Clayton County Public Schools

An Atlanta-area school district leverages Lexmark Multifunction Printers to reduce expenses, minimize IT burden and gain new visibility into its output environment.

Gaining control of a disparate fleet

Like many growing school districts with multiple school and administrative locations, Clayton County Public Schools (CCPS) managed over 3,500 output devices representing 30 different manufacturers. Managing this many diverse devices across the district caused ongoing service challenges for the IT staff. Plus, administrators were continually asked to do more with less, which put an additional strain on existing resources.

Managing IT resources

According to Rod Smith, Chief Technology Officer for CCPS, it became increasingly difficult to support the number of disparate devices with the district's limited IT resources. Nearly all the district's teachers had a printer directly connected in the classroom, which drove a high number of service calls.

"Without having a group of tech staff responsible for each type of device, it became a jack-of-all-trades situation, which was difficult to sustain," says Smith. "Also, when the devices aged out it became harder to get parts, making things even more complicated."

Smith knew the time was right to reduce the number of devices on the network and find new ways to support these devices without adding additional staff. "Cost reduction is always a consideration. We needed a partner who could provide the features and solutions we needed, while helping us control expenses," says Smith.

Maximizing fleet efficiency

To address these challenges, CCPS chose Lexmark to optimize its print infrastructure. As a first step, Lexmark performed a detailed assessment of the district's output environment including analysis of device-to-user ratios, fleet performance, internal process workflows and process optimization. This allowed Lexmark to recommend the most efficient configuration of devices for each building's output profile.

"As a result of the assessment, we were able to reduce the device count from 3,500 direct-connected printers in classrooms and staff areas to 891 fully networked multifunction printers," says Smith. "The device reduction has made a significant impact from a resource standpoint, as half of the service tickets generated by CCPS teachers and staff were printer related."

The new configuration is also user-friendly. When teachers or staff need to print, they simply enter their credentials at a nearby printer. Authenticating directly at the MFP protects sensitive student information and eliminates print jobs that are forgotten or no longer needed.

"The problem we are solving is this: How can we do a better job at managing a fleet of devices with a limited staff? Since the footprint of our fleet has gone down, it means end user support time and frustration have also gone down," says Smith.

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Increasing visibility across the district

In addition to right-sizing its output environment, CCPS has gained new insight into its printer fleet. In large enterprises networks, it's not unusual for administrators to have limited visibility into fleet performance. Printer activity becomes a guessing game with little accountability and even fewer metrics to share with stakeholders. With Lexmark MFPs across the district, this has changed for the better.

"We have complete visibility into our devices and the utilization of those devices, including toner level and page count. Before, the direct-connected devices were invisible to us." explains Smith. "Now we can analyze how much money we are spending and what we are saving."

Meet Clayton County Public Schools

Clayton County Public Schools (CCPS) serves over 55,000 students with 38 primary, 15 middle, 12 high schools and one psychological education center supported by 7,400 staff and teachers. CCPS is a fully accredited district through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement and is committed to making data-driven decisions focused on elevating student academic performance.

"We get a lot of data that allows us to report analytics to our Chief Finance Officer and our Superintendent," adds Smith. "Whenever we talk about cost savings, we can use this data to help drive down expenses. Plus it allows us to be proactive instead of reactive. We can resolve issues before they happen."

Choosing the right partner

Finding the right output technology for an enterprise is only part of the total picture. The choice of a partner can mean the difference between a successful integration and frustration for users and administrators. For CCPS, Lexmark not only installed high-performance devices to meet the needs of its staff and educators, but delivers outstanding service that helps everyone across the district work more effectively.

"We're in the business of educating students. Every time I take 10 minutes or even one minute away from a teacher, that's taking time away from instruction," says Smith.

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>
> **Rod Smith**
> Chief Technology Officer
> Clayton County Public Schools

"We're also in the business of doing things more efficiently and effectively. That's why I would definitely recommend Lexmark to my peers in other school districts," adds Smith. "The service we have received is outstanding, and from a product and solution standpoint, Lexmark is rock solid."

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