Case Study

Gales Solicitors
Legal
Office Solutions

SME legal firm transforms printing capability with a Ricoh Office solution supplied by Allied Office Machines

Printing at legal firms, even for small ones like Bournemouth-based Gales Solicitors, is an unusually important support service because legal documents are often over 1,000 pages long. Gales approached local print specialist and Ricoh business partner, Allied Office Machines, and has transformed print and copying into a business-class facility that is efficient, easy to manage and is set to save the business 23 percent a year.

Executive summary

Name: Gales Solicitors
Location: Bournemouth, Dorset
Size: 21 staff
Activity: Solicitors

Challenges

- Legacy printing facility comprising multiple device types from multiple suppliers
- Rising costs and time needed to provide a practical print service
- Manual, time-consuming document handling with some staff crossing the road to another office to scan

Solution

- Ricoh Office Solution provided by Allied Office Machines
- Allied Office Machines Print Audit

Benefits

- Enables a small firm to benefit from a business-class, but cost-efficient print solution
- Expected to deliver savings of 23 percent a year
- Reduces cost per print by around 20 percent
- Removes the entire burden of sourcing consumables and maintaining equipment
- Saves around one and a half weeks a year in administration time spent managing print operations

Challenges

Gales Solicitors in Bournemouth on the South Coast of England was founded in 1948 and provides a range of legal services to clients and businesses in the local area. There are seven fee-earning solicitors and 14 administration and support staff based in two offices on either side of the street.

For legal firms, printing is an important support service because they often have to print or process documents, like court submissions, that are over 1000 pages long. But Gales was facing a problem with the way it handled print, scanning, copying and faxing. The organisation had around 23 printers, one for each member of staff, plus two photocopiers and two faxes.

But over time the fleet of print and copying devices had grown to comprise around eleven different types and makes. The result was increasing costs and time the business spent sourcing the right consumables for each of the different devices. It was also difficult and impractical to have any maintenance contracts for so many different devices, which meant that every time a device broke down, staff would have to find someone to repair it, pay £60 just for a callout, and manage without a printer while it was fixed.

Faxing and copying was more or less manual, with faxes being printed out and put into recipient in-trays and scanned documents, which often contain sensitive information, sent to one central and communal directory. In fact, one office did not have any scanning capability at all and staff had to walk across the road to the other office to scan documents.

"We had no standardisation for printing and copying across the organisation. One of the main problems this caused was having to hold a large supply of printer and copier toners and drums on site and constantly having to re-order supplies," says Mike Powell, Practice Manager at Gales Solicitors.

When Powell started looking into finding a solution, he happened to get a speculative call from Allied Office Machines, a local print specialist and a Ricoh business partner. Although Powell did investigate a number of different potential suppliers, he decided on using Allied after speaking with some of the company's other customers.

Solution

At Gales, Allied has implemented a best-of-breed Ricoh Office solution, comprising a print audit and a mix of products from Ricoh and other printer manufacturers. A key part of the solution was the Allied print audit that looked, in detail, at Gales' use of print and copying during one month. This enabled Allied to provide the best-fit solution for the business. The audit assessed all aspects of Gales' print operation including print volumes, cost of consumables, processes and way print equipment was used day-to-day. For example, the print audit highlighted hotspots where some equipment was either over or underused, as well as all the associated energy costs.

Based upon the results of the print audit, the Ricoh and Allied solution replaced most of Gales existing devices, and includes 21 printers, two Ricoh photocopiers and two Ricoh fax and print products. All the devices are integrated into Gales' corporate network and are managed using Ricoh's @Remote print management software.

Benefits

"The Ricoh solution and service from Allied have transformed our printing and copying capability from a home-device system to a professional, commercial one. What we have effectively is a business-class solution that fits equally well and cost effectively in a small business environment," says Powell.

Gales estimates that the Ricoh solution is set to the save the firm around 23 percent of its print and copying costs every year. The saving has been achieved by having devices that use less energy and by using the Ricoh solution to take a more intelligent approach to using print resources. The Ricoh copiers automatically switch to power saving mode, rather than having to be switched off by someone. Also, giving high-volume but low-cost-per-print devices to secretarial staff rather than to partners, results in more printing done at a lower cost. With these devices especially, the cost per print has been reduced by 20 percent.

RICOH

ALLIED OFFICE MACHINES

@Remote is used at Gales to monitor activity on each device to help ensure it is being used and managed efficiently. One of the benefits of @Remote is to remove the administration overhead usually associated with managing even a small number of print devices.

@Remote allows Allied to monitor every device and spot when new toner is needed or if a fault is imminent. Allied will replace the toner just before it runs out or repair a fault before either causes any disruption to the firm. Powell estimates that removing consumable and device management will save around one and a half weeks every year in administration time.

The Ricoh devices are a significant improvement on the previous devices Gales used. The faxes, for example, are integrated with printers so that only one device, instead of two, needs to sit on a desk. Powell says, "The advantage of the Ricoh devices is that they are faster and are networked, which make it easier to scan and share documents between various partners because scans go to email and are sent directly to the right person."

Powell adds, "At Gales, some of the documents that we frequently have to scan are proof of indemnity documents, like driving licenses or passports. One of the nice features of the Ricoh scanners, especially for a legal firm like us, is that they automatically prevent these kinds of documents being colour copied, which of course is illegal."

The Ricoh and Allied solution also gives Gales a more environmentally-friendly printing facility because the new equipment uses less energy, there is less waste paper from having to print out faxes, and consumables are being used more efficiently.

Powell says, "The Ricoh solution and service provided by Allied are very important to Gales because they save a lot of time and we expect they will help save quite a lot of money. But they also help us service our clients in a better way because when documents come in we don't have to spend so long scanning or processing them, which means that something can be actioned on the documents faster."

Ricoh Solution/Products
- Ricoh photocopiers
- Ricoh fax and print products
- @Remote
- Third-party desktop printers or Desktop printers

"The Ricoh solution and service from Allied have transformed our printing and copying capability from a home-device system to a professional, commercial one. What we have effectively is a business-class solution that fits equally well and cost effectively in a small business environment."

Mike Powell, Practice Manager, Gales Solicitors

RICOH

ALLiED
OFFICE MACHINES