

White Paper



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The Advantages of Document Distribution Solutions

Service Areas

Digital Peripherals Solutions

Network Document Solutions

Professional & Managed Print Services

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Introduction

Documents drive information transference. They inform, prompt us to take action and memorialize events. Documents contain information for human consumption. They exist in multiple forms including those on paper and those that are view only. Many documents exist simultaneously in both digital and paper formats.

Many documents require distribution. Some documents play a role in a process such as accounts payable, client on-boarding or employment and need to be reviewed by multiple staff members. Organizations spend a great deal of time creating, printing, and distributing documents.

Document Distribution Solutions (DDS) utilize multifunctional copiers/printers (MFPs) to improve organizational productivity and reduce costs. Paper based documents can be digitized and handled more efficiently. Electronic distribution can eliminate the cost of printing and of shipping.

Key Findings

- Many documents that are currently printed and distributed physically can be transmitted as digital documents saving time and money. The total cost to print a page in the workgroup including direct and indirect costs such as IT support and staff time is \$.51 to \$.70.¹ The cost to ship a document overnight in an envelope starts at \$13.09.²
- Documents can be scanned and securely distributed avoiding print and distribution costs. Intelligent routing adds additional value and saves time. Intelligent routing allows you to distribute a document at the touch of a button.
- With a Document Distribution Solution in place, organizations are more efficient. Those who work in these workgroups will enjoy higher levels of employee and client satisfaction that contributes to having a high performance organization.
- Working with a partner to implement a Document Distribution Solution is typically the most effective way to both launch and sustain a successful program.

Recommendations

- Audit your current environment to determine, identify existing practices and associated costs to distribute information. Focus on processes that require multiple parties to review documents.
- Identify workflows where documents are distributed routinely to a set group of recipients or to specific back office systems. This type of distribution can be automated and distribution achieved by one touch.

¹ InfoTrends & ALL Associates, Assessing and Benchmarking Document Output Costs

² USPS Priority Mail Express, from \$13.09.

**736.7
Billion**

Number of images
printed in US personal
and workgroup
environments.

Source: InfoTrends

- Examine your costs for sending documents within your organization and to regular external sources. A document distribution solution can easily distribute electronic documents faster and at a much lower cost. If required, documents can be printed by the recipient but you will still enjoy savings in distribution costs.
- Many of the opportunities for savings involve specific workflows. Working with a partner who understands a broad range of workgroup activities from accounts payable to employee or customer on-boarding. Experienced partners can leverage their experience and expertise to your benefit.

What is a Document Distribution Solution?

A document distribution solution uses hardware and software to change how documents are disseminated. It addresses both hard copy and electronic documents and manages information that exists in both formats. It eliminates costs associated with fax, courier and mail. It achieves this using multi-functional copier/printers (MFP's) and software.

A document distribution solution can have applicability in a number of business processes. Some document distribution solutions can automate certain processes such as OCR, redaction, bate stamping, etc. and can include intelligent routing to various departments and recipients. By using data collected as part of the deployment, you can ensure that procedures are being followed and that your solution is a success. Well deployed solutions will increase efficiency and reduce costs.

US businesses spent on average .7% of revenue on courier, messenger and long distance telephone services.

Source: United States Census Economic Census Data.

Legacy Document Distribution

Legacy document distribution is labor intensive and error prone. Incoming mail documents require sorting, delivery, opening, review, and distribution. The document typically has to be utilized, stored for some period of time and then destroyed. Outgoing mail documents require printing, inserting, addressing, and the cost of sending. Larger organizations have mail rooms to assist in completing these functions.

The use of fax services eliminates some of the steps and the costs related to legacy document distribution. It adds the cost of fax devices and related telephone expenses. A fax based solution can improve distribution time and reduce distribution costs but the document is typically printed and can then enter the legacy paper based process. Legacy approaches lack the information associated with a document distribution solution that can track the status, audit use and eliminate losing documents.

Some attributes of legacy document distribution:

- A volume of paper that must be managed, stored and eventually destroyed
- A high reliance on fax devices
- High costs for courier and mail services

- Labor intensive work processes, paper based workflows add cost, introduce the risk of loss and are limited to one viewer at a time

A document distribution solution will address these issues. The return on investment (ROI) will vary based on the number of workflows that can be improved and the volume of transactions.

The Benefits of a Document Distribution Solution

The major benefits of a document distribution solution are seen in particular workflows such as accounts payable or client onboarding. Deployment of a solution is related to improvements in specific work processes. There are a general set of benefits a document distribution solution will deliver.

- **Lower Costs:** A well implemented document distribution solution can provide savings of up to 50% over legacy costs. Savings are found in the time spent distributing, filing, locating and retrieving paper based documents. Reductions in print volume provide hard dollar direct savings of \$.05 to \$.07 per page. A 20% total reduction in print volume for the average worker translates into savings of over \$100 per employee.³
- **Reduced Delivery Costs:** Documents can be sent to any email address or to any designated document repository. You can avoid fax line costs and delivery costs by using an effective document distribution solution.
- **Improved Access to Information:** Digital documents are accessible by multiple users in real time. The documents can be searched and easily located. This allows organizations to provide better service to customers and business partners.
- **Increased Employee Satisfaction:** Staff doesn't need to spend as much time on routine processing. They will have more time to focus on their primary job responsibilities.
- **Improved Management:** A well deployed document distribution program will provide audit trails, secure access and automatic filing for disaster recovery. This can facilitate stronger compliance.
- **Environmental Improvements:** A document distribution solution will result in less print and less transport of documents. Scanning a document on an MFP and sending it over the Internet to the recipient is much more environmentally friendly than placing it in an envelope and flying it so that it is received when needed.

Outsourcing Your Document Distribution Solution

Most organizations lack the expertise to implement a successful document distribution solution. External experts have the experience and knowledge to develop and successfully deploy solutions.

³ Source: ALL Associates.

Working with a business partner allows you to focus on your core organizational mission. The ROI is generally better if you outsource this function. Among the benefits of outsourcing your document distribution program are the following:

- **Faster Deployment:** Experts have the experience and the knowledge to quickly deploy solutions. They have access to a range of tools and business processes.
- **Process Improvements:** The benefits of a document distribution solution are realized by improving specific business workflows. Success is contingent upon addressing the requirements of business units. Typically document distribution solutions are deployed along with solutions for document management, intelligent routing and effective print management.
- **Clear Ownership and Accountability:** Your document distribution partner should have clear ownership for all activities related to successfully deploying a solution. You should expect them to demonstrate compliance with program goals and service level agreements.
- **Training and Support:** Ongoing training for new and existing staff should be included in your deployment.

Best Practices

Document distribution solutions are available from a number of suppliers. InfoTrends has identified a number of best practices that should be considered when choosing a partner including the following:

- **Document and Process Expertise:** Work with a partner with extensive document expertise and who understands your work processes. Local presence is a strong advantage and provides ongoing value.
- **A Range of Technology:** Work with a partner who has access to a wide range of equipment and software. Look for one who has subject matter expertise in your industry and the work processes you perform.
- **An Ability to Provide Excellent Service:** Work with a partner who can deploy a solution and provide ongoing support to ensure continuous improvements.
- **A Commitment to Success:** Success is contingent on the deployment of the right hardware, software, training and change management. Work with a partner who will help you implement and manage change.

Next Steps

A successfully deployed document distribution solution provides a number of cost and efficiency advantages. Regardless of your vertical industry or organization size it is likely a document distribution solution will improve your operation. InfoTrends recommends taking the following steps:

- Appoint someone who will lead this initiative for your organization. They should be held accountable for the success of your program and manage its deployment.
- Solicit input from end-users on existing challenges and problems related to process workflow.
- Develop your goals, objectives, timelines and the benefits that your organization requires for success.

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About InfoTrends

InfoTrends is the leading worldwide market research and strategic consulting firm for the digital imaging and document solutions industry. We provide research, analysis, forecasts, and advice to help clients understand market trends, identify opportunities, and develop strategies to grow their businesses.

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[Comments or Questions?](#)

This analysis was commissioned by Canon Solutions America to help business leaders better understand how today's technology can optimize their business processes and how they can benefit by adopting these proven best practices.

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