

Case Study

Liverpool John Moores University
Education
Managed Document Service

Document management transformation helps Liverpool John Moores University meet value for money targets and save £100,000s



Liverpool John Moores University has an established and enduring relationship with Ricoh that has transformed document and print management services, delivered

£100,000s in cost savings and created a partnership that is set to extend the University's and Ricoh's services to other public sector organisations in the region.

Executive summary

Name: Liverpool John Moores University
Location: Liverpool, North West England
Size: 3,000 staff and 25,000 students
Activity: Higher education

Challenges

- Deliver value for money and improved support services
- Lack of control over document and print costs and assets
- Unsustainable near one-to-one printer to user ratios

Solution

- Ricoh Managed Document Service
- Outsourced central print room facility
- Ricoh Professional Services

Benefits

- Helps the University meet its value for money strategic objective
- Delivers a more cost effective and high-quality document and print management service
- Reduces print devices from over 2,000 to 225
- Delivers cost savings well in excess of £100,000
- Reduces print volumes by 20 percent
- Cuts centralised print costs by 30-40 percent by bringing them in-house

Challenges

Originally founded as a small mechanics institution in 1825, Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) now has around 25,000 students and is organised into five Faculties spanning Arts, Professional and Social Studies; Education, Community and Leisure; Health and Applied Social Sciences; Science; Technology and Environment. Named after Sir John Moores, the founder of the Liverpool-based Littlewoods empire, LJMU's ethos is to provide educational routes for people of all ages and from all backgrounds.

In the current economic climate, education organisations particularly need to manage carefully what they spend, where they spend it and deliver value for money. LJMU - which has an annual budget of over £100 million - has a policy to rationalise costs so that it can focus investment in frontline activities – teaching, research and knowledge transfer.

Document and print management services at LJMU account for around £1 million of budget. But a year or two back, and faced with delivering better value for money, the University had a problem controlling these services. As a large and distributed organisation, LJMU had a proliferation of desktop printing devices located across campus. There was no central control over device type or numbers, nor over the on-going cost of supporting and maintaining these devices. Document management and print was managed by individual departments which masked how much was being spent.

Mark Power, Registrar & Chief Information Officer, and a member of the executive at LJMU, says, "While we could track down purchase prices, the on-going costs such as toner, paper and so on, were quite difficult to manage. Also, it was difficult to know exactly how many desktop printers we had, but with 3,000 users directly connected to a printer we think it's around 2,000 printers."

Almost every member of staff had their own personal desktop printer. But it was not possible for the University to continue to support and pay for this level of service. Also, the University felt that the print service it was providing to students was not fit for purpose.

Improving document and print management services was seen as strategic by the University and was driven by the executive board. Power was charged with transforming the document management and print operation so it delivered a better service to staff and students and delivered better value for money. A fundamental part of finding a solution was establishing a partnership with an organisation not just for the immediate challenge, but as a long-term relationship.



Solution

The University put out a tender to several different organisations. Power says, "The presentation we got back from Ricoh was quite impressive – the figures involved, the type of service being proposed and having the opportunity to have staff on site – presented us with a very attractive proposition. So we decided to work with Ricoh."

Power adds, "Speaking as someone who manages a very large number of commercial contracts I would say that Ricoh is probably our best partner because it's a true partnership. Ricoh is very responsive and the quality and commitment of Ricoh staff and the senior management is very good, right up to the CEO who has taken time to visit the University on a number of occasions. We can discuss issues openly and have a frank debate and that makes for a very mature relationship."

The University has deployed a Ricoh Managed Document Service (MDS) which is helping to transform the way documents and print is managed around the University. The Ricoh MDS began with a detailed survey and analysis of documents and print processes and workflows carried out by Ricoh Professional Services and the University. From this, Ricoh helped develop an integrated document and print solution which balances user needs against best deployment of resources and devices. The service replaced more than 2,000 existing devices with just 225 Ricoh Multifunction Products (MFPs) distributed across the campus in staff offices and student Learning Resource Centres. Integrated into the Ricoh MDS is the University's central print facility which uses Ricoh production presses and is staffed by Ricoh employees. Part of the role of the onsite Ricoh staff is to report on and continually optimise the way document and print processes and devices are used in the University.

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The Ricoh MDS includes Equitrac software which helps manage the way documents are accessed and printed across the University. Equitrac also enables 'tap and print' use of the Ricoh MFPs and staff and students use existing ID cards at any printer to call up and print off their documents.

One of the challenges of transforming document and print services was the significant cultural shift to a shared resource environment with new workflow processes. Working in partnership with the University executive, Ricoh implemented a structured change management programme with a team of staff charged with implementation.

Power says, "Taking something away that a member of staff believes they are entitled to is challenging. However, it was something that was driven by management at all levels with support from Ricoh. The benefits were clearly communicated and the processes managed on a phased basis, rather than a big bang approach. We worked through buildings and faculties step by step, communicating cost and environmental improvements and people begin to see the benefits for themselves."

Benefits

Power says, "The Ricoh MDS and our partnership with Ricoh is hugely important to the University. The quality of service we can now provide and the value for money associated with the partnership are significant benefits to the University, its students and ultimately what we do - provide education."

Across a number of areas the Ricoh MDS solution is helping LJMU meet its value for money objective. It has cut the number of print devices from over 2,000 to 225 and is cutting print costs, reducing waste and delivering much greater control over document and print activity.

"We'd set ourselves a target of £100,000 saving in document management and print-related costs. We've certainly achieved that and it is probably considerably higher than that. But because of the invisible costs, prior to the Ricoh cost solution, it's difficult to determine a precise figure. But we can certainly demonstrate £100,000 saving and a better quality of service," says Power.

For example, swipe and print means that documents inadvertently sent to print, or no longer needed, are deleted from the system automatically after 24 hours, reducing wasted paper and time. The Ricoh MFPs are also set to certain defaults, such as duplex and mono printing, which automatically reduces paper and expensive colour toner consumption. If someone needs single-sided print or colour they have to manually change the setting for each document. LJMU estimates this has reduced print volume by 20 percent.

Equitrac allows the University to implement highly accurate and detailed departmental charging and reporting. Each month reports are circulated to departments detailing, by individual, print use. Equitrac can determine not just the number of pages printed, but also whether it was colour and even double-sided. Students use the Ricoh MFPs in a similar way with their ID cards. However, the Ricoh MDS integrates with the University's cashless payment system. Students have a 'virtual purse' and when they print a document the cost is deducted automatically from the purse.

The Ricoh managed central print operation is also delivering some significant savings. LJMU has a campaign to steer print away from the managed fleet to the print room, where printing is more cost effective, as well as using the facility to reduce reliance on external print. Equitrac manages the balance between fleet and print room jobs. When someone sends a job to print, if it can be done more efficiently and cost effectively in the print room, Equitrac automatically notifies the department budget holder for them to decide where the job should be printed.

Power has presented information to the executive to show that by diverting a threshold of print work to the print room, the University will save around 20 percent, and by doing print in-house, as much as 30-40 percent. Also, anything that goes through the print room that is stapled is VAT free. Other advantages include quicker and more reliable job turnaround and the capability for work to be sent to the print room electronically. The University has, for the first time, brought all its certificate printing in house, which has saved money; but perhaps more significant was the fact that the University was able to present students with official certificates on the day of graduation.

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This saved a further £15,000 in postage because previously, the certificates had to be posted around the world by registered post to students because they were not ready in time.

As well as delivering and supporting a comprehensive MDS, part of the University's policy to establish long-term partnerships is being realised in other ways. The University and Ricoh have just started a project to turn the print room facilities into a regional hub service which can be used by other organisations in the area, such as other universities and the NHS.

"Universities are in competition on a number of fronts, not least students, but when it comes to services and resources like print I think there are huge opportunities for Liverpool John Moores University and the wider university community, and indeed Ricoh, to come together to share facilities, resources and knowledge to benefit what is our primary and shared objective of delivering first class education," says Power.

Ricoh is working continuously with the University to optimise and improve document management processes and scale up the MDS to meet the University's future needs.

The Ricoh MDS is also a significant contributor to the University's green agenda. Power says, "Reducing carbon footprint is very important to the University and we do figure very highly in the green league table, especially among the education sector. In terms of our environmental aspirations - defaulting to duplex, green disposal of spent cartridges and reduced waste across all aspects of print - the Ricoh MDS is a significant benefit." The Ricoh MDS has helped the University significantly reduce its carbon footprint.

Ricoh Solution/Products

- Ricoh Multifunction Products
- Equitrac
- Ricoh Production Presses
- Central print room outsourcing services
- Ricoh Professional Services

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