

CASE STUDY

Global Technology Provider

SAP certified output management integration provides simpler, more robust label printing



Over four decades, a personal computer company grew its popularity from a small group of passionate customers into one of the leading technology companies in the world. From an initial focus on computing hardware and software, the organization has expanded into personal electronic devices, cloud services, software services, online content streaming, financial services and more. In the process, they have created a product and services ecosystem unrivaled in the marketplace.

One of the most visible elements of the company's success is its popular chain of retail stores, which started with a handful of locations in the early 2000s and steadily expanded to 500+ stores around the world. To provide the level of service customers expect, the employees and the business infrastructure they rely upon must act as a seamless unit. This extends even to the IT systems they use to manage product inventory and facilitate sales transactions.

Like most large organizations, the company manages key aspects of their business using SAP® applications. These create a variety of documents that drive key business processes. For example, employees in retail locations take orders and manage inventory using wireless mobile devices that connect to SAP applications in their central data center. These SAP transactions generate stock labels and other documents used to track products during the sales process.

To avoid the problems inherent to Windows® print servers, the company's SAP team was using a number of Common UNIX Printer System (CUPS) instances to manage print requests. These proved problematic, as they were difficult to administer, prone to disruption, and lacked sophisticated error recovery capabilities.

Just as importantly, the CUPS solution did not have an SAP-certified interface to the business applications used throughout the company. As a result, a user could initiate a print request in the SAP application, but if there was an error at the destination printer, the originating application would not know whether the job had truly printed. Missing documents — or even worse, duplicate documents — could cause confusion among retail staff and result in costly and embarrassing errors.

After surveying the market, the company's SAP admin team evaluated a number of packaged output management solutions. In the end, they chose the VPSX/OutputManager® solution from LRS. The evaluation team found the LRS® software simple to install and customize, providing a great deal of flexibility to integrate within the existing IT environment. Robust error recovery and proven support for the SAP-developed external output management interface gave them confidence that labels and other SAP print requests would print in the right location, the right format, and in the right order every time on any of the thousands of print devices in their stores.

AT A GLANCE

The Company

The customer is a global provider of technology hardware, software, and services with nearly \$400 Billion in annual revenues.

The Industry

Technology hardware, software, services, content, and more.

The Requirements

Provide reliable printing from SAP applications for retail stores and other locations.

The Solution

• VPSX/OutputManager

The Benefit

Reliable printing from critical SAP applications to ensure continuity of business processes and fewer document-related disruptions



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Unlike some of the alternative solutions under consideration, the LRS software did not require any heavy print client on the end user devices, meaning store employees were able to continue using their wireless tablets without sacrificing performance or the security of their mobile devices.

The result is a stable, secure SAP print environment that is easy to manage and relieves the core SAP administrative team of the need to manage burdensome CUPS servers, print queues, and print-related help desk calls.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

Simplified IT operations: the new solution simplifies management of the print environment and components as compared to the previous complex infrastructure.

Improved business continuity: SAP-certified interface with bi-directional feedback to the SAP application ensures that labels reliably print once and only once.

Support for open standards: ability to run LRS software on non-Windows platforms ensures customer can leverage open standards used across their environment.

Robust data security: LRS software meets and exceeds standards set by customer information security department.

KEY DELIVERABLES

Scalable print management environment that can handle dramatically increased document volumes without the need for additional servers or specialty hardware.

Vendor-agnostic, standards-based solution able to run on a variety of operating systems and hardware platforms.

Flexible, customizable software that can adapt to meet the changing needs of this large global technology leader.

LRS output management expertise and support to ensure ongoing customer success.

AT A GLANCE

Why Change?

The customer was printing critical SAP label output using cumbersome native CUPS print servers running on Linux servers. SAP spool servers frequently became overloaded which resulted in downtime at retail locations.

Why Now?

With plans to expand the number of branded retail locations, problems with SAP label printing were expected to increase sharply in number and duration.

Why LRS?

LRS offered a certified direct interface to the SAP product, giving the customer confidence in the long-term reliability and support for the solution. The LRS software was available on a variety of non-Windows platforms, which was a requirement for this IT environment.

The simpler method of spooling SAP document output and ability to automatically create printer queues made life easier for the customer's SAP admin staff.

Learn how LRS solutions can improve printing in your SAP environment.

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