Pharmaceutical Manufacturer

Success Story

Manufacturing & Distribution

LEXMARK

SUMMARY

Lexmark's output management solution solved a major biotechnology organization's asset underutilization problem and automated a tracking system for guaranteed output delivery of shipping labels.

Lexmark's output management solution saves customer time and money

The Organization

One of the world's largest biotechnology companies, this customer discovers, develops and commercializes proteins, antibodies and small molecules that extend the reach of modern medicine. This Fortune 500 organization has expanded to serve patients around the world in supportive cancer care, anemia, rheumatoid arthritis and other auto-immune diseases.

The Challenge

The company develops expensive advanced medicines for supportive cancer care, among other diseases. They had previously implemented an advanced label management software application to create shipping labels for the shipment of medicine to customers. They immediately faced a problem with missed or duplicate shipments because of printer failures. When the printers failed, they missed shipments because the print job was restarted at the wrong label, causing delivery delays and more importantly, unsatisfied customers. A second problem they encountered was the issue of duplicate labels. If two or more labels were printed, an expensive drug shipment was sent to the customer without an accompanying invoice. This caused the organization to lose thousands of dollars per duplicate shipment if the problem was not caught at the receiving end.

Finally, the line workers responsible for manually ensuring there were no missed or duplicate labels printed were dedicating large amounts of their time to this task, resulting in significant inefficiencies and unnecessary delays.

In order to ensure all shipments were being fulfilled and no duplicate shipments were sent, the company was wasting valuable time and money manually checking the printers. Each time a label printer failed, the printer problem was resolved and the label printing had to be restarted.

A confirmation report log was created that listed all labels printed prior to the error. This report log had to be manually compared with the labels that were actually printed to ensure no mistakes or omissions occurred.

Another challenge the organization faced was asset utilization, or perhaps more accurately, asset underutilization. Multiple printers were in place for the label printing, however, a single printer was handling most of the work. The other printers were sitting idle and their primary purpose was backing up the main label printer in the event of a hardware failure.

The Solution

Lexmark helped the organization implement a print confirmation solution. As the batches of labels are released, the new solution sends them through the system to manage and confirm delivery.

The solution then tracks the printing of the batch jobs and the individual pages within the job. It also performs the confirmation by communicating directly with the printers via PJL commands being

sent directly to and from the printers. The user knows at any given time which pages of which batches have actually hit the output tray.

This solution not only reduces the amount of wasted employee time, but also the likelihood of human error in allowing missed or duplicate shipments.

The Results

The new solution eliminates the need for line workers to manually compare the printed labels with the confirmation report log. The new central management screen indicates which batch job has been interrupted when an error occurs and which page has last made it to the output tray.

Lexmark also solved the organization's asset underutilization problem by ensuring that all printers are used to distribute jobs equally.