Print Behaviours – A Case Study

An enterprise in excess of 20,000 users had a need to reduce its annual expenditure on print toner by 10%. The initial evaluation showed a high dependency on colour printing, almost 43% of printed pages. Given colour printing is around ten times the cost of mono printing this is where the effort was focussed. Three different methodologies were used.

Cultural Change Through Local Champions

Across the organisation 1,500 local champions were identified, namely the people that were purchasing the toner for their local printers. These champions were provided with a variety of tools and information to help sell the message of what was required of their local population.

Data was supplied for a period of 6 months and in that time, whilst the number of pages printed across the enterprise remained relatively stable, the ratio of colour prints fell to 38.7% equating to a combined saving of £50k. On the assumption that the culture was embedded after 6 months, the forecasted annual saving based on the end point ratio equated to £235k.

Web Based Print Usage Statistics Delivery to a Pilot Group

In the organisation three departments were chosen for the delivery via a web interface of personal monthly usage information. There were a total of 1,050 employees in the pilot, it was interesting to note that almost all were pleased to receive the data and over 60% followed links in the web page delivered to further information. Colour prints reduced by 4.4% via this methodology between October and March compared to 2.1% through the use of local champions and the forecasted savings if this methodology were to be fully employed were in excess of £400k/yr.
Direct Appeal to High Print Users

The final methodology that was employed was to make direct individual contact with the highest users of print and those individuals primarily utilising colour printers a total of 815 people. Over a 6-week period, the combined spend fell from £53k to £29.5k or a 45% reduction. Again it was interesting to note that there was minimal resistance or complaint from receiving the data, rather the majority were keen to be able to share their issues around their print habits which led to some significant process change that would not have otherwise been highlighted.

Summary

In summary the approaches used each showed that a significant change can be brought about in print behaviour without the need to resort to the implementation of a vendor toolset. Each had its own level of success, however the combined approaches all show that it is possible to effect a change in how printing is viewed within an organisation.

Interestingly the savings discovered only relate to the costs of the actual consumables utilised and do not reflect the additional savings in paper, storage and waste disposal. Indeed a number of pain points were also identified in processes within the organisation that were resolved as a result of the conversations that were had along the journey. The value of these has not been quantified but can be considered as part of a justification for undertaking such a project.

Finally the time invested in the project was quite limited and would equate to around 40 man-days per year. Again this is a justification of how easy it can be to make savings in an organisation without resorting to an expensive tools implementation. The forecasted savings if all three methodologies were fully adopted were in excess of £600k/yr.

If this case study highlighted some opportunities for savings in your company please contact The ITAM Review to discuss our no-nonsense, vendor neutral, fixed-cost consulting.

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