

OLMSTED COUNTY

Pin Pointing Needs Critical to the Right Program

The Situation...

The printing and copying needs of Olmsted County's 20-plus departments range widely. From departments with very sophisticated printing needs to those that only need basic printing functions, Olmsted County's challenge was to meet the needs of each department accurately. "Unless you really dig in and have meaningful discussions with departments identifying their real printing needs, you might as well be working off wish lists from those departments or lists that generalize all function," stated Debbie Palmer, Purchasing Manager for Olmsted County.

With numerous County buildings spread out geographically there isn't a great deal of opportunity to share equipment. Factor in limited budgets and the need to be vigilant in spending taxpayer dollars, and the need for absolutely pin-pointing individual department requirements is critical. "Our biggest challenges are always going to be money and resources," Palmer said. "So it really is all about getting the right machines in the right places and then monitoring them to make sure they are doing the right job for us. The key is having a competent partner you trust, and we have that with EO Johnson."

The Solution

Working together and utilizing EO Johnson's expertise is what makes Olmsted County successful in their print and copier program. EO Johnson works with each County Department to identify their printing needs, and Palmer underscores the word "needs." "Quite often what a department wants isn't what they need," she said. "EO Johnson has been very helpful in identifying actual needs. And because of their experience, they often identify things we wouldn't think of."

With some 90 copiers and multi-function devices, the program is a big one, but Palmer is confident the County is getting exactly what they need. "There are no sales pitches or pushing one type of equipment over another," Palmer said. "There is no doubt in our minds that when EO Johnson makes a recommendation it is what is best for our operation."

On a quarterly basis, Olmsted County and EO Johnson meet to review the printer/copier program. They examine individual machine usage and make adjustments to ensure all machines are in the right locations and providing the best value and efficiencies.

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OLMSTED COUNTY



OLMSTED COUNTY CENTRAL SERVICES
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Used Copier Program Benefits Non-profits and Landfills

With the size of Olmsted County's copier/printer program, the question of what to do with surplus equipment could be an issue. But Olmsted County has a unique answer – a program that refurbishes the decommissioned copiers and gets them in the hands of local non-profit organizations.

The program relies on a partnership with EO Johnson and the local United Way. EO Johnson refurbishes, warehouses, and transports the surplus copiers, and United Way determines which non-profits the copiers go to.

"The program is a win for everyone," said Palmer. "The copiers are no longer useful to the County and have little, if any resale value. Once refurbished, the copies have two-to-five year's additional life, so non-profits get a copier and we divert them from going into the landfill"

The program has garnered recognition. In February 2008, Olmsted County received Honorable Mention in the Minnesota Governor's Award for Excellence in Waste and Pollution Prevention for the surplus copier program.



Business Profile

Olmsted County is located in Southeastern Minnesota. With a population of 124,777 it is the eighth largest county in population size in Minnesota. Olmsted County has 18 townships and seven cities for a total of 653 square miles. Rochester is the County Seat and accounts for 69 percent of Olmsted County's population.

The Right Partnership

To Palmer there is more to a successful partnership than just getting the right machines – the service has to be extraordinary. "Productivity is key to our County operations," she said. "If things slow down, we are not serving our constituents like we should and ultimately it is costing us money."

Needless to say, service is big for Palmer, and she is a fan of EO Johnson's. "EO Johnson has impressed us with their service and how they continually step up to the plate when necessary," she said. "They consistently beat our contracted time frames for service calls, and their service technicians are excellent – very friendly."

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