Multi-Functional Printing Devices

Council Name: North Sydney Council
Web: www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au
Size: 10km²
Population: 60,000

Summary
North Sydney Council redesigned its printing, scanning, faxing and photocopying infrastructure by purchasing multi-functional printing devices. A reduction in hardware from 43 to 26 devices was achieved, resulting in greater energy efficiency.

Background
The operation and maintenance of Council’s stand alone printers, fax machines and scanners was becoming time consuming and costly. The hardware was also outdated. Collectively these devices used more electricity and generated more greenhouse gases than the new technology available, including when in standby mode.

Implementation
A team was developed to research and implement the change to multi-functional devices (MFDs). The team included key stakeholder areas within Council staff, such as purchasing, information technology and document management services. Research and surveys were conducted to determine the needs of staff in relation to device functionality. Suppliers were sought for submissions and demonstrations.

Due to the Council-wide scale of the project, number of staff involved, and research and evaluation required, it took 18 months to devise an optimal solution. In contrast, removal of the old fleet of devices and installation of the new ones took only two days. The machines selected were the Canon Image Runner Advance C5030 and C5035 as well as Image Runner iF1024i and iF1021F.

A number of challenges needed to be overcome to ensure the success of the project. Fear of change was a barrier for staff, especially as it was found that many staff were unaware of the full functionalities of even the old fleet of devices. The most significant challenge related to the complex range of capabilities featured in the MFDs. To address this, several communication mediums were employed, including training sessions and quick guides.

The overall reduction in the number of devices meant that some staff had to walk further to access one of the MFDs, resulting in some discontent. However this also produces a benefit in terms of social sustainability – the health benefits of regularly standing and moving around whilst working at an otherwise sedentary desk job are well documented.

Another challenge existed due to the logistical layout of North Sydney Council. There are several small pockets of departments with 1-5 staff members. These required basic printer, fax, scanner and photocopyer functions but not the full functionality of the large MFDs. Smaller machines with only black
and white printing were installed in such areas, however the difference in technology of these machines did inhibit some functionalities.

Outcomes
Project outcomes include:

- Reduction in overall fleet size of 34%;
- Reduction in overall printing capacity of 13%;
- Reduction in overall energy consumption of 23%, and associated reduction in cost;
- Reduction in maintenance tasks for IT staff (maintenance is part of the agreement with the MFD provider);
- Reduction in amount of paper used due to secure print and scanning function, allowing staff to electronically share documents within the organisation rather than printing and photocopying;
- Increased staff efficiency registering documents in the document management system (also due to the scanning function);
- Reduction in unnecessary colour printing – the MFDs are colour-capable but are set to black and white as default, so the use of colour requires more thought.

Future
The budget allowed the MFDs to be purchased outright. This will avoid the need to change over so many machines on a lease. As staff become proficient in utilising the time saving functions of scanning and secure print the fleet size can be further reduced.

The MFDs can be rotated between high use areas and low use areas, maximising the machines’ life space and reducing costs. Ipads have also been introduced to the organisation and provide additional time saving functionalities.

Top Tips
It is recommended that councils analyse the printing, scanning, faxing and photocopying fleet to determine the needs of the organisation and departments. It will be discovered that staff will be able to cope with the reduction in machinery and utilise the functions to reduce printing and increase the scanning benefits.

Any company that can provide this type of product will also have an ability to audit and collect activity data over a course of months and present an analysis of what the organisation’s fleet should be. This also includes interviews with key staff members. This would be most worthwhile for a larger Council. North Sydney chose not to pursue this option as it is a small organisation, so IT and purchasing staff were able to determine its needs.

References
There is a RFQ, evaluation, memo to the Financial Manager and MFD presentation in relation to the project available on request.

Contact willing to talk to other council staff considering similar initiative

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