

Case Study: International Retail Business

International Retail Business Eliminates Print Servers and Streamlines Printing



Challenges

- End-users and administrators were forced to carry out the time-consuming manual process of mapping printers in order to install them
- Print servers did not automatically push newly installed drivers out to the end-users, causing driver conflicts and hard-to-trace printing problems
- Remote printing took place via the central data center, which meant that field-office print jobs consumed bandwidth as they were sent across the WAN and back

Results

- Along with its convenient visual floorplans for easy self-installation, PrinterLogic's automatic criteria-based printer installation has done away with laborious manual printer mapping
- PrinterLogic automatically pushes new and updated drivers out to end-users while simplifying driver management as a whole
- Field offices can now print locally through PrinterLogic's direct IP connections, thereby eliminating print-related WAN traffic

An international retail business wanted to streamline printing, but with a heavy reliance on print servers throughout the enterprise, the company saw very little opportunity to improve the print infrastructure that serviced its fleet of more than 100 printers.

Then an IT manager who works for the company received an e-mail linking to a [PrinterLogic](#) white paper.

"The title of the e-mail was something like, 'Do you want to eliminate your print servers?' That caught my eye," the IT Manager says. "I went through the first page and then I forwarded it to a technician on my team and asked him to take a look. They were interested right away."

Initially, there was some justifiable skepticism on the part of the wider management and IT teams toward implementing a new print management solution.

"We did have an early discussion about the value of a new solution," the IT manager says. "Until that time, we had been using Windows Print Servers. To migrate to PrinterLogic, we'd need to pay for a license. That was a cost we hadn't budgeted for. But we also saw the value in PrinterLogic and the features that would help us."

One feature, in particular, stood out: Automatic printer installation. The company's print server infrastructure gave end-users no other option than to manually map printing devices in order to install them on their client machines. And if the end-users were unable to do so, that meant administrators had to take the time to do it for them.

"I wouldn't say it was a nightmare. It was more like a nuisance," the IT Manager says, "but it had become a strong enough nuisance that we decided to consider PrinterLogic as an alternate solution."

Challenge #1—Automatic Printer Installation and Easy Self-Service

"In the traditional print server scenario, we required either the technicians or the users themselves to have to manually map to the printer," the IT manager says. That method was time-intensive and resulted in unnecessary calls to the service desk asking for help with routine printer installation.

In searching for a new print management solution, the company hoped to find either an automatic method of printer installation or one that was intuitive enough for end-users to do it themselves.

Solution

With PrinterLogic, the company got both. As PrinterLogic is able to automatically install printers on client devices based on IP address—in this case, subnet—end-users have access to available nearby printers as soon as they log on. No manual mapping is necessary; the correct printer is installed in a way that's invisible to the end-user.

"Subnet mapping is easy because you just find the subnets in the PrinterLogic admin console and assign the printers. When a user logs on, he or she automatically gets the printer," she says.

In the rare cases that users don't automatically receive the correct printer, they can use PrinterLogic's self-service portal to easily locate, identify and install local printers themselves without needing to call the service desk.

"The floorplan map in PrinterLogic helps a lot of people because they can see exactly what printer is on their floor, and they can automatically install the printer if they need to. That's another highlight. From a user perspective, that's a feature that they really like."

Challenge #2—Automatic Driver Deployment and Installation

Cumbersome driver management was another persistent issue for the company. Print servers made it difficult to keep drivers organized and to ensure that updates were delivered to the end-users promptly and uniformly.

"Anytime you have a new driver installed on the print server, you have to make sure that it's pushed out to the end-user device as well," explains the IT manager. If the driver was installed but not deployed for some reason, it had the potential to cause printing issues and driver conflicts with the client devices.

Solution

PrinterLogic introduced centralized driver management as well as automatic driver deployment to the company's print environment.

"On the driver side of things, we now have a central location to manage drivers, and it does push [the driver] out to the user directly once they've refreshed the configuration," she says. This has simplified enterprise-wide driver updates and avoided the printing problems that stem from partial deployments.

Challenge #3—Eliminating Print-Related WAN Traffic at Field Offices

As with many distributed environments with a consolidated server infrastructure, remote printing left the company's field offices dependent on WAN connections. Every print job initiated in those field offices had to travel across the WAN to the central server, then

back again to the local printer, consuming valuable bandwidth each time.

If the network between the field office and central server is down, there is interruption to printing services which some business functions rely upon.

Solution

With PrinterLogic as the company's print management solution, "Printing

from the remote office works really well because the print jobs don't have to come all the way across the WAN to the data center anymore when they print," says the IT manager. "Now they have local connections to the printers through direct IP printing."

The effect has been faster, more reliable printing across the organization.

Conclusion and Savings Summary

The IT manager for the Retail Business estimates that their team has been able to eliminate multiple print servers from their print environment since implementing PrinterLogic. Given the short time that has passed since deploying PrinterLogic across the enterprise, it's more difficult for them to gauge overall time- and cost-savings.

"Once everyone is brought up to speed and every user has the PrinterLogic client, then we'll be able to see the reduction of support cases and how much time it's saved compared to previous years," the IT manager says.

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