Case Study: Inspire Education Group

At a glance

The Inspire Education Group implements Intuitive for PaperCut dashboards to better manage their print estate, control costs, provide a better experience for staff and students, and manage the environmental impact of printing

Inspire Education Group

The Inspire Education Group (IEG) is a successful provider of further and higher education with two main campuses in Peterborough in Cambridgeshire and Stamford in Lincolnshire.

IEG aims to deliver high-quality education and training that responds to the needs of employers and individuals. With a strong commitment to its students, their families, the community, employers, and regional partners, collaboration, teamwork, and excellence are at the heart of all that it does.

Following the recent publication of the latest National Achievement Rates Tables (NARTs) Inspire Education Group was ranked in the top 3% of General Further Education (GFE) Colleges (5th out of 168 colleges) nationally for GCSE english and maths results, and in the top 20% of GFE Colleges nationally for overall achievement rates of 16 to 18-year-olds (28th out of 160 colleges).

Peterborough College (one of the IEG subsidiaries) has worked with Konica Minolta as a provider of its managed print infrastructure over a period of 10 years. In the last 5 years, IEG had also implemented leading print management software from PaperCut for its rich feature set.

THE CHALLENGE

As a newly formed further education group, IEG has over 1500 staff and 10,000 students, spread across 3 campuses. These staff and students have access to 90 Konica MFDs, which provide print, photocopying and scanning facilities.

As Rob Cottrell, Group Director of IT & Digital Innovation at IEG, explains "*We needed an easy way of getting an over-arching view of the fleet across all of our three campuses. We wanted to ensure that we had the right devices in the right places, and relocate them, where appropriate, in order to spread the load, and give quicker access to devices where they were needed. We also were aiming to reduce service demands and call outs by ensuring that printers weren't being overused.*"

When the IEG group was formed in 2021, the MFDs were set up using the "Find-me printing" capability in PaperCutMF, allowing staff and students to authenticate against an MFD with their College ID badge and access any MFD across the campus at any time to release prints, scan documents to their email inbox or photocopy. Staff and students are assigned a cost-per-print or copy, which is the click cost for each mono/colour page that any device outputs. Staff costs were being reported by department but it was not easy to provide a visual summary of department cross charges.

It became very clear post-merger that the amount of printing produced across the new group had become extremely high, as it wasn't easy to provide a visual summary of MFD click costs. The group was also looking to provide better visibility of the environmental impact of printing or the power consumption drawn by the fleet of MFDs. Over the first year of merger the IEG group produced 3.5 million mono pages and 700k colour pages.

Rob continues "*We had two big challenges to address. How could we ensure that the fleet of MFDs were located in the areas where they could be accessed by the widest range of users, and which MFDs in the fleet were under-utilised and no longer required? We also wanted to visualise the environmental impact of our printing, with the aim of improving our CO2 footprint in terms of both energy consumption and trees used.*

The other challenge was how IEG could provide a visual way to monitor excessive usage, by providing staff and managers with insight into their printing habits so that they had an easy insight into their personal contribution to our commitment to be carbon natural by 2030."

THE SOLUTION

The team at Konica Minolta recommended the Intuitive for PaperCut dashboards which they knew would provide the ability to monitor the entire fleet of MFDs, with the ability to provide managers insight into their staff and student MFD activities. Intuitive for PaperCutMF is a suite of pre-configured dashboards that use the comprehensive data from PaperCutMF to provide a highly visual summary of valuable information when managing a fleet of MFDs.

The dashboards provided a clear vision of the total cost of ownership of each MFD across the group, and allowed IEG to identify MFDs that were under-utilised and compare these to MFDs that had higher than expected usage and understand why.

In addition, the dashboards use PaperCut MF data to give insight into costs per department and provide managers with the visibility of individual usage so they can work with staff members to adjust the method of teaching and learning so that printed resources, where possible, are moved to digital resources to reduce the environmental impact of printing.

"The Intuitive dashboards take all the important data from PaperCutMF and make it into a highly visual presentation which is easy to engage with. Working with the team from Intuitive was great – they guided me through getting the users and filters set up– it was all really simple once I was shown how."

Rob Cottrell,
Group Director of IT & Digital Innovation
Inspire Education Group

BENEFITS

1

Print Estate Optimisation

The dashboards allowed IEG to identify under-utilised MFDs and ones which were being heavily used. Several devices were repositioned and this allowed for the utilisation to be balanced more evenly across the print estate.

2

Improved Staff and Student experience

The redistribution of MFDs based on usage data reduced the queues for staff and students when waiting to print and release work. It also improved staff efficiency by allowing them access to devices which were more conveniently located to support larger hubs of staff.

3

Ownership of print costs

Departments have been able to identify and own their own departmental data. Both in terms of costs and in terms of their own department plan to achieve net zero.

4

Senior Leadership visibility

Overall, the board and executives now have a very easy to understand visual of the total cost of ownership of the MFD fleet. Because of the integration with PaperCut Grows they also have a full understanding of the environmental impact and the steps being taken under this partnership to plant new trees and thus counter the CO2 impact.

NEXT STEPS

Rob is now working on creating departmental manager accounts for the 60-65 budget holders in the organisation. Each one will have their own pre-filtered executive summary dashboard for their area which will give them ownership of their MFD activity. This will display departmental, staff and student utilisation, cost and environmental impact. And because the Intuitive dashboards integrate with Microsoft Active Directory, it's really easy to give access to the right people and ensure data is protected correctly.

In addition, quarterly reports are being developed to provide to the IEG Green Committee on the overall environmental impact and offsetting CO2 emissions.