

From Selling Commodities to Providing Consultative Partnerships: Why MPS Is Becoming the Industry Standard

By Laura Hunt, Director of Marketing and Strategic Partnerships with PrintFleet Inc

Managed Print Services has fast become the industry standard rather than the industry trend once projected. Many dealerships discover new success as they transition from selling the commodity of print and imaging, to offering a consultative partnership to their end users. The result is increased market share within current accounts, competitive differentiation with new clients, cost savings and efficiencies for dealer and end user. In a time of economic uncertainty, a technology driven process such as PrintFleet software allows dealers to bring dramatic cost savings to their customers, while increasing their market share. These customers, in turn, choose them as their single source provider for their imaging needs. Therefore a properly executed MPS program presents the single biggest opportunity for print and imaging dealers.

For many dealers this transition to a MPS program involves a radical shift that can and likely will affect several layers of their business. This is precisely why technology alone is not the answer for a dealership. As an example, let's imagine you live in California and have never experienced a true winter snow fall – as a Canadian residing in Eastern Ontario, I say you're a wimp, but, I digress, let's move on... You wake up one morning and decide "today, I am going to take up snowboarding!" You hop on a flight to Vermont and tackle Stowe Mountain. You arrive and rent some cheap gear; you ride the Gondola all the way up to the summit and make your descent down the mountain, tumbling feet over head, bruising your legs, ribs, behind and not to mention your ego. Snowboarding just does not work that way. You need the right gear: snowboard, helmet, boots, bindings, etc, along with proper training, a smaller hill to practice on and to find what technique works for you, long before you take on a mountain run 4,395 feet above sea level. The same philosophy applies with an MPS program. In addition to obtaining software technology, you must provide sales enablement training, strategy development consulting and integrated marketing programs to help dealerships succeed with the transition to a new business strategy.

How PrintFleet Users Have Leveraged the Software to Evolve their Business Strategy

MT Business Technologies saw the use of PrintFleet technology as an opportunity to provide a Cost per Page offering as a value added service for their current customers, and a strategic way to protect their customer base. Previously a traditional copier dealership, MTBT saw the need to expand upon their offering to bring more value to their customers. The technology has given MTBT the visibility they need to bring order to output chaos; they can use the software to: establish client's current costs, devise a way to be more cost effective without sacrificing efficiency, and go forward with an output management plan. The result is that MTBT sales representatives have become output consultants rather than



traditional copier reps in their customers' eyes. Sam Richmond, Technology Coordinator for Ashland City Schools, and client of MTBT states, "Our Partnership with MTBT has been very good for us; we have been able to actually look at our printing processes to look for ways to improve how we print and manage our output environment. Before this partnership, our approach to print management was inefficient and ineffective." This partnership has been beneficial for both parties; MTBT has helped Ashland streamline their processes, and has gained additional business from the client by becoming a "one-stop-shop" for Ashland's imaging needs.

RJ Young Company, previously a traditional copier dealership headquartered in Nashville, TN, boasts similar success with PrintFleet technology powering their ImageWORKS MPS program. RJ Young has been able to decrease the cost of business with automated meter reads, proactive supplies fulfillment, reduced inventory at customer sites, and streamlined supply delivery, which has resulted in better customer care and experience. Lee Rummage, director of ImageWORKS, notes, "We have changed our talk track: we are no longer the sales reps who are trying to sell the product. We are going in and talking to the people in IT and having a different conversation. We are collaborating and making decisions based on what the customer needs." Young has seen revitalization in their number of clicks, which is why they initially

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moved in this new direction. The deals are getting bigger, and they are able to approach more of their accounts as their single source. Rummage said, "It's going to get more and more difficult for a competitor to go up against us when they are just selling copiers."

SymQuest Group, headquartered in South Burlington, Vermont, is a network infrastructure and document solutions technology services company that was looking to grow its business in a small market. SymQuest saw PrintFleet's technology as a way to provide a high quality offering to its clients at a low cost. "The markets SymQuest operate in are typically small. Our growth strategy is to penetrate existing accounts," states SymQuest's CEO Larry Sudbay. "SymQuest has three components of our business: traditional copiers, desktop laser printers, and network infrastructure/IT. When we looked at it strategically, the majority of our customers only bought one of these segments from us. We needed to offer solutions that would leverage all three business units. When it came to office printing, we adopted a strategy to own 100 percent of customer print volume." SymQuest now has the visibility into their clients' printing environments to work towards owning 100 percent of the print. "The future of Print Management will shift from, 'you call me and we fix it fast', to 'you pay us to keep it running'. The customer's devices will virtually never go down. We will see a shift from a reactive 'break-fix' model to proactive machine maintenance. You need technology and support from a partner like PrintFleet in order to do this. PrintFleet offers a better process," said Sudbay.

PrintFleet offers a complete print management system designed for dealerships to remotely collect and manage critical information from their clients' printing environments. The technology continu-

ally and securely transmits imaging metrics into a dealer's SQL database; this allows dealers to move beyond the basic assessment stage and progress towards ongoing MPS. The real time monitoring of device information allows for ongoing management and maintenance of the end user's fleet, and the ability to implement a service contract for proactive service and supply fulfillment. As PrintFleet software is vendor neutral and our database of imaging devices includes over 20,000 makes and models of imaging hardware, dealers have the flexibility to manage the most diverse imaging environments.

About PrintFleet Inc

Managing over 2.2 billion pages monthly, worldwide, PrintFleet offers data collection, data integrity and back end support within their family of print management software solutions ranging from simple rapid assessment to advanced, independently hosted print management. PrintFleet software coupled with their award winning sales and marketing support programs, empower dealers to build stronger customer relationships while evolving their overall corporate value. PrintFleet has the highest installed base of any print management software vendor in the industry. Additional information about PrintFleet Inc. can be found at www.printfleet.com.

