

# A PRINT AUDIT CAN BE THE FIRST STEP TO DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

**A print audit is an effective way for an organisation to gain an accurate understanding of their existing print devices, usage and expenditure. The findings of a print audit can then be used to implement a more efficient Managed Print Service. Why replace your print and document infrastructure with like-for-like technology without fully understanding how your existing infrastructure works?**

In order to conduct a print audit, software is used to monitor and collect informative data. This data is then used to gain a full understanding of your organisation's existing print infrastructure along with user behaviours, print volumes and costs. All data is then analysed by a Business Analyst to identify key problem areas and highlight opportunities to maximise efficiency, ensuring your organisation's print infrastructure is as efficient as possible. This exercise is also a great way to learn more about how a document moves through your organisation.

A basic print audit will focus on device locations, usage and costs, however a detailed print audit will look at additional factors such as document workflow, wastage, energy usage and the lifecycle of a document. There are generally five steps to complete a print assessment that will help define a solution tailored specifically to your organisation. These five stages are summarised and displayed in the following graphic. It is crucial that the auditors engage with various end users across the organisation in order to gain a true understanding of how documents are used within the organisation.

## 1. Identify existing infrastructure

Mapping out current device locations against floor plans highlighting all single and multi-functional devices against departments and users. Investigate all existing document and print workflows and processes in place to understand business and user requirements.

## 2. Understand business objectives

Establish the key improvements your organisation requires, e.g. reduce paper waste or minimise print costs. This is crucial for recommendations to be made in order to optimise business processes.

## 3. Review workflows and processes

Repetitive tasks like invoicing and scanning can take up valuable staff time and often contribute to the physical production of documents. An assessment will identify automated processes and workflows that will streamline the way your organisation operates.

## 4. Assess impact on users

Discover how much time your staff spend managing device inventory or fixing print related issues.

## 5. Calculate outsourced print costs

If you are outsourcing due to inefficient or inept equipment, you could be spending unnecessarily. An assessment will provide solutions that allow those jobs to be bought in-house, potentially saving considerable time and money.

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The main benefits that a Print Audit can deliver to your organisation include:

### **Full Visibility**

The main aim of a print audit is to provide organisations with full visibility of management information. The audit will not only show you how documents are printed but how they move around your organisation, providing you with a definitive list of devices, current suppliers and usage. With this visibility, the organisation can establish an effective print strategy for continual improvement.

### **Cost Savings**

The data gathered as part of a print audit can provide real time and accurate figures on how much your organisation is spending on their current print infrastructure. This may lead to an uncovering of hidden costs and wasteful practices. Implementing a more efficient Managed Print Service can help organisations reduce their print costs by up to 30%.

### **Improve Efficiency**

Slightly larger organisations often find that they have multiple suppliers for the print infrastructure, which comprises operational inefficiencies. By switching to one Managed Print provider, it creates a clear print strategy that can relieve the headaches of dealing with multiple supplier processes and communication channels. The print audit will optimise the fleet through identifying how devices are being used and synchronise the workflows, which will ultimately make it easier for users to follow and increase efficiency.

### **Environmental Awareness**

A print audit will provide your organisation an insight into the environmental impact of your current print fleet. Data collection can help locate areas of excess paper use and ink wastage, highlight areas of high electricity consumption and lead to the introduction of a new print policy. Creating awareness of this environmental print policy will gradually change user behaviours so it becomes natural to conserve the print consumables.

### **Increased Security**

The increased visibility provided by a print audit can help you find any weak areas within the document security, such as confidential documents being printed on unsecured devices which can potentially cause breaches of data. These gaps in security can therefore be addressed to help minimise risk and help your organisation gain increased control via audit trails.

### **Process Optimisation**

Most organisations do not have a full understanding of their existing document workflows, so a print and document audit may be the first time all workflows are assessed. This may highlight duplicated or unnecessarily long processes. An audit will then show how this process can be optimised by streamlining and automating workflows. This in turn will reduce the amount of documents printed, as well as speeding up processes.



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The discussed benefits can help your organisation tackle common problems related to printer inefficiencies. Having a bespoke and effective Managed Print Service will ensure that all of the negative areas found within the print audit can be targeted and improved upon, while the positive areas can be enhanced.

James Anderson, Professional Services Business Analyst for Apogee, Europe's largest multi-brand Managed Print Services provider, offers the below as rationale for an organisation undertaking a print audit:

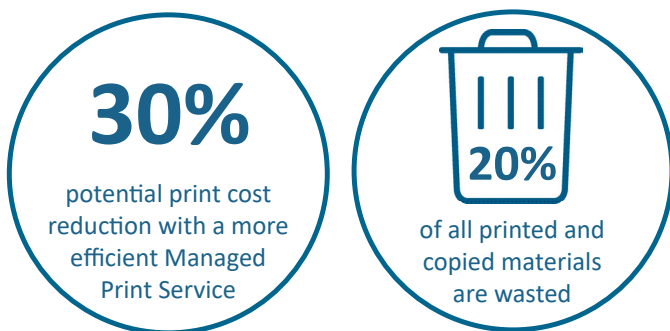
*“Printing can account for up to 3% of an organisation’s revenue, yet very few have an accurate understanding of what that cost actually is. The Business Analyst team at Apogee produce reports showing an organisation’s current print fleet (mapped onto floor plans), the volumes going through each device and the associated costs. Potential cost savings of between 10-30% can be made merely by ‘rightsizing’ the number of printers, copiers, faxes and scanners in use”*



With ‘Digital Transformation’ the ultimate end goal for most organisations, this whitepaper highlights the key steps required to make the desired impact within a print and document environment. Understanding your existing infrastructure is of paramount importance and a Print Audit will provide exactly that.

Once an organisation has gained a full understanding of their printing patterns and document workflows, they are better placed to determine what changes can be made to increase efficiency, control costs and ultimately optimise the performance of the business. A Print Audit delivers many benefits to organisations of all sizes and can uncover inefficient processes and workflows that quite often go unnoticed. It is important organisations don't remain complacent and just continue doing what they do because it seems to work.

The scale of opportunity is bigger than ever in the print and document environment with more and more organisations driving towards digital transformation. This paper details the importance of a Print Audit as part of that process, so join the revolution.



**Managed Print Services, Apogee** - (<https://www.apogeeinc.com/services/managed-print-services/>)

**Apogee News**- (<https://www.apogeeinc.com/news/apogee-bgl-group-reduce-carbon-footprint-print-costs/>)

**Apogee News**- (<https://www.apogeeinc.com/news/green-printing-tips/>)

**Energy Central**- (<https://www.energycentral.com/c/ec/ink-waste-environmental-impact-printer-cartridges>)

**Printing News**- (<https://www.printingnews.com/trade-services/trade-printing/whitepaper/10281623/eastman-kodak-company-data-security-what-you-need-to-know>)

**Apogee News**- (<https://www.apogeeinc.com/news/apogee-bgl-group-reduce-carbon-footprint-print-costs/>)