

21st Century Solution for Malvern Hills District Council

When this council in the Midlands was looking to update its analogue print room, it wanted to do more than upgrade its equipment. As the Document Management Officer explained: "our aim was to provide a modern, professional, cost-effective and on-demand print service to all the departments within the council. We recognised that we need to upgrade our equipment to new digital technology and re-think the way that we worked."

The council had specific objectives in mind, which included:

- Improving the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of printing and copying throughout the organisation
- Ensuring that the most appropriate devices were being used for each job
- Increasing the volume of printing and copying controlled by the print room and reducing the amount of printing on satellite or desktop printers
- Higher transparency of print costs to allow reports to be produced for all the departmental heads
- Better management information on the services provided
- More professional presentation for internal and external documents

The perfect partner

Ricoh was selected as a partner for the project and supplied a range of equipment for the print room. This included a 10512 high volume (105 ppm) mono multifunctional product (mfp), an A070 A0 plotter for producing specialist drawings and plans, a Cs213 professional colour machine and a DSc 338 hybrid colour mfp.

Ricoh worked with the council to carefully integrate its existing software package to exactly meet its requirements. Ricoh combined the Equitrac document accounting system, ATI's doc-Q-manager job ticketing software and DeskTopEditor for Production for advanced job editing functions (geared around print room requirements). All the machines in the print room were networked so the powerful management tools could be used throughout the department. For example, they enabled the print room team to move from a paper-based order system to a fully electronic one, receiving print requests via the electronic job ticket system. Special requests can be received by email for jobs comprising many separate documents, which are easily merged using DeskTopEditor for Production. Each job is then accurately costed and billed to the appropriate department. Now work can be prioritised effectively and jobs even split between machines to make sure that they are produced in the most efficient way.

The right blend of products

The Council's Document Management Officer explained the reasons behind choosing Ricoh for this project: "Ricoh had the right blend of products to meet our specific needs, for example, the 10512 high volume mono mfp with its online booklet maker is ideal for the print room and is very robust. The IT and software solutions were just right too, when moving from an old analogue set-up we didn't want to over-invest in software that we wouldn't use. This is simply not the case and we use virtually all the functions."

He continued: "I did have some initial concerns about buying 'out of the box' software products but I've been very impressed by how Ricoh has been able to tailor the products to find the right solution. Ricoh has a partnership approach, which suited us really well, they worked very hard to make sure that we had exactly what we wanted."

"It was a big step for the print room staff to move to new networked digital devices, systems and software but the team at Ricoh was extremely supportive. They were very good at gaining the confidence of all the staff and conducted the training in bite-sized chunks. This allowed us to really get to grips with each new system or function before moving onto the next one."

Finally to conclude he said: "The installation went without a hitch, it was very straight-forward. Naturally, I had some concerns about ripping out all the old kit at the time, but I think that we only lost a day and a half's production at the most. We didn't try to do everything at once, which made it so successful. The whole project was managed carefully from start to finish."

doc-Q-manager benefits summary

- Maximises efficiency through better prioritisation of workload
- Can deliver urgent jobs faster by splitting them across several machines
- Allows print room staff to preview and manipulate jobs on screen
- Job tickets simply display product options
- Integrates seamlessly with Equitrac accounting software

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