



Case Study: Cincinnati Police Department

PrinterLogic resolves Cincinnati Police Department print server meltdown by eliminating them altogether.

Challenges

- After suffering a print server “meltdown,” the Cincinnati Police Department needed a print management solution that was ultra-reliable.
- The IT staff was constantly fielding calls to carry out and troubleshoot printer installations.
- Routine printer deployment using a print server was laborious and troublesome.

For more than 150 years, the Cincinnati Police Department has been the primary law enforcement agency in the city of Cincinnati, Ohio. The organization has a history that actually extends half a century further into the past: It grew out of a ‘night watch’ peacekeeping patrol when this city of around 300,000 inhabitants was no more than a fledgling village.

These days, the Cincinnati Police Department has more than 1,000 uniformed officers and 125 civilian employees which are divided into three discrete bureaus—Patrol, Resource and Investigations—and spread across 16 facilities. Organized in this way, the force is responsible for addressing matters of crime, disorder, public safety, and quality of life for residents, visitors, and businesses across the city’s 52 diverse neighborhoods.

In the course of their duty, these officers and administrators generate a great deal of paperwork and documentation. Case files have to be filled out and archived. Reports have to be printed. Responses to citizen inquiries have to be written and mailed.

“We are a shop of around 1,000 employees and almost 90 printers,” says Justin J. Meek, Sr., a computer programmer analyst at the CPD. “Until we started using [PrinterLogic](#), we were relying on a print server. One day that server experienced a meltdown, and suddenly half of our printers became unusable over the network. That kind of downtime just isn’t an option in our line of work.”

Meek recalled coming across PrinterLogic online a number of years back. In the wake of the “meltdown,” he started searching for new solutions. PrinterLogic’s “Eliminate Print Servers” message immediately resonated.

Results

- PrinterLogic completely eliminated the organization’s print server, removing its single point of failure.
- Service desk calls from employees regarding printer issues have all but stopped.
- IT can quickly and easily deploy printers according to a number of different parameters.

“Once I realized that PrinterLogic offered a free trial, I thought, what do we have to lose? There’s no better way to see if a solution is right for you than to test it in your actual environment. So we quickly installed in our environment and found that it immediately solved the issues we were up against at the time.”

Challenge #1—Availability and Reliability

The Cincinnati Police Department is a round-the-clock operation that knows crime doesn’t stop because your print server happens to be acting up. Officers need to be able to print crucial case paperwork at any time of day. Therefore, the CPD needed a print management solution that they could count on without question.

“Losing our print server was a turning point,” says Meek. “People are counting on our officers to keep them safe and secure—and yet here we were, relying on a print server that left our print environment vulnerable. That’s why we knew that our next print solution had to be reliable above everything else.”

Solution

By eliminating print servers, PrinterLogic also eliminates the single point of failure that they introduce. Because PrinterLogic treats physical printers like IP printers, it is inherently redundant in a way that guarantees unprecedented availability. That means end-users can continue printing without interruption—even in the event of a WAN outage or a host server failure.

"I love the fact that the printers all end up being locally installed IP printers as opposed to the way print servers handle the installations on the workstations," Meek says. "I can take the server completely offline and everyone is still able to print!"

Challenge #2—Reducing Service Desk Calls

The IT staff at the Cincinnati Police Department was constantly receiving calls from end-users regarding problems with printing and printer installation. It reached a point where they were spending inordinate amounts of time dealing with service desk calls and troubleshooting, leaving them with insufficient time to keep the print environment running smoothly, which led to even more service desk calls. It seemed like a hopeless and never-ending cycle.

"On any given day, we would get tons of calls about printer issues," says Meek. "Their workstation wasn't seeing the printer. Error messages when they would try to print. Everything was printing from the wrong tray. They installed a new printer but it wasn't working. So we would have to take time out to troubleshoot those issues, and all the while there were a hundred other important things we needed to be doing."

Solution

Once PrinterLogic was implemented, the service desk calls stopped. Straightforward self-service printer installs put power into the hands of the end-users. The issues with driver errors and incompatibilities went away, thanks to PrinterLogic's easy, centralized driver management. The ability to make detailed edits to profile configurations and quickly set default preferences in PrinterLogic solved recurring problems with printer settings.

"If I had to list the top three benefits about PrinterLogic, every single one of them would be, 'We aren't getting calls about printers.' I can't tell you what a relief that has been. It's like you can measure PrinterLogic's effectiveness by how quiet my phone is," Meek says.

Challenge #3—Effortless Deployment

Although print servers purport to simplify print management, the Cincinnati Police Department found that the opposite was true. Routine deployments always seemed to take longer than they were supposed to. Lingering complications and incompatibilities then led to increased service desk calls.

"None of us looked forward to deploying printers," says Meek. "The way print servers handle deployments—well, let's just say it was never easy. But everyone just accepts that print servers are the way to manage and deploy printers in a large print environment, only because that's been the default mindset for so long."

Solution

PrinterLogic streamlines deployments while continuing to provide all the options—and more—that print servers do. IT admins have the ability to automatically deploy printers according to a whole host of parameters (e.g., Active Directory user, computer, group, container)—all without resorting to group policy objects (GPOs) and scripts.

Default printers can be set dynamically by simply checking a box. They can even use location-based features to automatically install printers on workstations that fall within a certain IP address range.

"Today our deployments are being handled using IP ranges, Active Directory Organization Units, and by machine name," Meek says. "In each of our locations, a different method seems to work a bit better than the others to get the printers deployed. With PrinterLogic, the preferred deployment method is almost a non-issue, because it's so simple no matter which one you choose."

Conclusion and Savings Summary

In one fell swoop, the Cincinnati Police Department was able to eliminate their print server and their related headaches altogether. Now the CPD uses PrinterLogic exclusively to manage its diverse and demanding 24-7 print environment.

"PrinterLogic just works and it's very intuitive to use," says Meek. "I needed almost no instruction to install it right out of the box, and I had all the printers in our organization deployed in a couple days. In fact, almost all of them were deployed on the very first day PrinterLogic was in place."

The ROI remains qualitative at this early stage, but Meek acknowledges that they have yet to make use of PrinterLogic's powerful auditing capabilities to cut down on consumables usage.

"Once we tap into the auditing features, we think that's going to shed light on a lot of areas where we could make huge improvements to printing habits and resource consumption. There are some significant expenses in there that could stand to be reduced."

"The cost savings we've seen so far are in the time my teammates and I don't have to spend dealing with printer installs and troubleshooting," he says. "It's hard to put an exact figure on that, but I can tell you that it's removed a big, ongoing source of stress for our IT staff as well as our employees. That's virtually priceless."

CS_CINCINNATI-POLICE-DEPARTMENT_FV2_082219

435.652.1288
info@printerlogic.com
sales@printerlogic.com

PrinterLogic