

# State department of veterans affairs

Lexmark multifunction printers help speed delivery of vital services to military veterans

## Challenge

With many of its 50 statewide offices staffed by just one or two employees, the single-function printer, copier, fax and scanner units installed in each location often outnumbered the workers. The expense of maintaining these devices, along with the cost of electricity consumed, the need to stock disparate toner cartridges, and countertop space required for them made for a costly, inefficient arrangement.

"The thousand dollars a month we were paying for each copier lease was not a good use of those funds," said the agency's chief information officer. "Even faxing was racking up a lot of long-distance and monthly analog line charges for documents we transmitted just within our department."

Adding to the difficulties was a concern that faxed documents, which routinely included medical records and other personal information, could be accidentally picked up by workers who were not the intended recipient.

Following an analysis at its headquarters, veterans' homes and satellite offices, and a directive by the state government to control spending, the agency determined the time was right to replace its hundreds of single function devices with a smaller fleet of networked multifunction products and develop workflows to maximize efficiency and drastically reduce the use of paper. "Consolidation is a hot topic across all state agencies to cut costs and improve workflows," the CIO said.

## Solution

The agency purchased Lexmark MFPs for its satellite offices, veterans homes and headquarters facilities. Lexmark MFPs combine a business-class laser printer, auto-feed document scanner, copier and network fax into a single space-saving unit. Equipped with Lexmark's customizable e-Task™ touch screen operator panel, document workflows, such as scan to email, to a network share or to the human resources department are initiated with a single finger tap.

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## Meet this state department of veterans affairs

This state agency assists veterans, their dependents and survivors in obtaining benefits to which they are lawfully entitled. The agency operates five veterans' homes, 50 veterans' services offices, certifies education and training programs and provides nursing and domiciliary care. The agency is operating under a \$68.2 million budget for fiscal 2011.

### Products in use:

- ▶ Lexmark multifunction products

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Chief Information Officer  
State Department of Veteran's Affairs

The impact was immediate. As the agency began its conversion to a paperless, electronic records system, the MFP devices' scanners have become the on-ramp. “We scan paper documents through the Lexmark MFPs to a network share where they are picked up by our document imaging software and indexed for archiving and instant retrieval,” said the CIO. “We are getting rid of all the paper!”

Aside from the security that the agency gains by eliminating paper records in its offices and human resources department, documents can be called up for viewing by any authorized user, eliminating the need to pull originals from a storage facility, copy and fax them, and then re-file them. “Removing the need to store huge amounts of paper is even allowing some of our locations to relocate into offices that are less expensive and more accessible to our veterans,” said the CIO. Eliminating the faxed copies also allays privacy concerns.

## Results

For each single-function printer, copier, fax and scanner consolidated into a Lexmark MFP, the state agency cut its device headcount by 75%. Expensive copier leases no longer exist. Three of the copier leases were costing the agency \$1,000 each per month and 12 others were \$50 per month in addition to page count overage charges. Electrical consumption is down and only one type of toner cartridge is needed. Documents that were formerly sent via fax for internal use are now scanned and transmitted instantaneously as email attachments.

In a one-week sample, the scan to email function was used by field offices 1,154 times. By avoiding toll-call faxes, this could save the agency \$6,000 to \$10,000 annually. For one particular workflow, elimination of paper handling and opening envelopes is saving more than \$7,000 a month. In total, the agency anticipates it will save more than \$100,000 per year based on the consolidation of devices, implementation of a standardized fleet of Lexmark MFPs and adoption of scan to email workflow processes.

In the agency's human resources department, personnel documents from new field employees that were once faxed across the state are now scanned and sent as email attachments that guarantees privacy. Indexed and archived in the agency's document repository, any document is available for immediate recall.

Administratively, processes seemingly as simple as approving each office's monthly phone bill have been streamlined. In the past, phone bills were copied by a central accounting clerk and mailed to each office, where it was approved, signed, and mailed back—a slow and costly process. With its Lexmark MFPs and document-routing application, the phone bill is scanned and a barcode is added to simplify tracking. Posted to the agency's Microsoft® Exchange® Server, personnel in each office view their bill, approve and mark it as completed. Mailing, printing and faxing of 2,000 pages per month to 16 departments have been eliminated and the process has been cut from days to minutes. This process alone reduced paper consumption by 768 reams, or 384,000 pages.

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With its device consolidation project complete, the agency is now looking for other ways to leverage its Lexmark printing, imaging and document-routing capabilities. “We are constantly evaluating our challenges and working with Lexmark to see if they already have a solution.”

At this state agency of veteran's affairs, caring for those who have served our country is far more than a job—it is a mission. And in its search for ways to deliver services faster, Lexmark multifunction technology, document routing, imaging and archiving is continuing to help the agency achieve that mission.

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