

Softcat

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Case Study

SOFTCAT FIND THE IDEAL SOLUTION FOR MANAGED PRINT

Softcat's internal MP specialists

Over 1000 users

6 offices

Softcat were looking to implement a new strategy for print and document management so we decided to put our own Managed Print (MP) Team to the test.

The Challenge

Softcat wanted to formalise our strategy around print and document management because the system as it stood was no longer sufficient for our business needs. The problems that Softcat had with our current printing estate could be broken down into several distinct areas:

Management

We had limited management and configuration control over the hardware devices and this was a significant problem for us. This was particularly a problem for the devices located in the regional offices where there was no localised IT support.

Support

Softcat were struggling to support all the print devices in regional offices without the presence of an onsite IT Support Team.

Information Security and Risk Management

Prior to the MP solution Softcat had limited visibility of the types of documents that were being printed, this included having no visibility over the security classification of the documents being printed. This increased our likelihood of encountering a data breach or a data leakage type incident.

Corporate Social Responsibility, Environmental and Energy Management

The existing system meant that accurately identifying and establishing the environmental impact of our print estate was impossible. Each of Softcat's six offices was ordering their own print consumables and paper making it incredibly difficult, if not impossible, to track.

Cost and Budget

From a cost and budget perspective, there was little visibility and control over what we were spending on printing. Replacement consumables/cartridges would be ordered at the staff's request, with no centralised record being kept of this expenditure.

Applicable Standards, Relevant Regulations and Legislations

The solution that we chose to implement had to support our ISO accreditations and comply with the upcoming General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Softcat's Operations Director, Doug Fawell, took charge and came up with primary objectives for the project. These were:

- To improve how the print estate is managed.
- To improve the level and quality of the support that we provide for the print estate to our staff.
- To identify and reduce information security risks presented by our printing and paper handling processes.
- To create a resilient print infrastructure to support the organisation's business continuity and print requirements.
- To ensure the staff experience was greatly improved, including support for mobile working.
- To reduce the environmental impact, including our carbon footprint and improve the energy management of the print estate.
- To gain better visibility of the costs involved with printing, and where possible, control and reduce these costs.

Softcat had no clearly defined strategy around print management but we wanted to ensure that the above goals were implemented and that we created a clear and defined strategy for print management going forward.

The Solution

We were extremely keen to utilise our own MP specialists and to find out for ourselves why our MP division is so successful with our customers. We spoke to Rhys Lawson, head of our MP Team, and he and his team got to work transforming Softcat's print estate.

The first thing the MP Team did was conduct a comprehensive print assessment across all Softcat's offices. The results from the assessment helped to determine the exact solution and vendor that would best suit Softcat's requirements.

The full MP solution took our team around 6 months to implement from solution scoping, to Proof of Concept, to full companywide deployment.

Softcat's MP Team engaged with the Internal IT Team and the Managed Services Team over the technical deployment to ensure a smooth roll out.

The Benefits

Doug comments that, "Everyone within the organisation is benefitting from the MP solution".

From a staff perspective, the 'follow-me-print' feature has been the most successful and well received aspect of the solution. This feature has reduced staff's printing concerns around security and paper wastage. It has also made all printing in the company much easier to track and prevents items getting lost in the system.

From a technical perspective, the ease of management of the solution has been the greatest benefit. All devices and settings can be centrally administered and technical configuration changes are rolled out from the centralised management interfaces.

The MP Team found that we had purchased an old and expensive piece of software for device management that we were not utilising and therefore no longer needed. We have been able to remove this software which has not only saved us money, but more importantly it removed a layer of technical complexity which means we have a simple, clean and effective print management solution. With our new centralised management capability, we switched our default print setting from colour printing to mono printing. This small change has resulted in a very good cost saving.

The amount of time and money being spent on supporting the printers has reduced dramatically. This is largely down to the centralised management and support capabilities of the deployed solution. The amount of staff support calls has also fallen greatly due to the strict SLA's and improved service. Any device or software issues are dealt with swiftly ensuring minimal impact to our staff.

The information provided by the MP solution has enabled us to provide key reporting statistics and performance metrics that help to support our environmental goals and objectives. Within the first three months of the new MPS solution we reduced the number of pages being printed across the organisation by 16%.

As part of the MPS solution, we are producing quarterly Service Delivery Reports. The Service Delivery Reports provide ongoing information so that we can be sure of the benefits of the solution.

Credit goes to Rhys and the rest of the Softcat MPS Team who proved they really do know their stuff when it comes to managed print!

Solution highlights:

- Large cost savings
- Greater visibility across entire printing estate.
- Fewer IT helpdesk calls due to printer issues
- Less paper wastage