

Unlocking Transformation for Mid-Size Companies through Mobility and Security

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Mobility has become one of the biggest and most visible disruptors of technology in the office environment. IDC calculates there are 266 million smartphones and 184 million tablets currently in use in the U.S. – the growing availability of these devices in office environments has driven many organizations to make mobility a high priority for investment. However, while investment has focused on access to business data, documents, information, and processes, one area of adoption that greatly lags behind is connecting mobility and the print environment.

While the office may become increasingly digital, many businesses still have the need to actively print. Historical IDC research shows that for most mid-sized companies the majority of printing occurs due to company requirements, users' personal need to back-up digital files with a hard copy or to maintain a personal in process workflow, such as printing out emails or documents that may be a work in progress. Yet for workers in mid-sized environments using mobile devices as their primary tool for work printing, limited access to printers/MFPs can create bottlenecks in productivity.

Making Print Fit in Mobile Work

A recent IDC survey revealed that 35% of tablet users and 29% of smartphones users in mid-sized companies wanted to print from their mobile devices but did not know how. This is concerning as 58% of smartphone and tablet respondents noted they spend the majority of their workweek outside the company office. As the mid-sized company worker increasingly becomes a traveling worker there is an increasing need to enable enterprise applications and capabilities, such as mobile printing, to allow anytime/anywhere access of content. Limiting mobile business user access to such critical information will only perpetuate document silos and exacerbate the digital disconnect felt by mobile users.

Business users are looking to their company for support in eliminating bottlenecks in mobile printing especially when it comes to moving between company locations. In the IDC survey when mobile users were asked about different mobile use cases they would like, but are unable, to perform, the majority of responses highlighted the disconnect that exists for mobility and traveling employees. For example, one of the most requested use cases is mobile printing from the road to one's office printer, for either oneself or someone else to pick up.

Those users that are able to mobile print state that they have found that printing from a mobile device gives the same or similar value to printing from a desktop or laptop. In addition, the benefits to mobile printing manifest themselves in improved productivity, higher transactions, and customer/worker satisfaction. More than 50% of mid-sized respondents who mobile print stated that it helped to improve speed in reviewing documents, the number of transactions they completed, and increased overall customer satisfaction rates.

The Security Imperative

Enabling mobile devices for print clearly has its benefits, but, like any other device accessing company networks, must be secure. Mobile print should be part of an overarching print security strategy, as a secure print environment equals a secure IT environment. As a device on the company network, a printer can serve as an access point into the overall IT infrastructure. The risks associated with an unsecured print environment can be costly and severely damage an organization's internal and external reputation.

Historical IDC research has noted that unsecured print environments within mid-sized companies are responsible for almost half of all security breaches. Organizations that fail to secure their print environment face data loss, regulatory and compliance issues within their industry/company, and morale impacts. Print has the unique aspect of managing data/documents/information in both digital and paper forms, and those organizations who secure their print environment are seeing great benefits to doing so. IDC survey research shows that mid-sized companies who enable print security not only reduced or eliminated the risk of a security breach but also found that more effectively managing print gained efficiencies, including the ability to better audit content trails. Bringing mobility and print security together is key to ensuring a productive and protected document workflow that will drive transformation.

Organizations today have a true challenge on their hands when it comes to keeping up with the demands of the mobile worker while maintaining a secure IT environment. Mid-sized companies need to understand how their workers want to use mobile print solutions, what bottlenecks limited enablement is causing them, and ensure that connections into the print environment are secure. The road to transformation in both mobility and print security involves not only investments in solutions but finding a vendor partner that clearly understands the needs of the mid-sized market.

For more information on mobile and print security we encourage you download a copy of IDC's *TechScape: An Increasingly Mobile Computing Landscape is Changing the Game for Printers and MFPs in Mid-Sized Companies*.