



An Excellent Report Card for Blue Valley School District's Print Shop!

Blue Valley Unified School District's Print Shop had a good thing going. Print volume was high and operators were hard at work delivering jobs in a timely manner.

But at Blue Valley, good enough isn't good enough. The District knew they could do better and set out to take a good Print Shop and make it great.

The District's print shop was reaching capacity with its existing workflow and structure. Carbon-based copy request forms required a manual process that resulted in four-day turnaround times for basic copy jobs. Scanning hardcopy jobs was a bottleneck and the quality of originals was degrading. Only 10 to 20% of jobs were being archived. Pre-press time was spent dealing with fonts, applications, and imposition issues.

Blue Valley used one vendor for their copiers and another vendor for production. Only one-third of their copier fleet was networked before the change to the new copier program. Business cards were being sent out for printing. And basic repetitive functions in the print shop were becoming another bottleneck as the volume grew.

Blue Valley determined that 14% of the building fleet was producing 86% of the volume, with the majority of those jobs being printed on distributed copiers. The District knew that many of those jobs could be printed centrally, on efficient production equipment, saving staff time and money for the school district.

Setting High Standards

This growing K-12 school district in the heart of Kansas City serves more than 20,000 students and has about 3,100 staff. Blue Valley has 32 schools and plans to open three additional school buildings in the next two years.

A focus on academic excellence means that Blue Valley students have a graduation rate of 98.2 percent and the highest ACT average test scores in the metro area, far exceeding state and national averages.

Blue Valley was the only school district in Kansas with over 5,500 students to achieve No Child Left Behind's Adequate Yearly Progress.

It's no wonder that Blue Valley's Mission Statement aims for unprecedented academic success and unparalleled personal growth for every student. The District's commitment to excellence sets high expectations for all - including the Print Shop.

Setting Goals

"Our overall goal was to balance out some of our volume, that would promote a healthy printing system in each building and across the district while controlling costs," recalls Jason Gillam, Assistant Director of Business Operations.

Through surveys and focus groups, the District determined that printing and copying is personal and different for everyone. A solution had to accommodate job submission that worked for web-savvy and non-technical users, and everyone in between.

Decision Time

Blue Valley decided it would be wiser to invest in new technology to meet the production demand instead of throwing more people at an outdated solution.

Blue Valley selected RSA for a number of reasons. The RSA solution was a modular, proven system and Blue Valley would not be a test case. RSA was the only single company with all the components they needed, so there would not be any finger pointing between different vendors. RSA's relationships with many equipment vendors gave them confidence that the solution would work now and in the future.

"We always believed a lights-out automated Print Shop could be a reality and RSA was able to deliver on this desire. We held an open house the other day. Nobody was manning the Print Shop. All of a sudden, the production printers started printing. We could not handle the increased volume without such automation."
Jason Gillam

Rochester Software Associates, Inc.

69 Cascade Drive
Rochester, New York
14614

Main 585.262.2690
Fax 585.262.4808
E-mail RSAinfo@rocsoft.com
Web www.rocsoft.com



Blue Valley sets and achieves high standards for both their students and their Print Shop.

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APPLICATION STUDY

The Report Card

The District's print shop has added capacity without adding people. Before the solution was in place, the print shop completed less than 50 print jobs a day. Now, they're turning around about 100 to 200 orders/day, allowing the staff and educators to focus on their jobs. "When we started with this process we had about 75% black and white being printed outside the Print Shop," notes Gillam. "With the RSA solution, everything is tracking toward a fifty-fifty split."

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Jason Gillam

Teachers Give RSA an A+

"Teachers are thrilled," raves Gillam. "They need quick turnaround. They need control. They need to know when they are getting the job back. With WebCRD and QDirect.SCAN, teachers get the job delivered on-time. We've been able to deliver on that promise. We have a system now where they can get status updates on their jobs over the web. Teachers know if a job is waiting for approval. Blue Valley's focus is on ensuring that resources are directed at students to support our mission, vision and goals. We're giving teachers and staff the right tools to take the pressure off them when it comes to reproducing documents. It's not often that the printing production staff gets to help drive success in the classroom."

Print and Reprint

"What teachers really like now is the ability to reorder. Our teachers tend to reorder jobs on a regular basis. They are building that repository now on WebCRD, whether the job is coming in on QDirect.SCAN or WebCRD." This is possible thanks to QDirect.SCAN's "Scan to Archive" capability. Users scan, ticket, and submit hardcopy jobs directly from a supported MFP (Multi-function printer). The user receives a confirmation page, directly at the MFP, with thumbnails on the reverse side. The job can be queued for manual or automated printing, based on business rules defined by the Print Shop. With Scan to Archive, scanned jobs can be archived for future ordering, via the web, using WebCRD. This means no more hunting down originals or losing quality by making copies of a copy of a copy! The AutoStock module in WebCRD allows staff to reorder standardized forms, tests, assignments and stationary items. Business cards and other Variable Data personalized documents can be ordered as well.

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If Blue Valley had just adopted either QDirect.SCAN or WebCRD, it would have helped drive volume to their centralized Print Shop, but the combination of RSA's integrated Scan and Web-to-Print solutions makes the two components better than the sum of their parts. Scanned jobs can be reordered via the web, and jobs submitted via the web can flow through QDirect's order management logic and accounting logs. This allows Print Shops to batch release jobs based on business rules such as location. This way, all jobs destined for a specific school can be printed at the same time, to facilitate courier delivery.

Lights Out, Productivity Up

Another automation feature that Blue Valley appreciates is the ability to update a job's status simply by scanning a barcode. Instead of returning to a computer to locate a job, select it and mark it printed or in shipping, an operator can scan a laminated sheet with standard barcodes representing different stages. Then they scan a cover sheet for each job they wish to update with that status. Job status is instantly updated in WebCRD for operators and users to see. Shipping labels can be scanned and the tracking information can be available for end users, without any typing. This time saver can enhance customer service and eliminate mistakes.

"We always believed a lights-out automated Print Shop could be a reality and RSA was able to deliver on this desire," adds Gillam. "We held an open house the other day. Nobody was manning the Print Shop. All of a sudden, the production printers started printing. We could not handle the increased volume without such automation."

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Blue Valley has achieved a level of automation that enables their Print Shop to handle the increased volume.