

Equitrac - the direct route to costs savings

NHS Lanarkshire

Challenge

- To take control of spiralling print costs by centralising print management
- To reduce carbon emissions in line with government targets for the NHS
- To simplify management of multiple printers

Strategy

- To deploy Nuance Equitrac on 14 new multifunction devices
- To dispose of old and inefficient desktop printers
- To consolidate the printer fleet

Results

- Estimated annual savings of £36,000 on print costs, with anticipated reduction in carbon emissions
- ROI within 12 months
- Granular insight into printer use through Equitrac's comprehensive reporting
- Pilot success paves way for broader deployment and greater savings.

The NHS is striving to become a leading sustainable and low carbon organisation. Today, many NHS trusts are looking at new ways of saving energy and are working to lower their carbon footprint to meet the government's target of a 10% reduction from the NHS' 2007 level by 2015.

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At one health board, NHS Lanarkshire, this environmental obligation – as well as a desire to lower its printing costs – was the motivation behind its decision to review its printer management strategy and print fleet. The health board has four main sites, with its IT backbone supporting 9,000 desktop devices, 200 servers and a myriad of other applications. The move to a new site at Kirklands Hospital – which is now home to functions including IT and finance - was an ideal opportunity to trial 14 new multifunction printers (MFPs), equipped with Nuance Equitrac, in order to consolidate its printer fleet and dispose of old and inefficient desktop printers. The success of this trial would determine whether this model was replicated across the health board.

Out with the old

While the new MFPs benefit from the latest technological advancements to ensure energy efficiency, the health board also needed a solution that would enable it to effectively monitor and track its print output, and thus enable it to calculate its overall print-related carbon emissions. Nuance Equitrac brings accountability and control to make printing convenient and secure while reducing cost and waste. Thanks

to its unrivalled experience and relationship with all major MFP manufacturers, Nuance's range of imaging solutions is able to leverage the full power of advanced MFPs. This benefits NHS Lanarkshire today, because it is able to track output from all connected printers and devices, as Adrian Hargan, NHS Lanarkshire's IT Customer Services Manager, explains:

“With Equitrac deployed on the new MFPs, NHS Lanarkshire was able to centralise its printer fleet and remove 300 inefficient desktop printers. Today, we can also generate print usage reports and set and enforce print quotas which further help control costs.”

It's a strategy that has succeeded, with NHS Lanarkshire saving an estimated £36,000 in print costs, which effectively achieves ROI in 12 months.

Safe and secure printing for everyone, everywhere

Talking about the rationale for the trial, Adrian explains: "One of our objectives was to meet the government's carbon targets. But the former desktop printers made it difficult to control and measure our carbon footprint. There is truth in the adage that if you can't measure it, you can't manage it. In the trial at Kirklands, the new fleet combined with Equitrac, gave us the means to better measure and now manage our carbon footprint in line with the government's target."

The quest for efficiency could not be at the expense of compromised security or confidentiality, as Adrian explains:

"In a healthcare environment, patient confidentiality is essential. Equitrac delivers against this requirement through the provision of a pin code-activated document retrieval system. Using the Follow-You Printing feature, users at the health board can only retrieve their printed material once they have typed a pin code into any of the Ricoh devices."

Follow-You Printing prevents anyone else from accidentally collecting someone else's material and negates the risk of confidential material being left behind on a device. Adrian explains: "The security of patient data is vital, and Equitrac's pin code system for document retrieval helps honour our confidentiality obligations to our patients." A further benefit of Follow-You Printing is that it provides users with the flexibility to select which printer they collect their material from. This boosts productivity, as users no longer have to wait at one machine for a large print job to finish before collecting their document. Nuance's heritage and experience working in the healthcare industry has paid further dividends during the deployment, as Adrian states: "Work was completed so that Equitrac could integrate easily into our Patient Management System, so minimizing disruption when rolling it out."

Setting a template for future saving success

Since the deployment, Adrian has observed another benefit. "Previously," he stated "about 30% of calls to the service desk were printer related. This has been reduced dramatically, and soon we'll have a matrix in place to illustrate exactly how much the calls have come down." The inherent reliability of the new MFPs has played a part here, but so too has the training the staff received on basic maintenance, such as adding paper or replacing toner cartridges.

Following the proof of concept, Adrian is delighted with the success of the project.

"Equitrac has really tightened up our printing processes and procedures, which have been central in the drive to cut our carbon emissions. We now plan to roll this out to a wider audience, with plans for a further 120 licences to be added."

Once done, NHS Lanarkshire will be able to build upon the £36,000 it has saved on prints costs in one year, which combined with a reduction in its carbon footprint, will put it well on its way to meet the government's targets.

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