:

- Reduces Help Desk calls—XDM proactively notifies technicians in the event of a problem and can reduce calls to the help desk by 40 % or more; this minimizes user disruption;
- Restores devices more quickly—detailed fault information and troubleshooting wizards help identify and resolve problems remotely;
- Tracks fleet volume—XDM electronically tracks usage, which enables automated and more accurate billing and reporting; it also tracks performance targets;
- Enables fleet billing and reporting—XDM replicates its discovery, asset, and usage data with the Xerox Asset Manager;
- Tracks usage data for chargeback—XDM can track print job data at both the central print queue and at the desktop;
- Accesses real-time information to discover computers for installation, upgrade or removal of the Job tracking Agent; and
- Allows for e-mail alerts with device information and status to designated recipients; it also triggers alerts used to automatically create incidents in the XGS Help Desk.

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The necessity of intelligent print drivers

With the need for multiple printer brands, models, and devices within an organization to handle an assortment of printing needs, organizations have become accustomed to supporting dozens, if not hundreds, of disparate printer drivers. While especially time-consuming, this has been a fact of life for IT departments as well as for the users they support.

But the market is changing and this no longer has to be the status quo. Print drivers are now available that offer streamlined deployment, usability and consistency from device to device. One global driver that mirrors many of the same features, simplifying usability for IT and the entire enterprise, can now also manage the individual drivers on the network—even if the network includes a mix of device manufacturers and models. The combination of these updated tools can simplify, streamline and optimize business printing and processes for IT and everyone in the enterprise on a daily basis.

Hewlett-Packard offers its Universal Print Driver (UPD), which is focused on streamlining the print processes and operations within an organization by employing a single driver to handle all supported HP-branded devices. The benefits of this seem obvious—but they hinge on whether the printing environment is dominated by HP devices.

Xerox has developed a print driver platform that can reduce costs and increase the efficiencies of device management and support. This core driver platform streamlines the user interface, places a majority of commonly used features on a driver's first tab and ensures a consistent experience across products. The bottom line is this simplifies print services delivery and reduces end-user training and support requirements. The first substantiation of this platform is the new Mobile Express and Global Print Drivers.

With the Xerox Global Driver, IT not only can manage a variety of printer and MFP makes and models, the department will also save time and manpower whenever a new printer needs to come online. There's no network or software re-qualification necessary for the new print driver with the Global Driver. Nor does IT need to install a new print driver when a new device is added to an existing IP address. These features streamline many of the time-consuming tasks that many enterprise IT departments currently handle.

Why bi-directional print drivers are so important

Highly intelligent print drivers that are simple to deploy and offer consistent, bi-directional features reduce IT's time with network integration, training, support and problem-resolution. They also significantly increase usability for workers in the office, as well as mobile workers who need to print documents in various locations. When users don't have to learn a new interface with each MFP or other printer, and print drivers provide real-time status and other information right from the desktop, users can get more work done, much more quickly.

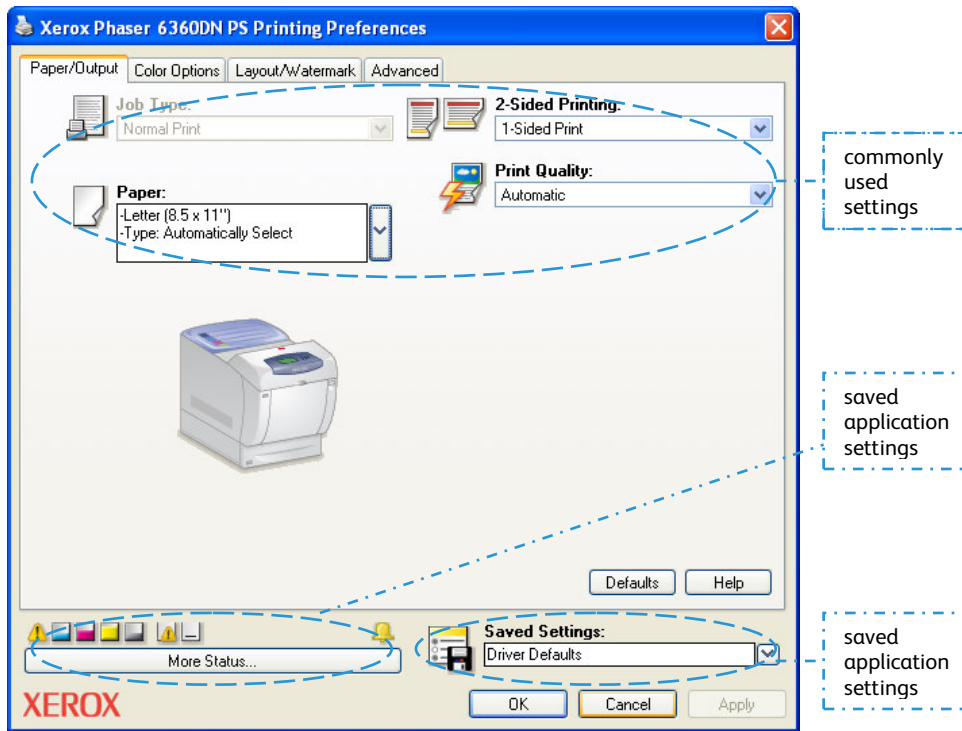
The bi-directional functionality of these drivers allows users to see the capabilities of a specific device as well as to view a status of current supply levels. Therefore, a user can route a print job based upon on paper size, finishing requirements or proximity and other variables that can help organizations speed workflow while reducing printing costs.

Another benefit of a consistent driver platform is application support—set defaults by application. Users no longer have to access the “properties tag” to print common types of documents, which saves time and money.

Why MFPs Matter to IT

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The necessity of intelligent print drivers, continued



Xerox Global Print Driver

The Xerox Global Print Driver solves problems for IT administrators, delivering all the benefits of traditional drivers plus:

- no need to re-qualify
- true universality
- port redirection
- reduced support and training costs

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Printing challenges in the virtual workplace

Until now, the mobile worker—not just employees who travel frequently or work from satellite offices, but also those who move from place to place within one building—faced even bigger challenges when it came to printing their documents.

First, workers had to get up from their notebook computers and find a device capable of printing their documents. This involved finding the right device to output color, duplex, selected finishing options and other variables. Then they had to figure out how to connect to that device, which meant determining its IP address, DNS name, print queue or other specifics. And then mobile workers had to download and install a driver or call IT, open a help ticket and wait for an SA to come and install it so they could actually send their jobs. It took a lot of time and effort just to print their documents.

And not just for them, but also for IT...supporting these workers via the network was complicated and more time-consuming. For many companies, the move to a virtual workplace entails figuring out how to put together a collaborative knowledge-sharing environment without sacrificing the security of confidential data and other information assets.

Again, there's a movement in the marketplace to simplify and make working (and printing) away from the main office fast and easy. A single driver that's simple to install and transforms the way workers print on the road or when changing locations was made available in June, 2008. Its interface makes the old problems with mobile printing history—no more installing drivers or finding IP addresses. It can provide quick, easy printing wherever mobile workers need to go. And it's compatible with a wide mix of manufacturers and models of networked printers and MFPs.

“The move to a virtual workplace can increase agility and productivity and reduce facilities and personnel costs—but supporting one creates challenges that are both technical and organizational.”

—Johna Till Johnson (Network World), “Addressing the Challenges in a Virtual Workplace,” May 1, 2007

Xerox Mobile Express Driver

Flexible and adaptable

- Automatically detects your location
- Automatically discovers local print devices
- Real-time status helps users pick the right device every time
- Expands automatic search to other subnets
- Manually enters IP address or path
- Sorts devices based on Status, Location, Name, Model, etc.
- Ability to print to Xerox and non-Xerox devices

Easy to use

- 100 % feature and design parity
- Same interface, independent of device
- Ability to change device on the fly
- Saved application settings

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Conclusion

The proliferation of pages, printers and MFPs on today's networks has increased the need for better print-management tools to simplify network-printing processes for both end-users and IT departments.

The rise of mobile and virtual employees in most companies has created a real demand for new ways to make printing easier from a variety of locations. After all, people need devices and software tools that adapt to the ways they work today—tools that simplify, streamline and increase turnaround times for network printing. And the market is changing and responding to these needs.

Adding the right print-management tool to the network can offer a real boost in productivity for end-users of the network as well as the IT staff that manage the network. While a variety of print-management tools is available, most are not conducive to an enterprise that uses a mix of devices and their corresponding print drivers.

The time it takes for IT to deploy, test, troubleshoot and manage a multitude of print drivers—not to mention the time and frustration on the part of the end-users who have to become familiar with them—all add up to significant amounts of expense and lost productivity.

By ensuring that the print-management tool can work with virtually all devices on the network and also by simplifying the process of using them via print drivers that feature a consistently familiar user interface, enterprises can benefit in every way that's important in today's global business environment: IT spends less time in deploying devices, training end-users and upkeep of the network. End-users, including mobile employees, get more work done, more quickly. Businesses can enjoy greater competitive advantage, and gain greater ROI on their investments in IT, all while saving on printing costs.

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For more information

Xerox, renowned for its technological innovation, has focused that innovation on the challenges IT faces on a daily basis. We offer proven expertise in improving document and business processes, and put that expertise to work every day around the world, liberating thousands of IT professionals from the tedious and resource-intensive hassles of managing their output infrastructure.

Xerox is committed to ensuring that our customers' businesses run at top efficiency, with services and service availability levels aligned with today's organizational demands and designed to minimize the impact of your IT workload.

The full portfolio of Xerox services is a comprehensive array of offerings, customized to address specific business and IT management requirements. Xerox service expertise includes dedicated technicians who respond to all support calls, along with trained analysts and engineers who are ready to be on-site when needed. In addition, Xerox offers new administrative technologies to simplify processes, plus full Internet support:

- Local support team of dedicated sales consultants, technical specialists and analysts
- Online services for Web-based administration tasks
- Online Support Assistant and self-help tools
- Xerox Office Services for end-to-end management of the printing and imaging environment
- Office Document Assessment and Xerox Office Productivity Advisor Services
- Device-Centric Services™, Xerox's DRM Platform for the Future[†]

Look for more in the “Why MFPs Matter to IT” series, including:

- Part I: Validating the Technology
- Part III: Transforming Business Processes
- Part IV: Ensuring Security on the Network

Learn more about how Xerox can put our forward-thinking to work for you.

Contact your local Xerox provider, or visit www.xerox.com/solutions.

[†]Smart eSolutions client is a free download from www.xerox.com/smartsolutions and installs on your PC. It's available for a range of Xerox network-connected devices, including Phaser® printers, Document Centre®, WorkCentre® and WorkCentre Pro. It also includes award-winning CentreWare® Web device-management software. CentreWare Web is free and can be downloaded from www.xerox.com/centrewareweb.

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About the author

Jeffrey Coffed, Worldwide Product Marketing Manager with the Xerox Corporation, is a marketing professional with 18 years' experience in the high-tech sector. He has worked in all phases of marketing, including strategy, product marketing, growing channels, developing programs, training, marketing communications and events. Currently, he's responsible for the marketing of Xerox's high-end color MFP portfolio.

Prior to joining Xerox, Jeff served as a product marketing manager with Hitachi Data Systems. He was responsible for the company's flagship products and led Hitachi to the enterprise digital-storage market-share leadership position. During his employment with Hitachi, he was a key contributor in several high-profile product launches, authored several white papers and articles, and worked with the global sales force to increase revenues.

From 1988 to 2000, Jeff held progressively responsible positions with ATTO Technology, Caslon & Company, Dartnell Enterprises Incorporated (DEI) and EDS. He developed the marketing plans and programs for ATTO Technology and helped to create its channel partner program. At Caslon & Co., he supported the member companies of the Print on Demand Initiative (PODI), a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to educating various marketing segments about the benefits of print-on-demand technology. With DEI, he led the company's marketing efforts and started its Office Imaging Division.

Jeff began his career with EDS as a systems engineer, after graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree in management science from the State University of New York, with concentrations in marketing and computer science. He is presently working on his Six Sigma Green Belt certification.