

NJ SCHOOL DISTRICT BOOSTS USER CONVENIENCE AND PRODUCTIVITY WITH FOLLOW-YOU PRINTING.®



“Follow-You Printing® is the ‘killer app’ for us,” says Jeff Janover, Director of Technology for the Wall Township (New Jersey) Public School District. “Being able to walk up to any device anywhere in the district, swipe an i.d. card and print just seems like magic to our teachers.”

Printing wasn’t always so convenient for the approximately 700 faculty and staff in the 7-school, 4,400-student district. Until the deployment of Equitrac Express® 4 print management software with Follow-You Printing, users would select a networked printer as part of the print command, go to retrieve their document and then often “find a long line waiting ahead of them or that the machine was out of paper or toner,” explained Janover. “So they’d have to go back to their classroom computer and re-send their job to a different printer.” The inconvenience was both a source of user dissatisfaction and a drain on faculty productivity.

Janover knew what kind solution he needed. He just didn’t know if it existed. “I asked my printer rep if there was

anything that would let me send print jobs to a virtual device and retrieve the job at any physical device.” In very little time, the consultant found and recommended Equitrac Express with Follow-You Printing.

With Equitrac’s Follow-You Printing, print jobs are held in a secure print server until users authenticate themselves at the networked printer of their choice. In a school district setting such as Wall Township, this gives users the convenience and mobility to release documents at any networked device — anywhere in their building, on other servers and even in other buildings.

To keep operation as simple as possible, Janover created just two print options in the server-based solution: one for black and white printing, the other for color. Users choose either one at print time and go to the printer to swipe their i.d. card and retrieve their job. Most of the approximately 20 devices in the Wall Township network support an attached RF card reader and Equitrac Embedded™ software for user authentication directly in the MFP’s control panel. For others, Janover installed Equitrac PageCounter® terminals with card readers.



Organization: Wall Township Public School District, New Jersey, with 7 schools serving approximately 4,400 students in grades K-12.

Challenge: To eliminate the inconvenience of long lines of users waiting for queued print jobs and equipment being out of service when faculty and staff went to retrieve documents output to shared networked multi-function printers.

Solution: Follow-You Printing® capability of Equitrac Express® 4 software that holds print jobs in a secure server allowing users to authenticate themselves and release documents at the printer of their choice.

Result: Immediate positive acceptance by faculty and staff over the increase in convenience and productivity. In addition, the requirement for a user to be at the device in order to print has dramatically reduced paper consumption by eliminating wasteful unclaimed print output.

Client Comment: “With Follow-You Printing, we have reduced network problems by two orders of magnitude. Now we only have two print drivers per server vs. hundreds.”

Janover says faculty reaction to Follow-You Printing was immediate. “They loved it. Having users control where they pick things up makes life a lot easier for everybody.”

Somewhat ironically, the district’s switch to fewer and centralized MFPs was originally intended to solve prob-

lems not create them. Wall Township's previous deployment of printers in every classroom had resulted in unexpectedly high support requirements and network performance issues.

"We had different vendors' printers and literally dozens and dozens of different drivers loaded on every server," said Janover. "An update could cause a printer driver to suddenly misbehave, not accept logins, lockup or knock people off the server. Every time there was a change in class, people would try to log in at the same time, and it would bring the network to its knees."

"Centralized Follow-You Printing may be new to K-12 environments, but I think it's going to increase, because the complexity of printing is increasing. It took us two and a half years to figure out that 98% of our problems were printer-related."

By the spring of 2007, Janover was certain that replacing classroom printers with centralized shared MFPs would solve these performance problems. But that solution was met with resistance.

"Teachers were really upset that we were going to take their printers away," Janover said, "even though we told them that when we take them out, all these other printer problems you've been complaining about will go away. When they came back after summer, they couldn't believe their printers were really gone — but all the load problems immediately went away."

As Janover explained, those problems were unfortunately replaced by the

inconveniences of long lines at the printer or devices that were occasionally out of service — issues which in turn were alleviated by Equitrac's Follow-You Printing.

Even though Wall Township was not using Equitrac's print tracking capability to allocate or reduce print costs, the district has nevertheless reduced paper consumption during the solution's first five months of operation, in part by eliminating unclaimed print output.



An attached RF card reader and Equitrac Embedded™ software provide user authentication directly in the control panel of customizable MFPs. Other devices require Equitrac PageCounter® terminals with card readers.

"You might assume that as a school district we would be interested in tracking and billing, but we've told faculty it's not our policy to be tracking every page," said Janover. "We do use the tracking capabilities when we see excessive use, but for us Follow-You Printing was the killer application."

"Follow-You Printing is part of a thought process we're going through in Wall Township," Janover continued. "We're getting away from being a paper-based district. We're reducing the amount of paper we're using and increasing the amount of collaboration that takes place — with bulletin boards, shared folders, and a whole new generation of doing things in a far more effective and efficient way."

As Janover explained, Wall Township has built a robust infrastructure, including fiber backbone, 40 application servers, 175 programs and 3,500 client devices allowing students and staff members access from anywhere. "It pays off," he says, "because we're providing the kinds of tools that a teacher needs to deliver a technology-infused curriculum."

And though Wall Township is a relatively small district, "we're always ahead of the curve and trying new things," said Janover. Those new things include Follow-You Printing.

"The concept of centralized printing with Equitrac's Follow-You Printing may be new to K-12 environments," said Janover, "but I think it's going to increase, because the complexity of printing is increasing. It took us two and a half years to figure out that 98% of our problems were printer-related. Now we only have two print drivers per server vs. hundreds. Other schools are going to go through the same process of discovery that we went through."

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