Case Study: Loudoun Medical Group

PrinterLogic enabled a multi-specialty healthcare organization with close to 150 locations to centralize and streamline the management of its direct-IP printing environment, saving "countless" hours.

Challenges

- Printer installation in LMG's widely distributed, 150-location environment was a time-consuming manual process that required each affected workstation to be touched.

- The broad-brush printer deployment mechanism could be confusing and inefficient for mobile staff members who frequently changed locations.

- The heterogeneous fleet was supported with a variety of drivers for different printer makes and models, resulting in an inconsistent end-user printing experience.

Results

- Management of the entire direct-IP print environment—including remote printer installation—now takes place through a single pane of glass.

- Highly configurable printer deployments provide roaming medical staff with the printers they need on a per-location basis—quickly and precisely.

- Printer drivers across the organization are now consolidated and standardized in PrinterLogic's common driver repository.

Loudoun Medical Group (LMG) is a patient-focused, physician-owned, multi-specialty healthcare organization—the largest and most diverse of its kind in Virginia. Founded in 2000, LMG now employs more than 1,000 individuals who deliver healthcare services to nearly 500,000 distinct patients throughout 23 medical and surgical specialties across nearly 150 locations. The organization's geographic distribution spans close to 65 miles.

The aim of LMG is to provide its patients with highquality care and services, even as the wider medical and healthcare industry experiences profound change. To do so, the organization has adopted a structural model that fosters collaboration and flexibility among its groups of practices, called "pods," by providing strong, centralized operational support.

Given this unique model, LMG requires a complementary IT infrastructure: one that allows for robust centralized management along with the right balance of flexibility and automation at the remote sites.

"Most of our end users are on traditional desktops, and laptops, with print delivery through Citrix as well," says. Tyson Hoffman, a systems administrator at LMG. "We also have an on-premises EMR solution called eClinicalWorks. We have some locations that, since they're

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specialists, have their own EMRs, but eClinicalWorks serves the majority of our users."

This combination of side-by-side EMR solutions in a distributed hybrid virtual–traditional environment with a dynamic userbase places considerable responsibility on LMG's IT staff. Managing these components becomes even trickier when the organization's vital print infrastructure is factored in.

In 2012, LMG had a fleet of around 200 printers, "and there was a lot of variety of different printers across the board," Hoffman explains. "We had everything from multifunction to single printers to Dymo label printers, the whole entire gamut. And then we handled everything manually as far as printer installs, which led to us wanting to look for a solution like PrinterLogic."

After previewing several print-management solutions, LMG chose PrinterLogic because of its ability to configure accurate printer deployments to mobile staff.

"We had a unique use case where our providers had to move from office to office, and we needed the printers to be able to work within a specific subnet depending on the users' Active Directory OU. So, if a

provider—and this kind of goes into the complexity of how our organization is set up—is at Group 1 and they hit IP 1 or 2, they automatically get a certain set of printers," he says.

PrinterLogic was the only print-management solution to offer advanced deployment mechanisms like these while retaining the stability and simplicity of direct-IP printing.

Challenge #1—Centralizing Direct-IP Printer Installation

LMG recognized the benefits of direct-IP printing, but its geographically distributed environment added layers of complexity to tasks as commonplace as printer installation.

"Every time a new printer was installed, we would have to manually download the drivers and install them, which over time would result in various drivers installed for the same device throughout the office," Hoffman says. "This was especially time consuming in larger offices where there could be up to 50 devices or more that needed to be manually updated."

> "After we got PrinterLogic, we went through a big initiative to replace all of our printers to lease-based printers. The time savings there was countless. From an IT perspective, the replacement of our printer fleet was simple."

Unfortunately, conventional direct-IP printing paradigms make it impossible to cut steps from this process. Printer setup is manual and requires admins to touch each affected machine.

Solution

PrinterLogic's unique fusion of reliable direct-IP printing with powerful centralized management enables organizations like LMG to install printers at remote sites from a single pane of glass. Today, LMG can make single printer changes and push them out to multiple clients.

"With PrinterLogic, it's literally just log into the interface, update the driver, change the IP and push the configuration change out. You simply refresh the configuration on the clients, and that installs and updates the drivers for you. Most of the time you don't even have to refresh the configuration. It happens so fast that end users never even notice they have a new printer."

What used to be a tedious, resource-intensive process is now convenient and streamlined.

"PrinterLogic made our printer installation and the time spent on it go away completely," he says. "It's a better experience for both our IT staff and our end users."

Challenge #2—Providing Accurate Location-Based Printer Deployments

Healthcare providers are known for having fluid, highly mobile staff, and LMG is no exception.

"Our roaming staff is mostly doctors, and they have different schedules in different locations. Previously, of course, when they went to a different location, they would just have printers from each location installed," Hoffman says, illustrating the blanket printer deployment strategy the organization was forced to implement when using conventional direct-IP printing.

That meant every user would receive the full set of printers for a given location, even if they only needed one.

"Sometimes that would get confusing for our providers, because if their printers weren't named properly, they weren't sure which printer to print to," he says.

Solution

PrinterLogic features advanced deployments, which enables admins to deliver printers dynamically to end users on the basis of a specific set of criteria, such as IP address. Unlike traditional print-management solutions, PrinterLogic's deployment mechanism doesn't require group policy, although it does integrate seamlessly with Active Directory.

"We have an 'and' statement with PrinterLogic's advanced groups, so when employees change to another office, they automatically pick up that office's printers once they log into their device," says Hoffman. "PrinterLogic was one of the few products that gave us the flexibility we needed with printing."

Any confusion over choosing the correct printer is gone, too, because PrinterLogic is able to automatically delete unnecessary printers alongside deploying new ones.

"The way we deploy with PrinterLogic, whenever users go to an office, it actually removes the previous office's printers and only brings in their current office printers. It just streamlines the entire process. You only see the printers you're looking for at that office, and it happens automatically as soon as they log into their computer."

Challenge #3—Consolidating and Standardizing Printer Drivers

One of the secondary problems with operating a large, distributed, and heterogeneous printer fleet was driver maintenance. With so many different makes and models of printers to account for, LMG's IT staff had to spend considerable time troubleshooting drivers to identify compatible versions and remove incompatible ones.

"We had cases of multiple people installing different versions of the driver for the same printer. We had a bunch of HPs at the time, and there were some universal drivers versus specific drivers for models, and you would get different printing results for different printers," says Hoffman. That invariably led to help-desk calls, which drained the support staff's time and resources.

Printing issues and inconsistencies like these ran counter to the organization's mission of supporting its providers in a swift and uniform fashion.

Solution

As part of its centralized model, PrinterLogic provides a single driver repository that allows admins to flag known optimal drivers and deploy them consistently across the entire organization—even in distributed environments like LMG's.

"We get a better experience from our printers because we know every single device actually has a specific printer installed on it, and it's all controlled through PrinterLogic," he says.

"There's no [opportunity] for error in PrinterLogic. It really let us concentrate on finding the one driver that we knew was compatible."

Conclusion and Savings Summary

PrinterLogic has been "a huge time saver," according to Hoffman. "We were probably looking at anywhere from five to ten hours a week managing printers, depending on certain calls. Our time went from that to an afterthought as far as managing and deploying our printers is concerned. We simply don't have to manage printing now. It's literally a one-time setup."

"PrinterLogic allows us to serve a larger base of clients," he says. "Without PrinterLogic, if we were still deploying printers throughout our environment manually, we would definitely need more people to help with our printer deployments."

The next-generation print-management solution has also created unanticipated cost-saving opportunities, thanks to its ability to migrate and upgrade entire printer fleets with far less work by instantly and automatically replicating single changes.

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And there are more savings and efficiencies yet to come. Hoffman and his team are currently transitioning LMG's Citrix print environment to PrinterLogic in order to "streamline the entire printing process for Citrix" and "seamlessly manage all our printers like we do already with all our workstations."

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