

Case Study

higher education

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"By consolidating with one vendor — Modern Image Systems — we have cut our leasing costs in half."

— Keiona Middleton,
Vice President and Chief
Operations Officer,
Shorter College



Shorter College

How a historic liberal arts college cut costs in half by re-examining document management and visual communications

ABOUT THE CUSTOMER

Shorter College in Little Rock, Arkansas is one of 110 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) in the U.S. It holds the distinction of being the only private, two-year HBCU in the nation. Founded in 1886 by the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the college began with a mission to provide educational opportunities in the aftermath of the Civil War. More than 130 years later, Shorter College is still true to its mission — providing intimate classroom settings and knowledgeable faculty that empower students to pursue academic excellence.

CHALLENGE

- **Classroom interactive flat panel displays that couldn't be repaired**
- **Inability to enhance classroom learning with visual communications**
- **Rising print fleet costs due to multiple vendors, leases and models**
- **Lack of visibility into printer use and inability to track costs**

Shorter College had four older interactive flat panel displays (IFPDs) on campus, but three of them were inoperable and beyond repair. They could be used by instructors as glorified monitors hooked up to laptops, but they remained idle due to the limited number of laptops available on campus. In addition, the IFPDs weren't large enough for students to easily see what was being displayed. To enhance classroom visual communications, Shorter needed larger, truly functional IFPDs that didn't have to be connected to external devices — technology that could also be used for video conferencing down the road.

Along with its visual communications shortcomings, Shorter College's printing fleet no longer made fiscal sense. Through the years, printers had been purchased randomly, resulting in a fleet of various makes and models, disparate lease pricing terms and contract durations — and a stable of different vendors routinely making time-consuming inquiries. If a printer needed service, the college first had to determine which vendor to contact and what the service plan entailed, which led to increased downtime and administrative consternation.

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In addition, Shorter College had no visibility into the use of their printing fleet and they couldn't track costs to specific areas of campus or students. Although students and staff had mobile devices, there was no way to conveniently print from their phones or tablets directly to a networked printer.

RESULTS

- **Printer and IFPD leasing costs cut in half**
- **Reduced time and hassles for service calls**
- **Compelling, visual classroom lectures**
- **Visibility into fleet, accurate charge-backs for printing**

By consolidating with a single vendor for document management and visual communications, Shorter College has reduced its lease costs by 50 percent. They have more advanced technology at a lower cost and can divert that savings to other needs on campus. And, with Modern Image Systems handling everything from technology installation to service calls, administrators are able to focus on advancing the college's mission and bottom line — rather than printer breakdowns.

Classroom lectures and discussions now come alive with streaming video, internet searches and document presentations on the larger IFPDs that are easier for students to see. Instructors can also pull up email or documents on the IFPD and send to a nearby MFP to print for students. In the future, the college intends to add more IFPDs to classrooms and enlist built-in capabilities for videoconferencing between internal and external sources.

Shorter College now has a printing fleet that runs more reliably and efficiently. They have insight into which printers are used the most and that knowledge informed the placement of a convenient self-service printer in the library where students most frequently print. The college can now track who is printing and accurately charge students' accounts. And, students and instructors are able to print directly to an MFP from their phone or tablet.

HOW WE DID IT

- **Conducted cost analysis to show savings through consolidation**
- **Replaced older MFPs with new systems**
- **Installed advanced, highly functional IFPDs**
- **Provided training on IFPDs**

Lanier dealer Modern Image Systems was one of Shorter College's print fleet providers and had become increasingly known on campus. When the college decided they needed to reduce costs and improve capabilities, they looked to Modern Image Systems to help them re-examine document management and visual communications.

Modern Image Systems provided the college with a detailed visual cost savings comparison, showing administrators how much they could save by consolidating print technology and service with one vendor. We demonstrated how some of the savings could be used to fund new multifunction printers with more advanced scanning, authentication and mobile printing capabilities, and upgraded their entire printing fleet.

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A year after the fleet overhaul, we replaced the broken 64-inch IFPDs with new larger, 84-inch systems with stands and Windows® controllers. The new IFPDs had better resolution, more features and they came with speakers and a camera. To ensure instructors knew how to use the new technology, Modern Image Systems trained instructors while students were away on winter break.

“We wanted unique ways to integrate visual communications technology into our classrooms. Eventually, we want to have an interactive flat panel display in every classroom.”

www.ricoh-usa.com

Learn more about **Ricoh Services and Solutions** or **contact us**

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