Fashion meets IT. Implementation of innovative printer management at s.Oliver.

Facts.

Environment
Print servers: 60
Printers: 500
Locations: 33
Users: 5.200

Problem
Script-based printer assignment and thus complex and unclear administration of the printing environment

Solution
steadyPRINT for a location-based printer assignment on IP basis

Reduced login times

Intuitive management of printer assignments for users

Minimum administrative effort

The fashion and lifestyle company s.Oliver located in Rottendorf near Würzburg stands for fashion that is renowned both nationally and internationally and that perfectly adapts to each personality and each occasion. Since its founding in 1969, the company has established itself as one of the leading European clothing stores. With a brand awareness of 95 percent and a sales volume of more than one billion, the company founder and owner Bernd Freier can look back on a true success story.

The Rottendorf-based head office is the place where the threads of all departments run together – from human resources via marketing to product design and distribution. From here, also logistics is centrally handled so that every day up to 350.000 garments are shipped to destinations all over the world. In order to support the organization of such a complex structure, it is necessary to have, apart from a stringent management, also a comprehensive and stable IT infrastructure ensuring the interruption-free operation of all computers, networks and servers.

In 2012, the company had to face an increasingly complex structure in its printer management. With 60 print servers responsible for the operation of 500 printers at 33 locations all over Europe, the printer administration was pushed to the limits of capacity. The script-based printer assignment used so far could no longer cope with the growing number of printers. After every change of location, employees who were flexibly working at the various sites or in one of the more than 250 showrooms had to re-login to the system. This login process included the script-based integration of all printers into the system which was leading to extremely long waiting times.

Furthermore, it happened that sessions were started even before the local printer mapping on the Client was completed. As a consequence, the Citrix session contained only those printers that had been integrated before the start of the session. However, if an employee needed a printer that was not yet included, he had to logout and login again so that the missing printers could be used – *„a time-consuming and dissatisfying process"*, says Michael Fleischmann, Manager Application & Client Services at s.Oliver.

IP based solution searched for - and found.

In July 2012, in their search for an alternative for the complex and unclear administration of the printing environment, the responsible IT executives soon came across steadyPRINT, a software-based solution for the administration of printing environments developed by the Siegen-based K-iS Systemhaus Group. Reliability, intuitive operation and the mapping of the organizational structure were parameters that had to be complied with. Due to its versatile opportunities and innovative features, steadyPRINT seemed almost predestinated to meet the requirements of the fashion company. A product presentation by phone as well as first successful tests had a promising effect on the decision-making process.

„In the end, the announcement of a new release providing an IP-based assignment completely convinced us", Fleischmann remembers. Contrary to the corporate principle that every new product has to be tested thoroughly before its first rollout, s.Oliver renounced all tests for the first time and showed a great readiness to take on risks. *„We staked everything on one card and were rewarded in the end"*, says the Head of the IT department in retrospect. A first successful rollout thus took place already in August 2012.

Tailor-made solution.

Due to the clearly arranged and intuitively designed user surface, steadyPRINT could be implemented into the existing IT infrastructure in just one morning and could be configured without long training periods. The client rollout was taken over by s.Oliver itself with initial difficulties being immediately resolved owing to the very good and close contact to the developers and the support team of the Siegen IT experts. All available printers can now be mapped in a recursive folder structure and assigned on location basis. In this context, IP ranges are defined for different departments or locations so that in case of a change of location all printer connections and default printers are automatically adapted to the respective IP range.

„If our employees are now visiting the different showrooms, they don't have to worry about whether they chose the right printer at the right location or not", Sebastian Miederer praises the use of the new software. Thanks to the IP filter, the selection of the available printer is now restricted to the respective location – a feature that is perfectly tailored to the requirements of the fashion company. As a next stept, the integration of steadyPRINT into the Asian company organization is scheduled – the rollout has already been done, the configuration is in the planning stage. *„Our confidence in the product has been fully rewarded and we are happy that we can manage our printing environment with such an innovative and intelligent software"*, Fleischmann finally summarizes the successful project implementation.

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Christoph Dräger
Head of Software Development
K-iS Systemhaus GmbH

steadyPRINT is the leading software for intuitive management of Microsoft printing environments of any size and enables secure and flexible printing as well as automated document management in each situation. The inventory, administration and monitoring of the entire printing environment are just as much a focus as the fail-safe operation and migration of print servers and printers, intelligent standard printer and driver management as well as numerous additional functions.

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