

# Toledo Public Schools

One of Ohio's largest school districts partners with Lexmark to automate copy center project requests and significantly reduce costs associated with printing and supply storage.

## Managing volumes of paper

Like most urban school districts, Toledo Public Schools (TPS) faced challenges typical of institutions where large amounts of paperwork are processed during the school year. For example, the TPS central print shop runs 24 hours a day, seven days a week and produces over 40 million pages annually. Before modernizing its print processing system, resources at the print shop were stretched to the limit. Dozens of project requests were received each day, and each request contained a four-part request document along with a multi-page instruction sheet. To support the volume of requests, couriers ran multiple routes to schools around the district throughout the day, picking up new requests and delivering completed jobs.

## Simplifying print jobs district-wide

The large number of requests, combined with the inefficiencies of handling hard copy documents, prompted the district to look for new ways of managing print jobs. With 98 percent of projects being processed manually, TPS knew it could realize significant time and cost savings by migrating to an automated processing system; this investment would also strategically position TPS for a technology-related future.

After researching options, TPS chose to partner with Lexmark for process automation. The goal was to reduce the time teachers and administrators spent on managing print projects, as well as lower print-related expenses. TPS first upgraded the district's printers and output devices, and after a successful pilot, leveraged Lexmark's document management solution to automate the request process.

Today, teachers fill out job request forms online right in their classroom or by using the Lexmark multi-function printer in the teachers' workroom. The request is then electronically routed to the print shop and teachers receive an automated message letting them know the job has been received. Errors caused by mistakes or incomplete information are virtually eliminated, which further speeds the printing process. Best of all, nearly all job requests are completed within a 24-hour timeframe.

According to Cathy Prala, Print Production Manager for TPS, the switch from manual to automated processing has transformed the way educators manage print projects. "Our teachers have embraced the solution, as they don't have to leave the classroom to submit a request," says Prala. "It's helping them work more efficiently and giving them back time that can be spent with students."

## Meet Toledo Public Schools

Serving the children and families of Toledo, Ohio, Toledo Public Schools (TPS) strives to produce competitive college and career-ready graduates. With a rigorous curriculum, high standards and accountability, TPS provides instruction for over 22,000 students annually and is the fourth-largest school district in the state.

**Products in use:** Managed Print Services, Print Release, CX510 Series, MX510 Series, MX810 Series

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**Cathy Prala**

Print Production Manager  
Toledo Public School

Today, nearly 100 percent of jobs are requested electronically, and the solution has eliminated overflowing tubs of hard-copy requests that previously took hours to process each day. In addition, administrators now have expanded visibility into the status of all print jobs, along with greater control of printing functions across the district.

“The print shop staff spends less time sorting hard copies and more time on strategic projects,” adds Prala. “The automated process has also saved TPS money on courier costs, since it has eliminated almost all job pick-ups.”

### A managed approach to print processing

One of the most significant benefits in partnering with Lexmark was the use of Lexmark Managed Print Services (MPS) to gain visibility into print usage and fleet performance. Detailed reports give administrators a clear picture of activity for each school and user, enabling proactive management and ongoing optimization of the entire print and imaging environment.

“The best thing about Lexmark MPS is the ability to monitor what’s actually going on in the buildings. This was something we never had before,” says Prala. “We knew what was going on in the print shop, but had no idea what was being printed in each building.”

### Controlling the cost of consumables

Another opportunity to reduce expenses was in consumables management. The district’s previous supplier had problems reading output devices properly, which caused delays in delivering toner. As a result, managing consumables was a frustrating experience that took time away from other, more critical tasks.

“I was constantly getting calls from schools that were out of or low on toner,” explains Prala. “I probably spent four hours each morning monitoring toner for all the devices in the district.”

In switching to Lexmark’s Proactive Consumables Management service, TPS realized immediate cost and timesavings district-wide. Toner requests are now processed automatically, and administrators no longer receive dozens of calls each day for toner replenishment. Says Prala: “It’s been a complete turnaround.”

In addition, toner storage is no longer a concern. Previously, toner cartridges were stored at a warehouse without climate control. As a result, cartridges damaged by heat, cold or humidity were unknowingly delivered to schools, which frustrated users and further delayed print projects. Since the district no longer stores toner, the costs associated with damaged products, expired cartridges and physical storage space are a thing of the past.

### Print release: a powerful printing tool

Along with its managed approach to printing, the district dramatically reduces costs with Lexmark Print Release. This powerful feature enables users to easily print documents from any device on the network. Here’s how it works: jobs are sent to a single print queue and released for printing once the user authenticates, or swipes his or her badge, at the enabled device. Administrators have the ability to print user reports directly from the device. Jobs not processed are automatically deleted from the queue after a predetermined amount of time, which further increases savings.

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**Cathy Prala**

Print Production Manager  
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“As with most school systems, our district is on a limited budget and only gets so much paper to use each year,” explains Prala. “Print Release has given our principals a tool to better manage their buildings.”

Along with increased transparency to print activity, a reduction in print expense has been a major benefit in using Lexmark Print Management. “In the first five months of usage Lexmark tracked information for us. During this time, we discovered six million print jobs were sent to the print queue but were not released at the printer,” says Prala. “If we were to bill out those print jobs, it would be \$120,000, and that’s only over five months. It’s been eye-opening for me.”

### **A partner for savings, and more**

Partnering with Lexmark has delivered positive, measurable ways for TPS to impact the district’s bottom line when it comes to printing expenses. And automating processes for print requests and consumables management helps TPS honor its core commitments of developing better relationships within the district, as well as supporting technologies that contribute to student success.

“Lexmark has stood behind their product, and the product does exactly what they say it will do,” says Prala. “Overall, the solution has been a driver of print management control, visibility and cost savings. It has turned out to be a really big success for the district.”

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