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Lexmark provides legal solutions for Vinson & Elkins

The Organization

With more than 860 lawyers, 3,800 clients and offices in Austin, Dallas, New York, Washington D.C., London, Beijing, Singapore, and Moscow, Houston-based Vinson & Elkins is among the world's top law firms. Since its inception in 1917, the firm has attracted an outstanding and diverse group of attorneys as well as a strong, varied client base. Clients include national governments, U.S. states, cities, and municipalities, public and private companies, domestic and international financial institutions, and individuals.

The Challenge

Vinson & Elkins was using more than 800 Hewlett-Packard printers for its network printing. "Our printer fleet was aging," says Tim Armstrong, Chief Financial Officer at Vinson & Elkins. "We knew we needed to update our print technology, but weren't excited about the \$1.2 million we were going to have to spend to do it."

Vinson & Elkins had also been dissatisfied with the print driver technology in use at the firm. In order to maintain consistency in document pagination across a rather diverse population of HP printers, the firm was required to use a print driver that functioned from the oldest to the newest piece of printing equipment in place. That legacy technology limited the functionality of the newer printers, and it had become increasingly difficult to support as other software applications that relied upon it were being updated.

The Solution

To design the best possible solution, Lexmark interviewed key members of Vinson & Elkins' IT and procurement departments, as well as staff, to understand the firm's culture, environment, and most importantly, its document needs.

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—Tim Armstrong
Chief Financial Officer
Vinson & Elkins
Houston, Texas
www.velaw.com

"If you look at the project from start to finish, it took awhile to complete because we wanted to make sure we were choosing the best solution for Vinson & Elkins," Armstrong said. "The positive aspect of the time invested though is that it allowed us to develop a very close working relationship with Lexmark."



Lexmark demonstrated a deep understanding of Vinson & Elkins' current printing environment and how the Lexmark approach could assist them in achieving the results they were looking for, without requiring the firm to make a huge upfront capital investment.

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—Dennis Van Metre
Chief Information Officer
Vinson & Elkins

“In utilizing the usage-based billing (UBB) model introduced to us by Lexmark, we were not only able to reduce our consumables expense by a fairly significant amount, but we were also able to avoid a large capital outlay, which made the partnership very happy,” said Armstrong. “In the UBB model, we simply pay a monthly fee for each piece of equipment in use at the firm and then a click charge is incurred for each print made on the equipment in use. It was a model we could support from both a financial and operational perspective,” he said.

Lexmark's asset management services provide monthly reports on printing activity at Vinson & Elkins. “Having this kind of information available makes printer placement decisions easier,” said Dennis Van Metre, Chief Information Officer at Vinson & Elkins. “The information we get from Lexmark helps us monitor, manage and make decisions about allocating, or reallocating, our print resources.”

The original solution for Vinson & Elkins included Optra T610n and Optra T616n monochrome laser printers, Optra Color 1200n color laser printers and Lexmark's Optra T614dx multifunction devices that offer print, copy, scan, and fax services.

As the firm has required additional equipment, Vinson & Elkins has opted for machines from Lexmark's new line of printers, including the T520n monochrome laser printer and the X522 multifunction device.

Although the vast majority of the firm's documents are printed on monochrome printers, Vinson & Elkins deployed color units on each floor in all of its domestic offices. “We use color for documents like handouts, charts and reports for clients,” Van Metre added. “We thought that the color devices would be used mostly with our technology clients, but it has been adopted in almost all practice areas.”

Vinson & Elkins also deployed multifunction devices in a similar fashion to the color devices. There is one multifunction device on each floor throughout the firm. This distribution of scanning capability allows staff to scan documents to PDF or TIFF formats for easy electronic mailing, or to place in the firm's document management system.

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The Results

“Lexmark demonstrated to us that they could complete an entire print technology refresh at Vinson & Elkins, while allowing us to avoid a large capital investment,” Armstrong said. “They also presented us a model that allowed us to reduce our day-to-day printing costs. It was a solution we were comfortable with, and one we could easily justify. We were impressed with what Lexmark was able to accomplish.”