Unlock the Power of Print

Promoting cost reduction, effective resource management and enhanced cybersecurity

"With the UK IT industry in the midst of a skills shortage and improved cybersecurity and data protection at the top of the business agenda, effective resource management is essential. While many large businesses are keen to invest in innovative technology solutions such as cloud storage and automated CRM systems, the outsourcing of everyday tasks, such as the management of a firm's printing function, can drive huge efficiencies.

Managed print services, if correctly implemented, can significantly reduce a business' cost base, free up time for the execution of high-level tasks, while also reducing waste and streamlining the environmental footprint."

Rob Jones, Head of Managed Print Services at Office Depot

The Big Picture

The increased threat of cyberattack and the secure storage of data are a growing concern for many businesses. Our own research reveals that just 26 per cent of IT managers working in large, UK-based corporates believe that their firm is doing enough to ensure cybersecurity and data protection. Even more startlingly, 27 per cent of those we spoke to have no idea if the measures their firm are taking are sufficient. In addition, 81 per cent of IT managers believe that they would benefit from having more time and resources to devote to these tasks.

Such concerns are not unfounded. In the past three months, 81 companies in the FTSE 100 were victim to potentially malicious domain registrations[i], enabling fraudsters to create dummy websites that can be used to trick users into supplying private data. However, in a working environment where 40 per cent of those we surveyed described themselves as 'overstretched', the pressure is on businesses to drive the internal efficiencies required to protect themselves.
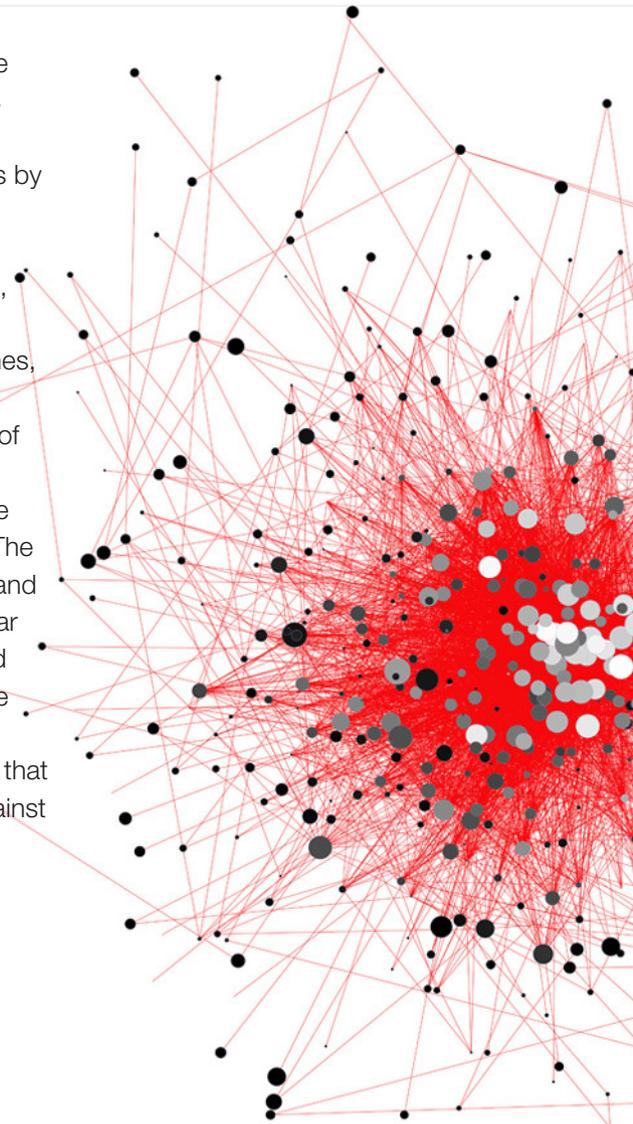
The IT sector skills shortage is no new phenomenon, however it is an issue that is set to intensify as demand for digital expertise grows. A recent Government report by the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee cautioned that "systemic problems with education and training need to be urgently addressed" and predicts that the UK will need another 740,000 workers with digital skills by 2017.

This culmination of market forces, including the proliferation of cyberattacks and security breaches, as well as a shortage of skilled IT professionals, reinforces the role of technical expertise and the value of senior level time in ensuring the future prosperity of UK industry. The adoption of automated systems and intelligent outsourcing, in particular the implementation of a managed print service, can prove invaluable in driving cost efficiencies and managing resources in a manner that allows businesses to mitigate against these risks.

"Uncertainty surrounding cybersecurity is best assuaged by giving senior level IT staff the time and resources they need to take matters into their own hands."

Rob Jones, Office Depot

MPS and Resource Management

The Problem

In a climate where talented IT professionals are hard to come by, ensuring that employees are working in the most efficient way possible is essential. Our research found that, on average, IT managers spent 35 per cent of their time dealing with low-level hardware and software issues, including fixing printer problems, troubleshooting and updating software. In total, the completion of these tasks costs UK businesses £4.2 billion a year.

While the undertaking of such activity, in some capacity, is likely to remain a composite part of the IT manager's role, financial directors must evaluate whether doing so in such high volumes is a good return on investment, or whether the time of senior-level IT staff would be better spent on more complex tasks.

Those working in large organisations (1000 employees +) were the most time poor, with almost half (47 per cent) of IT managers describing themselves as overstretched. In these organisations, updating printing hardware and software, as well as carrying out regular maintenance on such a wide scale, often proves a significant drain on resources.

The Solution

A managed print provision is extremely effective in reducing this burden on IT staff, freeing up their time to complete more advanced tasks such as data protection and cybersecurity, as well as allowing them to explore innovative technology solutions which could bolster business performance.

Managed print services free up employee time by:

- Providing a third party managed helpdesk and single point of contact to support users with any printing issues.

- Facilitating the resolution of more technical issues over the phone, eliminating the need for engineer visits where possible and leading to faster resolution.

- Offering on the ground support when required to repair any hardware faults before they significantly impact business performance.

- Monitoring toner usage, ensuring that supplies are automatically reordered and delivered to site before they run out.

"**Centralised procurement of printing hardware, software and consumables, as well as possessing the transparency required to reduce waste, are all essential for those looking to achieve cost savings and consolidate billing.**"

Rob Jones, Office Depot

Cost Management

In order to adapt to the changing industrial landscape and drive increases in productivity, which will in turn improve their firms' bottom line, many business leaders are keen to invest in new and innovative technology systems. Similarly, improving the security of data requires an investment in staff training and sophisticated software such as cloud storage solutions.
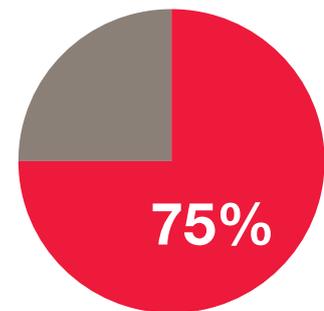
This drive towards increased automation and enhanced data protection requires funding - financial directors are under growing pressure to drive efficiencies elsewhere and , if possible, further down the value chain. Startlingly, 75 per cent of businesses are unaware of their printing costs, however this is an area where significant cost savings can be made. An efficiently run managed print service can reduce printing costs by up to 25 per cent.

Coordinating the procurement of printing equipment across multiple sites and departments often proves time consuming, with different offices or IT managers taking responsibility for particular sections of the business. This decentralised approach will likely involve the use of multiple suppliers and makes it more difficult to achieve cost efficiencies across the firm.

Businesses with a managed print service can enjoy cost savings as:

- the MPS provider will conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the firm's printing needs and current equipment, selecting the most effective solution across all sites.

- equipment is procured by a single supplier to provide a balanced deployment of best in class technology; the adoption of a common platform ensures consistent user experience, aiding productivity.

- printing volumes can be tracked by department or individual, allowing any excessive usage to be identified and controlled in real-time.

75%

"75 per cent of businesses are unaware of their printing costs."

25%

"An efficiently run managed print service can reduce printing costs by up to 25 per cent."

Improving Data Security

Ensuring the protection of company and client data is a prime concern for business leaders in both the public and private sectors. Any breaches in information security are likely to cause significant reputational damage and alienate the firm's customer base. Businesses are legally required to protect documents which include sensitive client information and to put processes in place that guarantee they handle this information in a manner that complies with regulatory guidelines. The security parameters required to maintain compliance vary from industry to industry, however businesses that collect financial or medical information are likely to be subject to the most rigorous controls.

Making sure that protected documents do not get into the wrong hands can be a challenge, especially in large, open plan office environments where printing devices are shared across departments or where employees 'hot desk', meaning that their location and proximity to other members of staff changes on a regular basis. There are a number of provisions available within an externally managed print service that act to assuage this risk, helping to provide assurance that sensitive information does not get into the wrong hands, including:

Print Me or Follow Me software can safeguard the print environment - this secure release technology requires users to enter a pin code at the printer before a copy is made, meaning that no documents are left unattended in the printer tray

Bespoke scanning solutions increase the security of inbound paperwork to ensure financial companies comply with FCA guidelines.

"Having due diligence procedures in place is vital in remaining compliant with data protection laws."

Rob Jones, Office Depot

Environmental Footprint

Numerous futurologists have persistently predicted the advent of the 'paperless office', wherein technological advances and personal devices remove the need for the physical printing and storage of literature and documents. However, despite these predictions, only 1 in 20 firms currently operate under this model, with many still relying heavily on a traditional printing function. At present, the average employee throws away 6,500 pieces of paper per year and businesses spend £16.6bn on needless printing.[ii]

However, monetary implications aside, this wastage significantly increases firms' carbon footprint and is at odds with many corporations' efforts to operate in a more environmentally responsible manner. By implementing a managed print service, businesses can access data and enforce software controls in order to drive real behavioural change and reduce waste. A managed print service will allow your IT department to:

- Access and feedback information to staff regarding how much paper is used, increasing awareness of the need to reduce wastage and allowing the firm to set sustainability targets.

- Set controls on the printing of excessively large documents, requiring user confirmation or sign-off before the job is released.

- Implement printer settings on a company-wide basis to promote efficiency, e.g. double-sided printing as default.

Conclusion

The resources and time of senior-level professionals, including finance directors and IT managers, is increasingly stretched. While many are focused on the limitation of business risk, bolstering their firms' productivity and keeping abreast with technological advances, a lack of focus on driving efficiencies at a ground-level is likely to stifle innovation and drive up cost. A focus on intelligent outsourcing,

in particular the implementation of a managed print service, can streamline budgets, ensure data protection and compliance, as well as reducing their firm's environmental footprint.

Crucially, by reducing the burden of traditional 'helpdesk' queries and troubleshooting on skilled IT staff, businesses can empower employees to move up the value-chain, and

contribute to the fulfilment of higher-level tasks such as cyber security, networking and technological innovation.

> **Office Depot conducted research with 500 UK-based IT managers, working for businesses with 100+ employees.**

i   Anomali – The FTSE 100 : Targeted brand attacks and mass credential exposures
ii Figures courtesy of a survey by printer cartridge supplier CartridgePeople.com