

# Leveraging Your Investments in Law Firms—Advanced Device Management

*UNLOCKING THE FULL POTENTIAL OF LAW FIRM TECHNOLOGY*

## Getting the Most from Law Firm Technology—Automatically

Because of the document-intensive nature of the legal profession, law firms absolutely depend on their output devices, especially today's networked all-in-one multifunction products (MFPs) that print, copy, scan, and fax. While firms count on this equipment for fast and reliable output of work product, what they may not know is that coupled with new technology—that was not available as recently as five years ago—these devices can offer even more far-reaching benefits to the firms:

- **Lower operating costs**—by assuring most effective and efficient use
- **Greater staff productivity**—through deployment that matches capabilities to user requirements
- **Better client service**—by providing detailed information on usage and assuring that facilities management and managed print services are meeting their service level agreements
- **Environmental best practices**—through automation that allows even the most heavily used devices to help firms reduce waste, become “greener”, and promote sustainability.

These and other benefits of increased accountability and control are available through today's advanced device management solutions.

Many law firms already have comprehensive device management capabilities at their disposal. For the rest, it is easily acquired. That is because device management technology is at the heart of advanced cost recovery solutions that firms already use to capture copies, prints, faxes, and scans for billing to specific client matters. And because cost recovery solutions provide the key informational connection between a firm's output devices and billing and document management systems, they are the logical point for centralized device management to streamline document workflows, authorize user access, report on device usage, and optimize the performance and availability of the entire output fleet.

# Wide Ranging Benefits Make the Case for Device Management

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## Manage access to devices and features

One of the surest ways to reduce MFPs' total cost of ownership is to reduce unnecessary or unauthorized use. Today's most effective device management solutions allow administrators to control which printers are available to specific users, departments, or purposes.

Users' interaction with access management begins at the desktop where the print dialog box presents only their authorized printer options. At networked printers, integration with existing login procedures and ID card systems allows secure release of queued print jobs, while support for single sign-on allows users to access their authorized walk-up services without having to continually re-enter their credentials. This also allows firms to offer rapid authentication at the MFP without additional management overhead.

## Control print workflows

Maximizing the return on a firm's printers requires that users make smarter print choices. Active device management achieves real change in user behavior by controlling print workflows and making smarter printing virtually automatic. For example, least-cost routing can automatically direct large jobs away from desktop printers to more cost-effective departmental devices or to a reprographics center operated by a firm's facilities manager. Rules can enforce paper-saving duplex (double-sided) printing for internal review drafts. Color jobs can be re-routed to more appropriate devices.

## Report on device use

The information captured by device management systems reveals all printing, copying, and scanning activity, tracks client expenses, and increases recovery of billable costs by providing client matter detail on every item. But it does more. It also helps to paint a truer picture of client and firm profitability and provides the facts for making more informed decisions on device acquisition and deployment. Information in device usage reports can show which devices are over-used or under-worked so they can be relocated for higher productivity, helping the firm avoid purchasing more devices than it actually needs. Reports on devices can also show whether service level agreements are being met.

## Maximize device up time and performance

Many office workers are familiar with the frustration and lost time of discovering they have sent a print job to a device that's out of paper or toner or one that is in use. Availability of printers is especially important during periods of peak demand—such as end-of-the-month billing.

Advanced device management solutions increase device up time and user productivity with remote monitoring capabilities that track device status, alert administrators to performance issues, and provide automatic routing of print jobs away from devices that are out of service. Even better for productivity are systems that allow users to print to a virtual device then release their jobs at any convenient and available printer on the firm's print network.

## Following Other Industries' Lead

Other paper-intensive industries have realized the immediate and substantial benefits of implementing device management strategies into their organizations—and for good reason. Industry analysts Gartner and IDC estimate a typical organization's document output costs at one to three percent of revenue. They, and others, also report that active management of the output fleet can cut print costs by up to 30 percent.

Indeed, the experience of customers using Equitrac print management solutions in a range of industries bears this out: Large corporations the world over have discovered that centralized device management reduces the time—estimated at up to 15 percent—that their IT departments would otherwise spend resolving printer-related issues.

# What Should a Device Management Solution Include?

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**From over 30 years experience providing intelligent cost recovery and print management solutions to the legal profession, and recent visits with C-level officers at 70 of the AMLAW 200 law firms, Equitrac has gained insight into the capabilities and attributes needed for a device management solution to yield the most efficient and cost-effective print environment.**

## Scalability and high availability

A device management solution should be appropriate to a firm's needs and size. But it should also be scalable to grow as needs change. Solutions that support Active-Active and Active-Passive clusters on Microsoft Windows Server® can be counted on to deliver high availability.

## Robust reporting

A complete device management solution provides the information needed to make the best decisions on fleet productivity. Summary, detailed, and total activity reports viewable by user, department, client, or device can help partners fully understand their print network's usage, costs, and performance. Partners will appreciate reports showing the number of pages printed by any device, how many jobs were printed in color, which devices are most heavily used, or where problems typically occur. Reports such as these can reveal at a glance if a firm's fixed fee contracts are adequately covering expenses.

Web-based reporting, easy customization, and automated generation and distribution on user-defined schedules are other reporting features popular with law firm decision-makers.

## Integration with current infrastructures and platforms

No one in IT who is concerned about both the future and the present wants to incur the expense, complexity, or limitations of proprietary technologies. Therefore, a device management solution must work with the systems firms rely on today, and the technologies they are likely to acquire tomorrow. This translates to strict reliance on industry standards.

Integration into heterogeneous environments is especially important where networks most likely include a multi-vendor/multi-technology mix of MFPs, scan solutions, and key, PBX and VOIP phone systems. Support for Microsoft Active Directory as well as a full range of standard server technologies—both

physical and virtual—can allow firms' IT organizations to build on management processes they already have in place. Device management software embedded in the MFP leverages the user interface experience, document controller, power connection, network connection, and IP address of the device, with no terminals to purchase, install or maintain.

## Proactive device feedback and alerts

The larger and more dispersed a print network, the more difficult it can be to know how individual devices are performing at any given time. A device management solution with remote, real-time, monitoring capability reduces the burden on IT by tracking the performance and availability of the entire output fleet from one central location.

Proactive fault detection and timely error notification can help technical staff resolve issues before they become problems, while alert rules can help IT to focus on issues genuinely needing attention. For example, setting time thresholds to delay the issuance of certain alerts can prevent the immediate escalation of minor issues that are frequently addressed by end users themselves. Endemic problems, on the other hand, can be proactively addressed by triggering more urgent notifications based on frequency of occurrence.

To promote user productivity, a system could be set to automatically redirect jobs away from devices that are low on toner. To reduce the occurrences of that condition, the system could alert the appropriate employee before a device's toner gets so low that jobs would be re-routed.

## Non-intrusive user experience

Especially in a professional organization such as a law firm, user acceptance is crucial to the success of a device management solution. Compliance suffers when interruptions for output control, cost allocation, or user authentication get in the way of people doing their work.

The ideal solution makes device management, cost recovery, and document security clean and simple, with as little additional user interaction as possible. Support for single sign on, network log-in, and an existing employee ID card system can provide security with simplicity. A system relying on familiar procedures eliminates the time and cost of user training.

# Workforce mobility

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Advanced device management solutions support employees' need for mobility by allowing them to print out documents at any printer anywhere on a firm's network—whether that's down the hall, on a different floor, or in another city. Accomplishing that requires a system that works across servers to send print jobs into a secure print queue, where they're held until users release them at their printer of choice.

Besides increasing mobility and productivity, this approach also protects document security and client confidentiality, since documents are not printed out until the authorized user is physically at the printer to sign in and release them. Or instead of possibly losing or

exposing documents when traveling to a branch office, an attorney can securely print them to the queue for release at the destination.

This same technical capability also helps to reduce waste by eliminating jobs that are printed out but never picked up. Abandoned jobs like these can be deleted from the print queue before they become wasted output.

Finally, replacing dozens of possible printer definitions with as few as one or two virtual printer choices simplifies printing for users and reduce printer-related help desk calls.

## Conclusion

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**Centralized, software-driven management of networked printers, copiers, and MFPs can help law firms improve client service, boost staff productivity, achieve environmental goals, and increase their return on investment.**

Today's most advanced device management solutions give firms the power to control and streamline print workflows, authorize user access to output devices, report on device usage, and optimize the performance and availability of their entire output fleets. Available technology makes smarter printing automatic by routing print jobs to the most efficient and economical devices, requiring double-sided printing for certain types of output, and limiting the use of color to specified, allowable purposes.

Many firms can begin to realize these benefits without increasing the complexity of their IT and printing infrastructures because comprehensive device management is built into the cost recovery solution they may already be using or considering. The same technology that allows today's most advanced cost recovery solutions to track and allocate all of a firm's copying, printing, faxing, and scanning activity to specific client matters can also help to manage their output fleets for maximum productivity, efficiency, and economy.