

Save time and money with integrated network faxing

Reduce labor and material costs while cutting down on lost or misplaced faxes

With an integrated network faxing solution, you can save thousands of dollars in labor costs, improve employee productivity and increase the security of your fax communications. At the same time your faxes can be readily prepared, look more professional and add an air of professionalism to your organization's business communications. By leveraging existing word processing and messaging applications, you can expand your use of these applications at no additional software or training costs. Do higher productivity and lower costs sound like attractive options? Read this white paper for more details.

Introduction

This white paper describes the benefits of network integrated faxing in business communications, resulting in a more cost-effective and efficient form of fax system when compared to traditional fax machines and email. It also explains why integrated network faxing is the best approach to take when dealing with issues of security, compliance with privacy regulations, reducing overheads and increasing productivity, all at no real cost. Fax machines and email messaging alone cannot match the benefits that integrated network faxing brings to an enterprise.

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The state of the fax

The fax is dead! Long live the fax. It wasn't that long ago that faxes were destined to go the way of the dinosaur and the dodo bird. Faxing, the transmission of paper documents by electronic means, was an exceptional technology, said the pundits. However, they argued, the growth and importance of email systems would soon make faxing passé, or at best reduce fax usage to a small niche sector where email couldn't yet match the capabilities of a fax machine, especially in environments where digital signatures were not legally binding.

As so often happens, the pundits and doomsayers were wrong. Faxing did not disappear and it continues to be an important business communication tool. In fact, email didn't really ever come close to replacing faxes; and fax technology, it turns out, may be a better solution in an increasing number of situations.

Problems with email messaging

There are a number of reasons why faxing did not become another extinct technology. When email first appeared, many saw the advantage of being able to attach documents to an email and those documents could then be printed by the recipient. In turn, these documents lost little of their integrity – which is often the case with fax transmissions.

However, many began to realize that the necessary safeguards to ensure email was a secure

form of communication were not in place everywhere and all the time. For example, a single email could be sent to any number of computers or servers thereby compromising the confidentiality of the sender's and / or recipient's documents. This lack of security and guaranteed confidentiality / integrity of the data meant that email often fell foul of numerous pieces of legislation safeguarding data security and integrity, HIPAA being a good example.

Besides, unlike emails, a fax can't carry a virus; a fax can't be used to phish; a fax cannot be used to spam thousands of companies (too costly) and a fax cannot be used to harm your company's network security.

There is no doubt in anyone's mind that email is today the preferred means of communication for individuals and an excellent tool to do business globally, but there is still a thriving market for the fax machine and faxing technology. Although a decline has been registered in the sales of fax machines, the technology is still selling well in the form of multi-function printers.

It is estimated that there are about 130 million fax machines in use in the world today, and a couple of million new purchases are made each year. One of the reasons why fax machines continue to be used is that they are simple to use and an easy way to receive documents quickly, safely and securely. Although nearly every company in the world uses email, many still have a trusted fax machine from which they send and receive important documentation. Contracts, legal documents and papers requiring original signatures are still sent and received via fax machine; and this is not expected to change any time soon.

Clearly, there are still valid reasons why a fax machine is still an important piece of hardware in many organizations. At the same time, however, it is also true that there are a number of cost issues that large companies may want to look into if they are heavy fax users.

The following section examines the costs involved to send a fax manually.

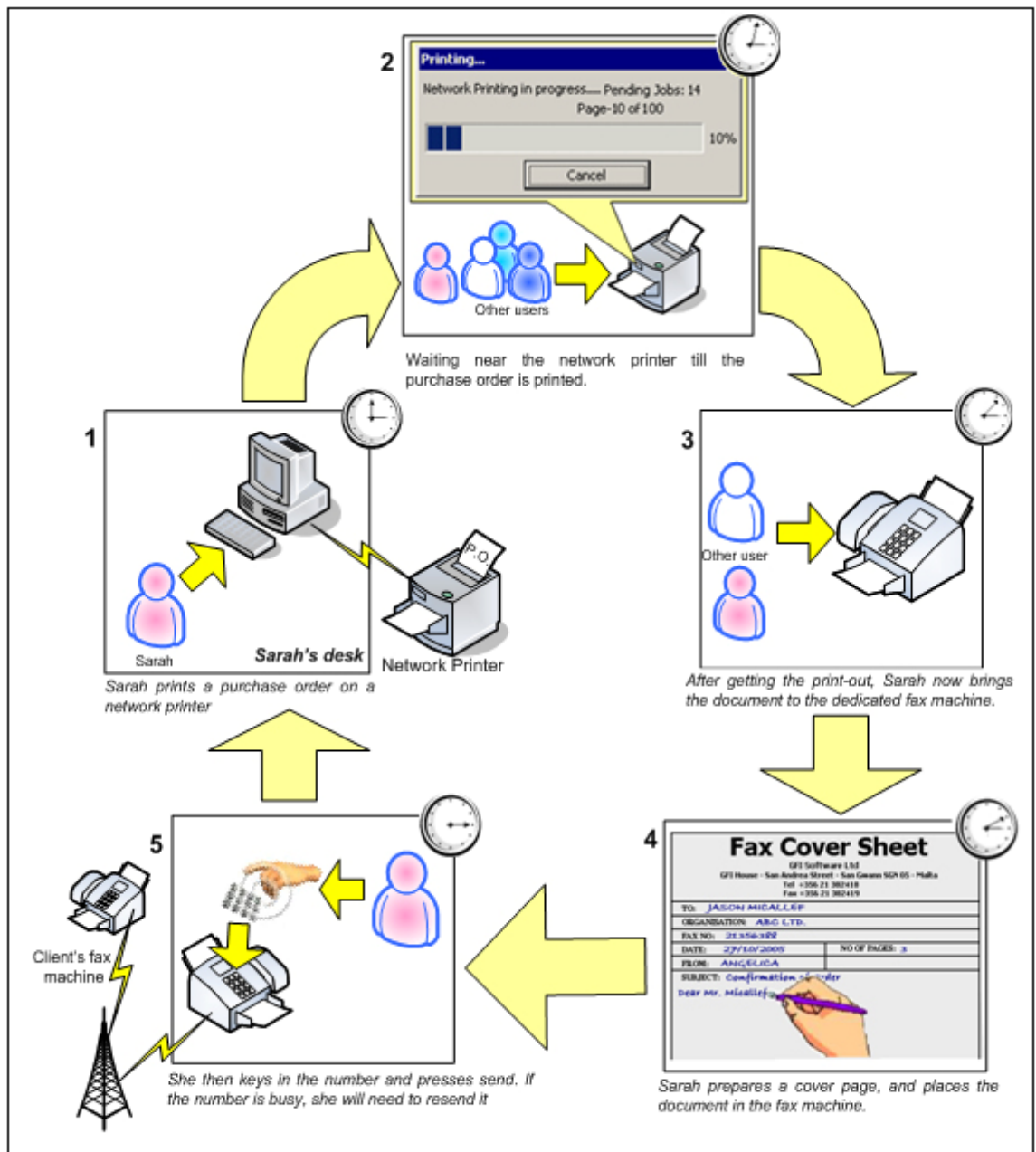
Problems with manual faxing

One of the biggest problems with manual faxing is the time it takes to send a fax – time that could be put to better use elsewhere.

Let's take a look at the steps required to send a fax manually. For the purpose of this exercise, we are going to assume that the fax document is a purchase order that has already been prepared on an employee's workstation and needs to be faxed to a vendor. How does it get there?

1. Print the purchase order on a network printer
2. Get up from his/her desk and walk to the network printer
3. Take the document to the dedicated fax machine
4. Prepare a cover page and place it, along with the purchase order, in the fax machine

5. Key in the phone number of the receiving fax machine and press send. If the number is busy, he/she may need to resend it
6. Once done, the employee returns to his/her desk.



It can take up anything from five to 10 minutes to send a simple fax, assuming that other factors do not come into play – the employee is distracted, there is no paper in the fax machine, it

jams, machine errors pop up or the employee stops for a chat or a cup of coffee with co-workers.

Apart from 'wasting' 10 minutes and depending on the quality of fax machine the recipient is using, the documents just faxed are likely to be received in poor quality (90% of all faxes are sent in standard mode), with gray scales reduced to black and the document probably tilted slightly (or worse). Not very presentable, to say the least!

There are issues at the receiver's end too. Presuming that the fax arrives at a communal fax machine, the chances that it will be lost or misplaced increase if the document is not immediately picked up. If the machine is in use often, it is not hard to imagine employees picking up another person's fax by mistake, filing it incorrectly or, even worse, leaving it on the side with other waste paper. The fax can be misdirected to an entirely wrong department where it will remain indefinitely unless someone specifically asks for it (highly unlikely as most people would simply tell the sender to resend it). There is also a risk that the contents of that fax could be read by other employees.

Picture this scenario in a working environment with not one but with 100 employees regularly sending faxes – rising communication costs, wasted resources, productivity losses and concerns that confidential material may end up in the wrong person's hands – and manual faxing starts to lose its shine.

Unfortunately, companies still need to use a fax machine. The question is: How can you cut costs and make fax communications more secure?

Why integrated network faxing is the answer

So what is the solution?

We have already said that email is not a secure form of communication. Faxing on the other is more secure but is also costly in terms of resources and productivity. Ideally, the best solution would use the speed and easy-of-use that email clients offer while making the most of the secure transmission that manual faxing guarantees.

What is needed

An all-round solution would satisfy the following:

- Reduces fax associated costs
- Improves worker productivity
- Easy installation and deployment
- Leverage existing email and office suites
- Requires no change to the user's routine
- Archives faxes for later retrieval and record retention.

The most popular solution has been to replace standalone fax machines with integrated network fax servers that allow users to quickly and easily send, receive and manage fax communication right at their desktop.

In this type of a solution, users can compose faxes using word processing software (or another application) or create a new message in their email client (e.g. Outlook or Lotus Notes). Numbers can be selected from the mail clients address list or entered manually. Traffic is managed through the Exchange/SMTP mail server which can receive and route faxes.

Top of the line integrated network fax servers also allow users to send and receive faxes via their handhelds or mobile devices such as Blackberrys and PDAs. As more and more businessmen check their email while on the road, the ability to send a receive faxes on their mobile device ensures they have access to documentation even if they are not in the office.

The benefits: Saving time and money

Two of the key benefits to integrated network faxing are that you save time and money. If you still use manual fax machines, a simple calculator created by GFI – http://www.gfi.com/faxmaker/fax_savings.htm?emp=1&fax=1 – will give you a very good estimate of how much money you could save if you install fax server software in your company, as shown in table 1.

In our calculator, we assume that it takes an average of six minutes to send a fax. If the employee sending the fax is paid a modest \$15 an hour (approx. \$30,000 per year) then, by simple proportion, the manpower cost alone for those six minutes of sending a fax is \$1.50 per fax.*

To factor in the cost of paper or maintenance costs (such as toner cartridges) we add another \$0.05 per fax sent. This total is then multiplied by the number of faxes sent per day and 261, the average of working days in a year.

Faxes /day/ employee:	Employees	Time saved (hr/yr)	Cost savings / yr
5	70	9,135	\$116,571
10	46	12,006	\$154,262
25	25	16,312.5	\$210,920
30	20	15,660	\$202,437

Table 1 – Cost and time savings using GFI's fax saving calculator**

The calculator shows two results: the number of man-hours required to send faxes in a year and the amount of money you would save if you had an integrated fax server installed on your network.**

When using an integrated network fax solution, such as GFI FAXmaker, it takes less than a minute to send the fax and the total cost is only \$0.25 per fax. Furthermore, the process to send a fax comprises fewer steps.

An employee working with a company that uses a fax server can send faxes in three simple steps without having to leave his or her desk.

1. From the word processor, print to the fax application
2. Select the recipient from the address book or enter the phone number
3. Click send (the fax will continue to be resent without user intervention if the line is busy).

Simpler, faster and much cheaper!

There are other reasons why an integrated fax solution can be of benefit to companies.

Production faxing

Production faxing is similar, but very different to broadcast faxing. A broadcast fax is essentially sending the same message, for example, a sales brochure, to multiple recipients. With production faxing, you send a unique document to multiple recipients.

Production faxing is a key requirement for any company whose day-to-day operations consist of delivering large numbers of paper documents to customers and partners. Production faxing allows enterprises to deliver business critical documents - such as purchase orders, invoices, order confirmations, bills of lading, financial reports and mortgage tables, without the need to print, mail or manually fax a document both electronically and automatically.

Mailing a document involves printing out the document, enclosing it into an envelope and mailing it out at a cost similar to manual faxing. If an organization's day-to-day operations involve sending out multiple documents per day, such as invoices, order confirmations and inventory ordering, then the cost per year can be a significant piece of a company's operational expenses. With production faxing, a company can reduce these costs by up to 90% by automating fax delivery and reducing costs to print, mail or fax a document.

Improved security

With network integrated faxing, end users can send, receive, view, print and save faxes from their PC or laptop computer, eliminating the pile of paper around a communal fax machine.

Automatic inbound routing through a process called Direct Inward Dial (DID) routing, (in which

end users are assigned a personal secure fax number) sends faxes directly to the user's desktop. Because the fax is received in the user's account, faxes cannot be seen by other employees, and they are not prone to being discarded or misrouted.

Other advantages

In addition to the above, high performance integrated network faxing solutions have the following capabilities:

1. Incoming and outgoing fax queue sorting – i.e. you can view faxes by any of a number of variables, such as sender, status, destination, etc.
2. Improved fax quality, formatting capability and document legibility for a professional appearance
3. Ability to add attachments to the fax
4. Delivery to both email clients and standalone or network fax machines
5. Delivery to PDAs and mobile phones
6. Junk fax filters to eliminate unwanted documents
7. Fax broadcasting capabilities that allow you to send personalized fax messages to a large number of recipients
8. Archiving of faxes, thus eliminating the need to keep faxed copies of documents while still retaining key records
9. IT departments can consolidate fax server operations and standardize them
10. Integrated network faxing opens the possible use of real-time FAX over IP (FOIP).

* Varies from country to country and also organization.

** It is important to point out that the savings figure includes the cost of purchase of GFI FAXmaker. The process of sending a network fax using GFI FAXmaker takes less than a minute, at a mere labor cost of \$0.25 and no material costs other than what you pay for GFI FAXmaker at the very beginning.

Summary

The simple and relatively painless process of setting up an integrated network faxing solution can significantly increase a company's efficiency and productivity. With a network faxing solution thousands of dollars can be saved in labor costs alone. In addition, faxes can be more secure, readily prepared and add an appearance of professionalism to the company's business communications. By leveraging existing technologies (such as word processing and messaging applications), enterprises can derive greater benefit from existing applications with no additional cost in terms of software or additional training expenses. The only expense is that to purchase

the software. Yet even then the savings made will be considerable.

The integrated network faxing solution is one of the most elegant and beneficial on the market. The return on investment is high and the benefits of executing the solution can be realized in minutes.

About GFI FAXmaker for Exchange/SMTP

GFI FAXmaker is the leading fax server that makes sending and receiving faxes an efficient, simple and cheaper process. The problems with manual faxing are solved because GFI FAXmaker allows users to receive and send faxes directly from their email client.

With 30,000 customers and numerous awards, GFI FAXmaker is the no.1 fax server, offering reliability and enterprise functionality at the best price on the market. The benefits are numerous: Less time is spent sending, collecting and distributing faxes, noticeable cost savings and each fax received or sent is saved in digital format as an email.

GFI FAXmaker is easy to install, requires little maintenance and integrates with existing messaging clients and customized solutions. GFI FAXmaker integrates with your mail server, allowing users to send and receive faxes and SMS/text messages using their email client. The company can also search for and backup all faxes in the same way that emails are stored and retrieved on the network. GFI FAXmaker supports Fax over IP (FOIP) and integrates with IP-enabled PABXs, and Dialogic's Brooktrout's SR 140 technology to send faxes over the Internet.

For more information about this product and to download a free trial, visit <http://www.gfi.com/faxmaker/>.

About GFI

GFI is a leading software developer that provides a single source for network administrators to address their network security, content security and messaging needs. With award-winning technology, an aggressive pricing strategy and a strong focus on small-to-medium sized businesses, GFI is able to satisfy the need for business continuity and productivity encountered by organizations on a global scale. Founded in 1992, GFI has offices in Malta, London, Raleigh, Hong Kong and Adelaide which support more than 200,000 installations worldwide. GFI is a channel-focused company with over 10,000 partners throughout the world. GFI is also a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner. More information about GFI can be found at <http://www.gfi.com>.

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