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- **MPS Adoption Model: Guidelines for Success - by Ed Crowley**

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**Guest Commentator MPS Adoption Model: Guidelines for Success - by Ed Crowley**

**Managed print services (MPS)** usually refer to the outsourcing of imaging devices of any kind, but today it involves more than just leasing copiers. For end user organizations, MPS is initially seen as a way to gain control of output device fleet cost. Ultimately it becomes a means to improve business processes.

Organizations across all industries, as well as government agencies, are turning to MPS to:

- Reduce costs in multiple areas
- Consolidate and standardize devices and reduce maintenance
- Optimize utilization through use of experts and consultants
- Outsource maintenance and trim non-core functions

It's no small order to implement an MPS program for a fleet of devices that span multiple departments, locations and platforms, so many companies turn to outsourcing. In a full engagement, a vendor analyzes enterprise equipment utilization and recommends a deployment strategy. The vendor then manages and maintains the fleet. As contracts approach millions of dollars, MPS takes on greater significance, and both vendor and end user organizations see it as strategic to their business.

**IT Dominates MPS Decision Process**

Both non-IT and IT managers indicate that in most cases, the MPS outsourcing decision is owned by the IT organization. Dealing with digital workflow isn't usually a strength of the facilities team. It makes no sense to burden facilities with ramping up a complex print infrastructure, when IT professionals are already up on the technology.

Even so, MPS decisions can be confusing and represent big risks for IT professionals, facilities managers, and others involved in the process. Contracts affect millions of printed pages annually. If a program fails, it can have significant financial impact on a company, and create negative perceptions of the MPS provider.

A manager who is responsible for MPS will want to know:

- What are reasonable expectations for the scope of my responsibility?
- What is a reasonable length for MPS contracts?
- How is MPS pricing typically structured (click charge versus per device)?
- What are guidelines for service response?
- Which vendors are rated the best? And why?
- Which vendors receive poor ratings?
- What is truly important in an MPS deal?
- What are other customers including in their MPS contracts?

**The Phased Adoption Model: Guidelines and Expectations**

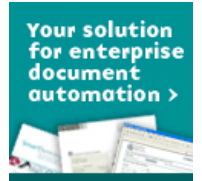
Whether you're new to the process, or you've completed one or two contracts, knowing what to expect can make your experience more successful and less stressful. Although every engagement is unique, you can benefit by understanding the typical phases of MPS adoption. The MPS Adoption Model developed by Photizo Group offers guidelines for the success of MPS initiatives. You can compare your efforts with a model derived from hundreds of interviews.

The Adoption Model helps companies anticipate the stages, benefits and growth potential of an MPS strategy. It defines the general progression of an MPS engagement, from assessment to contract and explains what you should consider to fully benefit from a fleet assessment.

Firms typically begin in their first and second MPS engagements by focusing on gaining control and cost reduction. This can occur over a three to five year period. While Phase One is all about control, Phase Two - spanning the second or third engagement -- addresses effectiveness. It's not until completing the first two phases that companies really focus on business process improvement - the third phase. By the third or fourth engagement, the organization is ready to take MPS expectations to a new level.

**NEXT ISSUE - The Three Phases of the MPS Adoption Model**

*Ed Crowley is founder of the Photizo Group, a marketing intelligence firm that provides market tracking services and consulting to Imaging Industry clients. The Photizo Group is the only source for ongoing business intelligence on the rapidly growing opportunity of Managed Print Services. Since its landmark MPS study released in April 2008 to ongoing research covering North America and Europe, Photizo has emerged as the leader in dynamic business intelligence about the MPS market. Photizo clients include leaders in the digital marketplace, including six of the top imaging manufacturers. Ed Crowley can be reached at 859-873-4518 or [ecrowley@photizogroup.com](mailto:ecrowley@photizogroup.com).*



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## MPS Adoption Model: Guidelines for Success - Part 2 - by Ed Crowley

In the previous article I discussed why Managed Print Services (MPS) should be considered a sound business alternative to in house services.

The Adoption Model helps companies anticipate the stages, benefits and growth potential of an MPS strategy. It defines the general progression of an MPS engagement, from assessment to contract and explains what you should consider to fully benefit from a fleet assessment.

### Phase One: Lowering Printing Costs

Fifty percent of all MPS engagements captured in the Photizo study were in their first MPS engagement. Phase One objectives are to identify costs, benchmark usage and ultimately bring the fleet under one department. The vendor's role is often limited in this phase to providing equipment, the initial assessment of the fleet, and tools for monitoring usage.

Financial pressure to reduce operating and support costs is usually the first driver for adopting MPS. Savings are achieved through lower maintenance and printing costs, along with less paid staff time to support devices. Even a small percentage reduction can be significant, but first current costs must be captured. This requires an assessment.

### Make Your Assessment Count

One of the first steps at any stage of MPS engagement is an assessment of your current print infrastructure. Of the surveyed by Photizo, almost 60 percent had already completed an assessment on their device fleet. A solid assessment will be the foundation of a solid MPS contract.

Once you select vendors to bid on your contract, you and they will want to answer questions like these. You might be surprised at what you learn!

- How many devices are there in the organization?
- Define your installed base (by device type)
- How many devices are needed? How will this be determined?
- How much are devices used?
- Who are the "heavy" users?
- What about other users? What is the largest group? Where are they?
- What are hardcopy costs across different documents?

### Phase Two: Device Consolidation, Optimized Utilization

At this stage, companies strive to consolidate devices, optimize utilization, and outsource maintenance. The vendor's role expands to include both equipment and more services. Greater effectiveness comes from consolidating devices under one management. An across-the-board MPS strategy lets companies standardize on consumables, training, maintenance, service and systems.

Standardization is an enabler for more efficient workflow and job routing, and as printer technology evolves, more capabilities are built into each system. Widespread adoption of multi-function peripherals (MFPs) is fueling record MPS growth. As systems do more things in a single unit, older models become obsolete, and their upkeep can drag down productivity and profit. As we bridge the gap between printers and copiers, the number of systems is consolidating.

Decision makers can build on their previous MPS experience. They consider questions like these to define their next MPS engagement:

- Evaluate your existing or previous MPS contract
- What services are included in the MPS contract?
- What is known about current or past MPS provider?
- Identify your installed base under MPS contract (by device type)

### Phase Three: Business Process Improvement

As companies expand their MPS experience, the third phase and beyond is a time to focus on business process improvement (BPI) and more productivity from improving document workflow. The result is a more competitive organization. The vendor's role expands to include business process consulting.

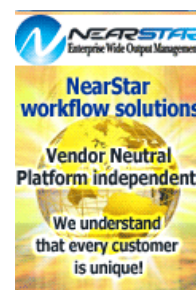
As MPS becomes part of the strategy, companies can expect stronger capabilities, increased efficiency and improved customer satisfaction. An MPS-experienced IT manager at this stage might ask:

- How can they benchmark their program and validate they made the right decision?
- Is their vendor doing a good job for other customers?
- Are they seeing the same problems or strengths with their vendor as other customers?
- Are they getting proficient in their MPS program?

### Resources for the Long Term

An MPS strategy can serve your company for years to come, but most organizations won't do just one survey over the course of time. MPS engagements are often renewed every three to five years, as management and companies change, print technology evolves, brands rise and wane, and new vendors pursue the business.

No two engagements are ever the same, even within the same company. Both vendors and customers need current information and the latest best practices to help them improve with every new or renewed MPS contract. As the market



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evolves, static data doesn't hold its value. Look for research that provides on-going quantitative tracking of the MPS market and competitive brand positions.

Resources you'll need to evaluate MPS potential should offer:

- Continuous tracking of key metrics and brand position to stay on top of strengths and trends
- Access to industry experts for unique, practical insight
- Feedback about peers and what they learn from their own MPS experience
- Timely reports and analysis addressing key market events
- More efficient, accurate ways to capture, qualify and document data.

This information can be difficult for vendors and end users to acquire maintain on their own. In fact, to do so is an impractical use of resources, when professional, affordable solutions are available. Companies like Photizo Group are dedicated to the MPS marketplace, and are a good source of the up-to-the-minute information vendors and end users need for successful MPS strategies. For example, the Photizo Group offers the quarterly MPS Tracker, a survey of the market that looks at trends, players and what other companies are doing with their MPS initiatives.

More companies are recognizing MPS as a quantifiable way to drive cost savings and productivity. In today's competitive market, no matter what your business, it's well worth pursuing, especially when you have all the information you need to make the best decision for your company.

For more information about MPS engagements and resources, visit [www.managed-print-services.com](http://www.managed-print-services.com).

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