Campus-wide Sustainability and Digital Transformation

"By 2025 Northumbria intends to be a top-30 UK university. Digital transformation and sustainability are two of the areas we're focusing on to help us get there. Services and support from Xerox have helped us make great strides already."

– Jerry Mertz, IT Service Manager
   Northumbria University

OUR CHALLENGE

"We had more than 2,000 printers on campus, many of which were allocated to individual staff. Students, on the other hand, had limited access to printers. We wanted to change that, and make it easy for them to print in key locations and from their mobile devices.

We also had an onsite design and print service for staff. As part of our transformation strategy, we re-evaluated our operational requirements. We wanted a solution that aligned better with our changing needs, and was easier to access.

We decided to tackle both situations with help from Xerox. We also felt confident that Xerox would be able to go on supporting us as we continue to develop the organisation."

OUR SOLUTION

"Xerox rolled out a managed print service across the campus. Just 272 multifunctional printers (MFPs) meet staff and student needs. They're kept up and running by a very proactive Xerox team, who are permanently on site.

Students love being able to print to almost any printer, including from their mobile devices. Pull printing helped us convince staff that sensitive documents would stay secure, despite doing away with personal printers.

Xerox provides us with print and design services on a consumption-based model that does away with fixed costs. Staff request jobs using an online portal; an onsite Xerox communications manager supports the process and advises on how to get the best results.

Everything ties back to our financial management system, so we can track who's printing what and charge students and departments accordingly."

OUR RESULTS

"Staff and students now have much more choice about when and where they print. Printers are more reliable, our design and print service runs more cost effectively, and we've dramatically lowered the cost of print for students."

- Printer fleet down by 86%, from ~2,000 to 272, while maintaining high service levels

- Increased access to printers for students, with ~90% of MFPs installed in shared spaces

- Ability to print from mobile devices

- 80% cut in print costs for students

- Cost-effective pay-as-you-go Xerox design and print services

- Information security and compliance with data protection regulations maintained using pull printing

- Support for ongoing digital transformation and sustainability aims

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BETTER FOR STUDENTS

Technology is changing teaching and learning, and students are all for it. Northumbria University, based in Newcastle upon Tyne, has embraced the concept of the digital curriculum; and further digital transformation aims are central to its corporate strategy.

The need to print hasn't yet gone away, however. Although the university had around 2,000 printers, its 30,000 students often struggled to get stuff printed. "They couldn't use a lot of the printers as they were locked away in staff offices," says Jerry Mertz, IT Service Manager at the university.

That all changed when the university rolled out the Xerox® Managed Print Service. The entire printer fleet was replaced by just 272 MFPs, and almost all of them are in areas that students can access. A mobile print solution makes it simple to print from a personal mobile device. Students are also spending less on print.

"We've been able to dramatically reduce the cost of print for students," says Mertz. Students buy print credits to top up their annual free print allowance. "They pay only a penny to print a black-and-white A4 page," he says. "That has a big impact financially and helps improve the student experience."

BETTER FOR STAFF

A Xerox-operated design and print service makes it easy for the university's 3,000 staff to order business stationery (such as letterhead and business cards) and have brochures and other collateral designed and printed. In the past, these jobs meant a trip to the print room. Now it's more convenient: staff use a portal to submit jobs whenever it suits them, whether they're working on campus or elsewhere.

"The Xerox® portal makes the ordering process much more convenient and supports more flexible working practices," says Mertz.

When Northumbria University refreshed its branding, the design and print service came into its own, producing new posters, signage and other graphics-rich materials. And by offering only approved templates, styles and media, the service helps ensure staff stay true to the new brand identity.

BETTER CHOICES

A Xerox communications manager based at the university reviews all the orders that go through the portal. He steps in with advice when he spots the opportunity to print something in a lower-cost way, or switch to a digital format. "We want to produce as much as we can digitally," says Mertz. "The communications manager's advice is supporting our transformation."

The latest prospectus is a case in point. The university decided to print 30,000 copies — a smaller number than in previous years. The Xerox cost structure means every copy costs the same, no matter the number printed. So if more copies are needed at a later date, the university won't pay over the odds for them.

Mertz thinks it's unlikely they'll need more copies, however: "Consumption habits, especially among the younger generation, are changing, so we've also published the prospectus digitally to meet the increasing demand for an alternative to print," he says.

BETTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Because the on-demand nature of the Xerox design and print service removes the temptation to stockpile printed collateral, the university is reducing waste and becoming more sustainable. Pull printing helps cut down on waste across the campus, too, as users must be present at an MFP before their jobs are printed.

In addition, reporting from the Xerox® service provides metrics on the environmental impact of what's being printed on the MFPs. Mertz intends to use this information to help staff and students change their habits and become less reliant on print.

"Sustainability is both a strategic corporate objective and something our students care about," says Mertz. "We really like the fact that a focus on sustainability permeates our Xerox® services."

As it pursues its sustainability and digital transformation objectives, Northumbria will continue to look to Xerox for support. "Xerox has helped us achieve so much already, we know we can count on them for advice and services to help take the university to the next level," says Mertz.

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