

PROFILE

Name: Copy Products
Location: Upper Darby, PA
Founded: 1978
www.copyproducts.com

CHALLENGE

Solve managed service clients' print management reliability, cost and performance issues proactively while achieving consistent printing quality.

SOLUTION

Copy Products researched and then decided to sell Epson WorkForce® Pro printers featuring Replaceable Ink Pack System technology to address current clients' print management needs and support the firm's business development goals.

Serviceability is King

Office Products Dealer Says Epson Commercial Printers with Replaceable Ink Pack System Technology Offer A Huge Advantage for Their Managed Services Business

"Before we take on a new product line, we like to sit down with our service manager and ask, 'Is this a serviceable product?'"

Tom Minuti, General Manager of Copy Products in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania, asked when considering selling the Epson WorkForce® Pro printers featuring Replaceable Ink Pack System technology. Because Copy Products offers printers and copiers with a per-copy maintenance agreement, their reliability in the field is absolutely crucial to the firm's success.

"Our service manager said it's a simple mechanism, with far fewer moving parts than a laser printer. There's no fuser, so it works at a much cooler temperature. And the ink pack system on the WorkForce Pro printers is intriguing. I think we will have good success."

A year later, Minuti and his team have been amazed at how reliable the printers turned out to be. "They have worked out fabulously...Over the last year, we have had only one service call."

Managed Services

Copy Products, founded in 1978, is an office printer and copier dealer serving Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey. They offer printers, supplies, parts, and labor on an all-inclusive basis, charging clients according to their volume of use.



"Many IT managers don't really have time to deal with their printers, and they become a burden," Minuti explains. "We can handle their entire printer and copier inventory, taking care of maintenance and supplies for a per-copy fee."

Often Copy Products staff will start by assessing a new customer's printer stock. They make sure all printers connect to the network and work reliably. They also meter how many color and black and white prints or copies are made, how many scans and faxes both sent and received.

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“Once we have these numbers, we can do a lifecycle analysis on each machine,” Minuti says. Some will be over-utilized and others under-used, and some too old to work efficiently. “We constantly evaluate what they have and how to best utilize them, and normally we can save our clients a lot of money.”

Minuti says, the firm will most often get rid of the organization’s existing ink jets. “They often will not connect to the network and have no meter, so we can’t tell what’s going on. When we can tell, we find they’re very expensive to operate.” He says when he and his team first saw the WorkForce Pro WF-R5190, with its ability to print up to 50,000 ISO pages¹, they were impressed.

Working at first with a beta-version printer in their own office, Minuti and his people studied how the Epson printers with Replaceable Ink Pack System technology might be deployed. “We looked at how long it would take for someone in our organization to set one up, and how long to load the software. Both were quick. We liked how it connected to our network, and that it would connect wirelessly. Then we put it through its paces, and we were even more impressed.”

One important consideration was print quality. “I don’t like to talk to clients in detail about quality, because everyone has their own criteria and will judge it differently. If you were going to use photo paper for every copy, you would be blown away by these printers. But most of our clients do not use special paper, and so what I can say is, it’s good quality printing, certainly comparable to color laser.”

Working Proactively

As good as the Epson product has turned out to be, Minuti says he wondered, at first, about the reliability of the organization behind them. “Because we live and die by the service we provide, we need to find manufacturers we can partner with. In our experience, Epson has acted like a true partner, and that means something to us.”

Specifically, Minuti says Epson has been a good source of qualified leads, better than most of his suppliers. As a result, about half of the WorkForce printers sold have gone to clients they had not dealt with before. “Finding new customers is a difficult, yet crucial, task, so taking on Epson has been very helpful to us.”



Next, Epson has many programs in place to help protect its dealers from those who sell printers as commodities, at commodity prices. “We appreciate Epson’s efforts, and they help,” he says.

The biggest question is printer or copier failure: Will the manufacturer stand behind them? Although they’ve had only one failure in the field, Minuti says when they did, Epson immediately shipped a new printer to their customer.

“Our business is not all roses,” he adds. “We live mainly in a laser-based, toner-based world, and the heat required for the fuser causes a lot of service issues. It would be nice to think that toner-based printers would have been perfected by now, more than 40 years after their introduction, but that doesn’t always seem to be the case.”

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“If you have a single user of a laser printer, and if we can train him or her properly, then we see minimal service needs,” Minuti explains. But users have to buy the right paper, store and load it properly, and use the right procedure in the case of a jam. In a larger organization, not everyone will receive the training or pay attention if they do. “In many situations, these things can become service nightmares.”

And that’s the key advantage of selling Epson. “Because Epson products keep us out of the service situation, they help us control the dialogue with our customers,” Minuti says. “Instead of having to defend ourselves from ‘Why is this always breaking?’ we have the chance to work proactively, to help our clients improve their use of their printers and help them focus on the business.”



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¹ Replacement ink pack yields are based on testing with ISO/IEC 24712 patterns with Epson’s methodology in Default Mode, printing continuously. Yields may vary considerably for reasons that include images printed, print settings, temperature and humidity. Yields may be lower when printing infrequently or predominantly with one ink color. All ink colors are used for printing and printer maintenance. For print quality, part of the ink from the included cartridges or ink packs is used for printer start up and a variable amount of ink remains in the ink pack after the “replace ink pack” signal.

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