

## IT Analysis - Printing predictions for 2010

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Although the recession saw the ink dry-up on printer hardware sales, many vendors turned their focus to managed print services to keep the ink flowing. As the economy rebounds, vendors will need to focus on a message of more effective printing practices through device optimisation which can drive efficiency throughout a business - in terms of user productivity, device availability and reduced costs. Despite its pervasiveness, controlling printing remains an afterthought for many organisations who are already taking steps to consolidate desktops, servers, control licensing and adopt lower cost service models such as cloud computing in an effort to reduce costs and improve efficiency. With businesses under ever increasing pressure to do more with less, Quocirca expects the following drivers to increase the appeal of adopting a strategic approach to print management in 2010.

**Cost control:** With the weak economy many organisations face tightened budgets and are forced to extend the life of existing hardware to avoid new capital expenditure. Although budgets may remain tight in 2010, organisations must consider the risk in not replacing/retiring aging printer fleets or optimising investment in existing high performance multifunction devices, which can lead to both hardware failures and service disruptions. The hidden costs of printing relate not only to hardware acquisition but also consumables, maintenance and support costs. An optimised print environment is one that balances deployment of devices at the lowest possible costs with higher employee productivity.

MPS involves outsourcing some or all elements of the print environment based on a pay-per use model that allows variable costs such as toner and ink to be based on actual usage. It does not always require capital expenditure at the outset, as operational costs can be reduced by device consolidation, more effective printing practices and adopting a usage based pricing model. As well as reducing the cost of hardware acquisition,

MPS can significantly improve the quality of service, reduce maintenance costs and improve business continuity.

While take up of MPS to date has been mainly by large enterprises, Quocirca expects more SMBs to consider simple contractual models which wrap hardware, support, services and consumables in a monthly payment. These entry-level packaged services enable smaller companies to benefit from predictable expenses and reduce time spent dealing with printer problems.

**Sustainable IT:** There is now significant pressure on businesses to reduce energy usage in all areas, and printing is no exception. Replacing outdated inefficient printers and copiers with energy efficient multifunction devices to reduce power consumption, can help to shrink the overall carbon footprint of an organisation. Also, the implementation of effective printing practices can significantly reduce wasteful paper and ink usage. These may include enforcing duplex printing, secure or "follow-me" printing solutions or restricting user access to colour printing on more expensive devices.

**Cloud services:** Cloud computing continues to gather pace, but has yet to become a mainstream way of delivering print services. A potential cloud printing service would be based on the following characteristics. Firstly, printing is used and paid for on demand - so resources that are not needed are not paid for in advance; this allows, consumption can be scaled up or down based on demand. Finally, the managed print infrastructure is owned and completely managed by the provider. Other cloud printing opportunities include high end production printing, minimising the need for businesses to invest in high end digital production printers. An example of a services in this area is HubCast which offers a global service that automates production and delivery of print jobs to any user location.

## Comment Article

**Enterprise mobility.** Workers will continue to be distributed across a number of office locations and their homes. Branch offices play a critical role front line services, and emphasise the importance of supporting printing in remote locations. There is also an increasing interest in printing from mobile devices - some which often have limited or no printing systems, for example on the spot parking fines, bed side prescriptions in hospitals. ThinPrint recently announced a cloud printing solution for Google Chrome OS and HP also offer CloudPrint for Blackberry devices. The challenge remains for organisations using these tools to retain control of printing, while enabling mobile workers to be productive.

**Security.** With the best IT security solutions in place, an often overlooked weak link is printers. This includes uncollected confidential output and the fact that as with most networked devices, printers have hard disks, RAM and Ethernet ports all of which to need securing as on any

conventional server. More organisations are recognising the potential security vulnerabilities of printers and are taking steps to protect these devices. Hard disk overwrite and encryption capabilities protect data on the device, while secure print solutions release print jobs using identification methods such as PIN, swipe cards or even finger prints.

While printing is not going to disappear any time soon, the complexity of the cost reduction and security pressures together with an increasingly mobile workforce brings many challenges. Businesses must recognise the impact that these trends have on existing printing practices and take measures to implement solutions and services which enable printing to be carried out efficiently, cost effectively and without risk.

Read more about how organisations have benefited from MPS in [Quocirca's report](#)

### About Quocirca

Quocirca is a primary research and analysis company specialising in the business impact of information technology and communications (ITC). With world-wide, native language reach, Quocirca provides in-depth insights into the views of buyers and influencers in large, mid-sized and small organisations. Its analyst team is made up of real-world practitioners with first hand experience of ITC delivery who continuously research and track the industry and its real usage in the markets.

Through researching perceptions, Quocirca uncovers the real hurdles to technology adoption – the personal and political aspects of an organisation's environment and the pressures of the need for demonstrable business value in any implementation. This capability to uncover and report back on the end-user perceptions in the market enables Quocirca to advise on the realities of technology adoption, not the promises.

Quocirca research is always pragmatic, business orientated and conducted in the context of the bigger picture. ITC has the ability to transform businesses and the processes that drive them, but often fails to do so. Quocirca's mission is to help organisations improve their success rate in process enablement through better levels of understanding and the adoption of the correct technologies at the correct time.

Quocirca has a pro-active primary research programme, regularly surveying users, purchasers and resellers of ITC products and services on emerging, evolving and maturing technologies. Over time, Quocirca has built a picture of long term investment trends, providing invaluable information for the whole of the ITC community.

Quocirca works with global and local providers of ITC products and services to help them deliver on the promise that ITC holds for business. Quocirca's clients include Oracle, Microsoft, IBM, O2, T-Mobile, HP, Xerox, EMC, Symantec and Cisco, along with other large and medium sized vendors, service providers and more specialist firms.

Details of Quocirca's work and the services it offers can be found at  
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