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CASE STUDY

EDUCATION INDUSTRY

West Chester University

Solving agenda challenges for large academic committee

CHALLENGE

- 300-page, pre-meeting information packets were assembled and printed monthly for Curriculum and Academic Policies Committee (CAPC) meetings, consuming three to four days of administrative time and hundreds of dollars in printing costs
- Last minute changes and phone calls seeking information consumed additional administrative time
- Archived information was not easily accessible to the faculty

STRATEGY

- Canon Technology Solutions designed a new Web-based workflow using Microsoft SharePoint as the platform for the new process
- The Provost's office installed eCopy ShareScan® with a standalone scanner and the eCopy™ Connector for Microsoft® SharePoint® to scan paper-based submissions into the SharePoint document repository
- eCopy's OCR capability and automated file naming features are utilized to ensure easy access to all materials

RESULTS

- Packets are now assembled electronically in less than a day
- Changes and additions consume minutes rather than hours, making even last-minute materials available to committee members prior to the meeting
- Committee members only print relevant pages — or no pages at all

- Committee members can easily look up information online to answer their questions rather than relying on phone calls to administrative staff
- Archives are being scanned to eliminate paper storage and make valuable information easily accessible

ABOUT WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY

West Chester University, a member of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, is a public, regional, comprehensive institution committed to providing access and offering high quality undergraduate education, select post-baccalaureate and graduate programs, and a variety of educational and cultural resources for its students, alumni, and the citizens of Southeastern Pennsylvania.

"With the combination of eCopy and Microsoft SharePoint, not only have we been able to put current materials online for easy access, we have also scanned much of the past material into an archive. Since this committee has to deal with such a large amount of both old and new information, this easy online access has been a huge benefit."

— **Dotti Shafer**

Assistant to the Associate Vice President
for Academic Affairs

West Chester University Office of the Provost

WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY WANTED A MORE EFFICIENT AND COST EFFECTIVE PROCESS...

to distribute the monthly Curriculum and Academic Policies Committee (CAPC) meeting agenda and related documentation to its members.

The CAPC is a faculty committee that oversees the university's curriculum. Any changes or modifications to curriculum, courses, programs, majors, minors, or new proposed programs, must be reviewed by this committee. These packets, which contain up to 300

West Chester University Case Study

pages, were printed and delivered to the 90 members of the committee and its various subcommittees prior to the monthly meetings. Since a majority of the content does not apply to any specific member, there was an excessive amount of waste in paper and administrative time using this process, with hundreds of dollars in printing expenses alone each month. Administrative staff was spending three to four days per month assembling these packets. In addition to this driving issue, the Provost's office wanted to improve departmental efficiencies for both the undergraduate and post-graduate offices for other content-based processes.

WORKING WITH CANON TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS, A STREAMLINED PROCESS WAS PUT IN PLACE...

using Microsoft SharePoint and Forms Server technologies. The SharePoint portal contains document libraries for CAPC materials and, within those libraries, electronic versions of meeting agendas are created, complete with links to supporting materials; user privileges for viewing, editing, and printing; and e-mail notifications to committee members. With the new electronic process in place, a standalone scanner with ShareScan and the Connector to SharePoint was installed to scan committee materials that were sent to the Provost's office on paper.

"In the academic environment, change can be slow, so we still receive a significant amount of paper input for these packets," says Dotti Shafer. "With eCopy, scanning paper submissions directly into Microsoft SharePoint is just as easy as loading submissions that arrive in electronic format. We chose to use a standalone scanner solution as the most cost-effective approach since we did not have a need for a networked MFP to be located in the Provost's office." The Provost's office is also using the solution to make it easier to locate documents in Microsoft

SharePoint. Using eCopy's OCR capability, scanned images are created with searchable text. In addition, eCopy pulls content from indexing fields in Microsoft SharePoint to automatically create file names based on user-entered data.

THE PROVOST'S OFFICE IS SAVING \$400 TO \$500 PER MONTH IN PRINTING COSTS...

as well as several days of administrative time each month. Committee members are notified when documents are available, and they can view all materials from their desktops, printing only what is specifically needed, or not printing at all.

If changes are made to materials between the time they are submitted and the time of the committee meeting, the electronic version is updated and committee members are notified. "This saves having to print changes and distribute them at the meeting," says Shafer. "It also means committee members can come to the meeting more prepared. There is a lot to cover in their one-hour meeting, so this pre-meeting preparation is critical to the efficient operation of the committee."

Shafer points out that while a majority of information is still originated in paper form, the committee members have been quick to adopt the new process. She says, "We are fairly aggressive with technology here at the University. The faculty appreciates the improved efficiency this new system has brought to them, and the ease with which they can review both current packets and the archives when necessary." Another benefit, according to Shafer, is that committee members can easily look up information to answer their own questions, rather than having to call the Provost's office and wait for a response. "The portal is available for them 24/7 online," she says, "and they can get answers immediately. It is much more efficient for them, and for the Provost's office."

With the CAPC process in place, both the undergraduate and post-graduate staff of the Provost's office are looking at ways to streamline other business processes. "To the extent we can eliminate paper," says Shafer, "not only are we more efficient, but we can put space formerly dedicated to storing and processing paper to much better use."

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