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CASE STUDY

EDUCATION INDUSTRY

Federation of Education in Central Ostrobothnia

CHALLENGE

- The organization wanted to realize more value from its information systems, especially Microsoft SharePoint, by using their multifunction peripherals (MFPs) to digitise and add paper documents to these systems.
- Scan to e-mail in the original MFP scanning solution was not secure. The Federation was looking to link this function to Microsoft Exchange and Active Directory to improve security and provide an audit trail to appropriately allocate costs
- The Federation wished to link the scanning function with a document repository to ease the transition away from many paper-based processes

STRATEGY

- eCopy ShareScan
- eCopy Connector for Microsoft SharePoint

RESULTS

- eCopy allows easy integration with information systems, including Microsoft SharePoint
- eCopy's support for the PDF/A archiving standard ensures long-term preservation of scanned files
- Significant time and money were saved through the consistent use of the PDF format, ease of use of the eCopy ShareScan, the ability to scan documents directly to SharePoint for ready access and faster retrieval of required documents
- E-mailing SharePoint links rather than scanned files has reduced the load on the Federation's e-mail infrastructure

- Compressed files reduce the need for electronic storage; conversion of paper documents to PDFs has reduced the need for physical storage space.

ABOUT THE FEDERATION OF EDUCATION IN CENTRAL OSTROBOTHNIA

The Federation of Education in Central Ostrobothnia is a public educational organization that is owned by 11 municipalities in Finland. The Federation delivers adult and continuing education from seven educational locations, serving 4,000 students 16 years of age and above. The aim of the Federation is to provide students with the ability to work in a multi-cultural environment in an increasingly internationalized labor market, offering such things as exchange student programs, on-the-job learning and projectbased study in addition to regular classroom study.

"eCopy has brought us tremendous value with a more efficient work process. By scanning documents directly to SharePoint, we have eliminated the need to make multiple copies of important documents for distribution throughout the organization."

— **Jukka Penttinen**
Chief of IT and Administration Federation of Education in Central Ostrobothnia

THE FEDERATION HAD ALREADY BEEN USING SCANNING SOLUTIONS TO

improve its administrative and governance processes. However, scanning operations were not tightly integrated with information systems and the Federation's Microsoft SharePoint content management system. The Federation wanted to provide a consistent solution across the entire organization that could leverage its installed base of MFPs as an integration point. At the same time, it was looking to make scan to e-mail from its MFPs more secure, integrate with Microsoft Exchange and Active Directory for user authentication, and to provide an audit trail to allow better alloca-

tion of costs associated with scanning activities. Finally, the Federation was interested in being able to efficiently scan documents from MFPs directly into a document repository. This would serve to make important documents more accessible, as well as to reduce heavy traffic at the e-mail server.

“By ‘eCopying’ and sending a SharePoint link to recipients rather than e-mailing scanned documents, we have been able to substantially reduce traffic on our e-mail server, which means our current configuration will continue to serve us for some time to come.”

— **Jukka Penttinen**
Chief of IT and Administration
Federation of Education in
Central Ostrobothnia

The Federation installed eCopy ShareScan on its Canon MFPs located throughout the organization. According to Jukka Penttinen, Chief of IT and Administration for the Federation, “We wanted to provide every unit with at least one MFP with eCopy ShareScan to make it easier for them to scan important documents. The most common document types we scan are official letters from government ministries and other national boards; EU project documents, including funding applications and decisions, as well as reports; and offers, and contracts. eCopy allows us to leverage Microsoft Exchange and Active Directory for user authentication, and the eCopy Connector for Microsoft SharePoint also makes it easy to scan documents directly to the SharePoint document repository on our Intranet. After investigating a number of solutions, we found that eCopy could meet all of our requirements.

Another eCopy capability that was important to the Federation was its support for scanning directly to PDF/A, an ISO standard format for the long-term

archiving of documents. PDF/A documents are 100% self-contained, with all of the information necessary for consistently displaying the document embedded in the file. This provides the ability to electronically archive documents in a way that will ensure preservation of their contents over an extended period of time. PDF/A also ensures that organizations can retrieve the documents with consistent and predictable results in the future. This is important to the Federation, since many of its documents must be maintained for long periods of time.

WITH ABOUT 40 PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE FEDERATION NOW USING ECOPY,

the organization has seen significant improvements in productivity as well as cost reductions. “Before eCopy,” says Penttinen, “we were making as many as 10 document copies for distribution through internal mail and the Post Office. Now we simply send a SharePoint link. That alone has saved a few thousand Euros annually on postage, paper and copies, as well as making it faster to distribute critical information.” Users simply use the eCopy ShareScan to scan documents, add appropriate identifying metadata and file them directly into SharePoint. They are then provided with a link that can be emailed to everyone that needs access to, or notification about, new documents that have been placed in SharePoint.”

Penttinen was also pleased with the ability for eCopy to leverage Microsoft Exchange and Active Directory for user authentication. “Before eCopy, scanning directly from our MFPs was not secure,” he adds. “Now we can be assured that only authorized users are taking advantage of the system, and with eCopy’s audit trail feature, we are able to allocate costs more appropriately.”

Since faxing is virtually obsolete in Finland, the ability to send documents via email or make them available in SharePoint was a critical criterion for the Federation in moving its scanning activities to eCopy. “I send perhaps one fax per year,” says Penttinen. “We leverage e-mail heavily in our business communications, so both the authentication and ability to send only a link were very important to us.”

It was also important to Penttinen that the system be scalable. He comments, “When we buy new MFPs, we want to be assured that we could apply the same solution, keeping our operation consistent and leveraging the organizational learning that has already taken place. Our partnership with eCopy and Canon provides that assurance.”

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