How Xerox Solid Ink is Meeting the Needs of IT Decision Makers

Prepared for:

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Executive Summary
This white paper identifies key trends shaping IT purchase decisions in North America and Western Europe, and explores how Xerox’s Solid Ink printing technology addresses these concerns. Focusing on sustainability, information security, and cost savings, the document discusses how Xerox’s latest A3 and A4 Solid Ink multifunctional devices address areas of greatest concern for print technology decision makers. Benefits of Solid Ink technology include claims of 90% less waste compared to similar laser technologies, a Hybrid Color payment plan where color pages are billed at different rates depending upon the amount of color on the page, and security measures demanded by today’s global companies. For businesses looking to reduce costs and minimize their impact on the environment without sacrificing security, InfoTrends recommends the consideration of Xerox Solid Ink technology for inclusion in the print environment.

Recommendations

- Align print infrastructure decisions to support the wider IT goals and objectives.
- If your IT goals include sustainability improvements, cost reductions, and security concerns, the benefits of Xerox Solid Ink technology are worthy of consideration.
- If you are looking to reduce your color printing costs, Xerox’s three-tier color payment plan for Solid Ink technology is worthy of consideration.

Introduction
This white paper has been written for those responsible for printer and office equipment-related purchases within medium-sized organizations, typically between 50 and 1,000 employees. This responsibility tends to sit with the IT department; based on our 2012 Market Pulse surveys, it is often an IT manager, systems administrator, or network manager who is charged with the task. Nevertheless, CIOs, CFOs, and managers within other departments may also be responsible for these types of decisions.

In the world of IT, there are many new and exciting technologies vying for attention, including advances in cloud computing, mobility, and outsourcing. Individuals are often more focused on perceived higher-priority initiatives rather than arguably less glamorous activities, such as printing, scanning, and copying. Nevertheless, in a world that is becoming more focused on sustainability, information security, and cost savings, there is merit in giving a little more consideration to print, scan, and copy devices.

The purpose of this document is to explain how Xerox’s Solid Ink technology can help organizations support their wider IT objectives.
What is Solid Ink?
Solid Ink is a proprietary printing technology, exclusive to a number of Xerox color printers and multifunctional peripherals (MFPs). Xerox’s Solid Ink technology is a hybrid of liquid ink and toner-based technologies. Unlike liquid ink technology, Solid Ink printers use resin-based ink sticks—think of a giant crayon. During the imaging process, the ink is melted into a liquid form, jetted onto a transfer drum, and that drum is then pressed against the paper to transfer the image. The ink solidifies instantly on contact with the substrate (paper), preventing any smudging.

Figure 1: Solid Ink Image Transfer

Solid Ink has some key differences from liquid inkjet devices and the more typical laser devices found in most offices. It is these technology differences that enable Solid Ink to offer benefits to the customer. For example, the Solid Ink process is less complicated than laser, resulting in greater reliability. With fewer moving parts, there is less to go wrong. IT decision makers are showing greater focus than ever of environmental sustainability, cost reduction, and security. InfoTrends believes that Solid Ink devices have something to offer the IT department in all of these areas.

Sustainability, Security, and Cost Savings Lead IT Concerns

Recent InfoTrends research in North America and Western Europe has shown that sustainability, information security, and cost savings are major priorities for IT decision makers. Naturally, these priorities are reflected in the types of technology products and services that IT departments evaluate and purchase.

Sustainability has become such a critical trend that most IT decision makers now consider environmentally responsible behavior as significant to their IT operations. In the recent InfoTrends surveys entitled Market Pulse 2012: North America and Western Europe, approximately 78% of North American respondents and 69% of Western European respondents identified “green”/environmentally responsible initiatives as “extremely important” or “of some importance” to their IT department.
Given that print operations can involve large amounts of electricity, paper, and supplies, a greener approach to printing represents a huge opportunity for companies looking to reduce their carbon footprint. Printing on both sides of the paper, enabling the device’s automated sleep mode function, and considering alternative printing technologies, such as Xerox’s Solid Ink MFPs, are just a few ways companies can limit their environmental impact.
Security is also a top priority for IT. In fact, InfoTrends’ *Mobile Business Process Initiatives and Obstacles* survey of U.S. businesses identified it as one of two principal IT initiatives. The other top initiative was mobility, which does not come as a surprise given the strong relationship between mobility and security. As more and more mobile workers access company data outside the company firewall, as well as bring their personal mobile devices into the workplace, the need for robust security solutions increases dramatically.

**Figure 4: Top IT Initiatives**

![Chart showing top IT initiatives with Mobility at 50%, Security at 45%, Business Intelligence/Analytics at 44%, Cloud computing at 36%, ERP/enterprise applications at 35%, Content management at 32%, CRM/sales automation at 24%, Compliance at 21%, Social media at 17%, and Other at 7%.](chart.png)

*Source: Mobile Business Process Initiatives and Obstacles; InfoTrends 2011*

Fortunately, there are many ways that businesses can further secure their print infrastructure, including setting up a password or PIN code for printing, restricting printing privileges to specific user accounts, and purchasing a device equipped with encryption software.

Cost savings is another front-of-mind concern for IT staff and department heads involved with technology purchasing decisions. With many businesses seeing their revenue and profit plunge during the Great Recession of 2008—forcing them to lay off employees, restructure their operations, and reduce spending—saving on printing costs is a clear way to improve the bottom line. There are many avenues for achieving this objective, including replacing A3 devices with smaller, less costly A4 machines; opting for a more affordable payment plan for color printing; and entering into a managed print services agreement.
Xerox Solid Ink Technology in Tune with Major IT Priorities

Businesses can move closer to achieving sustainability, security, and cost savings goals through purchasing hardware, software, and services that support these particular objectives. As far as printer equipment is concerned, the new Xerox A4 Solid Ink devices—the ColorQube 8700 and 8900, as well as Xerox’s A3 Solid Ink devices, offer benefits in each of these areas.

The new A4 devices were launched in North America and Europe during April 2012. They complete Xerox’s portfolio of Solid Ink devices, which also includes three tabloid/A3 MFP models (ColorQube 9301, 9302, and 9303) and two A4 printers (ColorQube 8570 and 8870).

Figure 5: ColorQube 8900 with Two Additional Trays, High-Capacity Feeder, and Office Finisher

Sustainability

Xerox’s Solid Ink devices, including the new ColorQube 8700 and 8900 A4 MFPs, are a viable option for companies considering the sustainability credentials of their printing equipment. One of the most compelling “green” features is the cartridge-free design of Solid Ink devices. The nature of the ink sticks means that there are no cartridges to package, ship, discard, and/or recycle. The compact nature of the ink sticks minimizes packaging and, according to Xerox, results in up to 90% less printing waste compared to color laser printing technology¹. Unlike toner-based technology, there also are no hardware fuser imaging units to replace or dispose.

Xerox confirms that the company’s Solid Ink packaging is made from post-consumer waste and is 100% recyclable. Any pages printed with Solid Ink technology can be

¹ This is based on a four-year life, 4,000 average monthly print volume.
recycled, and the cleaning unit only needs to be replaced a few times during the life of the printer\(^2\) and can be recycled through the Xerox Green World Alliance Program.

The relatively compact nature of the Solid Ink sticks contributes to increased transportation efficiency and, according to Xerox data, the Solid Ink devices use 17% to 30% cumulative less energy (depending on the model) compared to laser devices in the same class. One interesting aspect of Solid Ink is that it is entirely safe and clean, with no mess or toxins produced during the printing process. As Solid Ink image quality is consistent across media, recycled and lighter weight paper stock can also be used.

All of Xerox’s Solid Ink devices, including the new ColorQube 8700 and 8900, incorporate “Intelligent Ready” technology, a standard feature that helps organizations optimize energy usage by learning typical device usage patterns and moving to lower-power mode during expected downtime. The Earth Smart printer driver allow users to select environmentally responsible print options, including two-sided printing, proof print, no banner page, recycled paper, and draft mode. Additionally, Solid Ink machines come with "GreenPrint" software that automatically highlights and suggests the removal of unnecessary pages prior to printing. The new ColorQube devices provide a number of additional energy-efficient features as well, enabling IT departments to maximize sustainability efforts in the printing and copying domain with little effort and minimal on-going involvement.

**Security**

There are many ways that Xerox’s new 8700 and 8900 Solid Ink A4 MFPs can help keep confidential information safe. One method is secure print release, which enables workers to protect documents by setting a passcode that must be entered at the MFP before a document is printed. The user assigns a passcode to the print job from a computer, sends the job to the MFP for temporary storage, then prints the job from the machine’s control panel by entering the passcode. This function can be used for traditional printing from desktop computers and laptops or for printing from mobile devices, such as smartphones and tablets\(^3\).

The devices also offer a secure fax feature, requiring users to enter a code at the MFP before printing a received fax. In addition, there is a password protected PDF feature that allows users to convert hard copies into secure digital files. User authentication restricts access to authorized users and, in conjunction with an audit log, administrators are able to track what users have sent and when. For an extra layer of security, organizations can opt for card-base user authentication, where individuals log-in at the MFP by swiping a

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\(^2\) Xerox offers two cleaning unit options for the ColorQube 8570, 8870, 8700, and 8900: one with a 10,000-page capacity and the other with a 30,000-page capacity. The A3 ColorQube 9300 series has a cleaning unit with an even greater capacity.

\(^3\) Xerox’s Mobile Print Solution enables printing from any e-mail-enabled mobile device.
personal ID card before releasing documents for print and/or for accessing any of the features and functionality.

The new ColorQube devices provide 256-bit hard drive encryption to protect information flowing through the device; data can be electronically erased via the image overwrite function. In terms of network protection, the IEEE 802.1x protocol is in place, ensuring network printers have the requisite authorization. Additionally, the IPSec protocol delivers a secure method for transferring data over the network.

Xerox is in the process of seeking Common Criteria Certification for its new ColorQube Solid Ink devices, an international security standard for IT products; once in place, this recognition will validate the level of the MFP’s security functions.

**Cost Savings**

Cost-conscious IT departments will find much to like about Xerox’s Solid Ink devices, including the Hybrid Color payment plan: a three-tier payment option where color pages are billed at different rates depending upon the amount of color on the page. In contrast to many standard cost-per-copy plans that charge fixed rates for color pages, a three-tier plan enables businesses to more effectively pay for the documents that only contain small amounts of color.

With more traditional pricing, any color on a page results in that page being charged at the full color rate, even where the amount of color used is actually very small. The vast majority of employees do not give a moment of thought to pricing and, in fact, they have no reason to do so. With this in mind, a Xerox hybrid payment plan makes a great deal of sense. Only documents with significant amounts of color (“Expressive Color”) are charged at the full color rate. Documents that consist primarily of black text but also contain a color logo or URL are classified as “Useful Color” pages and are charged at the same rate as a black-and-white page. Documents with moderate amounts of color, such as a web page, are classified as “Everyday Color” pages and cost approximately 50% less than an Expressive Color page.

**Figure 6: Examples of Useful Color, Everyday Color, and Expressive Color**

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Given the many benefits of color printing, including increased purchase motivation, increased willingness to read messaging, and increased retention of important information, InfoTrends believe the three-tier color pricing plan is an excellent solution for the cost-conscious businesses that wants to retain the benefits of color.

Other cost-saving aspects of Xerox's new Solid Ink machines include user-friendly features that help minimize calls to IT support and increase user productivity. Print-related calls to help desks can account for a significant percentage of the total IT support budget and anything that can minimize these calls is extremely welcome. Replacement of supplies in office equipment can be problematic for the user. Xerox Solid Ink technology has overcome this issue. Ink sticks can be replaced at any time, even when the device is printing. New ink sticks can also be added before the previous stick has been fully used, ensuring that the device never runs out of ink.

**Figure 7: Solid Ink Sticks Can Be Replaced While Device is Running**

The inclusion of a 7 " touch screen on the new 8700 and 8900 device is a first for Xerox A4 Solid Ink products. This makes the devices incredibly easy-to-use. With help videos embedded within the user-interface, the devices have been designed to actively reduce calls to IT for basic support.

Additional productivity-enhancing features include automatic duplex (double-sided printing), a number of "scan to" capabilities (including scan to e-mail, scan to folder, and scan to USB), and a convenience stapler. By incorporating these features into the standard versions of the ColorQube 8700 and 8900, Xerox is making it easy for employees to work efficiently.
InfoTrends’ Opinion

As companies strive to achieve their IT goals, it is important for them to consider the many ways in which these goals can be delivered. Printers and multifunctional devices have been around for a long time; it is easy for organizations to lose track of all of the latest developments in something that is so well established and where the basics have been understood for many years. Yet there have been significant developments made in technology; a number of benefits are available today that were not possible just a few years ago.

Xerox’s latest generation of Solid Ink products, for instance, offer enhancements in security, efficiency, and sustainability—all identified as major IT priorities by IT decision makers in the United States and Western Europe. Given these priorities, it is a natural and logical progression to recommend the consideration of Xerox ColorQube technology for inclusion in the print environment. Features like cartridge-free solid ink sticks, secure release printing, and the Hybrid Color payment plan all directly address the major areas of focus for the IT decision-maker.

For any business that wants to manage costs without taking draconian measures, such as banning the use of color, Xerox’s Hybrid Color payment plan clearly differentiates Xerox Solid Ink devices. With a complete range of Solid Ink devices capable of delivering the same levels of security, connectivity, and productivity as laser equipment with additional cost and sustainability advantages, Xerox Solid Ink is a powerful proposition.

With more than one million Solid Ink devices already sold globally, thousands of satisfied users are testament to the success of the technology and InfoTrends predicts a continued bright future for Xerox Solid Ink.

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