



Responsible Printing At Salt Lake Community College

Problem: *Steep Consumable Costs and Wasted Paper*

In 2002, System Administrator Ron Wells and Lab Administrator Ryan Harrison put together a report on the printing supplies used in four of the largest "open" computer labs at Salt Lake Community College (SLCC). Their findings were disturbing. During the months of October and November, the four labs went through 906 reams of paper (453,000 sheets) and 32 containers of toner, at a total cost of almost \$8,000. Because SLCC did not charge patrons for printing, there was no way to recover these sky-high consumable costs. To make matters worse, a large percentage of the printed pages ended up in the labs' trash barrels. According to Ryan, "For every 7 or 8 cartons of paper printed, we estimated that only one carton's worth of paper was actually leaving the labs with students."

These were not the only issues confronting SLCC. Lab assistants spent so much time loading paper into printers that they could not provide students with all the assistance they needed. Additionally, the overworked printers were likely to wear out earlier than expected. And the reporting system could only count the total number of pages printed per day; there was no way to determine the time and duration of volume spikes. It was also hard to ascertain if any students were abusing their privileges, e.g., by printing 400-page documents. Finally, without a way to charge for usage, Ron could not pursue the idea of introducing a new multifunction device (a color copier/printer) into the labs.

Armed with their data plus two 50-gallon barrels full of discarded print-outs Ron and Ryan made a presentation to SLCC's Student Technology Fee Board in December of 2002. When they finished, they had the Board's unanimous approval to implement a solution for controlling printing volume and costs.

Solution: *Pharos Uniprint*

Ron had heard about the Pharos Uniprint® system at a conference and thought it might fit the bill at SLCC. He studied the product and was impressed by its features and functions. He liked the ease of integrating Uniprint with SLCC's OneCard system and the richness of Uniprint's reporting capabilities. After evaluating another commercial product and a homegrown application used in another Utah college, SLCC chose Uniprint as its output resource management software. The College selected Blackboard, a Pharos partner, to implement Uniprint in 12 computer labs. This expanded SLCC's relationship with Blackboard, which had previously installed the OneCard transaction system on campus.

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Ryan Harrison
Lab Administrator

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Ron Wells
System Administrator



Salt Lake Community College

- An urban, multi-campus college
- Located in Salt Lake City, Utah
- Serves more than 60,000 students annually, making it the largest institution of higher education in Utah
- Employs 900 full-time and 2,400 part-time employees in faculty and administration positions



About Pharos Systems

Pharos Systems develops innovative products that monitor, track, control, report, and account for document output. The Pharos Uniprint product is the market leader for managing accounting and charge back of network printing. Uniprint is being used in over 800 sites in 18 countries.

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Installation began the week of August 11, 2003. By September 10th, the rollout of Uniprint to the 12 labs was 99% complete. Under the new system, students were credited with 100 free pages per semester. Beyond that, they were charged 2¢ for each monochrome page they printed. Additionally, in order to release a job for printing, students had to swipe their OneCard at the Uniprint release station.

Results: *Reduction in Printing Volume and Waste Plus Some Unforeseen Benefits*

The Uniprint system had an immediate impact. According to Ryan, "We usually go through four cartons <40 reams> of paper a day in the main open lab. On the first day after implementation of Uniprint, we used only three reams of paper." Ron had been told to expect a 40% reduction in printing overall. "We've probably done better than that," he said.

Uniprint is also freeing up lab assistants to work with students, rather than load paper into printers. The exploration of Uniprint's powerful reporting capability is just beginning, but it's already clear that the OneCard accountant will use it for financial reconciliations. With a mechanism for recovering the cost of consumables, it's now feasible to consider introducing new multifunction devices into the labs.

In addition to the expected benefits, Uniprint has delivered some unanticipated bonuses. According to Ron, "It's helped get the word out about Blackboard's OneCard system. Because OneCard is now required for printing, many students are looking into the program for the first time. In the process, they are finding out about the full range of benefits OneCard provides." With OneCard, students can ride public buses and light rail for free, use on-campus vending machines, make purchases at the College's bookstore and dining halls as well as at off-campus merchants, pay tuition bills, access SLCC recreation facilities, etc.

Ryan pointed out another bonus: the 12 labs with Uniprint are much calmer and quieter than they were previously because "people are now printing what they have to print, not what they want to print." One of the labs is on the main floor of the library and has an open configuration, so the reduction in noise is very welcome.

Even though Uniprint was in place at SLCC for less than a month when Ron and Ryan were interviewed, they had already observed enough positive results to recommend it enthusiastically to other institutions. Ron commented, "It's beneficial to colleges because it cuts costs and beneficial to students because it encourages responsible printing. I'm seeing more possibilities in Uniprint than I ever thought there would be."