



Case Study: Kennewick School District

PrinterLogic eliminates print servers & integrates with PaperCut to deliver simplified print management for Kennewick School District.

Challenges

- Printing performance and scalability suffered in the school district's print-server-based environment, making it difficult to comfortably support growth.
- Poor print management made simple tasks like renaming or installing printers a protracted process.
- As part of the migration to a new print management solution, the district wanted to implement the PaperCut print budgeting solution alongside PrinterLogic.

As the largest employer in its city, [Kennewick School District](#) in Kennewick, Washington operates a total of 23 schools—15 elementary schools, five middle schools and three high schools—along with a skills center and multiple offsite programs, for a total of nearly 35 locations. It employs around 3,000 staff members and serves close to 19,000 students.

Like any academic setting, reliable, high-volume printing is essential for both faculty and students. To meet this demand, the district maintains a printer fleet of about 1,500 devices across a highly distributed environment.

"We have schools that are about a half-hour drive just to get there," explains Stu Ross, who heads student information systems and the helpdesk at Kennewick School District. "I can't just walk down the hall and fix a printer. I have to plan ahead."

Until the summer of 2016, the district was operating a largely centralized print environment based in its district office. The print load was shared between four different Microsoft print servers, but even this sizable infrastructure was buckling under the weight of the district's current and anticipated growth. Faced with the choice between additional investment in a resource-intensive print infrastructure or migrating to a new print management solution, Kennewick School District started seriously examining the second option.

"We had looked into [PrinterLogic](#) a few years back, but this time we decided to actually test it out," says Ross.

After installing the free demo, Ross and the district took the entire solution straight to implementation, entirely skipping the proof of concept.

Results

- PrinterLogic is now performing the work of multiple print servers with all the necessary scalability to accommodate current and future expansion of the print environment.
- The centralized management and end-user empowerment introduced by PrinterLogic has made life easier for admins, end users and the service desk.
- The school district has found PaperCut and PrinterLogic to be perfect print management partners.

"The PrinterLogic demo was very convincing. We couldn't really see any downside. The product speaks for itself."

Challenge #1—Performance and Scalability

Despite operating four Microsoft print servers, Kennewick School District found that even their enterprise-level print infrastructure wasn't enough to sustain its current printing demands—let alone the increase in number of students and facilities in both the near- and long-term.

"We never really had any server outages. The real struggle was processing time," Ross says. "We had a lot of printing delays. We were seeing print jobs that would take two minutes to print because the queue was so backed up and full of other jobs."

During the long wait for the jobs to process, the users would invariably make frustrated calls to the service desk. "We'd hear about it for sure."

Solution

A single server running PrinterLogic's print management software is now doing the work of all four print servers with plenty of resource overhead to scale for future growth.

"So far it's not showing any signs of slowing," he says. "PrinterLogic allowed us to have the print jobs be distributed in a better way. It's working really well, and I trust that PrinterLogic will grow as much as we need it to grow."

The improved performance isn't just evident on the administrative side. Whereas the service desk was once fielding complaints, it's now getting complements.

"I've gotten so many positive comments about how easy PrinterLogic is to use. People seem to be very happy with it, and we all know how rare comments like that are."

Challenge #2—Increased Ease of Management

Ross cites a number of minor but time-consuming print management issues with the district's previous solution, all of which are best exemplified by the simple renaming of printers in the administration console.

"In a Windows environment, if you want to rename a printer, it's a bit of a process," he says. "Not only do you have to rename it from the admin end, but then everybody has to delete the printer, then re-add the printer, and you have to try to communicate that to your users, which is next to impossible. And yet that's something we encountered on a regular basis."

Even basic printer installation was cumbersome.

"Previously our users had to guess which server they were on and then guess what the name of the printer was. It was not an easy process and it generally ended in a support call. What we wanted to do was create a clear system in which we could make a link to a web page, like you can do with PrinterLogic, where you could have each user choose the printer and install it. A simple, one- or two-step process."

Solution

Thanks to PrinterLogic's acclaimed self-service printer installation portal, the Kennewick School District staff are empowered with the ability to identify and install printers themselves—all with one or two clicks.

"Of all the solutions we've seen, PrinterLogic's is the only truly centralized print management solution that isn't complicated. It's just a simple point-and-click 'Add Printer' on the user's end and a simple 'Add Printer' on the administrative end. It's really straightforward," says Ross. And the same applies to the renaming process.

"With PrinterLogic, all you have to do is change the name. It updates, and you're done. It's the simplest process I've had with printers. It's fantastic. You get so used to dealing with complicated enterprise-level software that you expect it to be difficult. This was anything but. Everything should be as easy as PrinterLogic."

Challenge #3—PaperCut Integration

"The one piece of the puzzle that we were missing was complex budget management system," says Ross.

This was essential functionality the district wanted to add during its migration to a new print management system, but there was concern about whether or not the preferred print management solution, PrinterLogic, would be able to integrate seamlessly with the preferred print budgeting solution, PaperCut.

Solution

As other use cases have shown, the district discovered that PrinterLogic and PaperCut are able to coexist beautifully and complement one another within the same print environment.

"PrinterLogic was really easy to pair with PaperCut," says Ross. "It's almost as if they were designed to work together. We just dismiss the extra features of PaperCut that we don't need, which honestly PrinterLogic does better. They work hand in hand: PrinterLogic pushes the job, and PaperCut picks up that job and records it to its accounting database. It's as simple as that."

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Conclusion and Savings Summary

As of this writing, Kennewick School District's implementation of PrinterLogic is still relatively fresh, so no stringent cost analysis has been carried out. Yet Ross is already able to point to vast amounts of time saved, starting with PrinterLogic's rapid speed of deployment on through its ongoing reduction of service desk calls.

"The only helpdesk calls we're getting right now are related to some universal driver changes. And once all that's straightened out, PrinterLogic will save us hours and hours of support calls," he says.

"Around the office, we've been joking about the PrinterLogic logo—the guy hitting the print server with the baseball bat. It honestly feels like that kind of cathartic relief. We're finally able to get rid of those obnoxious Windows servers and make it work. It makes print management so easy. Simple as that."

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