

UniPrint Secures Print and Guarantees High Availability Across 6000 Users for The Welsh Government



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

The Welsh Government (Llywodraeth Cymru) is the executive of the National Assembly for Wales. Providing devolved government and administration for Wales and led by Wales' First Minister, the Government works tirelessly to improve key areas of public life such as health, economic development, education, and the environment. Established in 1999, the Welsh Government sits outside of Whitehall and includes ministers, cabinet secretaries, and 6000 civil servants. The Government has 44 offices, including 7 main offices, located throughout Wales.

The Challenge

The Government landscape and nature of sensitive policy matters being worked upon requires high levels of security, data protection, and availability of services. This extends to the ability to securely and confidently print sensitive documents and legislation. The CTO of the Welsh Government, Crispin O'Connell, assisted by Head of ICT Services, David Milner, are tasked with the primary responsibility to provide all ministers and officials of the Welsh Government with a highly secure, resilient, consistent, compliant, and reliable ICT infrastructure that stretches across Wales - from Cardiff in the south, to Llandudno Junction in the north. David Milner comments:

“We deal with highly sensitive, often classified, confidential personal and policy information each day, so we take security of all aspects of information management extremely seriously. There can be no gaps in our strategy, and the security and integrity of printed information remains paramount.”

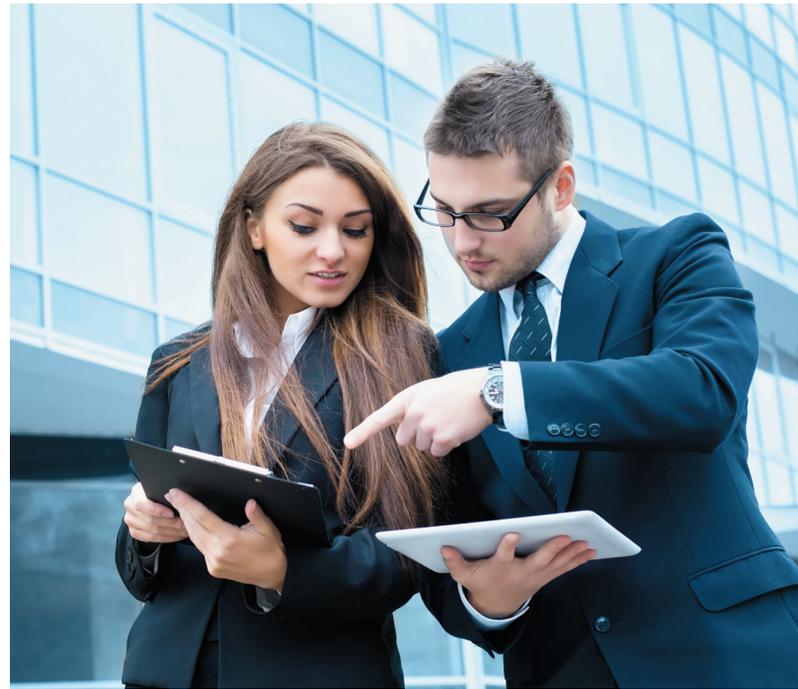
It was these security concerns that initially led UniPrint.net to first be selected as part of a transformation project to rationalise the hundreds of personal printers that had accumulated beside desks. Recognising users' convenient reliance upon their closest desk printer, ICT coordinated the move toward large MFD department printers with the move toward open plan office environments.

The Solution

In 2008, UniPrint Infinity's Universal Print Driver technology (UPD) was selected to standardise the HP printing estate and to resolve the issues of multiple printer drivers and ongoing updates. By working with only one universal printer driver in their Citrix environment, the Welsh Government was able to eliminate all printer driver incompatibility issues. Costs were also contained, with far less "comfort printing" occurring and the optimisation for standard black and white duplex printing as a default.

Later that year, UniPrint was again selected to work alongside the new Citrix XenServer hosting model, providing 5,500 thin client desktops to all staff. As a result, users could seamlessly access their desktop and applications whilst retaining the confidence to print securely and compliantly, regardless of location. Crispin O'Connell elaborates:

"It's fair to say that adoption of UniPrint in the early days was because Citrix was lacking in granularity of shared print features and the ability to provide secure print out-of-the-box. Even with upgrades of XenServer, this continued to be the case. The nature of shared print is that piles of paper tend to proliferate by group printers and we are reliant on staff being able to identify the correct closest printer to them, not always easy even when they all have a standardised naming convention."

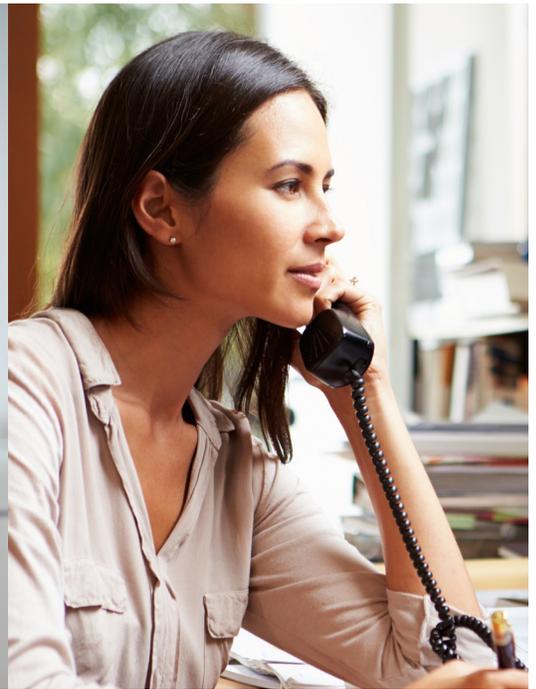


Secure Print Management Adoption

With guidance from their implementation partner ATOS two years ago, 175 UniPrint vPad devices were installed across the estate to enhance the user end-to-end desktop experience. UniPrint Infinity at the same time continued to simplify printer management, enable secure pull printing, and eliminate print waste that could also cause compliancy issues.

With the Welsh Government's secure print management adoption, every employee sends print jobs to a Virtual Print Queue (VPQ) and then uses their individual security pass to print onto the printer's vPad user authentication device. The vPads are easy to use and are deployed locally in minutes, even allowing staff to print and release multiple jobs together for increased productivity.

With the UniPrint software, the ICT have customised their print system to automatically remove print jobs that have remained in the queue and uncalled after 4 hours, further increasing security and decreasing wastage. For smaller offices with just a handful of staff, UniPrint still securely enables print via the VPQ, but authentication is direct from the printer.



Bespoke requirements and features have also been enabled. Tweaks to software through R&D have been delivered in a timely fashion. Crispin O’Connell notes one such example:

“It’s not only avoiding documents ending up in the wrong hands that we have gained over the years of using UniPrint. It’s their feature granularity and flexibility that extends to superfast support; access to their senior R&D team, and unique personalised tweaks such as asking for the vPads to request the word ‘PIN’ not ‘Password’ for secure entry verification.”

High Availability Adoption

Three factors drive the need for constant availability of print. Firstly, the print intensity - given one Government department alone uses over a couple of million print pieces each year, ICT know that print is vital to ensuring productivity and running of departments. Secondly, the ICT need to plan and provide for extreme disaster recovery scenarios. In such disaster scenarios, critical national infrastructure functions require the ability to print and share information. Thirdly, as a flexible working employer, full 24/7, any location working conditions are rolling out.

With this backdrop of usage, the Welsh Government extended the UniPrint software to incorporate the High Availability Module to ensure 100% printing uptime of their print infrastructure with a primary to secondary bridge roll over within their Citrix data centres. Crispin O’Connell explains why High Availability of print is increasingly important:

“Although we live in and embrace a digital age, like many organisations, the Welsh Government still has a high dependency on print as the primary method of collaboration and sharing of information. Given this intensity and importance, we need to ensure print is constantly available and that we have roll-over contingency plans.”



For David Milner, the use of UniPrint has reduced complexity, allowed optimisation and flexibly to respond to differing department needs. As such, in the paper-reliant legal department, secure print adoption has been so effective that the ICT haven't had a printing complaint in years.

The last words go to Crispin O'Connell:

“It's a popular misconception that printing is an easy process. To have an optimised, secure printing network that allows productivity but at the same time makes employees consider the impact of printing and whether it is needed is actually really difficult to achieve. We do feel we have been able to address this by deploying a secure and flexible print solution through UniPrint.”



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Crispin O'Connell
CTO of the Welsh Government

Key Benefits:

- Secure, compliant pull printing for all users, reducing dependency on individual desktop printers
- Increased data protection and compliancy, avoiding abandoned print jobs and wastage
- High availability of print infrastructure
- Disaster recovery & planning
- Optimisation and personalisation (i.e. 4-hour print job deletion)

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