



APPLICATION STUDY

Washoe County Schools turn a printer purchase into a redesigned workflow—and gain results.

The challenges of that status quo

In early 2009, the Washoe County School District in Nevada purchased new digital production printers to service the print requirements of 92 schools and over 63,000 students. Administrators were committed to leveraging the new equipment to the hilt, but as their expertise is in education rather than print services, they hired a consultant to help them utilize their resources to their fullest potential.

The consultant recognized very early on that the challenge in optimizing the print center's equipment lay in how district faculty and staff submitted job requests to the print center:

The district's teachers and faculty had a single "sneakernet" method of requesting print jobs, which posed several challenges and consequences.

Faculty, teachers and administrators had to fill out a preprinted form with copy and finishing instructions, attach the form physically to the hardcopy documents to be copied, and bring them to the print center or send them through the district mail. A print center employee would accept the job, manually create an electronic job ticket, and enter the job into the copy queue.

Not making the grade

This labor-intensive process was laden with potential for human error, disconnects, and frustration. Teachers and staff unfamiliar with the print center's capabilities would request features and services not provided by the print center. Request forms would have blank fields or illegible instructions, which meant a print center employee had to track down the users to find out what they really wanted. This resulted in emails and phone calls back and forth to clarify job specs.

The print center could perform makeready tasks on the documents to be copied, but quality suffered because of the state of the original. Additionally, scanning, "cleaning up", and copying documents takes longer, utilizes more resources, and is very expensive.

Teachers were not able to see what the final job would look like, so they were surprised or even displeased with the documents they received. Teachers would send jobs back to be reprinted or they would avoid using the district's print center, instead using expensive alternatives.

"We're going to be able to double our volume, save a great deal of cost to the district, and even make a little money. And it's all because we've never been this 'on the ball' before. That, in large part, is thanks to WebCRD. It has been a great investment—and one that we'll surely get a great return on."

Rachelle Guinan
Print Shop Supervisor

The print center was centrally located, but teachers would usually drive up to 30 minutes to drop off their jobs because using district mail added time and uncertainty to the process.

Faculty and staff didn't know where their jobs were in the production cycle. Jobs are time-sensitive, so it was common for concerned teachers to call the print center to make sure their tests and handouts would arrive on time. This took operators away from performing their primary tasks and teachers away from classroom activities.

Washoe County School District's print center was handling about 800 jobs per month. But Rachelle Guinan, Print Shop Supervisor for the school district expressed her confidence in her team's ability to do more. "Once we got the new digital production equipment, I knew we could handle more work, and handle it well. The problem was getting the jobs onto the print shop floor."

Working with their consultant and with Rochester Software Associates, Inc., that problem was overcome with WebCRD.

WebCRD makes the difference

WebCRD is a powerful Web-based submission tool that helps the print center offer more print services, make them easier to access, and make them more affordable to deliver and support.

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Before adding WebCRD from RSA, teachers would drive 30 minutes to drop off their jobs to make sure they were done on-time!

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APPLICATION STUDY



Washoe County School District's Print Center 'went digital', saving time, and money, while increasing customer satisfaction!

For Washoe's faculty and staff, WebCRD is similar to an online wizard that guides them through job submission. Users are prompted to complete any necessary printing/finishing instructions. Many of the fields are pre-populated with defaults set up by the print center—eliminating improper requests like unsupported binding methods. All required fields must be entered before being allowed to submit the request, so there are no incomplete instructions that must be followed up on by print center staff.

The user is given a price for the job as well as a PDF of what the job will ultimately look like, for final validation. Upon approval, the user can check the status of the job anytime over the Web, without assistance from a print center staff member. However, the ability to check job status is virtually unnecessary as most jobs are received, produced, and delivered within 24 hours. The bottom line for faculty is an easier, faster and more reliable job submission process with added peace of mind, knowing that their jobs will be produced correctly and on-time.

"If the print center handles the documents, the teachers can teach. That's what they're here for, and that's how the Washoe County School District ensures the top of the line education we promise our families."

Rachelle Guinan
Print Shop Supervisor

Big production without the big production

WebCRD provides the print center with significant benefits, as well. Operators no longer have to decipher written instructions or scan and copy hardcopy jobs with varying degrees of quality. They don't have to manually create job tickets and route incoming jobs. With WebCRD, as pre-approved digital files with complete, accurate, unmistakable instructions are submitted to the print center, an electronic job ticket is automatically created and the job is routed to the appropriate production device. Print center operators are more productive, less frustrated, and they can focus on improving quality of print services, delivery time, and the customer experience.

District executives are satisfied with the solution because of its ease of use and productivity-enhancing benefits, to be sure, but they also love it for an additional reason: financial gains. Copies and prints produced on an individual school's office equipment can cost approximately ten cents per page as opposed to producing the jobs at the print center, which typically cost approximately one cent per page. Along with the improved quality due to the print center's higher end production equipment, the district expects to redirect about 800 jobs from the schools to the print center, saving a significant amount of cost per job. At the same time, the district is planning on turning the print shop from a cost center into a profit center by insourcing work from local businesses. With online submission and a streamlined work process, taking on work from the outside is expected to generate a steady flow of incremental revenue.

"We're going to be able to double our volume, save a great deal of cost to the district, and even make a little money," Guinan explains. "And it's all because we've never been this 'on the ball' before. That, in large part, is thanks to WebCRD. It has been a great investment—and one that we'll surely get a great return on."

Now that the implementation is complete, Washoe is taking a proactive approach to marketing the RSA solution to encourage adoption district-wide. At the individual school level, they are working with teachers and faculty to redirect jobs to the print center. The print center recently held an open house for everyone—from members of the board of directors and the school board, to secretaries and faculty. The response was tremendous, generating significant interest and excitement around the solution's potential. Teachers are extremely enthusiastic about spending more time in the classroom interacting with students instead of in line at the copiers. After all, as Guinan says, "if the print center handles the documents, the teachers can teach. That's what they're here for, and that's how the Washoe County School District ensures the top of the line education we promise our families."

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