

Visalia Unified School District Uses Optimizon for Independent Copy/Print Analysis, Identifies Efficiency Improvements and \$1.5 Million in Savings

Nestled close to the majestic Sierra Mountains in the heart of California's San Joaquin Valley, the Visalia Unified School District is committed to providing students young and old with the tools and skills necessary to succeed in life. With 25 elementary schools, four middle schools, four high schools, an adult school, and a variety of other charter and specialty schools, Visalia Unified School District serves over 32,000 students and has a workforce of over 2,500 teachers and staff.

The Problem

Visalia Unified School District had not gone out to bid for their copier fleet for several years. According to Robert Gröeber, Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services, the time had come to open the door to competitive offers. "Just like many of our services, it was time to bid out in order to be sure we are providing the best service for students in the schools and the people in the district offices," says Gröeber.

Gröeber and his team began to examine printing and copying district-wide, and quickly realized that they needed outside assistance to perform a proper analysis. "We recognized that it was going to be a huge project and a tremendous amount of work," explains Gröeber. "And we simply didn't have the expertise, much less the number of staff necessary, to do the kind of research and investigative work that was needed."

"We recognized that it was going to be a tremendous amount of work and we simply didn't have the expertise to do the kind of investigative work that was needed."

The Solution

Looking for an independent analysis, Visalia USD reached out to Optimizon because of their reputation as an independent resource with great experience working with other school districts. "The reason we liked Optimizon is that they are not tied to a particular vendor or brand," says Gröeber. "We were able to utilize their expertise and experience working with schools nationwide and that was a tremendous benefit."

With Optimizon on board, Visalia USD began to conduct a thorough analysis that soon grew to include all printing, copying and reprographic services within the district.

"We started the process with just the walk-up printer/copiers, but we recognized that we needed to include our internal print shop services in the effort as well," explains Gröeber. "We felt that there was opportunity to expand those services to be used by our school sites to a greater extent. That mix was something that needed to be looked at as a package and not as a standalone service."

"Gaining efficiencies for teachers at the school sites was a big driver, but we didn't understand the full scope of the potential until we got further into the project."

Naturally, finding savings was part of the district's objectives, but Gröeber says that the district was also keen on building better efficiencies through the adoption of newer technology. "We realized that there were technology advances that we needed to be able to take advantage of. Gaining efficiencies for teachers at the school sites was a big driver from the beginning, but we didn't understand the full scope of the potential until we actually got further into the project."

According to Gröeber, their efforts had the added benefit of being in alignment with other important district initiatives. “With the new Common Core requirements we were trying to bring up the level of technology at school sites. As we worked more closely with Optimizon we saw the alignment of the efforts and opportunity to make printing easier for our teachers at the school sites by taking greater advantage of our internal print shop services.”

The Results

Optimizon conducted a thorough analysis that included the Visalia USD copier fleet, district-wide departmental desktop and workgroup printers, and the district’s centralized print shop. The study involved the consolidation and analysis of data from four main sources: vendor data, district data, device data collected by software and data from the print shop. This gave Gröeber and his team an unprecedented level of visibility into the environment that served to bridge the perspectives of various stakeholders in IT, Purchasing and Administration.

“The amount of savings available was a pleasant surprise, but the bigger benefit was the ability to make our print shop more convenient for our users.”

The Optimizon analysis showed a number of important areas for savings and efficiencies. “The study uncovered not just the ability to increase our efficiency and consequently reduce our costs, but also important ways to improve our service to the school sites and the district office location,” says Gröeber. “The amount of savings available was a pleasant surprise, but the bigger benefit was the ability to make our print shop more convenient for our users. As a result, teachers will no longer have to stand in line at their copier and instead will have the opportunity to choose the most efficient reproductive service in the moment.”

Moving Forward

Visalia USD is on their way to saving over \$1.5 million over the next five years. And armed with the findings from the analysis, the District took the next steps forward with a formal RFP... with Optimizon’s help. “Bringing in their expertise from the outside and standardizing the process based upon their experience working with other school districts was a tremendous benefit,” says Gröeber. “We felt we got the best deal for the district as well as being able to provide the best service for our teachers, administrators and students.”

Does Gröeber recommend Optimizon to other school administrators and districts? “Absolutely, I don’t think you can find a better process or a better team to bring in than Optimizon. They were a great asset to our team. They understand schools, they understand the technology, and their entire process was geared toward meeting our goals of increasing efficiency as well as ease of use for our users. ”

For more information visit www.optimizon.com or contact Ethan Davis at edavis@optimizon.com.

About Optimizon

Optimizon is an independent professional services firm that helps school district administrators create, execute, and manage ideal contracts for copier and printer fleets. We are completely vendor-neutral and we don’t sell equipment, equipment-related services, or supplies. Since 1992, we have been providing expertise, processes and technology that improve copier and printer fleet operations while reducing costs. We guarantee a 30% ROI when our services are fully implemented and we stand behind our guarantee. If we are not able to measurably improve your copier and printer fleet operations and costs at that level, we refund our fees until it is achieved.