SUMMARY

Pawnbroking company reduces hardware and support costs in 122 stores by standardising on wireless laser printers from Lexmark. Two-sided printing removes the need for pre-printed forms, while remote management and variable toner settings keep running costs low.

Pawnbroker updates contract printing with wireless Lexmark printers

The Organisation

Harvey & Thompson is the country's leading pawnbroking company with more customers and a higher loanbook than its nearest competitor. It has 122 outlets throughout the UK and offers a range of services, including pawnbroking, second-hand jewellery sales, cheque cashing, payday advances and unsecured loans. It recently became the first national company to offer a Prepaid MasterCard.

The Challenge

The move to a new Windows-based point of sale (POS) system was the catalyst for a complete overhaul of the IT infrastructure in Harvey & Thompson's 122 stores. Concerned that the cabling within its stores would be unable to support the new system and reluctant to spend £1,000 per store on new cabling, Harvey & Thompson decided to install wireless networks in all 122 outlets. At the same time, it took the opportunity to update its printers. Before Lexmark became involved, each store had one laser printer and three dot matrix machines for the printing of customer contracts. These used a variety of pre-printed forms that were expensive to produce, took up a great deal of storage space and would need to be thrown away if any details changed. The printers were slow, noisy, old and increasingly unreliable. Above all, they did not support wireless networking.

The Solution

With the move to a wireless network, Harvey & Thompson has halved the number of printers in each store by replacing three dot matrix printers and a single laser device with two faster, wireless-enabled printers - the Lexmark E450dn and E460dw. This has brought savings of £450 per store in hardware costs and has reduced the time taken to print unsecured loan, cheque-cashing and pawnbroking contracts.

> "Print is mission critical to Harvey & Thompson. If we can't print customer contracts we can't do any business, so we need printers we can depend on. Since installing the Lexmark printers, calls to our help desk have fallen and those we do receive we can sort out remotely."
>
> – Andrew Lawrence
> IT Manager
> Harvey & Thompson Ltd.

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The Lexmark E450dn and E460dw devices were chosen for its reliable duplex capability, which enables it to print Terms & Conditions on the back of contracts. This removes the need for separate pre-printed forms, each of which would have required its own paper tray, increasing the price of the printer and the complexity of device management.

Also, Harvey & Thompson now prints contracts on counterfeit-proof, watermarked paper for security.

A store can't trade without the ability to print contracts, so the productivity and reliability of the printers were important factors.

To keep running costs low, Harvey & Thompson monitors the printers remotely and has reduced toner density settings, which extends the life of the printer cartridge without any noticeable loss of print quality. As each store prints an average of 50,000 contracts per year, this has real financial benefits.

Harvey & Thompson considered a number of suppliers for its new print infrastructure, but none could match Lexmark's combination of features and affordability. The 200 Lexmark E450dn and over 80 Lexmark E460dw printers are compatible with the wireless network, have duplex printing as standard, a 33ppm and 38ppm print speed respectively and a first page out time of 7 seconds. Speed of printing is essential, as the printers will have to output 3 copies of every contract.

The ability to monitor the printers remotely was a key selling point, as Harvey & Thompson manages consumables ordering in-house. When a store manager needs a new toner, he or she simply ticks a box on a form and sends it back to head office. By checking printer usage and toner levels remotely, the IT department can confirm whether a new toner is needed and eliminate unnecessary purchasing of consumables.

"Being able to print our documents much faster has really helped us to improve our efficiency levels. Also the ability to print our forms on-demand and duplex without the need for pre-printed stationery has helped reduce waste and therefore the impact on the environment."

– Andrew Lawrence

The Results

- A 50% reduction in the number of printers used in each store, saving almost £50,000 in hardware costs alone.

- Simpler device management by standardising on one model and one set of consumables.

- Wireless connectivity gives complete flexibility in the positioning of printers in stores.

- Duplex printing enables Terms and Conditions to be printed on the back of contracts removing the need for expensive pre-printed forms.

- Variable toner settings extend life of consumables for lower running costs.

- Remote monitoring for improved cost control and device management

LEXMARK