



Changing for a greener future – The AGL way

Overview

AGL Energy is Australia's leading renewable energy business with more than three million customer accounts. As Australia's largest private owner, operator and developer of renewable generation assets, AGL is taking action towards creating a sustainable energy future for its customers, communities and investors.

The Green Office Program, an AGL initiative set up in 2008, is a part of that sustainable future. The project targets improvements across AGL, including the way the business uses resources and the subsequent impact on the environment. Included in this initiative was a commitment to reduce paper consumption by 10% from the previous financial year– representing a drop from 46.11 tonnes of paper to 41.5 tonnes, or an average of 19.8 kilos of paper per person. In addition to the obvious environmental benefits, using less paper boosts

productivity and reduces costs by allowing the print environment to be outsourced. In order to meet its commitments, AGL agreed to implement a rationalisation project and put the project out to tender.

The MDS journey for AGL

After a tender process in late 2010, Canon's MDS solution was implemented and saw AGL save a staggering 1.3 million sheets of paper in the first six months. If this trend continues, total paper usage is expected to fall by over 24 tonnes. This means a 50% reduction of paper instead of the 10% originally targeted. Although tangible facts and figures are a shining example of how AGL was able to hit its Green Office Program targets, there is a much deeper story to tell around how AGL managed a cultural shift among its employees and their day-to-day activities.

At a glance

Company

AGL Energy
www.agl.com.au

Industry

Utility

Canon products used

Canon MDS

Benefits

50% reduction of paper consumption in first 6 months, a saving of 1.3 million sheets of paper
Consolidated print fleet from 200 devices to just 90
Current uptime of 99.73%



Discovering the AGL print environment

“If you purchase in piecemeal, you don’t get the best value,” said David Galt, Head of Group Procurement, AGL.

For David Galt and AGL, everything is centred around the customer and ensures AGL operates as efficiently as possible to deliver the best services for them. As a result, it was important to gain a better understanding of the role of IT and AGL’s print environment within the business to ensure it aligned as closely as possible with these objectives.

“Print was viewed more as an IT function, rather than a crucial piece of infrastructure within the business. We had a variety of internal printers attached to the network from multiple suppliers, and to be frank, we didn’t really understand what we had or what we were using. Canon gave us a comprehensive view of our environment and helped us to understand where we could rationalise the fleet and begin hitting our targets.”

- Owen Coppage, CIO, AGL

The ‘discovery’ phase of Canon MDS uncovers who is printing what, where it is being printed and from which device - a complete audit of a business’ print environment. Over the course of the AGL MDS Audit, a recommendation was made by Canon to reduce the number of devices within AGL from more than 200 to just 90. Owen and David were firmly focused on finding a supplier who could not only provide AGL with a measurable service delivery, but could balance this with some of the more rigorous commercial environmental considerations.

“Canon hit this mark perfectly when auditing our print environment,” said Owen.

Designing and building for a future state

“It’s all very well understanding what you have now, but we need to have a solution that looks towards what our print environment might look like in 12 months or two years down the track,” said Owen.

Once AGL was aware of the devices that existed in the business and how these could be rationalised, the next phase was to design a service that fitted the business needs, both now and in the future.

“It had to be scalable and flexible enough to move with the business. This is where Canon MDS really came into its own,” said Owen.

Canon’s experienced consultants used the MDS Audit results to design a print and document solution that can evolve with AGL’s needs. During the ‘Design’ stage, the detail of the technical solution, policy design, service level agreements (SLAs) and key performance indicators (KPIs) were developed in consultation with AGL so that the print environment design was totally aligned with the business.

“Canon was substantially ahead with regards to its tender response, not only in terms of its product set, (particularly uniFLOW), but also by demonstrating that it was a supplier that has a willingness to partner. Canon understood what was being asked and ultimately delivered what we needed,” said David.

The decision to implement Canon’s workflow software, uniFLOW, was in the main due to that fact that it helps maximise the efficiency of both document input (scanning) and output (print, copy, fax), effectively controlling and managing the print and document environment.

In practical terms, uniFLOW allows AGL to monitor and control its print fleet by simply changing the printing behaviour of its employees. One of the solution's key features is the print-release function, whereby all AGL employees must swipe an identity card before their print job is released. Any print jobs that are not released within a set period are automatically deleted, reducing both environmental and financial costs.

"A good example of how staff have been able to save time and reduce the amount they print is through changes that have been made to meeting preparation. With uniFLOW, when hosting meetings, staff are able to send all the material needed to the print device, but then wait until they arrive at the meeting before deciding how many copies to actually print depending on the confirmed number of attendees and those that have already printed their own material. uniFLOW also gives you the option of printing from any printer across all AGL offices, so no matter which state you are in or what floor you are on, you can print your documents wherever is most convenient," commented Owen.

“These changes may seem inconsequential, but across our entire business this translates into a huge reduction in paper and creates a more productive workforce.”

In fact, in the first six months of the year (January-June 2011), AGL has reduced the number of pages printed by staff by 1.3 million sheets. These results are due to employees deleting unwanted print jobs at the device as well as unclaimed print jobs being deleted automatically by the system. The introduction of a print policy has also increased duplex (double sided printing) to 74%. Together, these print reductions have saved AGL more than \$59,000 in the first six months.

Transitioning the change

“What impressed me most was the visibility of the transition team, along with their flexibility, which created an environment where change is simple and benefits are immediate.”

- Glenn Page, Head of Service Management, AGL IT.

A large implementation and change in the printing environment within a business the size of AGL is not only a huge job logistically, but it also has an impact on the day-to-day working ecosystem for employees. Staff are typically used to their 'normal way' of working, so a project which fundamentally changes this routine needs careful planning from a change management perspective.

Roula Haritonas, AGL's dedicated Canon MDS client services manager, was responsible for steering the change management process throughout the entire implementation, including the training sessions for AGL staff.

The process began by working with AGL's corporate communication team to notify all business units the implementation was coming. The communication to all staff highlighted the benefits of the implementation, why it was happening, and the drivers of change, such as environmental benefits and cost savings for the business. In addition, Canon and AGL developed posters and @device help cards to educate and inform staff of the changes to the print and document environment.

Roula added, "The corporate communication was completed in phases, with staff at each AGL site notified in advance so they had a clear expectation of when exactly their particular site was to be switched over. The notification emails also had links to download further information.





“Face-to-face and tele-presence training sessions were also scheduled two weeks before each AGL site was switched over to Canon,” she said. “A device simulator was loaded onto a laptop and connected to a Canon MFD, so the various functions could be demonstrated during the training session, giving staff a chance to familiarise themselves before the actual implementation took place.”

Two Canon MDS PrintCare on-site coordinators were deployed, who were responsible for smoothing any teething issues during the transition period and who remained on-hand afterwards to assist with any queries relating to the use of the devices.

Finally, a second round of training was hosted a month after each site had been ‘cut over’ to Canon to ensure staff had no issues with the implementation and were making the most of the new features.

David commented: “This was a dream implementation as far as we were concerned. It was on time, on budget and Canon delivered on all promised outcomes, if not more. An implementation as large as this has the potential to be quite disruptive to staff, but I believe that we have managed to create an environment where people are confident in the changes that have taken place. There has also been a cultural shift in terms of the way in which people now go about their work – staff are more comfortable and have more control over their time than they might have had previously because of this change in working environment.

““These are perhaps some of the ‘softer’ benefits of what was achieved, and while they might be hard to quantify, they are certainly noticeable on a day-to-day basis in our business and the way in which our staff now go about their day-to-day work.””

Managing and reviewing

A core part of Canon MDS is managing information on performance and reporting. This is analysed so trends can be identified and improvements recommended.

“With any major implementation, there is a need to not only manage, but to continually review the process you’re going through. With Canon’s monthly reporting tools outlining how we’re performing against our agreed KPIs, I’m pleased to say that we’re over-achieving in every department,” said Owen.

As part of this overall management, Canon provides remote monitoring of AGL’s entire print environment, reducing the total cost of ownership by automating meter reading and consumables ordering. Canon also monitors AGL’s printing devices 24/7 to resolve potential issues before they impact on the business – and in doing so, maximises the fleet uptime. With AGL’s current uptime at 99.73%, Canon is overachieving on its SLA.

Service Desk and on-site support is yet another vital area that Canon assists AGL with on a daily basis, freeing up the IT department to work on other areas. Both AGL’s IT staff and end-users have a single point of contact at Canon for all queries, incidents and problems. Against a target response time of four hours, the national average is just half that. When it comes to restoring any issues that do occur, against a target of eight hours, the national average is sitting at 3.4 hours.

“It’s the continued Canon presence and ability to respond so quickly that’s made a real difference to our print environment and business as a whole,” said Owen. “Canon is consistently over-achieving against its KPIs, but it’s the bigger picture benefits around our green program and making our staff more efficient and productive that’s really showing the value Canon adds”.

For information on Canon’s business solutions visit www.canon.com.au/solutions

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