

Intelligent document imaging solution helps commercial explosives enterprise

AEL Mining Services, a leading manufacturer of commercial explosives, uses Ricoh document imaging solutions. Versatile and efficient multifunctional products that print, copy, scan and fax have replaced standalone imaging devices. By optimising fleet utilisation, Ricoh has helped AEL reduce expenditure on print, release office space and cut energy consumption.

Customer Objectives

- Rationalise imaging fleet
- Simplify document infrastructure
- Reduce print expenditure
- Improve communication process
- Minimise support requirements

Ricoh's Solution

- Managed document services
- Enterprise-wide solution
- Secure pull-print technology
- Automated OCR scanning
- Remote service management



AEL Mining Services

With annual sales of nearly R3 billion, AEL Mining Services is the largest supplier of explosives technology in Africa. The company's headquarters, regional offices and production sites had procured document imaging systems from different vendors according to local need. Little consideration was given to the overall effectiveness of the company's document infrastructure.

Employees moving from one location to another were faced with different technology. Many of the devices had limited functionality and did not fully meet business requirements. There were several different service providers and it was not always clear who supported which machine. The company processed hundreds of individual invoices every year for service and consumables.

Planned Approach

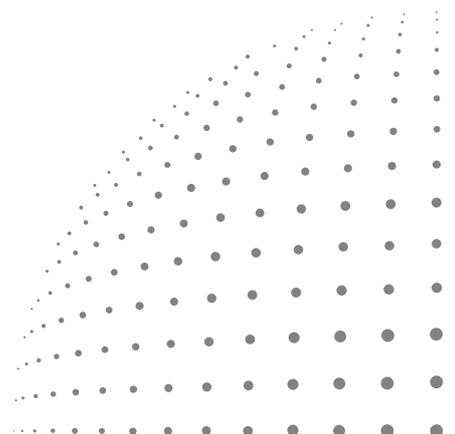
Recognising that a strategic and coordinated approach to document imaging would improve efficiency and reduce costs, AEL asked Ricoh to provide Managed Document Services. The company was looking for a managed solution which would utilise multifunctional products (MFPs) supported by intelligent software and effective service management.

Ricoh's solution has transformed the document infrastructure at AEL. By replacing standalone devices with more versatile technology and optimising utilisation, Ricoh halved the number of imaging devices. Information is shared more effectively, documents related costs have been cut by 35% and less time is wasted on administrative support.

**Managed
Document
Services™**
MPS and Beyond



Mining Services



Bespoke Solutions

Ricoh conducted detailed site surveys, mapping the location, utilisation and running cost of existing equipment. Users were questioned about their needs. Bottlenecks and opportunities for improvement were identified. From the audit data, Ricoh designed an optimised solution for each AEL site utilising pre-tested and approved technology.

To simplify the print process and protect document security, Ricoh installed a pull-print solution. Rather than print to a specific device, work is printed to a secure print server using a single unified print driver. Using company ID cards to authenticate themselves, users may release and collect work from any convenient Ricoh MFP.

An enterprise scanning solution is used to capture and share hardcopy information. Documents scanned using the Ricoh MFPs can be integrated directly into the company's document management system. Optical Character Recognition means enables documents to be searched and shared with employees, suppliers and customers.

Improved Efficiency

Ricoh's technology is proving fast, effective and easy to use. Pull-printing has simplified the print process and eliminated printer related bottlenecks. With work printed on demand, there is less waste. The introduction of enterprise-wide scanning has improved communication and reduced the need for paper-based copies.

Optimisation has halved the number of imaging devices employed, releasing space. The use of more cost efficient systems and technology is saving AEL 35% per annum. Ricoh's solution is also more energy efficient. The new multifunctional products consume less energy and, with fewer devices employed, AEL has seen a significant reduction in energy consumption.

Remote monitoring allows Ricoh to proactively maintain equipment, resolving technical issues before they become apparent to users and despatching toner in advance of need. Data provided by Ricoh's monitoring tool is used to generate detailed management reports and, rather than individual invoices, AEL now receives a single transparent bill covering all print services.

Service Improvements

- Versatile technological platform
- Card-based authentication
- Managed service support
- Automated toner replenishment
- Single transparent invoice

Business Advantages

- Uniform document infrastructure
- Improve business efficiency
- Minimal support requirement
- 50% fewer imaging devices
- 35% reduction in costs

“The optimisation programme has improved efficiency and is delivering savings of around 35% per annum. Ricoh's project team ensured that systems were commissioned and users trained well within required time scales. Automated meter readings, proactive toner replenishment and remote diagnostics have minimised our internal support requirements.”

Daryl Tarr, Group IT Manager, AEL Mining Services

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