CASE STUDY:

Snider Fleet Solutions

Eliminating Print Servers and Delivering a High ROI.

PrinterLogic SaaS enables leading truck tire and services company to migrate quickly and smoothly to cloud-based direct-IP printing.

CHALLENGES

- Print availability and printer deployments were sporadic in a direct-IP print environment.

- A regionally distributed IT environment posed severe obstacles to company-wide visibility and reporting.

- The few print-management tools the company had available were difficult to administer.

SOLUTIONS

- Snider retained direct-IP printing but gained the ability to deploy printers easily and reliably.

- Advanced reporting and auditing tools in PrinterLogic SaaS gave Snider more oversight and insight.

- PrinterLogic SaaS's centralized console and self-service portal provide the entire company with effortless print management tools

Now one of the largest dealers of commercial tires and retreads in the United States, Snider Fleet Solutions, began just over four decades ago as a small tire dealer based in North Carolina. The company has since grown into an industry leader, allowing organizations of all kinds to confidently outsource their trucking and truck services—from single vehicles to multisite trucking fleets, as well as maintenance, roadside assistance, and the purchase and sale of used trucks.

The company employs about 1,500 service professionals across 80+ regional locations, plus two-dozen Michelin retread facilities and distribution centers. These sites vary in staff size, but they have one core characteristic: a need to print easily, immediately and reliably. Yet, until early 2017, Snider had used traditional direct-IP printing across its environment.

"It was an absolute nightmare," says Brandon Boettcher, desktop IT analyst at Snider Fleet Solutions. "Every time a printer went down, or if a user wanted a new printer, they'd have to put in a ticket, and then we'd have to remotely connect and set up that printer. If the test print wouldn't work, we'd have to go into the printer."

When the number of print-related tickets started to overwhelm the IT staff's other duties, the company decided it was time to search for a new solution. The goal was to find a cloud-based solution that would make a direct-IP print environment more manageable.

"We're actively moving everything over to the cloud. Right now, our anti-virus is in the cloud and some of our virtual servers are moving to the cloud. We're trying to move Snider Fleet in that new direction," Boettcher says.

One of Snider's printer providers, Sharp Electronics Corporation, proposed a joint venture. Sharp suggested that Snider migrate to a time-

saving, zero-footprint print management solution called PrinterLogic SaaS. Sharp offered to cover the migration expense if it could happen in 30 days or less.

Additionally, when rolling out new MFPs, Sharp would deploy PrinterLogic SaaS with the MFPs, instead of first rolling out the hardware and adding the software.

Snider liked the fact that Sharp's Advanced and Essentials Series MFPs provided a uniform platform with the same screens and parts so no matter where they were deployed, they would look and act the same. With this in mind, the company deployed 50 Sharp MX-3570V Advanced Series Color MFPs and 25 MX-B455W Advanced Series Monochrome MFPs.

"We not only had a uniform platform for our products, from desktops to high-end products, we proved that we could deliver it in a timely manner, within 7–10 days, versus 30 plus days for everyone else," Boettcher says.

By shortening their deployment cycle, the IT team was able to get ahead of schedule with the other projects they were working on. "We had the first 20 sites done within a week, and we had all of our sites done before the month was out. They were set up in PrinterLogic SaaS, complete with drivers, so when the new printers arrived at their site, [the printer provider] could simply plug them in, configure them however they needed, and then walk away. It was a very smooth process," said Boettcher.

Challenge #1—Creating a Reliable, High-Availability Print Environment

While many enterprise-scale companies tend toward print servers, which have their own set of drawbacks, Snider Fleet Solutions made a

conscious choice to remain with direct-IP printing because of its simplicity and stability. Unfortunately, traditional direct-IP printing is notorious for its lack of manageability, particularly in distributed environments. That led to print-related problems and an increasing number of support tickets.

"That load [of support tickets] was actually starting to outweigh our normal workload. It was becoming more 'Fix my printing issues' or 'Add me to a printer' versus 'Hey, my hard drive stopped functioning.' There was no printer management whatsoever," Boettcher explains.

As those users waited for their support requests to be addressed, they experienced downtime and loss of productivity.

> "I don't have to remote into someone's PC anymore to set up a printer. If they're not in a security group, we just add them into Active Directory and they automatically get those printers."

Solution

PrinterLogic SaaS provides a centralized cloud-based admin-istration console that enables organizations to either implement or retain direct-IP printing while managing their entire printer fleet from a single pane of glass. It integrates fully with Active Directory to provide automatic and accurate deployments without the need for group policy objects (GPOs) or scripts.

"The thing I like about PrinterLogic SaaS is that we don't have to remote into a site. We can just simply set up a policy in PrinterLogic SaaS, and the printer would push that down to that person. And if there's a driver problem, it would be instantly fixed."

As a result of PrinterLogic SaaS's direct-IP architecture, Snider's users are also less reliant on the WAN than they would be with other cloud printing solutions. Thanks to those stable direct-IP connections and reliable deployments, they now enjoy higher print availability.

Challenge #2—Increasing Visibility Into the Print Environment

With a distributed IT environment and a direct-IP print infrastructure, Snider lacked the companywide visibility it needed to determine variables like uptime and printer activity.

It was therefore vital that any print management solution should feature detailed reporting mechanisms that would provide not only insight into printer usage but also the macro-and micro-level information necessary to make important decisions about consumable savings and hardware consolidation.

Solution

PrinterLogic SaaS's powerful, comprehensive reporting and auditing capabilities have given Snider "a clear, cut-and-dry picture of our printing environment," says Boettcher.

"I routinely run reports on our user agents and our printers for things like uptime, ink levels, how many times this user printed on that printer—pretty much anything we need to look at our costs. As a matter of fact, we're using PrinterLogic SaaS reporting system to manage our assets. It tells us that this printer logged an Active Directory clock-in at this time, so that PC is still active and still under this user. That really helps."

Challenge #3—Maximizing Ease of Use in Print Management

In addition to suffering from limited print management options in the company's traditional direct-IP printing environment, Snider's IT staff struggled with poor print management tools. Users simply had no way of having a printer installed without creating a support ticket. Admins had no way of deploying printers to end users dynamically and with confidence.

Furthermore, driver management was all but impossible, which led to client-printer incompatibilities, printing errors, software crashes—and invariably more support tickets.

Solution

PrinterLogic SaaS's ease of use was evident from the initial roll-out. Even though Boettcher and his team chose to migrate their entire printer fleet manually, the majority of the sites were incorporated into PrinterLogic SaaS within a week.

"It was pretty doggone easy," he says. Since then, Snider's users have been able to take advantage of PrinterLogic SaaS's self-service portal, which allows them to identify and install nearby printers themselves with a single click. Boettcher says both senior and new employees have been "impressed" by PrinterLogic SaaS: "They're happy that they don't have to contact us constantly to add a new printer. They can just go: Click, click, done."

But the biggest benefit to ease of use has been driver management.

"That's the thing I love most about PrinterLogic SaaS. I can go in there and say, 'Okay, this driver's out of date and this driver's out of date.' Then I'll go to remove it and it will say, 'All of these machines are using this driver. Do you want to remove and replace or just remove it completely?' And I'll remove and replace it with a new driver. Then—boom!—they're instantly updated."

Conclusion and Savings Summary

Snider is still gathering longitudinal data on its print environment with the help of PrinterLogic SaaS's reporting tools. By implementing PrinterLogic SaaS, however, Snider has been able to cut its time spent on print management and support without having to add a single piece of hardware to its direct-IP infrastructure.

"It's cut back on our ticket counts. That's very helpful for metrics, because we can actually get a better picture of what's going on in the company from an IT standpoint," says Boettcher. "And it's really simplified our print management experience. I don't have to remote into someone's PC anymore to set up a printer. If they're not in a security group, we just add them into Active Directory and they automatically get those printers."

Snider intends to leverage PrinterLogic SaaS's dynamic deployments in the future to deliver printers instantly to its mobile users.