Case Study: Clark County, Nevada

One of the largest counties in the United States rapidly implemented PrinterLogic SaaS (formerly PrinterCloud) as part of a larger enterprise printing solution to eliminate 90% of its print servers and streamline print management.

Challenges

- To minimize interruption during a wider printer-fleet migration, Clark County wanted a print-management solution that could be implemented quickly and seamlessly.

- The organization sought to decommission print servers as part of an initiative to reduce infrastructure and trim unnecessary costs.

- The previous end-user printer installation experience was confusing, which resulted in the installation of unwanted devices and print jobs being sent to unknown printers.

Results

- Two admins were able to perform the full migration to PrinterLogic SaaS and a brand-new printer fleet in just two months with "incredible" uptime.

- PrinterLogic SaaS's highly scalable, cloud-based architecture eliminated eight of the organization's print servers while increasing standardization and manageability.

- End users can now effortlessly identify and install nearby printers using PrinterLogic SaaS's intuitive self-service portal.

Spanning a geographic area as large as the entire state of New Jersey, Clark County, Nevada is among the top 15 largest counties by size in the United States. It is home to more than 2.25 million residents who account for around 70 percent of Nevada's total population. It also happens to be home to the world-renowned Las Vegas Strip, which helps to bring over 46 million visitors to Clark County each year.

The county government is responsible for providing services to those millions of residents and visitors. To do so as efficiently and professionally as possible, it operates with a total budget of close to $7 billion and employs more than 10,000 people across 38 departments.

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"We have probably sixty locations," explains Dave Hulet, a senior systems technician for Clark County. "Of course, the core is in Las Vegas itself, but it's spread out all over. We've got locations in the mountains, going down to the state line and out to the Utah border. And in IT, you have to support all of that."

Within that widely distributed network environment, print capabilities are a major component.

"We have all kinds of different bureaus, and it's all public-sector government work, so the print volumes can get pretty heavy," says Hulet. He estimates that the organization prints somewhere between 400,000 to 500,000 pages per month on average.

Following an extremely competitive RFP process in 2017, Clark County contracted with a leading enterprise MSP to serve as its primary print-services provider. Don Davidson, a business solutions consultant for the MSP, was the project lead.

"Once we were awarded the RFP, Clark County was developing the contract," he recalls. "They reached out and said, 'We're looking at cloud print-management solutions. We're really interested in that type of technology because we want to decommission several print servers this year. Do you have anything like that?' And I said, 'Yes, we're actually a partner with PrinterLogic.'"

In less than a day, Davidson arranged for Hulet to see a proof-of-concept of PrinterLogic SaaS (formerly PrinterCloud), PrinterLogic's cloud-based print-management solution.

"It was an amazing demo. The engineer fielded questions and had all the answers. Anything you threw at him, he was just boom, boom, boom," says Davidson.

"Once I saw how it was going to work, I was really excited about PrinterCloud*," adds Hulet. "After the initial setup, managing it from that point forward was going to be really, really easy. It looked like it was by far the most efficient service that we could move to."

Challenge #1—Migrating to a New Solution Quickly and Seamlessly

The centrality of printing to Clark County's day-to-day operations called for a print-management solution that would allow for a migration process so smooth that it was virtually imperceptible to the end user.

At the same time, both Hulet and Davidson understood that Clark County's environment was large, highly distributed and varied significantly from department to department. The introduction of a new print-management solution would also be accompanied by a migration to a new fleet of 500 multifunction printers.

Based on his experience with print servers and conventional enterprise printing solutions, Hulet braced himself for a long, arduous process.

"I was really sweating it," he says. "I was stressing, thinking, 'Oh, no, I'm going to have to recreate every single one of these print queues.'"

Solution

PrinterLogic SaaS features an optional migration tool that automatically recreates existing print-server queues and device profiles in the new cloud-based solution, where they're consolidated and manageable through a single web-based administrative console.

"When the import started, I finished my first server and I saw what got populated," says Hulet. "That's when I thought, 'Oh, yeah, this is going to be nice.' I was pleasantly blown away by how easy it all was for the size of the deployment that it was."

"We rolled out roughly five hundred devices in two months," Davidson says. "Some days we were literally connecting as many as twenty devices because the installation was so easy. We were able to just plug and play. Our uptime was incredible."

Thanks to PrinterLogic's ease of use for the admin as well as the end user, he and Hulet handled almost the entire rollout themselves.

"For a deployment of that size, when you look at from an IT resource point of view, we didn't have to deploy people onsite. We took that completely out of the equation. Two people deploying that many devices in that amount of time? That's huge."

Challenge #2—Decommissioning Print Servers While Increasing Manageability

One of Clark County's primary motivations for implementing a cloud-based enterprise printing solution was to minimize its print-server infrastructure.

"Management wanted to reduce some of our overhead on our VM environment," Hulet explains, "and so they saw it as a way to free up

a lot of resources that could be used for something else or maybe even scale back. We'd been decommissioning servers all over the place, so they saw that as a way for eight or nine servers right there to be decommissioned."

But the reduction in overhead was only part of the county's reason for wanting to eliminate print servers. The lack of reliability—plus the costly effects of downtime—were also key factors.

"If one of the print servers went down or had a glitch, until we got that back up, nobody could print. You might have the fire department and social services on one print server, and if they lose printing because the server goes down, they're all going crazy. We would have to close up several departments while we were trying to get that server either restored or rebuilt."

Solution

By providing a centrally managed direct-IP printing platform that minimizes potential points of failure while simultaneously centralizing print management, PrinterLogic SaaS is uniquely suited to fully eliminate print servers and their many shortcomings. That's given organizations like Clark County the convenience of a streamlined, infinitely scalable, cloud-based solution alongside minimal WAN dependency for increased print availability.

"Whereas a failed print server would put a person out of business, with PrinterCloud*, the drivers come from the cloud, yet the user is tied directly to their printer. So as long as they have network connectivity, they're not going to lose the ability to print," Hulet says.

Clark County's print-server pool has since shrunk from nine servers to just one kept in reserve for specialized cases, and PrinterLogic's unified administrative console has given the organization much-needed clarity and consistency across its print environment.

"Different admins do things a little bit differently sometimes, and that can really muck up the works, too, when it comes to managing drivers and even how they install devices. With PrinterCloud*, the drivers are all there in one repository, so it standardizes things and makes it much, much easier on the admin side. In fact, I'm pretty much the only admin now because it went from a three-person job to a one-person job."

Challenge #3—Enhancing the End-User Printer Installation Experience

Prior to implementing PrinterLogic SaaS, the end-user printer installation experience was tolerable but far from ideal.

"Basically," says Hulet, "they would go to a folder and there would be a whole list of printers there. They would have to pick the name of their printer out of that list. A lot of times people would install the wrong printers, which means they're printing HIPAA data or personal HR files to the wrong printers in completely different buildings, not knowing where the print jobs were going."

This was clearly problematic from a print-management standpoint as well as security standpoint. If users installed the wrong printer, that would leave the administrators with the hassle of identifying and removing the improperly installed devices. And with sensitive documents potentially left sitting in the output trays of unknown printers, there was a considerable element of risk.

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Solution

PrinterLogic SaaS features an intuitive self-service portal that enables users to install their own devices with ease. Using the optional floor plan maps, they can pinpoint nearby authorized printers in relation to their current location, then install them simply by clicking on the corresponding icon.

"They were so used to navigating that awful tree and trying to find their printers and installing the wrong one. Now there's no doubt which one they're installing," Hulet says.

As proof of PrinterLogic's ease of use, this method was what Hulet and Davidson used to deploy the new printers during the initial rollout. The process was so straightforward that most end users understood it immediately, which led to accelerated deployment times.

"Users would go right into the client on the desktop and just click on it. Based upon their department, they decided what building they were in, what floor they were on, and which printer was right outside their cubicle, double-click and install," Davidson says.

"With PrinterCloud*, we were able to dial in which users could see which printers using Active Directory, and everything has a clear name or a description. It just made it so much easier. There wasn't a single complaint. Not one."

Conclusion and Savings Summary

"There's a huge ROI to a solution like PrinterCloud*," says Davidson. "You take the figure that twenty percent of the calls most IT people deal with are print-related. Imagine what the savings look like when you no longer have to deal with those calls. That's the big thing."

Sometimes, he says, ROI is measured in other ways that are less quantifiable but profoundly important.

"It goes beyond the product. It's the whole PrinterLogic team. There was really good synergy from the very beginning. Whether it was sales or support, if we had a question, we'd e-mail and somebody from PrinterLogic would be there. Service like that is something that really resonates deeply with me."

Hulet agrees, adding, "I've spent weekends rebuilding a print server because it crashed and the backups didn't work. We've had some doozy situations where print servers would disappear or go down and get corrupted, then whole departments can't print. I haven't had that problem with PrinterCloud*. You're no longer spinning your wheels doing things the old way. It definitely saves time and frees up staff to deal with more pressing issues."

*PrinterCloud is now PrinterLogic SaaS