

How To Be The Solution To Your Customer's Print Service Quandary

Integrated field service platforms offer a valuable opportunity for managed print services (MPS) providers to expand their capabilities with limited investment and risk.

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We've all been there. Your car breaks down and you have two options — take it to the manufacturer's dealership, which can be inconvenient and expensive, or find a trusted mechanic that can reliably serve all your needs. Going to the dealership often means paying more for the implied trust of the brand and specialization, whereas a certified mechanic can service any make and model of vehicle and has to compete on price. Now picture yourself as the head of a household with several different manufacturers' cars. Is your decision to use a skilled, multi-brand mechanic easier than having relationships with a number of dealerships? Would you prefer to go online to see all mechanics in the area, their rates, credentials, reviews from past customers, and to schedule and manage your service work in one place? That's the multi-line service management model.

This same approach is emerging for managing a company's varied print technologies and it's called managed print services (MPS). For businesses, a top opportunity for cost savings through new management approaches is print solutions, given that on-site printing costs may represent as much as 3% of a company's total expenses. Today, it is common for various business departments to purchase their own unique printers, copiers, fax machines, and other devices to best suit their needs. This practice prevents a single procurement and support strategy because maintaining full-time "jack-of-all-trades" support personnel, in such multi-vendor environments, is extremely difficult, and quality OEMs either cannot or choose not to service these varied configurations. Companies are now looking at outsourcing with a multi-line, national MPS provider to single-handedly assess, design, optimize, and manage a diverse office print landscape. Now emerges the challenge of a cost structure that offers the desired flexibility to meet the customer's specific needs.

To this point, more and more organizations are seeking a single source for all print service and support, along with pricing and administration that is efficient, flexible and can adapt easily to the changing business requirements of the company. That's where FieldSolutions and other online, integrated technology field service platforms add value with

their nationwide networks of skilled and vetted independent contractor technicians, enabling VARs to provide more variable and streamlined management services. Providing a supplemental field service resource for managed print companies enables these MPS providers to service a broad range of technologies, while offering a broader range of variable cost structure options. The emerging cloud-based field service provider platforms like FieldSolutions, are increasingly offering a one-stop service supply chain strategy for the broadest range of manufacturers, geographies, and even other services. To achieve nationwide, same-day service and parts supply with complete transparency and control of technicians' work, MPS service companies are often turning to these newly evolved service platforms.

As organizations look for opportunities to cut costs while simplifying their management strategy for multiple types and brands of technologies, integrated field service platforms offer a valuable opportunity for managing print services providers to expand their capabilities with limited investment and risk. Early analyses indicate that managed print "platform partners"

offer the MPS service companies cost savings between 20% and 50% versus traditional models of field service labor and local vendor networks. What's more, just like the local "do-it-all" mechanic, the integrated service platforms stake their reputations on ensuring nearby, timely, and reliable access to qualified technicians to help manage and maintain entire fleets of technology. ●



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