How to Gain a Competitive Edge in the Crowded MPS Field

A Fresh Look at User-Centric Print Assessment

Overview

As the MPS market matures, it is harder to gain an edge on the competition. After attending numerous MPS trade shows and conferences, it is quite evident that most dealers now offer similar services to their customers. Many of the tools which looked almost revolutionary a few years ago are now common. It is hard to find a dealer who is not offering a full suite of device-centric tools, such as click counting, toner optimization and improved scheduling of supplies. It seems that everybody is doing it. So how do you break out of the mold?

One of the overlooked actors in this drama is the customer itself. All of the MPS tools on the market were oriented towards you – the dealer. They told you exactly how many pages each printer printed on any given day, and how much toner was used. But is all that information truly relevant to your customers? Does it really help them manage their print better?

We are not suggesting that the tools you are using so far are not important. Of course they are important. What we are suggesting is that by providing your customers with information which is more meaningful to them helps you to build a better customer relationship. With most

vendors offering similar machines at similar prices and all dealers using similar tools, isn't a better relationship with your customers the winning ingredient?

If you want to be noticed in a crowd, think about offering something different?   RXforPrint will let your customers look at their printing issues from their perspective: who is printing what, to what device, and at what cost. People make prints; printers do not. By obtaining detailed user print activity data, you can help the customer leverage technology to make their business more cost-effective.

How It Works

RXforPrint runs on Windows networks. It consists of:

- Server, which maintains the database
- Spooler agents, which gather the data
- Reporting components, which ship or expose the print activity data
- Admin client, which allows the Administrator to control it

Data Gathering

Data capture is accomplished by our Spooler agents working closely with Windows Print Spoolers.   RXforPrint™ can see and capture data not only from connected (network attached) devices but also from **non-connected** (local) devices.   All print activity on the Windows domain is visible to us. We gather these kinds of data:
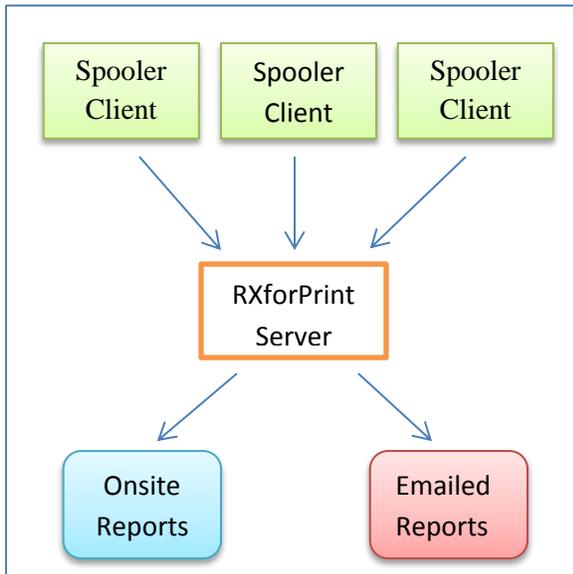
- Who submitted the print job and when
- On which printer was the job printed and when
- How many pages were in the job, and the number of copies printed
- The document name and type that was printed
- The paper size, duplex, color

This data is stored by the server in a SQL based database at the customer location. It can be later queried by our reporting tools, or downloaded to Excel to produce various, detailed reports.

Reports

Reports from the data on user print activity can be produced locally at a customer site, or accessed via cloud services by the dealer and the customer.

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│  ┌────────┐  ┌────────┐  ┌────────┐  │
│  │ Spooler│  │ Spooler│  │ Spooler│  │
│  │ Client │  │ Client │  │ Client │  │
│  └────────┘  └────────┘  └────────┘  │
│         ↘       ↓       ↙            │
│           ┌──────────┐               │
│           │ RXforPrint│              │
│           │  Server  │               │
│           └──────────┘               │
│          ↙            ↘              │
│   ┌────────┐      ┌────────┐         │
│   │ Onsite │      │ Emailed│         │
│   │ Reports│      │ Reports│         │
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Customers are interested in reports which allow them to better manage print activity within their departments. Dealers are interested in data which will allow them to produce better business proposals for their customers. Working from the same set of data allows the dealers and customers to find a common language.

Integration with Other Systems

RXforPrint™ doesn't work in isolation. One of the systems we interface with is Windows Active Directory. It allows RXforPrint™ to capture the user's department id. Imagine when a large printer is shared among multiple departments. How do you allocate costs accurately? Now, the customers will know how to allocate these print costs.

Mapping print activity is also important. RXforPrint™ interfaces with Newfield IT Asset DB™. With a click of a button you can export user-centric print activity data to Asset DB's print mapping tool to depict print activity in proposals.

Mobile Devices

How do you capture information about print activity from mobile devices? To solve this problem RXforPrint™ partnered with EFI. Their tool, PrintMe Mobile®, routes print requests from Apple iPads, and other tablets, through their server. PrintMe Mobile® is integrated with RXforPrint™ so that print activity from tablets is recorded in the reporting subsystem, like any other print activity data.

Security

One of the main concerns to the customers is that their confidential information does not leave their premises. While RXforPrint™ can ship print activity data to outside locations this CANNOT be done without the customer staff first authorizing it via the Admin Client. For example, the names of the documents printed are often considered confidential and customers may disallow it by using the Admin Client.

Benefits to the Customers

Customers now have a tool that helps them better understand and control their print activity:

- Monitor who is printing what and how much it costs
- Detect printing cost "hot spots"
- Implement various "green initiatives" based on reduction in print

- Better project their printing costs into the future.
- Identify workflow opportunities – by understanding printing and finding a better way to manage documents (document management).

By explaining the potential benefits, customers will welcome the opportunity to use RXforPrint™.

RXforPrint™ produces numerous reports which are useful to the customers in monitoring print activity in their organization.   These reports reflect print activity from user's perspective:

User Print Activity Assessment

User Id: DJOHNSON
Name: Dave Johnson
Department: Sales

Job Name	Paper Size	Color	Pages	Cost/Page	Print Cost	User Cost	Pricing Method	Completion	Printer
Microsoft Word - RXforPrint Roadmap to Cloud	Letter	Color	5	0.0545	0.27	0.27	Printer cost	7/11 9:21PM	Samsung CLX
Microsoft Word - RXforPrint White Paper	Letter	Color	4	0.0545	0.22	0.22	Printer cost	7/10 9:22PM	Samsung CLX
Microsoft Word - RXforPrint Roadmap to Cloud	Letter	Color	5	0.0545	0.27	0.27	Printer cost	7/10 9:21PM	Samsung CLX
Microsoft Word - APWI Minutes July 9	Letter	BW	1	0.0350	0.04	0.04	Printer cost	7/10 11:01AM	Lexmark T622

Management now has a flexible tool which helps them view print activity and costs by department and by users. Knowing where the costs are concentrated, and who prints how much, allows them to take specific actions to comply with various "green initiatives".

Installation

RXforPrint™ installation package can be downloaded from the web site, www.apwi.com. The installation is very easy and an installation manual can be found on the same web page. Click on the installation package after downloading it to start the installation process.

The Server uses SQL Server to store the data and it should be installed on a Windows server machine. If you do not have SQL Server 2005 or 2008 on that machine, we will install freely distributable SQL Server 2005 Express from Microsoft.   You can then push out the Spooler agent package to all of the machines which handle printers so they can start reporting print activity data to the Server.

Licensing

Once the installation is complete, you can obtain the RXforPrint™ license by contacting support@apwi.com

RXforPrint™ is licensed per Windows domain irrespective of how many printers and users are on the domain. The product is priced very competitively and is affordable to any client.

Summary

We have demonstrated how you can compete in the crowded MPS field by offering your customers a tool which tracks user print activity. RXforPrint™ offers a common frame of reference by capturing and analyzing print activity data that enables you to focus on print activity issues which need to be addressed. This helps you differentiate yourself from the rest of the field. It enables you to partner with your customers in analyzing document workflows and identifying better technology-based solutions. It creates "stickiness" with customers because of the "consultative" relationship, and the opportunity this provides to design more cost-effective business solutions. In today's tough market, RXforPrint™ enables you to gain a competitive edge.