

Long Island school system learns a valuable lesson by replacing hundreds of expensive inkjet printers with cost-effective color laser printers and high-yield toner cartridges.

Color lasers in Hauppauge, N.Y. classrooms reduce costs and improve reliability

The Organization

Situated on New York's Long Island, the town of Hauppauge operates five public schools with a total student enrollment of 4,300. Long a leader in implementing technology to further its academic curriculum and support its administrative needs, the district is in the midst of a \$2.3-million wide-area network upgrade. It is implementing a 12-strand fiber-optic backbone to improve communication throughout its facilities.

The Challenge

School districts throughout the United States are facing a dilemma. Budgets remain tight, but curricula and technology must grow in order to prepare students for the modern world. Hauppauge is no different.

Throughout the last several years, the district's student population has grown, and the widespread use of new technologies, such as digital photography for educational purposes, has been supported by installing inkjet printers in hundreds of classrooms. Though their low acquisition cost is alluring to budget planners, inkjet printers have a high total-cost-of-ownership and other budget-busting shortcomings often become evident.

"We found that our inkjet printers were very slow, required special paper for printing photographs and the very expensive ink cartridges needed frequent replacement," said Ryan Meloni, the district's Director of Instructional Technology.

With manufacturers continually introducing new models, the district's long-term acquisition program resulted in a menagerie of about two dozen different printer models, each requiring a different set of ink cartridges. "Managing the consumables was becoming a logistical nightmare, and a very expensive one," said Meloni.

Adding to the challenge was inkjet printer maintenance. Designed for light-duty home use, they often broke down in the face of near-

"Prior to this project, we dismissed color laser technology in the classroom as simply too expensive, but we were impressed by the affordability and low operating costs of the Lexmark C510n."

—Ryan Meloni
Director of Instructional Technology
Hauppauge, N.Y. Public Schools
Hauppauge, N.Y.
www.hauppauge.k12.ny.us

continual classroom use. The acquisition price of these inkjet printers was too low to justify purchasing extended warranties, and fixing them often cost more than they were worth. As a result, the district simply replaced malfunctioning units with new ones. With so many breakdowns, the pace – and cost – of replacements was rapidly becoming prohibitive.



To rein in costs, improve performance and reliability, and reduce the district's high level of hands-on maintenance, the Hauppauge school district decided to reconsider its approach. The printers installed in each of its classrooms needed to deliver full color, had to reliably print thousands of pages every month at an acceptable speed, and do it all in an economical way.

“We've reduced our consumables costs by tens of thousands of dollars at a time when every penny saved is crucial.”

—Ryan Meloni

The Solution

To meet its performance and cost goals, standardize consumables and streamline maintenance, Hauppauge schools chose to install Lexmark C510n color laser printers in every classroom and in each school's administrative office.

“Prior to this project, we dismissed color laser technology in the classroom as simply too expensive, but we were impressed by the affordability and low operating costs of the Lexmark C510n,” said Meloni.

For classroom use, the district chose the C510n, a compact, network-ready, medium-capacity model suitable for printing crisp black text and photographs in rich, saturated color. Rated for a maximum monthly duty-cycle of 35,000 pages, the C510n easily stands up to near-constant use by students printing photos, presentations, and reports, and by teachers printing homework materials, tests, administrative materials and teacher-to-parent communication.

The district also installed one high-capacity color laser printer in each school's administrative office and at its headquarters building.

Outfitted with genuine Lexmark high-yield toner cartridges, its classroom color laser printers require consumables replenishment only once each academic year, compared with every few weeks for its previously used inkjets, said Meloni. “We've reduced our consumables costs by tens of thousands of dollars at a time when every penny saved is crucial.”

Standardizing on a single set of genuine Lexmark toner cartridges has allowed the district to significantly reduce its on-hand inventory, resulting in tighter control and additional savings.

In a further move to minimize expenses, the district chose to perform its own maintenance, becoming certified through Lexmark's unique Self-Maintainer Program. Designed to meet the service needs of organizations that prefer to perform their own service from the original warranty period through all extended warranty periods, the program includes a comprehensive Service Library containing training, parts catalog and service support CDs, along with training manuals and quarterly updates.

The Results

With C510n color laser printers installed in all its classrooms, the Hauppauge school district is reducing its costs, simplifying maintenance and creating a rich educational experience.

“The C510n color laser printers are having an instructional impact in our classrooms,” said Meloni. “Our teachers are building their curriculum around color and can more effectively communicate with parents.”

According to Meloni, the color laser printers provide a link that wraps many of the school's academic programs together for real-world impact. In fact, the district's high school students are creating a video production, including graphic design, music, photography, video production, and printed materials, to help children get ready to enter kindergarten.

With reliability up and the need for maintenance down, the district's technical services group is now able to redirect staff to other high-priority projects. “With less time spent worrying about printers, we reassigned resources to reduce the district's server headcount from 48 to 12, resulting in even more cost savings.”

“The C510n color laser printers are having an instructional impact in our classrooms. Our teachers are building their curriculum around color and can more effectively communicate with parents.”

—Ryan Meloni

In the public schools, every penny counts and savings can sometimes be found in unexpected places. This was the case with the schools of Hauppauge, New York. Switching from expensive-to-operate and break-down-prone inkjet printers to reliable, cost-effective color laser printers from Lexmark has put Hauppauge Schools at the head of the class.