

Networked Printing Recommendation and Plan

October 14, 1999

Jeanne Boyle
Associate University Librarian for Public
Services and Communications

Donna Cryan
Manager, New Brunswick Copy Services

Library users currently expect to be able to photocopy our paper resources. Increasingly, they also expect to be able to make hard copies from our growing collection of electronic full-text reference, journal, and reserve resources. No one is currently able to initiate printing with cost recovery from any workstation provided by the Libraries except in a limited way at the Alexander, Chang, and Robeson Libraries. At LSM, Douglass, Kilmer, and Robeson students may print using workstations in labs in the Libraries provided by university computing. A similar arrangement provides a small lab for graduate students at Alexander Library. Faculty and staff may use these RUCS student labs in the libraries if space permits, but they are off-limits to members of the public, including alumni, Friends, and other guests. At Dana, library workstations are run collaboratively with campus computing, and printing has so far been provided without charge to everyone. As university computing in Newark implements additional security measures, it is anticipated that printing will be available only to members of the Rutgers community.

The lack of networked printing in each of our libraries is disruptive to scholarly processes. Users must download or email search results and fulltext, move to a lab or leave the library to print their findings, and then return to the library to pursue print items referenced in their search results or to get assistance for the next steps. By forcing our users to finish the process outside our reference areas, we are removing the librarian from the loop at this critical transition time for our profession and our users. Concern about the lack of networked printing is a barrier to use and acceptance of the new electronic reserve service. This means that the libraries are providing equipment at a level lower than undergraduate labs. This situation is a growing concern of collection development librarians as additional full-text files are acquired. The libraries should be providing the best equipment possible, especially since many faculty still have limited access to good equipment and connections.

RFP for Printer/Server Solutions

Over the past year, a systemwide group of librarians, library staff, and library administrators developed systemwide requirements for networked public printing. Members were Ka-Neng Au, Jeanne Boyle (chair), Donna Cryan, Gary Golden, Ann Montanaro, Francoise Puniello, Samson Soong. Working with university procurement and contracting, the task force issued an RFP for either printer/server software or outsourcing solutions, evaluated responses, and arranged for demonstrations from finalists. When it became apparent that substantial new funding would be required for a common systemwide solution, the Request for Proposal was withdrawn. Costs to implement the products from the two bidders whose technology would work in our environment cost \$95,860 and \$113,030.

Digital Printer/Photocopiers

We subsequently learned that brand new digital printer/photocopier equipment that can be networked is becoming available from standard photocopier companies. Printer/photocopiers allow users to send print jobs from workstations to a networked printer/photocopier and use their Copicard to release their jobs and make their copies at the same cost as regular photocopying. This solution satisfies systems staff concerns that all print software and job queues reside in the printer/photocopier rather than on our building servers. It also will eliminate librarian concern about having printers they must manage in the reference areas and the perceived need for additional staff to handle paper jams and other difficulties. Most importantly, a printer/photocopier solution will integrate networked printing into existing photocopy operations, including equipment acquisition, service, and supplies, and will rely on current photocopy staffing resources and routines. Printer/photocopiers can be purchased from \$8,700 to \$34,000 each or be leased under other terms.

During September and October, we visited MCS Canon, Oce, and Toshiba showrooms for demonstrations of networkable printer/photocopier equipment. We had previously been to demonstrations for Xerox, Minolta, and Kodak equipment. All equipment was comparable in terms of overall functionality, including reliability, security, and user interface, and impact on our technological infrastructure. Toshiba is our first choice for the following reasons: it is the only model that allows users to name their print jobs and protect them with a unique personal password. It has a small footprint, is extremely quiet even when copying or printing, and has a very good purchase price. Oce offers a higher capacity machine that may be appropriate for us in some circumstances, but it comes with a very high price tag and does not allow use of a unique personal password. Canon also does not allow a personal password. Xerox would require a personal computer in addition to the printer/photocopier.

SROA Recommendation

SROA funds are available for a pilot project for networked printing in the Alexander Library. Using the information gained during the RFP process and printer/photocopier review, it is recommended that the funds be used to purchase two printer/photocopiers for the Alexander Library. One printer/photocopier would be placed in the reference photocopy area and the other in the Copy Center. Drivers for both machines will be installed on every public workstation in Alexander, and users wishing to print will be able to select the printer/photocopier most convenient to them. Pending a positive outcome of testing currently underway with a Copicard unit and approval from the Libraries' Systems Department, the model recommended for this pilot is the Toshiba DP3580.

Systemwide Networked Printing

For the library system overall, we recommend development of a flexible, integrated, and multi-modal approach that depends primarily on printer/photocopier technology. Copy Services is currently working with university Procurement and Contracting to develop an RFP for selection of a photocopy vendor for the Newark and New Brunswick libraries, and printer/photocopier equipment will be included. Printer/photocopiers will be strategically located in the Dana Library and in all New Brunswick libraries where the Libraries provide equipment. Delivery of new

equipment is expected by January 1, 2000.

Three New Brunswick libraries will need a different approach. Photocopy equipment in the Chemistry, Physics, and Alcohol Studies Libraries is owned by the related hosting departments. Each department could be offered the option of replacing an existing photocopier with a printer/photocopier once our price is established during the bid process. Alternatively, a separate public workstation with its own printer and card reader could be provided. Copicard, however, cannot work in this configuration. Implementation of such a solution in these libraries will depend upon an upgrade and upgrade or change to the debit card system. The upgrade or change will be completed by September 2000.

The Robeson Library has its own arrangement for copy services with an outside vendor. The current arrangement for standalone printing from two public workstations is suitable for current needs. We should offer the vendor the opportunity to purchase a printer/photocopier once our price is established during the bid process.