

# Case Study

government

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## Department of Ecology—State of Washington

Ricoh Helps Transform a State Department's Print Environment into an Information-rich Workflow

*"Working with Ricoh, I've learned that they aren't just a print output company. They're really an information management company."*

– Gary "Mace" Maciejewski  
Manager of Infrastructure  
and Operations  
Department of Ecology  
State of Washington



### ABOUT THE CUSTOMER

Talk about a lofty mission.

The Department of Ecology for the State of Washington is charged with protecting, preserving and enhancing Washington's environment—while promoting the wise management of its air, land and water. All to maintain the state's quality of life and protect its natural resources for current and future generations to come. Workers at the department proudly embrace this mission every day as they serve everyone from rural farm families to suburbanites to urban dwellers.

While its purpose is lofty, it takes a down-to-earth strategy to improve the flow of information throughout the department's main headquarters and four regional offices. There are budgets to consider and government protocols to follow. Individual workers have their own way of doing things and often resist business process change. In the increasingly Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) world, employees want to access and print information anywhere, anytime, from any device.

With an eye toward driving down costs and reducing its own environmental footprint, the Department of Ecology set out to find a partner to help streamline its print management environment. And not just any partner. One that could right-size its print device fleet—and gather tangible data on the entire printing ecosystem to help the department make more informed decisions going forward.

#### CHALLENGE

- Proliferation of untraceable or unknown desktop printers
- No insight on costs to buy, run and maintain print fleet
- Long-term vision to outsource managed print services
- Desire to reduce environmental footprint

#### SOLUTION

- Ricoh Managed Print Services (MPS)
- Right-sized fleet with fewer, faster, lower-cost Ricoh MFPs
- Cost-per-page pricing structure
- TRAC print management software for supplies and service monitoring

#### RESULTS

- Complete insight into print environment and ability to make data-driven decisions
- \$200,000 annual savings by right-sizing fleet
- Reduced waste, improved air quality, less energy use

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### CHALLENGE

Big initiatives typically come with many unknowns. That was certainly the case when the department issued an RFP in 2005 to manage and right-size its fleet.

In the past, with printer procurement left to each individual business unit, desktop printers were proliferating, consuming precious office and workspace. There was no comprehensive print map or strategy that detailed exactly where all the printers were installed. The department lacked insight into how much it cost to buy, run and maintain the print environment—or how much time workers spent printing or waiting for jobs to print.

“We had no idea what our print environment was,” said Gary “Mace” Maciejewski, manager of infrastructure and operations at the Department of Ecology for the state of Washington. “Across the entire agency, we had more than 380 devices, and around 80 different models, that were being used by over 1,500 staff.”

Even though it desperately needed to right-size its fleet, the department had the long-term vision to partner with and potentially hand over print management entirely to an outside source. Simply reducing and/or swapping out devices wouldn’t achieve its ultimate goals of understanding its print environment and making data-driven decisions that reflect its environmental mission.

“We realized that we are not the department of printing. We are the Department of Ecology,” said Mace. “Our desire was to reduce costs, reduce staff time spent operating and managing printers, improve indoor air quality, lower our energy use and reduce our paper consumption.”

As a public entity, rather than a private sector company, the department has many unique considerations when soliciting for and awarding an RFP. Respondents must have an in-depth understanding of the department’s actual needs and use competitive contracting vehicles. Vendors must also be flexible in working with government agencies that have limited up-front capital and purchasing budgets.

Furthermore, the department didn’t want a traditional buy-or-lease pricing structure for print devices outlined in the contract. Mace insisted that Ecology not own any physical print devices. Instead, he wanted a true pay-per-page pricing structure—shifting the business risk to the chosen vendor or partner.

“Theoretically, if we print zero pages in a month, we pay zero dollars,” said Mace.

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### SOLUTION

After reviewing and evaluating RFP responses from a pool of responding vendors, testing actual devices and doing walk-throughs of the facilities with three named finalists, the department chose Ricoh to be its partner for new multifunction printers (MFPs) and Managed Print Services (MPS). In addition to demonstrating the strength of their printing hardware and software, Ricoh promised a commitment to continuous services improvement as well as a willingness to change its internal practices to accommodate the department's request for a pay-per-page pricing model.

"Over the term of our contract, Ricoh has earned the partnership badge in our operating relationship," said Mace. "They really took the time to understand our needs and showed us they could be flexible in their pricing structure."

Also, since the department wasn't paying for hardware and physical devices, the cost for the pay-per-page program could be shifted from a one-time capital expense to an ongoing use-based operational budget. For a public

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sector agency, this makes it much easier to show exactly how funds are being spent and how they should be budgeted as new needs are identified for the department.

Ricoh began its engagement with the department by replacing higher-cost devices with lower-cost, higher speed, higher quality MFPs—eventually reducing the printing fleet size by more than 50 percent. Today, those devices are strategically placed around the buildings and used to print approximately 680,000 black-and-white pages and about 90,000 color pages per month. Now a fully managed print services relationship, Ricoh oversees everything from installing new devices and replenishing toner to handling break/fix incidents and providing onsite technical support.

Ricoh installed TRAC print management software on the new MFPs to proactively manage service calls and supply reorders at all five of the department's locations. If a device breaks down, repairs are initiated or a new one is delivered and installed within four-to-eight hours. Because each device is proactively monitored, Ricoh typically replaces an end-of-life device before it breaks down.

Ricoh also tracks and provides detailed reports to the department on print volumes, device usage, supply information, service-level data and cost insight. In the beginning, Ricoh met monthly with the department to understand how the print environment was working and to make adjustments as necessary. But as the relationship progressed, the frequency changed to quarterly meetings and eventually semi-annual reviews.



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“When we started out, we went line item by line item for every service request to make sure all the kinks were being worked out,” said Mace. “Today, we can go through all the service delivery discrepancies in about five to ten minutes because there are virtually no discrepancies. The operational relationship is near perfect now.”

With Ricoh MPS, the department has one point of control to engage, a single source of knowledge about its print environment, a clear understanding of its print-related costs and the ability to better manage its print output. Some of the benefits the department has experienced include being able to proactively think ahead to right-size the fleet for upcoming spikes in projects and work, remove devices before they stop working, rotate devices to get maximum use before they are replaced and discover service gaps before they become significant problems.

Initially, the department encountered normal work place change resistance among employees to replacing individual desktop printers with MFPs. Employees felt personally connected to their desktop print devices and liked having them at arms length. They wondered whether new MFPs would measure up to their desktop devices and they feared losing control of their workspace and work output. But, by tying the effort to core agency values—and communicating this mission over and over again—the department eventually turned naysayers into champions of the new fleet and MPS.

“It took five years of communication and reiteration of what we saved and achieved. But eventually we changed our print mindset and culture,” said Mace.

Ricoh and the department are now taking the next leap to make information mobile for department employees. Together, they are testing Ricoh HotSpot mobile printing to allow workers to print anywhere, anytime to the Ricoh devices from an app on their tablets and phones. Going forward, the department plans to move from tactical execution to a more strategic approach with Ricoh. Mace plans to sit down soon with Ricoh representatives to discuss ideas to help the department better manage its information and workflow capabilities.

“Working with Ricoh, I’ve learned that they aren’t just a print output company. They’re really an information management company,” said Mace. “I want to take advantage of Ricoh’s knowledge and offerings in this area to better and more proactively manage our print output and information sharing capabilities, further reduce print while keeping information available and get even more value from our existing devices and Ricoh services.”

### RESULTS

The results speak for themselves in this now decade-long partnership between the department and Ricoh. The department now knows exactly how many pages they print and at what locations. They have faster print speeds and reliable print services across all of its operational units. Additionally, areas of the office and desk space that used to be cluttered with desktop printers have been reclaimed for more productive uses. Non-claimed and non-authorized print output has been dramatically reduced, resulting in less paper waste.

“Having MPS saves so much time and effort—and increases our efficiency,” said Mace. “I routinely explain to other agencies how using an MPS approach has benefited our agency.”

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### **Substantial Savings, Reduced Output**

In the first year, the department saved over \$200,000 in hard costs by right-sizing its fleet and implementing MPS. That cost savings is an actual reduction in dollars spent since no print equipment is purchased and the department only pays for what it prints. Relying on Ricoh MPS to keep its fleet up and running has enabled Ecology staff to focus on more high-value technology work, resulting in savings in staff time and resources.

Before MPS, the department had no idea how much paper it consumed or how much printing was performed. With devices now out in the public space, rather than individual offices, there's been a sizeable reduction in non-authorized print.

### **Better Air Quality, Less Energy Use**

Over the last 10 years, the department went from 380 print devices agency wide to approximately 175 MFPs. With substantially fewer devices—that power down during non-office hours and mandate duplex printing—the department has seen measurable improvements in both its air quality and energy consumption.

"There's less paper dust, less heat and fewer particulates in the air," said Mace. "And of course, our energy bill has made a downward tick too."

### **Empowered with Information, Flexibility to Move Forward**

With solid control and management of its print output environment, the department is now empowered to make data-driven decisions. It knows precisely how much is being printed, when it is being printed, and the caliber of print quality. Ultimately, this knowledge enables the department to better understand what drives its business.

Focusing on services, rather than buying devices, has made the department much more nimble and positioned for whatever the future holds. The agency now has the flexibility to grow or shrink the costs of operating the print ecosystem as it sees fit—it also has a partner committed to helping it do so.

"Buying physical print devices was the old paradigm," said Mace. "Buying print and services sized correctly is the new framework and is what saves money and helps you achieve your goals."

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