

Diagnosing Healthcare Technology

Managed Imaging and Printing Services and Desktop Lifecycle Solutions -

By John Tikins and Danny Papineau

The Canadian healthcare system is under intense pressure and scrutiny to improve the quality of care. Canadians are demanding that healthcare institutions shorten wait-times, improve patient management, protect privacy and modernize the delivery of health services.

But they must address all of these critical objectives in an environment fraught with numerous challenges. Institutions today face significant budget restrictions, considerable staff and skills shortages and major organizational restructuring.

In addition, the Canadian Medical Association and Ipsos-Reid issued a research report in June that found that almost 75 per cent of Canadians are looking for more than the "Status Quo" scenario in healthcare. The CMA described this as "a continuation of the current situation with highly-limited access to private care and no commitment to timely access to care beyond the September 2004 First Ministers' agreement."

Some 81 per cent of Canadians said that a "Medicare Plus" scenario would have a positive impact on overall healthcare in the country. This scenario would include "a care guarantee and a separate, publicly funded safety valve to help patients get timely access to care."

Healthcare providers are more aware than ever of the important role information technology (IT) solutions can play in delivering and supporting the health services to meet these expectations and address the needs of a growing and aging population.

In many ways, healthcare institutions are facing the same issues as private sector enterprises. They need to keep their clients satisfied. They need to reduce costs. They need to align their business processes and IT resources. And they need to increase their productivity and operational efficiencies in every area.

An institution's imaging and printing infrastructure and its desktop computing environment are two such areas where the right IT strategy and services can substantially improve management processes and cost structures.

Doctors, nurses, radiologists and the host of other clinicians and management staff produce, share and distribute massive amounts of medical and administrative documents and information, from patient records and images to procurement orders and equipment files.

Also, the healthcare workplace is evolving and becoming increasingly mobile and wireless and adopting innovative applications such as electronic health records, drug information systems and diagnostic imaging systems.

With a comprehensive strategy and a portfolio of customized managed print and desktop lifecycle services from an experienced and trusted IT partner like HP

Services, organizations can reduce their costs, protect their existing investments, boost productivity and maintain a more efficient and effective information environment.

Printing a Clear Picture

The key challenge for organizations is getting a clear picture of the total cost of ownership (TCO) associated with their imaging and printing solutions. Many don't have an accurate assessment of the ratio of employees per printer or the amount they are spending per employee for printing.

Such fundamental data is essential to determine the most cost-effective mix of departmental and personal printers, copiers, scanners, fax machines and multi-function products, as well as the right time to upgrade and refresh devices.

In a typical business environment, printers, supplies and support can make up 10 to 20 per cent of an IT budget. Paper output is growing at 21 per cent per year. And up to 50 per cent of all help desk calls are printer-related.*

HP's Managed Imaging and Printing Services take a holistic and flexible approach to developing and delivering the solutions that can enable institutions to understand and reduce their ownership costs, get the best return on their investments and improve their productivity and efficiency.

With no upfront capital expenditures, HP can develop tailored solutions where HP completely manages and optimizes an institution's print infrastructure, or does so jointly with them. By employing a monthly service fee model, as well as pay-per-use and flexible payment options, organizations can benefit from having HP's most innovative technology and products and the assurance that their expenditures and utilization rates are maximized.

HP's managed print services encompass planning, deployment, management and support. In the planning phase, HP enables the organization to obtain a detailed and accurate understanding of its needs through assisted and self-assessment services, as well as other services for discovery and design, to develop the right strategic plan.

This assessment is a critical starting point to provide the tools and insight to make fact-based decisions, find hidden costs, determine current usage, and ultimately establish a business case for creating a more effective imaging and printing environment.

In deployment, HP implements the plan, while minimizing disruption to the infrastructure, and delivers such services as hardware procurement, installation and provisioning. HP assists in identifying and securing the most appropriate and advanced output devices to meet the needs of users.

HP can assume day-to-day management of all devices and systems, including remote monitoring, onsite fleet administration, service portal, job accounting and document capture. Finally, HP maximizes uptime and usability through hardware onsite support, education and training, supplies management, output management, priority technical phone support and Global Service Desk.

Managing technology effectively can reduce TCO immediately. Also, with the rich capabilities of new technologies, HP ensures that this new functionality is used to its fullest with the HP Workflow, Change and Transition Management program.

As an ongoing objective, HP's consultants prioritize opportunities to change user habits, adopt new technology, and seek out and plan for the implementation of new services that further reduce TCO and improve users' abilities to retrieve and share information. Among these solutions are HP's mobile devices and application mobilization services.

Delivering Desktop Value

Solutions and tools are required to enable the accurate assessment and effective management of critical desktop systems, from workstations to handhelds, throughout their entire lifecycle, from purchase to disposal.

According to industry analyst firm Gartner, hardware and software purchase prices account for only about 20 per cent of today's IT budgets, with more than 70 per cent being spent on service and support.

These costs include desktop systems maintenance, repair, support and upgrades. As there is a large potential for cost overruns in these areas, it is vital to identify, manage, and control factors that impact TCO. The gap between acquisition and TCO is particularly wide in the desktop computing arena.

With HP's Desktop Lifecycle Solutions, organizations can tighten their control over procurement and asset tracking, speed and simplify deployment, keep pace with fast-changing technology and maximize user satisfaction and productivity. These solutions encompass the entire desktop computing lifecycle, including planning, deployment, management and transition.

They also incorporate Gartner best practices to help evaluate and enhance the return on IT investments, including automated asset management and software distribution, systems and user management, business protection, standardization and scalability, and end-user training.

Planning solutions focus on aligning IT strategy with business objectives. HP's free TCO Snapshot assessment tool provides a summary view of how an organization's IT operations measure-up against industry best practices, allowing it to quickly spot areas where savings can be made and discover which HP solutions can help bring costs under control.

HP also offers leasing and financial services to enable organizations to acquire equipment cost-effectively, conserve capital, eliminate disposition costs and take advantage of technology refreshes.

Deployment services ensure that large-scale, complex or customized implementations of HP and multi-vendor desktop environments are managed and integrated seamlessly and cost-effectively. They include HP Managed Deployment Services that provide for professional project management, complex product integration, and detailed reporting and tracking.

In addition, organizations can benefit from HP Factory Express Services to deliver ready-to-use PCs tailored to their specific needs, including custom system settings, system hardware integration and software application loading. HP also offers a suite of on-site services designed to fulfill installation, move, add, change and disposal requests.

Management services address the day-to-day support to maintain and optimize a distributed client environment. HP Client Management Solutions simplify systems deployment and migration, hardware and software inventory, application usage tracking and reporting, policy-based software distribution and automated troubleshooting.

To streamline the migration to new hardware and operating system platforms as needs change, transition services are essential. With such services as Asset Recovery, an organization can reduce its hardware capital expenses and disposal costs, as well as avoid environmental and data protection issues.

With a methodical strategy and an extensive suite of services to manage their print and desktop environments, healthcare organizations can become more adaptable, productive and cost-effective in all their operations. They will also be able to lay the foundation for emerging healthcare applications and systems, as well as concentrate on their top priority of delivering high-quality health services -- quickly, safely, reliably and economically.

* Cap Ventures, Gartner and Giga Information Group

A white paper available on www.longwoods.com.

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