

Integrated workflow solutions simplify business processes and deliver cost savings

Integrated workflow solutions as part of Ricoh's Managed Document Services has provided simplified document processes at insurance company Açoreana. The introduction of Ricoh's advanced solution has automated the distribution of inbound faxes and the capture of hardcopy documents. The replacement of standalone devices and the use of more efficient technology is expected to cut document management costs by around 30% per annum.

The Challenge

Leading Portuguese insurance company Açoreana™ provides customers with a range of personal insurance products, covering life, health, property, travel and motoring. Part of the international finance and banking group Banif™, the company has offices throughout Portugal and employs more than 500 people.

Insurers are obliged to maintain accurate records of customer communication. Insurance documents, received by fax or delivered in the post, form a legal record relied upon in the event of a claim. The quality of outbound print communication is also very important. Letters and acknowledgements sent to customers are expected to present a professional image.

Açoreana were using a mixed fleet of standalone imaging devices, including fax machines, desktop printers, photocopiers and scanners, which had been supplied over time by different vendors. This meant that it was difficult to manage service arrangements, and resulted in twenty five per cent of IT helpdesk time being spent resolving print related issues.

In addition to this, the print environment was not controlled, and costs were escalating. Açoreana was keen to establish a more satisfactory arrangement with a single supplier.

The challenge for Ricoh was to improve business efficiency and reduce print costs. A fully integrated solution was required to provide an accurate record of customer communication. New imaging devices would need to be able to handle print, copy and fax communication and provide a facility to scan and archive hardcopy documents.

Ricoh's Solution

Ricoh's installation of an integrated solution established an enhanced print environment for Açoreana employees. A suite of intelligent software applications supports the newly-installed Ricoh multifunctional products (MFPs), delivers enhanced performance at lower costs and simplifies and automates document processes at Açoreana. Remote monitoring and ongoing management help Ricoh provide outstanding service support and ensure costs are kept low.

Ricoh installed a solution to provide control over the complete print environment, and intelligent print rules were established to eliminate waste and minimise cost. Using the system's 'desktop printing' utility, Açoreana could now monitor all print activity, including those that output directly to local devices, without the need for multiple print servers.



Devices were equipped with IP fax technology; this reduced communication costs by ensuring that inter-company faxes were routed via the Internet. A digital backup is now made of all messages, whether received from a customer or from another branch, and the use of this Ricoh technology means that fax messages are distributed by email, speeding up the communication process and reducing print volume.

A document solution was integrated into the control panel of the Ricoh MFPs to simplify the scanning process. All company employees now had access to the MFPs and could easily scan, index and archive documents. Using the solution, important documents can be shared with other users within seconds of receipt.

Ricoh's @Remote management system was installed to take control of Açoreana's complete fleet of printers. @Remote monitors the printers in real-time, identifying issues before they become apparent to users, and delivering consumable items, such as toner in advance of need. System generated reports reveal usage, uptime and green metrics.

Customer Benefits

Ricoh's integrated solution improved productivity at Açoreana by simplifying document processes. Inbound faxes could be distributed electronically, eliminating the need for recipients to collect documents from a fax machine. Hardcopy documents, scanned by the recipient, are instantly available and can be shared by others in the business.

The use of more efficient technology, together with the implementation of intelligent print rules, assisted Açoreana in controlling print costs. The service Ricoh provides is expected to deliver savings of around 30% in the first year alone. Green metrics, reported by Ricoh's @Remote service utility, already showed a proportionate reduction in energy consumption.

Açoreana minimised its carbon footprint and improved the working environment through the use of Ricoh's solution. More than 400 legacy devices were replaced with just over 100 Ricoh MFPs and printers, reducing the desktop clutter and releasing floor space.

Ricoh solution was found to be easy to use and reliable, and the use of remote diagnostics delivers an effective service to Açoreana's employees. Office workers, familiar with the technology, are placing fewer IT helpdesk calls. It has increased system availability and is delivering an excellent return on investment.



- 30% reduction in document management costs
- Ricoh managed integrated solution
- 65% reduction in fleet size
- Managed print environment
- Low cost IP Fax transmission
- Automated document capture
- Remote monitoring and diagnostics

Corporate Development Director Luis Rodiles, said: "We evaluated solutions from several suppliers. Ricoh understood our needs and proposed an integrated solution which would improve processes and provide control. Ricoh's solution was not only commercially competitive, it was the only solution completely aligned with our technical requirements."

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