

MOVE TO EQUITRAC FOR PRINTS AND COPIES BOOSTS COLLEGE'S DOCUMENT EFFICIENCY, ACCOUNTING AND STUDENT CONSERVATION



Organization: The College of New Jersey, a four-year state college in Ewing, New Jersey.

Challenge: To simplify copy and print services and implement document cost accountability in the face of growing use of computer lab printers, while also reducing waste and improving document resource management.

Solution: Equitrac Solution for Education.

Result: The school assigned print quotas for computer lab prints, converted copiers from coin to card and billing through Blackboard, and improved student awareness of conserving document production resources, on the way to an anticipated reduction of overall print production by 50%.

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Like many universities, The College of New Jersey was facing a document production challenge. For years, the school had used coin-operated copiers in the school's libraries, and free printers in its computer labs. Professors increasingly were steering the 6,500 students to online curricula and other courseware materials, which would be printed at the school's expense – to the tune of five million prints a year. One industrious student even generated 23,000 prints one weekend. Such use and abuse forced the school to subsidize the print budget from other funding resources.

Even the coin-operated devices were a cost drain. Each day, workers had to visit 10 copy devices to empty the change and tally the number of copies made.

The college's experience is common in higher education. Courseware is driving up printer usage, leaving administrators wondering how to control costly volumes. Administrators needed a way to address printing's growing importance, and assign or recover costs for student printer use.

So the school worked closely with Equitrac to create a solution that was flexible and simple to use, yet powerful enough for both print and copy applications. The school installed the Equitrac Express Solution for Education on its fleet of

Canon digital copy devices with the campus control gateway into the Blackboard campus commerce platform. Students now use their existing magnetic-stripe student activity cards day or night to debit copy costs, like they do meals or books, using a solution seamlessly integrated into their daily lives. Staff, faculty and administrators still have unlimited access to the school's network of printers and copiers.

“From grade schools to universities, academic institutions realize the need to control their printing and copying expenses, while also helping instill better resource management in their faculty, administration, teachers and students,” says Michael Rich, CEO of Equitrac Corp. “Equitrac integrates with Blackboard to help accomplish all those goals in a seamless solution that is quickly implemented, easy to use and which can deliver immediate results for the school and its students.”

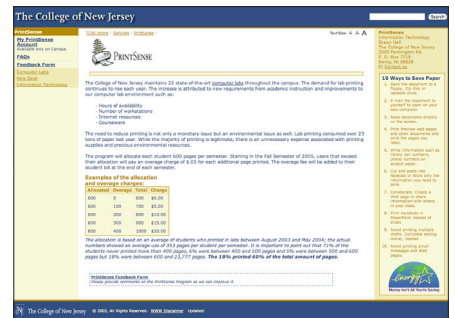
With Equitrac, the school has improved accounting of actual copies being generated; clicks and coins often didn't compute to the same copy count, says Frank Nardoza, Associate Director for Information Technology with the College. With the conversion to copy cards and tracking, students and faculty have found the cash-less copy system simple to use. The elimination of coin handling has removed a time-consuming chore for school staff.

Equitrac also serves the school's print needs. Some 80% of students make fewer than 600 prints a semester. Copy volumes have decreased to around 400,000 a year – from two million several years ago. At the same time, the Equitrac Express Server is accounting for five million prints generated each year on the 100 HP printers in the school's public computer labs. That number is growing as students turn to the Internet and school resources to generate coursework. As prints outpace copies, Equitrac solutions are tracking both at the college. This provides administrators a flexible, integrated solution that tracks all the school's document production needs.



In the school's computer labs, students are provided an allotment of 600 prints per semester, with each print costing five cents thereafter. The Equitrac server pulls student account information off the network and deducts the appropriate usage from each student's account. And with Equitrac's Follow You™ simplicity, student printing is immediately released to any Equitrac networked printer in the lab – eliminating delays from long lines, jams or malfunctions.

Student print habits likely will change with print tracking. Print volumes in the computer labs are expected to drop. Students have realized that by depleting their allotment of 600 prints per semester, each print thereafter costs five cents. To help students discover and use the simplified printer solution, called “PrintSense,” a quick reference guide to using the terminals and interface to the system was created. Lab staff is trained on how to assist students.



Equitrac solutions also have reduced consumable waste and negative impacts on the environment. Students rarely reach their document allocations, and most even are becoming more savvy about printing pages from Websites. Many print only the specific content they need, instead of entire documents. Students are advised to log on to their accounts to review each month's activity, which heightens student awareness of their use of document production.



Next up: College administrators are considering bringing existing color devices onto the Equitrac solution, and assessing quotas to faculty and administration as well. They also are planning to install Equitrac's Print Assistant, which calculates the cost of each print job and then presents a pop-up message requiring students to accept or decline the transaction. The goal is to decrease the school's print budget allocation by 40% to 50% by reducing print output (accomplished, in part, through eliminating students' unlimited free prints), and recouping costs for prints over the 600 print quota.

Such favorable reactions to printing and copying solutions will aid the finances at schools like The College of New Jersey, which has seen double-digit percentage growth in document production.

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