

Scan More, Print Less - save your small business a small fortune



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Process Used

This report references previous AIIM survey findings, each of which is referenced within the document.

About AIIM

AIIM has been an advocate and supporter of information professionals for nearly 70 years. The association mission is to ensure that information professionals understand the current and future challenges of managing information assets in an era of social, mobile, cloud and big data. AIIM builds on a strong heritage of research and member service. Today, AIIM is a global, non-profit organization that provides independent research, education and certification programs to information professionals. AIIM represents the entire information management community: practitioners, technology suppliers, integrators and consultants. AIIM runs a series of training programs, including the Certified Information Professional (CIP) course. <http://www.aiim.org/Training/Certification>

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Introduction

Small businesses can save money by replacing their print and copy culture with intelligent document scanning.

From the day you plug in a new printer or copier it starts costing your business money. Plug in a scanner and it can actually save you money. Scanners cost about the same as a printer, and today a dedicated scanner costing between €150 and €500 will scan documents at the same speed most printers spit them out – double-sided too. Scanning incoming documents allows them to be saved straight to the local PC or network, providing easy access and sharing of the information. This immediately decreases the need for further copies, speeds up communications, allows documents to be transmitted worldwide in seconds and reduces additional costs.

And the cost is not only to your business. Think of how many trees it took to print your weekly sales figures or take a look in the toner re-cycling box - you may or may not be concerned about sustainability and Green IT but in so many ways, scanning and all-electronic document processing could be helping save the planet – and saving you time and money in the process.

In this paper, we provide calculations, based on AIIM’s research, detailing how much your existing print and copy focused processes are costing you, how to manage the documents you receive in the mail and the how to deliver documents to your customers and suppliers. Based on a few simple scenarios, we can show you how investing a few hundred Euros in a scanner can bring payback in just a few months – even for the smallest of companies.

Small Businesses

99% of all European businesses are small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and between them they provide two out of three of all private-sector jobs and contribute to more than half of the total output of all businesses in Europe. Furthermore 9 out of 10 SMEs are actually micro enterprises with less than 10 employees. These small businesses form the backbone of the European economy.

So why is it, when it comes to using technology to assist SMEs, that all we hear about is enterprise-wide solutions? Most small businesses don’t have, want or need corporate document management systems, intra-repository data connections or complex document governance procedures. What they have is the need to manage their information and costs in the most efficient way they can. And one of the significant costs to an SME is that of printing.

Direct Costs

Printer/Copier Costs

The average European employee prints around 30 pages per day according to 2011 research by Ipsos² and Kyocera⁵ with approximately 62% being unnecessary. This of course is despite the fact that more and more business communications are being done electronically. AIIM research¹ shows that approximately one third of invoices now arrive as PDF attachments; however, the survey also found that most people (77%) are likely to print off at least one copy of the electronic document, with many also making further copies.

| | Inkjet | Mono Laser | Colour Laser |
|-----------------------------------|--------|------------|--------------|
| Cost of Ink/Toner | 30 | 60 | 100 |
| Number of pages per refill | 1200 | 4000 | 2000 |
| Cost Per Page (EUR) | 0.03 | 0.02 | 0.05 |

Printer/copier costs

Paper Costs

The actual cost of paper varies massively based on the type used and tends to be low in comparison to the cost of the ink/toner. However, any business should be able to readily identify the amount spent per annum on paper and therefore also identify the associated cost per employee per year, week and day.

| Employees | 5 | 10 | 20 |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Cost per day | €8.00 | €16.00 | €32.00 |
| Cost per week | €40.00 | €80.00 | €160.00 |
| Cost per month | €160.00 | €320.00 | €640.00 |
| Cost per year | €1,600.00 | €3,200.00 | €6,400.00 |

Print and postage costs

Postage Costs

An often unseen and expensive side-effect of printing is that of postage costs. Each letter/invoice/brochure that is printed (€0.02 per sheet) will need to be put into an envelope (€0.10), have postage added (at least €0.50) and be posted. All of these being performed by a member of staff.

The total costs associated with printing and postage are shown in the table above based on the following assumptions:

- €0.02 per printed/copied document (mono laser)
- 30 printed/copied documents per day per employee as an average
- 1 outbound letter per day per employee

Indirect Costs

Of course the direct costs of printing and copying have a significant financial impact on any business, but these are not the only issues. Capitalisation has led to an industrialized and energy-driven society and a by-product of that is global warming. It has been widely reported that trees are an important tool in the fight to against global warming³; given that businesses are consuming large amounts of this paper and paper comes from trees, any reduction in the amount of paper consumed will have a positive effect for the planet.

With the average employee printing over 6,000 sheets of paper per year we can see that a 10 person company accounts for 5 trees per year (12,500 sheets of paper come from one tree⁴).

Add to this the reduction in costs and energy used during the recycling of ink and toner cartridges, and any reduction in the amount of printing performed must be of both huge financial and social benefit?

Scan More, Print Less

We have already mentioned that increasing amounts of documents are being delivered into businesses electronically, but these account for less than a third of the total documents arriving. So what happens to the remainder of these documents?

Documents within a workplace can be shared, edited, have information taken off them and signed. Each of these actions can be done at least as efficiently with an electronic document, and areas such as document sharing are vastly more efficient with electronic versus paper documents.

Case Study

Getting There is a 10 person producer of travel books and has just received an order from a large bookstore for 1,000 books. The order has arrived by post to the company secretary.

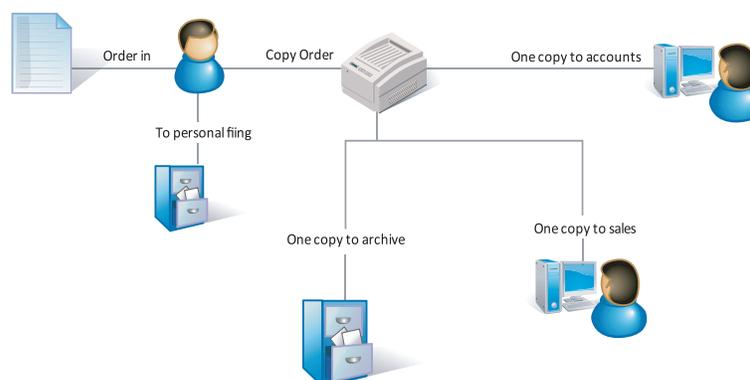
Current Procedure

Secretary copies the order 4 times: 1 for her records, 1 for the accounts team, 1 for the sales team and one for the official archive. The sales team then copy their copy of the order to pass to the shipping team manager and so on.

At least 4 copies of a single order are made in this process with a number of “personal” copies being made purely on the “just in case” basis. Introducing a desktop scanner into this environment can radically change the process and save time and money.

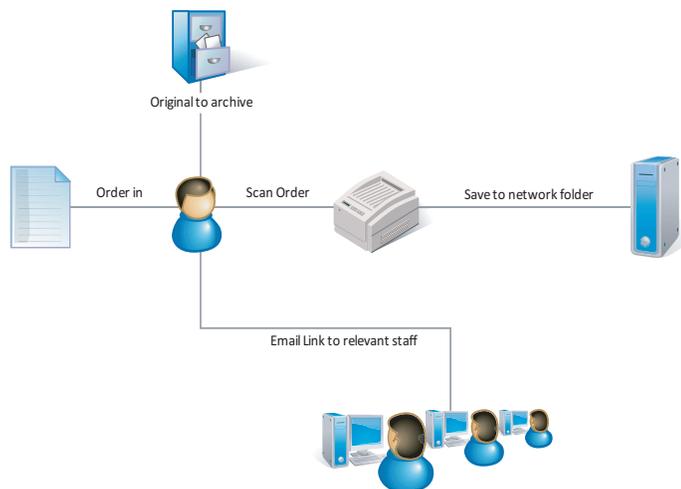
Once the order has been accepted an order acknowledgement needs to be sent to the purchasing company. This is printed by the accounts team, put in an envelope, has postage added and then is taken to the post-box – all of which have time and cost elements totalling approximately €1 per item including the envelope, postage and staff time.

Additional documents are printed further down the process - delivery slips and shipping information, the invoice and payment slip – and when the invoice is paid the whole process repeats with the secretary taking 4 copies and so on.



New Procedure: With Scanning

Secretary scans the order document using a desktop scanner. It is scanned as an OCR enabled PDF document, which means that the text and numbers on the document can be copied and pasted direct from the PDF into other applications such as the accounts software. This PDF is saved into a shared folder on the corporate network, or passed into the company's document management system if it has one.



The secretary then emails the relevant people in the accounts and sales teams with a link to the shared document. Those teams can then make use of that shared document

and either extract the information from the PDF or link that document to other tools such as the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool for the sales team.

No copies of the document are required and the original, once scanned can be filed or shredded as appropriate.

The order acknowledgement is no longer posted, but created as a PDF and sent as an attachment to an email. Not only has the company saved money on postage, but the purchasing company has received confirmation of their order much faster and can pass the electronic document directly into their processes.

Further down the process, the Getting There sales delivery team have received a link to an electronic copy of the order and can satisfy the order. Postage will still be required, unless the book can be delivered electronically, but the invoice associated with the delivery and confirmation of the success of the delivery can all be done electronically. And assuming the invoice is paid electronically, no more paperwork is required at all during this process.

Indirect Savings

Not only are we saving on the cost of paper, toner and postage in the above example, savings are also being made in other areas:

- **Distribution time**

Once the secretary has copied the order she still has to physically get it to the sales and accounts teams, who may be in a different room or building. Scanning the order and emailing a link means that the other teams can gain near-instant access to the order.

- **Storage space**

Each copy of the order needs to be stored somewhere leading to a plethora of filing cabinets in each department. The scanned solution provides one digital document that can be accessed by all, eventually removing the need for filing cabinets occupying expensive floor space.

Scanner Requirements

Most businesses already have access to a scanner, typically as part of a multi-function printer (MFP). The facilities offered by existing equipment will vary, but any business scanner should provide the following:

- **Optical Character Recognition (OCR)**

One of the most important functional aspects of any scanning solution is that it performs OCR, which scans the information on a paper document and attempts to convert it to readable text and numbers. This is very different to low end scanners that will literally take a picture of the document and store it as an image.

- **Scan to PDF**

PDF is now the format of choice for many businesses and any scanner needs to be able to scan directly to this format, ideally with OCR included

- **Scan to Application**

There are times when you want to edit the content of the document being scanned and having the ability to scan directly to your word processing or spread sheet application of choice should be a core feature of any scanning toolset.

■ **Scan to Folder**

The user should have complete control over where the scanned document ends up, be it displayed on screen, sent to a secondary application such as MS Word or saved to a folder.

■ **Connectivity**

Scanners can be connected into the SME in a number of ways and the choice will vary from business to business as to which works best for them. Ethernet (ie direct into the network) and USB are common connectivity options.

■ **Simple Use**

It goes without saying that any scanning solution deployed into an SME needs to be simple to use: complex configuration and maintenance are not an option for a small business.

■ **Advanced Technologies**

A number of “behind the scenes” scanning techniques are deployed by the better scanners to generate quality copies of documents. These include blank page removal, auto-rotation of pages and the detection of misfeeds (multiple sheets being passed through the scanner at once) – all of these should be transparent to the user.

■ **Profiles**

Ideally the scanning solution should be able to manage different user or application profiles; when scanning for accounts you may wish to scan to MS Excel and save to a particular folder versus scanning to PDF and saving to an alternative folder for general correspondence.

■ **Automatic Document Feeder (ADF)**

One thing that differentiates a dedicated scanner from many MFPs is the inclusion of an ADF. The ADF allows a number of pages to be loaded and scanned in one go, with the associated scanning software capable of scanning at one scanned document per page, or collating into a single scanned document.

■ **Duplex**

Many incoming documents will be printed on both sides and as such any scanner needs to be able to cope with this, ideally identifying and removing blank pages as the document is processed and saved.

■ **Colour and DPI**

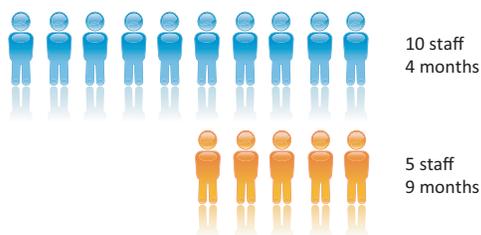
Of course, documents should be able to be scanned in colour or monochrome, and various levels of scanning quality, measured in dots per inch (DPI) need to be accommodated.

Return on Investment (ROI)

As with any large company, an SME investing in a scanner needs to see a measurable return on investment and the introduction of a scanner with just a simple change in process can lead to significant savings. The diagrams below benchmark the time taken to achieve ROI for a variety of business sizes and the savings made over the first 12 months. Both diagrams are based on the savings made purely on printing costs using 30 sheets per employee per day at a cost of €0.02 per printout.

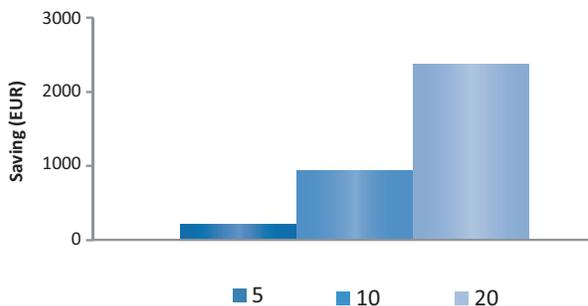
As can be seen, the results are staggering. A 10 person company can achieve a return on investment after just 4 months of deployment and delivers an additional €940 saving in 12 months. Even a 5 person company only takes 9 months to break-even, with additional savings of over €200 across 12 months.

How long does it take for a scanner to pay for itself?



Based on: 1 scanner per office, 0.02 EUR per printout, 30 printouts per person per day

Year 1 Savings by Employees



Conclusions

Small businesses are the lifeblood of the European economy but are involved in a constant battle to win business, survive today's challenging economic climate, and compete in the global marketplace. As such, any opportunity to cut costs and improve efficiencies within the SME should be explored.

Un-necessary printing and copying is rife within all businesses, costing a 10 person company over €900 per year just in ink/toner costs. Add to that the cost of paper, storage, handling and postage, and the negative effect of every single extra copy of a document within the business becomes apparent.

We have highlighted a simple case-study that demonstrates how the use of a single desktop scanner can reduce these costs. The cost reductions do not come purely by introducing the scanner: work must be done to modify the workplace processes to take advantage of the new equipment, but these changes are relatively easy to manage in a small team and pave the way for significant cost savings over a 12 month period even for the smallest of small businesses.

Couple this with the fact that a reduction of paper usage equates to a reduction in the number of trees cut down and both the social and financial aspects of the decision to deploy a scanner become convincing, provided the scanner covers all of the functional aspects required by the business.

Additional benefits of scanning include decreased storage requirements for paperwork (therefore less office floor-space to pay for) and a reduction in the amount of time it takes to share and locate documents – search facilities in MS Windows make finding a scanned PDF very quick and easy.

All of this leads to the conclusion that the cost of implementing a simple scanning solution can be fully recovered in a small amount of time. In addition the increased use of electronic documents can deliver a superior service to clients (internal and external) and help save the planet – so what's stopping you?

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About PFU

PFU Limited (Japan), a Fujitsu company, is the maker of Fujitsu scanners. PFU offers the broadest portfolio of document scanners for professional personal, desktop, workgroup and high-volume production environments and is one of the world's leading document scanner companies. PFU has been engaged in the document imaging scanner business for more than 20 years. Fujitsu scanners are renowned for their excellent imaging and paper quality and integrate seamlessly in all major document management applications. Operating in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA), PFU Imaging Solutions Europe Limited is responsible for marketing and sales of the Fujitsu document scanners. The European company was established in the United Kingdom in 1981 and has subsidiaries in Germany and Italy.

As a subsidiary of Fujitsu, PFU is able to concentrate on the document imaging business like no other manufacturer, leveraging the huge innovation power of Fujitsu. Thus PFU can come up with innovations that the market wants and it can direct its expertise exactly to the needs of its customers – from large corporations through medium-sized enterprises to freelance professionals. The result is an extremely broad array of scanner models - for production environments with high scan volumes, for desktop and workgroup use, and for professional end users.

PFU is shaping the future of document management with the new paradigm of Scan-to-Process. Scanning is changing face – from Scan-to-Archive to Scan-to-Process, from the end of a work chain to the early integration into business processes. Today scanning comes at the beginning of a business process marking the entrance into Document Management and Enterprise Content Management.

PFU scanners support Scan-to-Cloud, which means that companies have the opportunity to scan their documents directly into cloud applications like Evernote or Dropbox. Thus, they can synchronize their information at one single location, creating a data pool that all authorized persons can access, anyplace, anytime.

With Scan-to-Mobile the Fujitsu subsidiary is the first manufacturer to offer seamless transmission of paper documents to iPhone / iPad and Android-based devices.



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