

Integrated Solutions

Executive Outlook

Why Mobile Printing Is Now A Business Imperative

Aberdeen Group reports that 40% of service organizations intend to utilize mobile printers in 2010, a 12% increase from 2009. What is driving this adoption?

Five years ago the retail floor was the number one application for mobile printing. At the time, retailer investment in mobile printers surpassed the next highest category by more than 20%. Since then, a number of sectors have narrowed the gap, including field workforce, route accounting, direct store delivery, and warehousing and distribution. Usage has grown as organizations have learned about the advantages in worker efficiencies, customer service, and cost savings.

Momentum for adopting this technology continues as the economy begins showing signs of a recovery. A recent survey by analysts at the Aberdeen Group found that 40% of service organizations intend to utilize mobile printers in 2010 — a 12% increase over 2009. As economic uncertainty begins to dissipate, these companies are investing in tools to help them seize a competitive advantage.

Streamline Processes, Reduce Errors

Mobile printing supports the automation of routines such as providing receipts, invoices, estimates, and work orders, and capturing signatures. By eliminating written documents, companies can accelerate these processes

and free up mobile employees to become more productive. This transition can also streamline some of the cumbersome back office operations linked to these tasks. The Aberdeen Group reported that after deploying mobile printers, 59% of respondents saw measurable productivity gains and 38% reported a reduction in duplicated efforts.

Error reduction provides another compelling case. Writing and transcribing documents increases

the frequency of misreads, billing errors, and other complications. Mobile technology enables the user to populate a template rapidly and accurately using drop-down menus. Systems can also be programmed to ensure that customer signatures are captured, avoiding future disputes. Providing a record of the transaction with a mobile printer confirms accuracy without having to wait. Of the Aberdeen survey respondents, 54% noted the deployment of mobile printers led to a reduction in errors.

Corporate executives and small business owners alike know that new customer acquisition is considerably more expensive than servicing existing accounts. Improving the customer experience and building loyalty are paramount for maintaining competitiveness and profitability. Mobile printing provides a solution for addressing this need. Often illegible hand-written statements are replaced by accurate, detailed documents. Quotations are printed and delivered on-the-spot, versus two days later. If discrepancies arise, the employee can address the problem in real time, ensuring that pressing issues are not neglected. Of Aberdeen's respondents, 85% realized an increase in customer satisfaction by deploying mobile printers.

Mobile Printing Improves Financial Results

Beyond efficiency gains and service enhancements, mobile printing can directly impact financial statements. Thermal media is less expensive than the 8.5-by-11 inch forms typically used. Depending on volume, companies can save thousands by switching to a 4-inch mobile thermal printer. Delivering statements at the point of service also eliminates sending invoices through the mail, ensuring faster payment. Accelerating the cash flow cycle frees up capital that can be used to generate more profit.

In addition to private industry, the public sector is also seeing the benefits of mobile printing. Law enforcement agencies can generate thousands of citations per year, requiring a massive administrative effort to process it all. Documentation has to be generated by officers and coordinated among police departments and courts, and the data must be archived in an accessible format. Similar to the impact on field service, automating the mobile citation process impacts each phase of the operation, improving efficiencies, reducing costs, and accelerating payments. Due to the latest recession, municipalities are starved for the productivity gains and financial benefits provided by mobile citation printing.

As the economy begins to show signs of recuperating, companies are looking to capture the benefits of mobile thermal printing. Those that do will have the opportunity to accelerate field and back-office processes, reduce variable costs, improve overall customer satisfaction, and expedite accounts receivables. These clear operational advantages will no doubt help create separation from the competition. ●

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