Fairfield High School

Using document management to support cutting edge education

About Fairfield High School

The Fairfield High School traces its roots back to 1898, but excellent strategic management keeps it at the top end of technology. Fairfield High School provides facilities for inner city students and their local communities. It consists of five Schools of Learning and has a capacity of 1,120 students, including up to 40 students in the Elmfield School for the Deaf. The staff of 118, including 53 teachers, is dedicated to providing a cutting edge learning environment for students aged 11 to 16 through a number of techniques, including the use of emerging technologies.

> "The simplicity and familiarity of the eCopy user interface reduces training costs and improves rapid acceptance by a wide range of users. It also has the potential to become part of the education function of the school as we develop ways to allow students to use it as part of their preparation for the world of work."

Ralph Payne
Assistant Headteacher and Senior Leader of Technology Infrastructure
Fairfield High School

Executive summary

THE PROBLEMS

- Requirement to store student records until student reaches the age of 25, plus financial records for four years
- Storage of paper documents was expensive, retrieval was slow, and already limited office space was taken up by seldom-retrieved files
- Hardcopy documentation was not linked to the Schools Information Management System (SIMS.net)
- Slow hardcopy workflows caused an administrative burden on key staff

THE SOLUTION

- Installed eCopy™ ShareScan® on office copiers in the main office
- Installed SIMS.net Connector for eCopy™ ShareScan® for scanning student records directly into the school's SIMS database

THE BENEFITS OF THE eCopy SOLUTION

- Dynamic link with SIMS.net
- Easy integration of hardcopy and softcopy records
- Instant retrieval of information and documents
- Reduction of expensive paper storage space
- Ability to scan student work directly to student records

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Full details

AS FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL CONTINUED TO GROW, VOLUMES OF HARDCOPY INFORMATION AND STORAGE GREW AS WELL...

The school is required to retain student records until the student reaches the age of 25, and financial records must be retained for four years. Although there is an increasing volume of electronic documents in the mix, the school still receives significant hardcopy documentation from both internal and external sources.

Additionally, there was no link between the Schools Information Management System (SIMS) and hardcopy records. Records were sometimes misfiled, which resulted in wasted staff time when attempting to locate them, and even properly filed paper was time-consuming to retrieve. All of this placed unnecessary administrative burden on key staff. Storage of infrequently-accessed paper documents was using valuable space that could be more effectively dedicated to student use.

WORKING CLOSELY WITH THEIR DEALER TO DEVELOP A CUSTOM SOLUTION...

Having standardised on Toshiba multifunction devices (MFDs), Fairfield High School worked closely with its Toshiba dealer, Peninsula Business Systems, in defining a solution to its paper woes. "In an effort to migrate more information to electronic format," says Ralph Payne, Assistant Headteacher and Senior Leader for Technology Infrastructure, "we wanted to move beyond simple photocopying and printing, and bring reprographics and document handling under a single umbrella."

As part of the solution, the experts at Toshiba developed an eCopy Connector to SIMS to allow paper documents to be scanned directly into the school's information management system, integrating hardcopy and softcopy into a single student record. Ralph Payne adds, "This information management system contains the record for each pupil. The dynamic, native link between eCopy and SIMS enables users to attach scanned documents, such as letters from parents and outside agencies, directly to a student's unique record while at the MFD. Such documents are then maintained electronically for secure retrieval within the SIMS system."

With the eCopy solution in place, Fairfield High School's Headteacher, Nicky McAllister has a goal of being paperless within the next two years and is considering selected conversion of back files to electronic format. "Our finance department has a major use as well, scanning paperwork into the program that handles our finances for secure, electronic storage," added Ralph Payne. Peninsula Business Systems has also funded a paper recycling scheme at Fairfield to help with the move from paper to electronic filing.

THE PRIMARY BENEFIT TO FAIRFIELD WAS AN INCREASE IN EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY...

"Once we installed eCopy with our Toshiba MFDs," says Ralph Payne, "we were on our way to a paperless environment. The solution is surprisingly easy to use and fits perfectly with our move to a fully integrated document management and reprographic system that will revolutionise the way documents are managed in the school."

Ralph Payne reports that training staff was easy. "It literally takes ten minutes to show someone how to use eCopy, and with one or two weeks of practice, they are expert enough to teach other users."

With electronic storage and links to SIMS, document retrieval is now instantaneous from any desktop in the school, regardless of whether documents started out in paper or electronic form. Because metadata fields are populated at the time the documents are scanned, filing errors are eliminated. This means that staff spend much less time retrieving filed or archived documents, and response times for document requests are much shorter.

When archived documents are ready to be destroyed, the task will be simpler as well, simply deleting electronic files rather than shredding crates of paper. Ralph Payne adds, "Although it is too soon to calculate an exact ROI, it is clear that all of these process improvements will quickly repay the investment."
The school is also looking for creative ways for students to use eCopy.

"Looking ahead, I would like to see our students use eCopy in the classroom during their final two years at the Fairfield School. That way, when they leave the school, not only will they be able to convert paper documents and store them in their own electronic space, but more importantly, they will go into the work force with experience using an advanced document management system."

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