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THE TRUTH ABOUT DOCUMENT SOLUTIONS FOR REMOTE WORK

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1 **Introduction**
The pandemic has accelerated the trend to remote working, which research shows is likely to continue into the future. Employers must adapt working practices, including document imaging and workflow, to this new reality.

2 **Management oversight**
The shift to flexible working should not mean that print administrators lose oversight and control of document imaging. Lexmark provide the solution.

3 **Security**
Robust data security protocols and measures are required to prevent remote working becoming a vector for data risks and exposures.

4 **Sustainability**
The gains made in environmental sustainability for document imaging should not be lost in the move to flexible working. Continued centralised purchasing control and consideration of total cost of ownership is essential.

INTRODUCTION

The pandemic has accelerated the progress of many social trends, such as online shopping, the cashless economy and remote working. And it looks like remote working is here to stay – a recent survey of just under 1,000 firms by the Institute of Directors (IoD) showed that 74% plan to maintain the increase in remote working, with more than half planning to reduce long-term use of workplaces. A smaller survey of employers whose businesses had already cut workplace use, suggested 44% of them thought working from home was proving "more effective".

Successful businesses always examine working practices critically to see if there is a better way of doing things that improves efficiency and reduces the cost base. So in the challenging economic climate produced by the pandemic, businesses are finding it difficult to justify the cost of maintaining large office premises, providing car parking and paying city centre salary scale weighting. Modern cloud based technology now provides the means for breaking down traditional working patterns to produce a better work-life balance for staff and reduce overheads for employers.
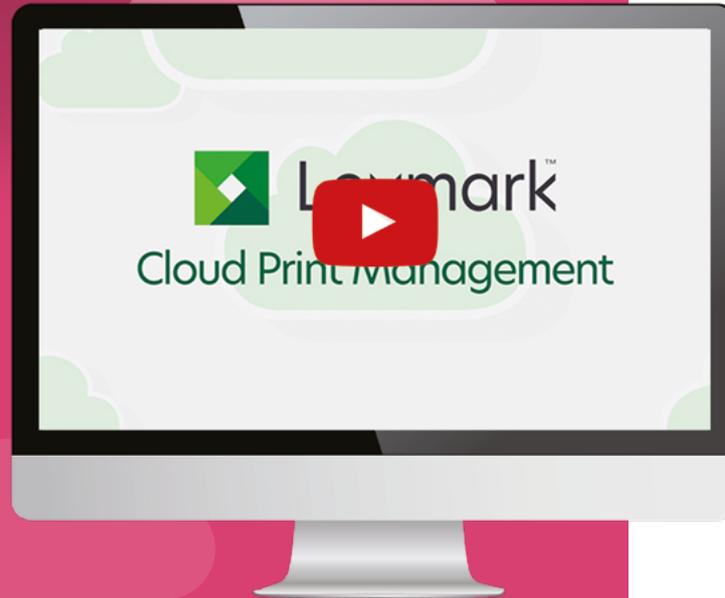
The developments accelerated by the pandemic are breaking down the working patterns of the last century. Businesses have found that many employees are very productive when working from home and there is less need for entire teams to be in large office buildings on a daily basis. More likely workers will be seen to visit a central location for meetings or on a part time basis, but fewer will keep a permanent desk.

But how can employers support their flexible working staff with the correct IT systems to ensure the same productivity at home as in the office? Cloud printing for document imaging provides users with secure access to their printing network via the internet. This remote access can facilitate a variety of flexible working practices by allowing users to prepare work at any location, and then just send the print job to their print network via the cloud where it will be stored ready to be accessed at any connected printer at a time convenient to the user.

MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT

An essential element in any support strategy for flexible working is the ability to manage document imaging devices remotely. To address this need Lexmark have developed their Cloud Print Management service to fully support both PC and mobile printing giving organisations the ability to to initiate print jobs from an iPhone®, iPad®, or Android™ smartphone or tablet, mobile users can release their documents at any Lexmark device in their organisation, whenever and wherever they have been allowed access.

90% produce a better work-life balance for staff and reduce overheads for employers.

Giving users the ability to release output from any authorised device across one or many locations, while curbing the use of hard-to-track personal printers. It's also possible to cut back on the number high-featured devices on the network—tabloid printers, finishing capabilities and colour, for example—by encouraging sharing via print management. Plus eliminating on premise print servers, multiple print drivers and queue management while reducing the admin burden on IT staff.

Never wanting your devices to be at risk, Lexmark's partner service even provides Cloud Fleet Management meaning in house IT teams can have control over any device settings, security policies, firmware updates and workflow deployments with no additional infrastructure or software required.

Working across the Lexmark range, Lexmark's Cloud Print Management provides a flexible, secure solution for any business working from any location.

With the cloud now being a universal data repository and Computerworld UK stating that 80% of organisations predicted to migrate toward the cloud, hosting, and colocation services by 2025, Lexmark have developed their Cloud Connector platform to enable users in multiple locations to quickly scan, store and share files. The platform simply negates the need to courier paper documents between locations, or scan documents to a different storage drive before uploading to the cloud.

77% of enterprises have at least one application in the cloud

Users can simply connect to Box, Dropbox, Google Drive and OneDrive using an intuitive interface to browse available cloud service file locations to print documents or store scans—with access to all the file formats your device natively supports. What's more is the ability for each logged-in user is able to only see their registered accounts and accessible files, once again providing top level security no matter which device is used.

Midwich together with Lexmark can advise on the design and implementation of a comprehensive document workflow solution that includes management oversight with Lexmark's Cloud connected services and appropriate print devices for any business application.

80% of organisations are predicted to migrate to the cloud, hosting, and co-location services by 2025

60% of organisations use cloud technology to store confidential data

SECURITY

Although flexible working has its benefits, by cutting down on commuting time and increasing productivity, it can also be a gateway to new data risks and exposures. Quocirca's Print 2025 Report found that 63% of IT decision makers say that security is the most important area of investment for their organisation between now and 2025. In the same Quocirca survey 54% of IT decision makers says that the ability to provide security expertise, services and solutions will be an important supplier selection criterion by 2025.

To avoid security risks, businesses must understand what they involve and how they can provide an extra layer of protection to secure critical data. Considering the full implications of allowing access to corporate data on personal devices – especially when they have no control over it – is paramount. Flexible working presents organisations with a whole raft of data security issues covering both the use of print and MFP devices used in employees' homes and remotely accessing devices in corporate offices.

63%

of IT decision makers say that security is the most important area of investment between now and 2025

54%

of IT decision makers says that providing security expertise, services and solutions will be one of the most important supplier criteria by 2025

Lexmark have designed their GO Line range to be suitable for both home and office working and the security features are integral to giving each customer full peace of mind with full spectrum protection.

Their highly developed security ecosystem is designed to overcome the most complex data protection challenges on your device and network.

Organisations that permit employees to use their own devices for home working should implement robust security policies that outline clearly the corporate position on data security and governance, setting guidelines on how information should be shared across the business, and which tools or systems can and cannot be used. Securely managed home devices should synchronise files to network servers and should not store company information on personal drives at home. This ensures that network security is not compromised by employees' misuse of their using their own devices.

Midwich & Lexmark work closely together to provide our channel partners and their customers information on the correct data security applications and protocols to protect and secure networks. Please do not hesitate to contact your Midwich Account Manager or a member of our specialist print team to find out more.

Bryan Willett
Chief Information Security Officer

SUSTAINABILITY

In an office setting, print management can be easily administered with workgroup multifunctional devices providing efficient, secure and cost-effective provision for departmental document imaging and workflow. The move to flexible working sees a shift away from workgroup MFDs to personal multifunction, printers and scanners. For IT managers and print administrators, the challenge is to provide portable document imaging devices without losing control of oversight, security and costs.

When considering what sort of print devices to provide for home use, considerations of cost of the device, cost of consumables, servicing and physical size all come into play. In addition, environmental sustainability is now a key factor in all organisations purchasing plans. The increase in remote working should not mean that the hard-won advances in environmental sustainability in the office workplace are lost but just extended to achieve the same results wherever employees are working from.

Centralised purchasing of document imaging devices ensures a business maximises its buying power. Devices acquired personally by staff can lead to a situation where no one knows what machines the organisation owns, how they are being utilised or what the true cost of ownership is. Users buying their own MFDs, printers and scanners can choose devices that are totally unsuitable for their work needs, generating unnecessary cost.

Centralised purchasing also applies to consumable items because allowing employees to purchase paper, toner and ink-jet cartridges on personal expenses can be a very expensive alternative to centralised purchase and control.

When considering what type of devices to provide to staff, for example laser printers or inkjet MFDs, the critical factor is total cost of ownership (TCO) over the lifetime of the device and not just its initial price point. Inkjets have a lower initial purchase price compared to laser devices, but the cost per print using inkjet cartridges is disproportionately expensive compared to the cost per print for laser toner. The life and replacement cost of parts also has to be factored in, as it can greatly influence the TCO.

In order to exceed environmental sustainability compliance all Lexmark's printers and MFP devices conform to the Blue Angel, EPEAT and Energy Star certified international eco-friendly standards. As well as this their intentional recyclable design means that over 90% of the materials used within their hardware products by weight are recyclable, the majority being polymers and metals that are formed into components through injection moulding or stamping operations. Lexmark is also an industry leader in the use of reclaimed plastic with 21% average post-consumer recycled (PCR) plastic content, by weight, across all new Lexmark branded toner cartridges, with the goal to increase to 25% by 2022.

As experts in document solution technology Lexmark & Midwich can advise on the most suitable devices for customer needs taking into consideration application, TCO and environmental sustainability. For our channel partners we offer a full pre-delivery inspection (PDI) service, ensuring all devices we supply are ready for immediate customer use, without costly complications.

88%
of SMEs value sustainability

70%
of SMEs value sustainability

WANT TO LEARN MORE

If we have whet your appetite and you want to find out more, our Midwich & Lexmark experts are here to help. We can even offer you a complimentary demo unit so we can walk you through our Midwich distribution service as well as specific Lexmark device features and show you how our solutions can really make a difference to your business.

Request a call back **Find out more**