

Nottingham Community Housing Association

Print Management

case study



Bringing more colour into the lives of care home residents

Nottingham Community Housing Association (NCHA) is a not-for-profit charitable organisation who put their customers at the heart of everything they do, from investing in their homes and communities, to how they go about providing their services. Understanding the Association's specific requirements, Arena Group recommended new inkjet technology from Epson with a fleet of over 70 W579 Colour MFPs.

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“Historically, we've had to go with monochrome print only to keep the cost per copy down, unless it was absolutely necessary for colour,” explained James Atkins, Head of Technology Services. “We're trying to ensure we have the best value for money solution so every bit of saving we can make in those areas means that more can be put into the care.”



Enabling colour without losing control of cost is a real plus for service users where care managers need colour pictures on items such as food menus for the day. “It's made a massive difference. It gives service users the opportunity to visualise the food and not just read the text to get a better understanding of what they were getting, giving them that little bit extra and showing that we're taking people's needs into consideration,” explained Steve Hanson NCHA's Service Desk Manager.

James concurred; “The wellbeing of the residents and service users is our primary concern; it's only a small thing, but it's those small things that do make the difference.”

The Epson is particularly suited for NCHA's care and residential sites.

“A lot of our sites are small, so we needed small machines but at an enterprise level,” Steve clarified.

“The footprint and functionality of the device was really important, and how the follow me bolted on to that,” continued James. “The big sell for our managers was that they'd not had colour before, because we couldn't control its use. Now we're able to assign specific users to be able to use colour, so there was a big excitement.”

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"We were also interested in the speed of the Epson inkjet," James recalled. "With the follow me print we didn't want people complaining about having to get up and going to the printer and then having to wait for it to do all the things a printer has to do when it warms up. Also its not sat there wasting energy when it's not being used. The Epson inkjet seemed to tick all those boxes."

"Working with the technical team at Arena allowed us to think about those details, like setting up protocols and controls to manage colour print more efficiently," James continued.

Arena really stood out as the right technology partner for them as soon as they were invited in to meet with the Association's team.

"Print is a large value contract, so we wanted a wide range of suppliers and a structured process to go through," explained James Atkins, Head of Technology Services for NCHA. "At that time, we had no procurement expertise in house, and it felt a little like we were on our own. By working within the framework, we had that structure provided for us, and there's a list of suppliers available that we already knew would be able to meet our needs."

"Part of the reason we went down the mini tender route is that you get to sit down with the people you'll be working with and get a bit of a feel for whether or not you think they'll follow through on their promises," explained James. "During the process you get a list of things that people say they will do for you, and then once you actually get into the contract, you only get a percentage of that in my experience. But with Arena we got all of the key things that were promised; the level of service, the way the project was run, the delivery and the communication."

"The team from Arena came across as very friendly, down to earth and approachable, and understood what we were trying to do. For me the differentiator was the values of the team members we were dealing with, and the fact that they've delivered on their promises."

The Epson W579 MFPs are 6 times more energy efficient than comparable laser MFP and also release less ozone and particulates for improved air quality around users and residents.

"Reducing energy consumption is important to the organisation," James shared. We want to be using energy as efficiently as possible so to know that these units were more energy efficient than the alternative was important."

Improving air quality has also been achieved as an outcome of using the Epson inkjet devices. "I saw the ink bag and realised that we get away from having to ask people to pull out toner cartridges and have toner flying into the air everywhere. The inkjet bags feel a lot cleaner and neater."

"Because of being able to report on more, we are taking more interest in setting up targets to reduce paper usage," Steve told us. "This wasn't on our original list of requirements, but in the future the environmental aspect will become of increased importance within the organisation so being able to report on impact helps."

James agreed; "This is another unintended consequence, but a really positive consequence none the less."

get in touch

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