Deep-dive analysis by MT Business Technologies results in printer consolidation, dramatic efficiency gains for Mansfield City Schools

Background

Mansfield City Schools is a public school district in Mansfield, Ohio. It serves a student population of approximately 3,400 K-12 students and employs a little over 500 people across multiple schools throughout the city.

Challenges

Like many districts, Mansfield recently faced a number of economic and demographic challenges.

A serious fiscal crunch from 2010 - 2015 required dramatic belt-tightening across the board. Building sites were closed, and staff was reduced by approximately 15% overall.

These factors and others spilled over into office equipment utilization and created a three-pronged problem.

1. The district had overlapping printing and copying contracts from two separate companies, which resulted in unnecessary redundancy of service and higher costs.

2. There were over 500 printers and copiers in service, hundreds of which were consumer units with per page costs *16 times* that of a commercial, multi-function unit.

3. The ratio of desktop printers to multifunction devices was 11:1 - more than twice the optimal ratio of 5:1. This meant there were too many desktop units.

4. There was no system to monitor total usage or help users select the lower cost printing device on the network.

As an illustration, District Treasurer Robert Kuehnle cited an instance where "we had one situation - not unique by any means - where two copiers and three printers were all within 15 feet of two employees."

The Team

After several preliminary meetings with MT Business Technologies (MTBT) Account Manager Tim Kissinger, a small team was formed to map the district's printer/copier locations and assess usage patterns to form the basis of a path forward.

Kissinger, a veteran of the document management business, teamed with managed print service expert Vanessa Bell and school Director of Technology Brandon Baker to devise a plan to confront Mansfield City Schools' challenges.

Consolidation increases efficiency

The heart of the solution is a Managed Print Services strategy developed through consultation with MTBT.

The strategy is a holistic one that looks at every device as part of a larger system, placing an umbrella over *all printing functions*. The goal is to send each print job to the right device at the lowest cost.

An extensive evaluation of district-wide printer placement and usage found hundreds of devices that could be either consolidated, retired, or replaced with newer, lower cost-of-operation devices. These devices are managed and tracked across the district's network.

"We literally walked to every room on every floor of every building… twice... to locate devices and obtain configuration sheets from each device", Bell said. "It was incredibly labor-intensive, but there was no other way to get the information we needed to make the best recommendation."

What she found was stunning.

"It was a sea of high-cost consumer devices. Once we started mapping things out, it was clear that the district would benefit from consolidation and a managed print program."

Ultimately, MTBT was able to consolidate 526 separate devices into a right-sized fleet of less than 100 at a hard cost savings of $13,000 over the life of the contract. Additionally, the consolidation positions Mansfield City Schools for continued success for many years to come.

Protecting privacy while managing user behavior patterns
Schools sometimes deal with sensitive documents related to their students. The consolidation plan removed many printers from private offices or classrooms, which could have presented a problem.

The MTBT team addressed this by implementing printing codes for staff members that assure a document's security, even if the printer is nowhere near the staff member when they send it to print. Confidential jobs sent to workgroup printers will be released to print only when the staff member is present and ready to pick up the job.

Along with that, user management software from Papercut (www.papercut.com) will help guide users to the device most appropriate for their printing job through "rules based printing." Each user (and the district) will have complete visibility into how much they are printing, where, and by whom.

Data that drives good decision-making
"We are glad to have started with this process, but are even more interested in how the data we collect over the next three years will form the basis of a better user experience for our staff and students," Kuehnle said. "The reduction in devices, and deployment of new ones based upon real usage data allows us to free up our technology staff to focus on student learning and staff support."

"Additionally, the knowledge we pull from the software MTBT provides will allow us to make smarter purchasing decisions based on data as we move forward."

Reinvestment in student growth and learning
The school system plans to invest the savings from a more cost-efficient document network in the types of technology that directly support student learning and staff development.
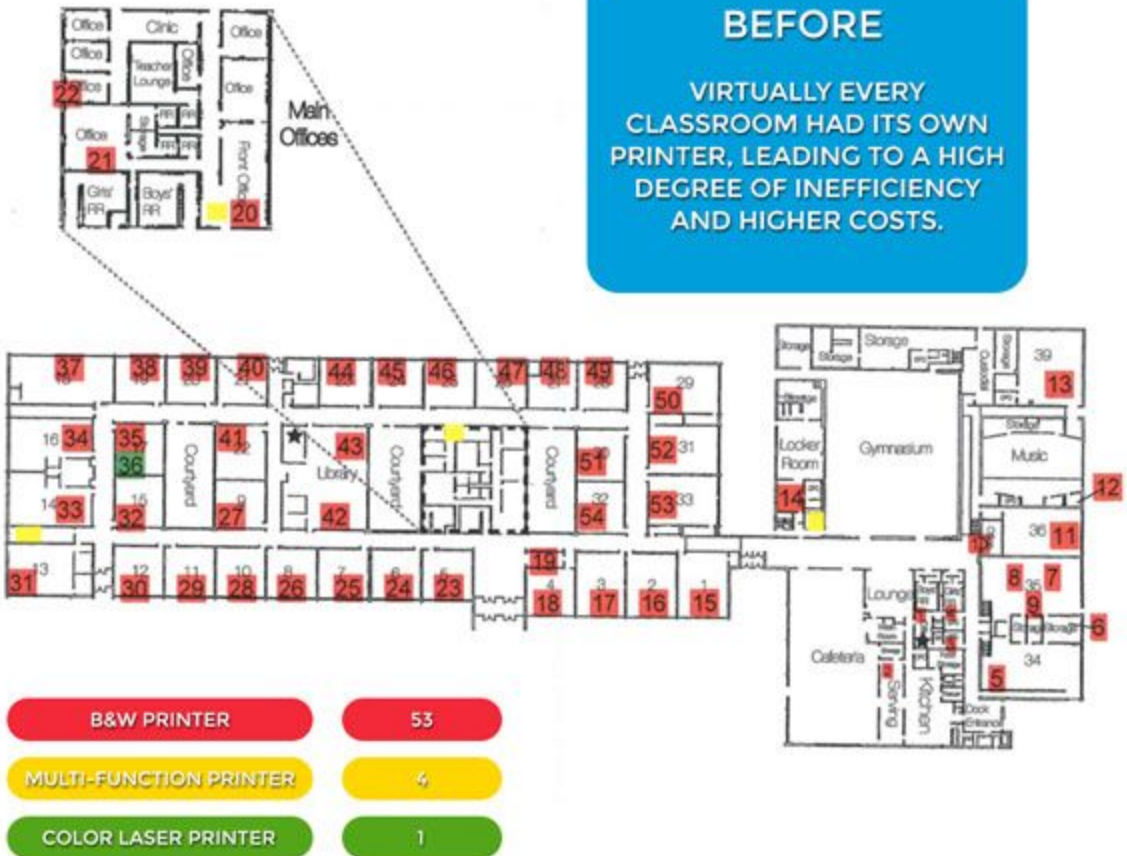
"One of the things we are working on is helping our teachers use real-time evaluation data to see where kids need help on a particular lesson while they are engaged in the learning process," Kuehnle said.

"Ultimately, supporting the learning and growth of our students is our job. We're pleased to be able to take steps forward in doing that as a result of a smarter document management strategy."

Printer consolidation in pictures
The images below vividly illustrate how the printing device consolidation plan for just one building in the Mansfield City School district simplified deployment, increased efficiency, and ultimately serves the district's staff, students, and taxpayers more affordably.

BEFORE

VIRTUALLY EVERY CLASSROOM HAD ITS OWN PRINTER, LEADING TO A HIGH DEGREE OF INEFFICIENCY AND HIGHER COSTS.

B&W PRINTER	53
MULTI-FUNCTION PRINTER	4
COLOR LASER PRINTER	1

AFTER

THIS DIAGRAM ILLUSTRATES HOW PRINTERS ARE DISTRIBUTED AFTER CONSOLIDATION.

AN 82% REDUCTION!

B&W PRINTER	5
MULTI-FUNCTION PRINTER	4
COLOR LASER PRINTER	1