

HP enables ABC Fine Wine and Spirits to regain tight control of its print infrastructure



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– Guy Ledbetter, Help Desk Manager
ABC Fine Wine and Spirits

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Established in 1936, ABC Fine Wine and Spirits is the largest privately owned fine wine and spirits merchant in the U. S. Based in Orlando, Florida, its 150 stores now span the Florida peninsula, from Tallahassee and Jacksonville, to Naples and South Miami. The stores carry a wide selection of gourmet foods – including cheeses, chocolates, and snack items – in addition to an extensive catalog of wines, spirits, and beers. ABC Fine Wine and Spirits focuses on continuous improvement of customer service and is committed to providing the best possible overall shopping experience.

Guy Ledbetter, Help Desk Manager, ABC Fine Wine and Spirits stated, “Continual evaluation of the services we offer encourages us to be flexible, innovative, and to constantly keep our customers at the center of our operations.”

Regaining control of print

Originally print devices were placed in each store to handle general accounting, including daily closing reports. However, it was increasingly found that they were being used to print signage for storefront product bins too.

“We had no control over our branch office printing,” reflected Ledbetter. “There was no device standardization – we were running a mix of ink- and toner-based printers from a wide variety of vendors. This meant the signage created by each individual store varied considerably in look and feel.

“In addition to the adverse impact on the consistency of our Company branding, we had no idea of the costs associated with running such a heterogeneous environment. All the printers were serially connected to the stores’ computers so we couldn’t gauge print volumes, and we weren’t always sure which type of printer was in any given location.”

Help desk calls related to specific hardware devices are regularly reviewed to enable Ledbetter and his staff to clearly see when device types are reaching their end of life. “As the printers started to age, we were experiencing an increasing burden of requests for repair. We would have a delivery truck bring the faulty device back to headquarters, where it would be diagnosed, repaired and then shipped back – leaving the store without its printer for over a week at a time. As the volumes increased we ended up dedicating one person to handle nothing but printer upkeep,” Ledbetter recollected.

The cost of toner and ink supplies finally brought the situation to a head. Ledbetter explained, “Our central purchasing department identified the monies that were being spent on supplies alone and it was shockingly high. We knew we could do better, and we set about re-evaluating our stores’ print infrastructure.”

Simplifying with HP Pay per use services

Ledbetter asked several major printer vendors to bid on providing a small desktop printer model that would fit on limited counter space and be capable of easy connection to the network. He noted, “We wanted to standardize on just one model of printer across all of the stores, and have service and supplies included in the contract to control costs.”

Ledbetter’s favorite local supplier did not have a model of printer that would meet ABC’s requirements; however, in the spirit of true customer satisfaction, HP brokered a partnership so that ABC could purchase HP printers from their supplier. He stated, “It was a win-win for us because we got to work with someone we knew and trusted, and were able to get a product that fulfilled our needs and was price competitive too.”

The HP LaserJet 2400 series monochrome printer was recommended as being the best match to the stores' requirements. ABC opted for an outright purchase of the HP printers and immediately placed them onto an HP Pay per use service agreement. Ledbetter described, "Under this 'base + click' plan, HP engineers installed HP Web Jetadmin software for remote management. A server was added that continually polls every networked printer under contract to collect data like the output page 'click' count, which is then transmitted back to HP. There's no overhead for me; I can add printers as required and have them automatically reported to HP by this server."

He continued, "Every month we pay a small base-level fee for each printer and an added charge for each page printed. The monthly fees include toner and ink cartridges, and support services. This type of contract was very attractive because our locations vary enormously in size – some are as big as a warehouse, others are just a small corner store – so they have very different print volumes. The HP LaserJet 2400 can handle the largest outlet's output, yet we're not paying excessive amounts for the same device in the smaller stores because the click component of the charge is correspondingly much smaller."

Stores no longer worry about printing

ABC has not needed to deploy more than one printer per store. "Despite some sizable print volumes from the larger locations, we haven't reached the HP LaserJet 2400's limits – in fact we have reasonable headroom left," stated Ledbetter.

He continued, "We've been able to say to the stores 'you don't have to worry about printing – we'll handle it for you.' The Help Desk takes the first level of calls from the stores. We decide when it's time to call HP on-site, and HP delivers same-day or next-day service levels, which is a vast improvement over the one-to-two weeks it used to take to get the printers back online. We no longer have a dedicated printer repair person on staff and HP service has proven able to more than meet our needs."

HP Web Jetadmin helps ABC keep the printers more highly available – especially when compared to its legacy print environment. Ledbetter described, "We use it to run reports on print volumes, monitor toner levels and receive notification when a printer needs a new cartridge. This enables us to order new supplies just before they are needed and proactively ship them to the stores to be fitted just-in-time. Now our printing costs are known and predictable."

Groundwork is in place for bigger projects

ABC is realizing the benefit of having standardized equipment. "We can now launch other projects knowing that every store has identical devices. For example, we have a sign generating software package that allows us

to regulate signage and more clearly brand our stores, knowing that all of the signs we design will output identically. We couldn't have done this with the older, mismatched printers," observed Ledbetter.

The rollout in the stores was very successful and ABC has begun standardizing on HP printers at its headquarters. Ledbetter said, "So far we've deployed 50 HP LaserJet 2420 series printers for general workgroup use, one HP Color LaserJet 5500 series printer, and one HP Color LaserJet 2550c printer for our drafting areas. We also have installed six HP LaserJet 4345mfp multifunction devices to eliminate copy machines and other standalone devices. Now that we have them in place, it's opened up a whole set of tools for the future – like scan-to-archive – that will ultimately help us eliminate costs, reduce paperwork and become more streamlined and efficient. And, ABC has each printer covered by HP Service with on-site hardware repair coverage."



Ledbetter concluded, "Thanks to HP Web Jetadmin, HP LaserJet printers, and the HP Pay per use service contract we have tight control of printer availability and total print costs. We have a limited range of models in our new fleet of printers, which has reduced the complexity of our network connectivity and streamlined support. We've saved money, created efficiencies, and laid the groundwork for bigger projects such as standardized signage. We are now positioned to take advantage of more scanning and archiving, with an ultimate goal of reducing total print volumes. HP's print solutions have positioned us for success."

At a glance

- **Company:** ABC Fine Wine and Spirits
- **Headquarters:** Orlando, Florida
- **Founded:** 1936
- **Size:** 1,500 employees and 150 retail outlets
- **Telephone:** 800-942-WINE
- **URL:** www.abcfinewineandspirits.com
- **Primary focus:** Commitment to providing the best possible overall customer shopping experience through the provision of fine wines, spirits, beers and gourmet foods.

Challenges

- Maintain control over branding portrayed in store signage.
- Reduce total cost of printing and improve predictability of expenses.
- Increase printer availability and reliability.
- Improve service response.

Solution

- HP Pay per use services agreement, including:
 - HP genuine ink and toner cartridge supplies; and
 - HP Services with Same day and Next day on-site support.
- Standardize on HP output devices:
 - 200 HP LaserJet 2300 series monochrome printers;
 - 50 HP LaserJet 2420 series monochrome printers;
 - 6 HP LaserJet 4345mfp multifunction devices;
 - 1 HP Color LaserJet 5500 series printer; and
 - 1 HP Color LaserJet 2550c printer.
- HP Web Jetadmin for remote management.

Results

Simplicity

- Total print costs are under tight control.
- Store signage is consistent and more clearly branded.
- Printer service significantly simplified.
- Print environment is streamlined and efficient.

Agility

- Printers are more highly available.
- Next day on-site support service is a vast improvement over the one-to-two weeks it used to take to get printers back online.
- Now have a standard, robust foundation for output, enabling future projects.

Value

- Optimized assets by standardizing on one device per store.
- Reduced total print costs.
- Eliminated in-house dedicated printer repair person.
- Enabled business efficiencies.

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