

# ADOPTING A GREEN PRINTING STRATEGY

There is an ever-increasing awareness surrounding the environment, which is leading to a global shift in the way organisations operate. The concern that over 80% of our world's forest is already destroyed<sup>1</sup> and a 60% rise in global carbon emissions in just over 20 years<sup>2</sup> is making many organisations think about the impact that their operations have on the environment and what they could do differently.

With the environment and sustainability being hot topics discussed amongst employees, suppliers and customers, it is becoming a higher priority for organisations to form strategic decisions and improve their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). An effective method to work towards positive sustainability is through adopting a green printing strategy. This white paper will discuss why green printing is a necessity and how organisations can potentially put simple but effective practices in place that will help reduce their organisations impact.

No matter the size of an organisation, there is always an opportunity to improve the business' eco-friendly position by introducing green printing practices. Not only does this way of working improve an organisation's sustainability, it is also a means to attract new clients and set themselves apart from the competition. Adopting green printing strategies were typically seen as a big expense<sup>3</sup> for organisations, however they can have the opposite effect and reduce costs significantly.





## Reliance on print

Despite a growing shift towards 'digital transformation', most organisations will still find it necessary to print a multitude of documents as well as an array of business support and marketing material.

This reliance, combined with consumer demand and expectations of sustainable practices, brings the question, what can be done? A global study of 20,000 participants found that 61% of people believe sustainability is mandatory for businesses<sup>4</sup>.

A common area of concern where businesses fail to manage in order to be environmentally friendly is paper wastage. Print waste within an organisation is caused by many factors, including unintentionally printing duplicate copies, printing one-sided, using inefficient paper and ink processes and simply printing unnecessary documents such as emails and faxes. Organisations are often unknowingly contributing to the negative environmental effects with day-to-day printing activities. Some research suggests that up to 50% of paper consumption in offices are non-essential<sup>5</sup> and avoidable.

## Where to start?

The first step to determine the correct green printing strategy for any organisation is to get a proper understanding of the current print and document environment. A print assessment is the start of the journey which will help determine print volume, usage and optimal device locations. A more detailed assessment will analyse all existing workflows and processes, highlighting any inefficiencies.

The assessment results can then be used to make improvements to the print and document environment by encouraging better printing habits, setting sustainability goals and implementing more efficient document workflows and processes.

Organisations can set measurable, realistic targets to reduce their environmental impact whilst aligning with the wider business' goals. These can vary from reducing paper waste by 50% or even becoming an entirely paperless organisation. Green printing can be implemented through print hardware, software and company wide policies. Some of the most effective strategies are mentioned in this whitepaper to give further insight.



## Efficient toner & ink cartridge disposal

A common and often overlooked area within organisations is the purchase and disposal of printer ink and toner cartridges. The production of ink cartridges involves using masses of oil and releases harmful emissions<sup>6</sup>. The lack of toner cartridge recycling is an issue, with over 375 million<sup>7</sup> empty ink and toner cartridges thrown away each year, mostly ending up in landfills.

A green strategy to support this simply involves implementing better recycling practices or using eco-friendly or sustainable ink cartridges. With recycling a key

focus for most organisations, they look to manufacturers and retailers to provide return services for empty toner and ink cartridges; by returning your cartridges, the plastic resin used from the breakdown of the product can be used to produce new cartridges

The HP Planet Partner programme<sup>8</sup> offers a closed loop recycling process and is available in more than 60 countries and territories around the world. By recycling cartridges it makes better use of the world's natural resources, reducing energy whilst providing valuable plastic material for reuse, and reduce the organisation's carbon footprint in the process.

## Reduce usage with Cloud solutions

As the world evolves, there is a need for organisations to focus on 'digital transformation' and exploit technology in new ways, not just to do things faster. The continued developments of cloud solutions will help organisations reduce their reliance on user owned hardware and increase the importance of subscription based cloud services that enhance accessibility and promote versatility for organisations.

It is not difficult to understand how paper still plays a large roll in the work environments and with an estimation that over half of paper used within offices, approximately 100,000 sheets per year in each organisation, are wasted in the UK<sup>9</sup> it's important that organisations manage and provide employees alternatives.

This is where the Cloud plays a vital roll in the digital transformation for many organisations. The Cloud provides multiple tools to revolutionise the way that an organisation manages document and print workflows. The Cloud allows employees to share, view, edit, send and store documents online reducing unnecessary printing and waste generated by printing.

*It has also been reported that by sharing documents via the Cloud it can also reduce greenhouse gasses by over 16% by removing the need to transport<sup>10</sup> paper.*

## Introduce new policies and objectives

A thorough print assessment will identify all print activity, highlight existing waste levels and all associated costs in the business. With the latest remote monitoring technology installed on devices, it allows live and ongoing recording and analysis of an organisations entire print environment.



This includes who issued each print job, when documents are printed and collected and used to identify unnecessary usage or highlight areas of concern for the business. From these results, company-wide policies can be introduced to reduce or eliminate waste and encourage positive print behaviour to improve the environmental standards. Helping organisations make informed decisions to reduce waste and save on future printing costs.

For example, a standard policy can ensure that staff can only release print jobs through using a secure password or ID card. This will eliminate any abandoned, unwanted documents being left at the device, which also enhances the security around critical or sensitive information being printed. Documents left unprinted can be automatically deleted from the print queue after any set time, e.g. it refreshes every 24 hours. Rule-based print policies can also be introduced to reduce toner and paper consumption by defaulting to mono and double-sided printing on all applications.



## Reduce energy output

Possibly the most obvious but also more expensive way to reduce energy output within an organisation is to introduce newer, more energy efficient multi-functional devices (MFD). By combining single-use devices, such as printers and scanners into a single MFD there is the opportunity to reduce the amount of energy being used daily. If your fleet is starting to age, replacing devices will also deliver a number of other benefits alongside energy reduction which include; more secure hardware and software, user-friendly and intuitive control panels and better connectivity to newer technology.

With a smaller footprint MFDs not only provide centralised document management, distribution and production they also use less office space. These devices have functions for default setting that will help reduce print waste, energy usage and 'night modes' which automatically put the device to sleep when not in use, all aiding the desire to be more sustainable.



## What the experts say

Chris Johnson, Professional Services Post Sales Development & Workflow Consultant for Apogee Corporation, Europe's largest multi-brand Managed Print Services provider, offers the below statement which summarises his experience of delivering green strategies for clients:

*"I have found from my experience in supporting Managed Print Services that organisations are more than ever aware of the environmental impact of their actions. Adopting green print strategies is important to all stakeholders because of the current global climate issues and 'Green Printing' can positively influence relationships. All strategies can be tailored towards the organisations goals so that specific areas can be forced on and ultimately improved."*



## Is it time to make a change and think green?

The strategies mentioned within this white paper such as a recycling programme and the introduction of print policies can be used individually or combined together to create the ultimate 'Green Printing strategy'. In addition to supporting a greener strategy, the strategies also provide many additional benefits such as considerable cost savings through reductions in waste and improved document security through secure MFD's and innovative Cloud software.

Considering just a few of the options available to all organisation's, MPS providers are witnessing a growing focus on 'green printing' strategies. Whether adopted individually or combined as a wider plan it is imperative all organisations understand what is available and the difference they can make by making just a few small changes in the way they operate. With the adoption of print and document monitoring software, goals are easier to measure than ever before encouraging more organisations to start their own green journey.

<sup>1</sup> **One Tree Planted** - <https://onetreepanted.org/pages/tree-facts>

<sup>2</sup> **World Bank** - <https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/chart-global-co2-emissions-rose-60-between-1990-and-2013>

<sup>3</sup> **The BMS Group** - <https://www.thebmsgroup.com.au/eco-friendly-printing>

<sup>4</sup> **Live Mint** - <https://www.livemint.com/companies/news/sustainability-in-the-workplace-is-no-longer-optional-study-1556096332683.html>

<sup>5</sup> **Nuance** - <https://whatsnext.nuance.co.uk/office-productivity/mps-help-businesses-eliminate-non-essential-printing/>

<sup>6</sup> **Virtual Strategy** - <http://virtual-strategy.com/2019/04/21/cartridge-world-and-environmental-office-solutions-partner-to-deliver/>

<sup>7</sup> **Energy Central** - <https://www.energycentral.com/c/ec/ink-waste-environmental-impact-printer-cartridges>

<sup>8</sup> **HP Planet Partner Programme** - <https://www8.hp.com/uk/en/hp-information/environment/product-recycling.html>

<sup>9</sup> **Nuance** - <https://whatsnext.nuance.co.uk/office-productivity/10-figures-will-make-think-twice-press-print/>

<sup>10</sup> **GESI** - <https://gesi.org/newsroom/detail/ict-can-cut-global-greenhouse-gas-emissions-by-165-saving-up-to-19t-annually>