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APPLICATION STUDY

M.I.S. Print Gets the Job Done for Global IT Group at SunGard

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M.I.S. Print saves the day at SunGard by saving time, manpower, and money.

Think of it as a high tech high wire act.

When SunGard PowerPartner's Sam Wurst began transitioning his data center from its legacy printer to a new PostScript Production Printer, he knew one wrong step could mean huge consequences.

"We had lots of proposals," says Wurst, Director at SunGard's Mt. Laurel, New Jersey, data center.

"Moving smoothly and quickly was very important to us."

SunGard PowerPartner, part of the SunGard Online Investment Systems group, is focused on delivery of market data services.

But SunGard PowerPartner's own financial interests—that is, its monthly invoices to clients depended on its data center performing seamlessly. Transitioning smoothly meant Wurst and his group had to find a way to convert all its LCDS data files to PostScript and fast.

"Since we only have minimum staff here, we could not afford the effort or time involved in converting this data," he says. "Every form, every program, it would have been a major effort."

Which is where M.I.S. Print comes in. M.I.S. Print converts data into efficient PostScript files designed specifically for networked high-speed production environments. M.I.S. Print converts host applications including LCDS, DJDE and Metacode data streams without requiring program or job process changes. M.I.S. Print also uses existing printer resources such as JSL, FSL, LGO, IMG and FNT in order to support prior investments in forms, job set-ups, fonts, logos and other important document components.

Bridges mainframe & PostScript printer

For Wurst, M.I.S. Print provides a highly useful bridge between the organization's mainframe and their PostScript production printer. "It fits nicely in between our MVS mainframe and the printer. And best of all, M.I.S. Print meant we didn't have to bring in programmers and devote hours and hours to the conversion effort."

M.I.S. Print runs on the print controller of most production printers.

Since SunGard's printer did not have a print controller, M.I.S. Print was installed on a stand-alone Sun workstation with direct 3211 channel input and TCP/IP output options. Print data is received by M.I.S. Print and sent to the printer as PostScript.

Since M.I.S. Print processes up to 10,000 ppm, it can drive multiple printers simultaneously. RSA guarantees 100% dot-for-dot conformance on the target PostScript printer.

Wurst says the solution is already paying off. "This system is much less expensive, plus we have LAN connectivity. We're not there yet, but it does give us the capability of connecting anywhere with our network."

M.I.S. Print offers other advantages as well. M.I.S. Print's resource management interfaces make it easy for users to edit, print or view existing printer resources such as forms, fonts, job set-ups, logos and images. Customers can modify and manage resources while jobs are printing, as well as view or sample resources on the screen or to the printer.

"Another advantage of M.I.S. Print is its reprint feature," says Wurst. "Once you send a file over to the server, the job can be printed or archived for later reprinting without delays and reprocessing at the host."

Before M.I.S. Print, when we would print reports and for whatever reason the user didn't receive it, we would have to rerun the job. It's pretty hard to do that when files are temporary in a job stream—they are deleted and then you have to come back and recreate everything. But with M.I.S. Print, it's simple to reprint the job again," he continues. "That feature really saves us a lot of programming time."

"We received excellent support from RSA," he notes. "Everybody really pulled together so we could make our deadlines."

Sam Wurst, Director

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From installation to production in one week

The conversion was a snap: "RSA loaded all the resources onto our system so when the printer came in, everything was already there," says Wurst.

What made this an even more exciting high wire act was that the legacy printer went away just as the new printer was coming on board: no redundancy, no safety net, just a keen desire to make sure everything worked right, and worked right now.

"The entire process from installation to production took less than a week to complete," he explains. "Within three days, the M.I.S. Print was running legacy jobs. For the few technical issues that we had, RSA was there to straighten them out right away."

"As it got toward the end of the month when we'd have to begin generating invoices on this new system, we were totally ready," Wurst adds.

Training was another important benefit for the data center. "We have three day work shifts that span throughout the week," explains Wurst. "RSA trained each individual staff member by setting up special training conferences for each operator. They conducted the training sessions online, walking each operator through the system. As a result everyone got training right away."

Wurst found RSA's technical support beneficial as well. "They would dial in directly to RSA's Sun workstation, diagnose the problem and solve it, so whatever was going on was resolved in a matter of minutes. And once it was resolved, we would call RSA's technical support and they would back up our complete system, burn a CD and send it to us.

"We received excellent support from RSA," he notes. "Everybody really pulled together so we could make our deadlines."

Asked if he considered other alternatives, Wurst shakes his head. "We had a lot of proposals but M.I.S. Print was the best solution. We couldn't have reprogrammed all these documents in time and we wouldn't have had the budget to do it. M.I.S. Print precisely suits our needs and we got our invoices out in time that month. Everyone really went out of their way to help."

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