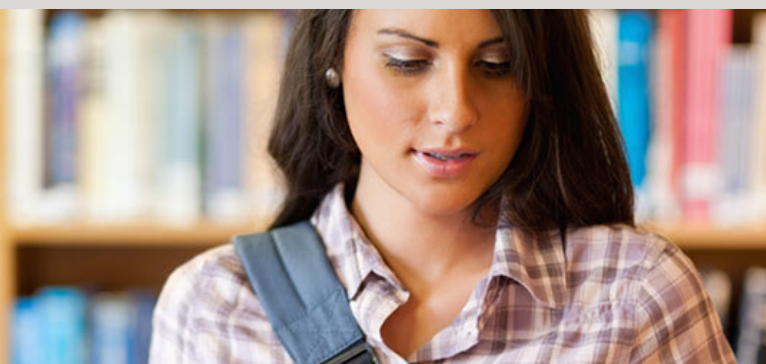# Case Study: La Roche College

La Roche College replaces ThinPrint and integrates PaperCut with PrinterLogic's printer management solution to deliver future-proof VDI printing.

Challenges

- La Roche College needed a print management solution that would solve issues with ThinPrint while facilitating its full migration to a VDI environment.

- Along with the VDI transition, any print management solution would need to work seamlessly with the organization's existing PaperCut software.

- Problems with group policy application and real-time printer deployment resulted in printing downtime and a frustrating user experience.

Results

- PrinterLogic's print management software replaced ThinPrint, providing ease of administration and a scalable, future-proof printing platform for the college's VDI transition.

- The new print management solution integrated seamlessly into the PaperCut-reliant print environment.

- The college solved its legacy printing problems and now enjoys faster, smoother printer deployments as well as more reliable printing.

A private liberal arts college in the North Hills of Pittsburgh, La Roche College offers more than 50 undergraduate majors, six graduate degree programs and one doctoral program, with particular strengths in education, business, criminal justice, psychology, and health and medical sciences as well as interior design and graphic design. The residential college provides a vibrant campus community for more than 1,500 men and women enjoying 30-plus student organizations and an exciting NCAA Div. III athletics program. Founded by the Sisters of Divine Providence in 1963, La Roche College embraces its Catholic heritage while welcoming people of all faiths and backgrounds. With a legacy of social justice and a commitment to international exchange, La Roche College educates students to be lifelong learners and achievers in an increasingly diverse and global society.

In this compact but distributed academic setting, efficient printing is key. Students and faculty regularly print their research, reports, papers, exams, as well as graphic and design work, much of it under deadline or within the limits of the class period. As part of this high-volume, high-pressure print environment, the school's IT department operated and maintained two print servers—one for staff and faculty, the other for students—that hosted around 130 print queues.

In early 2016, the school initiated a migration to a VMware virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) environment. Initially, the systems administrators deployed ThinPrint as their print management solution, but they ran into printing issues with their legacy printers and grew concerned that it would not support their ultimate goal of a fleet of zero clients.

"We thought about looking into an enhanced version of ThinPrint, but the independent consultant we were working with highly recommended PrinterLogic," says Scott Groomes, a systems administrator at La Roche College.

"During our testing phase, which was about a month, we became confident that PrinterLogic was doing what we wanted it to do in terms of getting the printers to the right clients and working with VDI, especially for our labs."

After the trial period, Groomes and his team quickly deployed PrinterLogic with the assistance of PrinterLogic engineers just in time for the start of the academic year.

"Working with the engineers was the easiest thing," he says. "Usually there's always some kind of special workaround you have to do to fit a new solution in your environment—especially for us, for some reason—but PrinterLogic fit really nicely. The implementation and configuration were much easier than most."

Challenge #1—Facilitating and Future-Proofing a VDI Migration

As part of a campus-wide upgrade, La Roche College was in the process of migrating to a VMware VDI solution for its student labs as well as its staff and faculty computers. Unfortunately, ThinPrint, a common print management solution in VMware environments, did not perform as Groomes and his team had hoped.

"ThinPrint didn't have the quality we wanted," he says. "There were some problems, especially with our Xerox printers, and printing was not working as well as it used to before we implemented VDI. And though we're not entirely at zero clients at this point, we will be in a year or two. So we needed a solution that enabled us to push out printers to VDI, especially when we go to zero clients, and we wanted to do it opposite to the way we push them out now, which is through group policy via computer OU."

Solution

Implementing PrinterLogic allowed Groomes and his team to automatically and dynamically deploy printers to the VDI clients based on Active Directory (AD) users or organizational unit (OU) as well as network IP. This meant they could accurately and reliably deploy printers to the VDI clients in the student labs without having to resort to group policy objects (GPOs). Furthermore, the chronic printing problems with legacy devices were resolved.

"PrinterLogic did a lot of the things we needed. It fixed the VDI deployment and printing problems for us," he says. "We've now got eight labs with 100 computers using PrinterLogic, and I also use it for some of our staff and faculty. If we eventually get to the point where we get the VLAN set up for our staff and faculty with the IP address printer deployment, we'd be able to move over to PrinterLogic entirely."

Challenge #2—Seamless Integration with PaperCut

According to Groomes, the college's "biggest concern" beyond VDI support was finding a print management solution that worked well with PaperCut, the printing solution that La Roche uses to charge staff, faculty and students for their print usage and track their printing activity.

"When you've been using a product like PaperCut and it's so ingrained in your system, it's hard to change over—especially in a short amount of time," he says. PrinterLogic, therefore had to integrate smoothly, rapidly and seamlessly into the existing PaperCut environment.

Solution

La Roche College now uses PrinterLogic and PaperCut in conjunction as complementary rather than competing print management solutions.

"PrinterLogic and PaperCut are working great together. We had the PrinterLogic engineers' help with figuring out how to implement it successfully, and it was really easy to do. We haven't had any issues. It was pretty seamless. There was no configuration on the PaperCut side at all," says Groomes.

"For anyone who's concerned that PrinterLogic won't work with PaperCut, our experience has been that it does. It's been fully functional for us."

Challenge #3—Reliable Alternatives to Group Policy Deployment

"When we did a lab survey three years ago, one of the biggest complaints was printing," explains Groomes. "For both VDI and non-VDI clients in our student labs, we always had issues with group policies because we use a product called SmartShield. Every time somebody logged in, sometimes the policies didn't apply, and the student didn't realize it until they were ready to print."

As it was necessary for the user to log out or even reboot in the hope that group policy would then redeploy the printer properly, this naturally led to routine printing issues, user frustration and complaints.

Solution

With PrinterLogic implemented, says Groomes, "now we don't have those complaints. People don't have to go looking for printers that aren't there." End-users outside of the labs are also empowered through PrinterLogic's self-service installation portal, which allows them to identify and install nearby printers with a single click.

"We only have one printer in our main library, so when that goes down, people need to print to other places—especially during midterms and finals. If there's a printer in another building they can print to, they can easily add another printer with PrinterLogic. It's a lot easier than the way we used to have them do it: search for and add a printer to the filepath. And they don't have to reboot or restart or anything like that. That's very helpful," he says.

"What's also nice is that, if staff or faculty need a printer changed or added, I can easily do that for them without them having to log off and log back in and reapply a group policy. They just have to refresh their configuration. The instantaneousness of the changes in PrinterLogic is nice."

Conclusion and Savings Summary

La Roche College has not yet conducted any hard ROI analysis since rolling out PrinterLogic, largely because the VDI migration is not yet complete. However, the organization says that it has already recouped unanticipated costs because of PrinterLogic's ability to solve its legacy printing problems.

"Implementing PrinterLogic as a VDI printing solution also helped us as a non-VDI printing solution," says Groomes. "If we'd thought about it before our VDI migration, PrinterLogic might have been something that we would have used to fix our lab printing problems because that was a big frustration. Now we can say, it's more than just a VDI cost, it's also a non-VDI cost because legacy printer deployment and printing is much more reliable for the students."

The college's move to PrinterLogic has gone so well, in fact, that La Roche may consider implementing PrinterLogic's Pull Printing and Mobile Printing solutions in the near future.

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