

Success Story

United States Navy and Marine Corps



AutoStore Scan-Enables the World's Largest Internal Network

Background

The Navy and Marine Corps Intranet (NMCI) is a massive internal network encompassing 363,000 computers serving more than 700,000 sailors, Marines, and civilians. It covers 620 locations in the continental United States, Hawaii and Japan, and is the largest internal computer network in the world.

Approximately 20,000 Multifunction Peripherals (MFPs) are plugged into this network. These devices provide copying and printing services and when properly configured, can also scan documents. The Navy was interested in a process that would make it possible to scan to user home directories on network shares or command shares and to process requests for this service. When implemented, each Navy or Marine Corps location could request that scanning be turned on for their devices and their system integrator would fulfill these requests.

Challenge

However, enabling scanning on 20,000 devices wasn't as simple as flipping a switch – or even 20,000 switches. The Navy uses many different models of MFPs from several different manufacturers. Some of these devices supported the initial goal: scanning to a user home or command directory. However, configuration and operation was unique to each device or family of devices. It would be a challenge to set up and manage scanning on thousands of devices even if they were identical. In this case, a cost-effective method was needed for integrating hundreds of different models. The project simply wouldn't be economically feasible unless configuration and management could be standardized and centralized.

But that wasn't the only challenge. There were also extensive Department of Defense (DOD) security and certification requirements. The DOD required specific lockdown procedures for each model from each manufacturer. The system integrator would have to develop manuals describing how to secure each device and certification would require months of testing.

Solution

A cost-effective MFP scanning solution for the Navy would not have been possible without a single product that would permit them to centrally manage up to 20,000 disparate devices and meet security and certification requirements.

AutoStore from Notable Solutions, Inc (NSi) was the only product that met all of the requirements. AutoStore supports more models of MFPs than any other software vendor and made it possible to configure and manage the NMCI devices using a single platform. Standardizing on AutoStore also gave users a common MFP control panel interface, which increases user acceptance and reduces the need for training. Even more important, AutoStore met all DOD security specifications and certifications. For example, AutoStore generates a full audit trail of its scanning operations and requires secure user authentication through Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) or Active Directory as well as a government Common Access Card (CAC).

The Process

There are five regional data centers for the Navy and Marine Corps. A single AutoStore server operates at each data center, supporting thousands of distributed MFPs. When a Navy customer anywhere in the US or Japan wants to enable scanning on the MFPs at their location, someone there completes a form requesting scanning and submits the form to the system integrator.

A field technician is then dispatched to their location, ensures their devices meet minimum requirements (e.g. firmware), gathers additional information (IP of device, etc.), and if necessary, installs the AutoStore client.

Finally, a system administrator at one of the five regional data centers receives this information, configures the AutoStore server to support this new client based on desired network shares, etc.

Results

AutoStore has fulfilled the Navy's request without compromising security or cost requirements. This was possible because AutoStore supported the hundreds of different models of MFPs on the NMCI. This support minimized the number of people required to configure and administer scanning.

The demand for document scanning was so great that more than 1,500 requests were placed to activate devices during the first month of the program alone.

The initial phase enables users to scan to a home directory or secure network drive share. The next phase may leverage AutoStore's automated character and bar code recognition and integration with content management and archiving applications to automate business processes such as human resources applications.

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