

# U.S. Army Directorate



## Challenge

Keeping Army personnel orders up-to-date, accurate, archived and readily available for the 60,000 soldiers, their families and civilians at Ft. Bragg is an enormous task that's essential to military readiness. Robert Zekanis, Chief, Information Management Branch of the Directorate of Human Resources, U.S. Army at Ft. Bragg and his staff process millions of personnel orders every year, including enlistments, marriages, divorces, births, duty changes, transfers, promotions and demotions, and discharges. Every order requires specific forms to be completed, communicated properly throughout the base, archived and available for retrieval, all with a heightened level of security that protects soldiers, civilians and national security. Individual forms can span multiple pages, with some orders also requiring multiple forms. The paper, hours and storage space required to handle it all added up quickly.

"One in-process order could be 15 pages," said Zekanis. "Then, that 15-page packet needed to be copied 10 times and delivered to each department on the base." According to Zekanis, some personnel actions required more than 100 individual pages to process. A master, hard copy of every order also had to be filed properly by a staff member in a physical cabinet and archived for one to five years, until it could be moved to offsite storage. Retrieval of archived orders was also time consuming, especially if it was originally misfiled.

Printers and copiers throughout the 15 administrative buildings at Ft. Bragg churned out more than 3.2 million pages, requiring an untold number of toner cartridges and an unknown amount of maintenance annually. A staff of 12 people at Ft. Bragg handled the mission, but the team knew there had to be a better, more cost effective and more secure way to process orders, share that information throughout the base electronically and archive it securely and in a manner that could be easily retrieved later.

"Our existing process worked but it was costly and labor intensive," said Zekanis. "Looking to the future, we knew it was going to take more and more dollars and hours to sustain the process. We were determined to find and deploy a solution that made our approach 'best in class' for those we serve at Ft. Bragg."

## Meet U.S. Army Directorate of Human Resources

The U.S. Army Directorate of Human Resources provides human resource administrative support services and functional programs to ensure the readiness of military personnel, family members, and Commanders of the greater Fort Bragg community.

### Products in use:

- ▶ Lexmark multifunction products
- ▶ Lexmark Print Management with Print Release for Common Access Card
- ▶ Three-year Next Day On-site Warranty

Zekanis initially turned to the contracting office to understand the potential solutions that were already approved for purchase. He was referred to a list of approved multifunction printer models from a variety of manufacturers from which he could purchase. Some of these devices could be installed at no initial cost, and his department would be charged per page for its output. After some analysis, Zekanis estimated that the department's annual costs would quadruple. And after taking a more technical look at the specifications of the approved devices, he learned they did not offer the level of security features needed to ensure the confidentiality of soldier, civilian and mission information at Ft. Bragg.

Next, he turned to Lexmark to learn more about how he and his staff might tackle this growing mountain of paper in a manner that would capture and route documents electronically and securely over the U.S. Army network, eliminating reams of paper, speeding up order processing and reducing the burden on his staff.

### Solution

Lexmark outlined a solution whereby CAC-enabled Lexmark MFPs would be strategically installed throughout the base and securely connected to the network. Army Directorate staff could authenticate using an active CAC card, scan images of completed orders on the Lexmark MFP directly to the network and then securely route them to other required departments on the base. Each order could be stored on the network for easy retrieval.

Zekanis liked the idea of the solution because it significantly reduced the amount of paper required, leveraged the network to route documents electronically to where they were needed and reduced the need for physical document storage. But, with all these benefits intact, Zekanis wanted to further ensure the security of the Lexmark solution. Along with technical resources at Ft. Bragg, Zekanis tested a variety of CAC-enabled MFPs from a variety of manufacturers. He quickly learned that manufacturers implemented CAC authentication in different manners, which could put security in jeopardy.

According to Zekanis' testing, some manufacturers pre-load authentication certificates on the MFPs themselves and then update those certificates on a set schedule. Other manufacturers simply required a specific PIN in order to access the features on the MFPs. Lexmark's approach was far more comprehensive, by authenticating users against current authentication certificates in real time over the network.

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Chief, Information Management Branch of the Directorate of Human Resources

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Zekanis also credits the success of the project to executive sponsorship and leadership. Nan Sanders, Director of Human Resources, U.S. Army Garrison Fort Bragg, supported the endeavor, saw the need to automate processes and understood the value of leveraging technology to support the U.S. Army mission.

## Results

The U.S. Army Directorate purchased and installed about 40 Lexmark MFPs, each with three-year next-day on-site warranty, throughout buildings at Ft. Bragg. Now, paperwork to process orders is scanned onto the network by CAC-authenticated personnel. Digital images of those completed forms are routed across the network to the necessary departments for processing and then archived to a network server for easy retrieval.

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Nine staff members previously assigned to processing, archiving and retrieving orders have now been re-assigned to other mission-and base-critical duties.

Beyond the business benefits of eliminating paper, freeing up staff time and reducing costs, the true value of the Lexmark solution lies in supporting the Army’s mission. “We’re not just here to do a job,” Zekanis said. “We’re here to support the mission of the U.S. Army and to sustain the readiness of military personnel and their family members. We take that role very seriously and the Lexmark solution now enables us to achieve that more effectively, more securely and more quickly than ever before.”

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