

Managed Print Services, 2021

Transforming the hybrid workplace



Managed Print Services, 2021

Executive summary

The acceleration of digitisation initiatives and the rise of cloud computing – prompted significantly by the shift to hybrid working as a result of COVID-19 - have forced MPS providers to rethink their approach. The market has reached a level of maturity, and new revenue opportunities will come from broader engagements that support an organisation's digital transformation initiatives while reducing cost, minimising risk and boosting sustainability. Quocirca's MPS 2021 study reveals that businesses are becoming more demanding of their suppliers across these key areas and prioritising suppliers who can offer broader workplace, collaboration or IT services. Meanwhile, more organisations are set to transition their print infrastructure to the cloud in order to drive greater cost efficiencies and reduce IT burden. Deploying support, security and management for devices used by remote workers will also be a key priority as organisations adapt to the long-term impact of COVID-19 on the workplace.

Key findings:

- **MPS leaders are differentiating beyond traditional print services.** Xerox continues to lead the group. It has one of the broadest service portfolios across the office and production print environments and deep expertise in business process automation. HP has made strong advances in deepening its security services and solutions portfolio. Lexmark continues to excel, particularly in distributed environments, boosted by its cloud print services offerings.
- **A slow recovery of office print volumes.** 77% of organisations indicate that paper is fairly or very important to their business, though this has dropped from 87% in 2019. Large organisations and those in the US are more print-dependent than smaller and European counterparts. 50% of respondents reported a decrease in office print volumes since the start of the pandemic. As organisations relinquish reliance on print-based processes, this indicates that a return to pre-pandemic print volumes is unlikely.
- **MPS spend growth is slowing.** 53% of respondents expect to increase their expenditure on MPS in the coming year. This is a drop from 79% of respondents who planned to increase spend in 2019. The US remains the most positive about MPS spend, with 73% expecting it to increase, although this is still a fall from 84% in 2019.
- **MPS is used to support the hybrid workplace.** Fully outsourced MPS is already showing its value for the future hybrid workplace. 56% of organisations with fully outsourced MPS have provided printers for remote workers, compared with only 42% of those using a hybrid model. Provisioning printers for home workers combats shadow IT purchasing and allows the organisation to retain control over the print devices accessing its network and data.
- **On-line purchasing of home printers has filled MPS provider supply gaps.** While 52% indicated that they used their MPS supplier to procure their home printers, 44% indicated that these were purchased online – 10% of which used a B2B online store such as Amazon Business. This highlights the changing nature of B2B purchasing, particularly through the pandemic where speed of purchase and delivery was critical to ensuring remote workers were set up quickly for home working.
- **Cloud adoption accelerates.** As businesses adjust the shape of their physical estate and adapt to incorporate remote users, cloud-based print management and advanced analytics can play a core role in print environment redesign and deployment. Three quarters of organisations expect to see greater use of cloud print management by 2025.
- **MPS as a digital enabler.** Organisations continue to see MPS as a key component of digitisation efforts, with 37% saying MPS is *very important* to digital transformation in their organisation. Organisations have accelerated digital transformation programmes to absorb the impacts of COVID-19, meaning MPS providers should be exploring opportunities to assist with digitising processes and workflows and aiding remote collaboration.

Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
METHODOLOGY	4
<i>End-user analysis</i>	4
<i>Vendor analysis</i>	4
DEFINITIONS	4
THE MPS ECOSYSTEM	5
THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON OFFICE AND HOME PRINTING	6
THE ONGOING IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON PRINT VOLUMES	6
THE SHIFT TO HOME PRINTING AND OFFICE PRINT RECOVERY	8
OUTLOOK FOR MPS SPENDING	11
THE DIGITISATION OPPORTUNITY	12
HYBRID PRINT AND DIGITAL WORKPLACE MEASURES	13
SERVICE, SECURITY, SUSTAINABILITY AND DIGITISATION LEAD MPS DRIVERS	14
THE WORKPLACE SERVICES OPPORTUNITY	17
FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MPS PROVIDERS	18
VENDOR PROFILE: KONICA MINOLTA	20

Methodology

End-user analysis

Quocirca conducted a survey among senior IT managers with responsibility for decisions relating to managed print services. The research was conducted in the UK, France, Germany and the US, amongst 219 enterprises with 500 or more employees that already use a managed print service. For the purposes of this research, organisations with 500 to 999 employees are referred to as midmarket organisations and those with over 1,000 employees as large organisations. The survey was conducted online and fielded during January 2021.

Vendor analysis

The following vendors participated in the study: Canon, HP Inc., Konica Minolta, Lexmark, Ricoh and Xerox. Vendors were selected according to the following criteria:

- **Experience and skills in providing MPS services** – All providers had to demonstrate a strong record of delivering MPS.
- **Geographical delivery capability** – Each provider was required to have the capability to deliver global services.

Each MPS vendor was asked to complete a written submission detailing its strategy, capabilities and customer references to capture key facts and figures. These submissions were followed up with vendor interviews. The quantitative and qualitative inputs from the vendor research were analysed by Quocirca to determine each vendor's score against a list of criteria related to market presence and completeness of offering. Each score is on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is weak and 5 is very strong. This evaluation of the MPS market is intended as a starting point only. Please note that Quocirca's scoring is based on an unweighted model, although prospective buyers may wish to weight the scores to meet their own specific needs.

Definitions

Quocirca defines a 'managed print service' as the use of an external provider to assess, optimise and continuously manage an organisation's document output environment and improve productivity and efficiency while reducing cost and risk. It also leverages existing investments in multifunction printers (MFPs), while continually monitoring usage, so that the optimised infrastructure continues to meet business needs.

MPS covers several service areas across three broad categories:

- **Assessment** – A review of the current print environment to provide recommendations for rationalisation and an estimate of potential future savings. Assessments range from basic online assessments to full workflow assessments. Environmental impact analysis and document security assessments may also be included.
- **Optimisation** – Device rationalisation and consolidation to improve user-to-device ratios, and development of print policies as part of a governance framework for a full enterprise MPS, deployment, transition and change management.
- **Management** – Continuous process improvement, business reviews, service level agreement (SLA) monitoring, remote management and workflow improvement.

These services fall under Quocirca's definition of MPS when the vendor takes over responsibility for delivery under a contract of three years or more in length.

The MPS ecosystem

The MPS landscape includes printer/copier manufacturers, systems integrators and software infrastructure vendors.

- **Printer/copier manufacturers** – These vendors’ programmes are generally tied to their product offerings, although multi-vendor support is often available. Service offerings include assessment, design, implementation and support services. They may also offer MPS programmes via their resellers. Vendors in this category include Canon, HP Inc., Kyocera, Konica Minolta, Lexmark, Ricoh, Sharp, Toshiba and Xerox.
- **Systems integrators/resellers** – These are a channel to market for some printer and copier vendors, and may offer MPS as part of a wider managed IT services offering.
- **Independent software vendors (ISVs)** – These provide software tools for use in the print environment. These vary from print management, security, analytics and cloud printing solutions. Examples include EveryonePrint, MPS Monitor, Nuance, Print Audit, ECI FM Audit, PaperCut, Printix, Process Fusion, Ringdale, and YSoft. Providers often use such third-party products to add value to a particular element of their MPS portfolio.

The impact of COVID-19 on office and home printing

The ongoing impact of the pandemic on print volumes

The MPS market has witnessed market disruption like never before, with national lockdowns and stay at home orders prompting a mass exodus to remote working. On average, 47% of employees are now working remotely, this figure rising to 53% in the UK and 54% in the professional services sector. Whilst this has led to a surge in home printing, as organisations grappled to support remote workers, it has also created a rise in the shadow purchasing of home printers by employees, often unapproved by employers.

While some organisations have procured home printers through their MPS suppliers, many have turned to simple transactional online procurement, creating gaps in security and device management. At the same time, with offices remaining shut for most of the year, office print volumes remain in decline and may never return to pre-COVID-19 levels.

Many organisations remain reliant on paper to support their daily business - 77% of organisations indicate that paper is fairly or very important. However, there is a gradual decline, this being a drop from 87% in 2019 (figure 1). There are regional variations, with 87% of US organisations indicating that paper is fairly or very important compared to 68% in the UK. Larger organisations tend to be more reliant on paper-based processes (82%) compared to smaller organisations (73%).

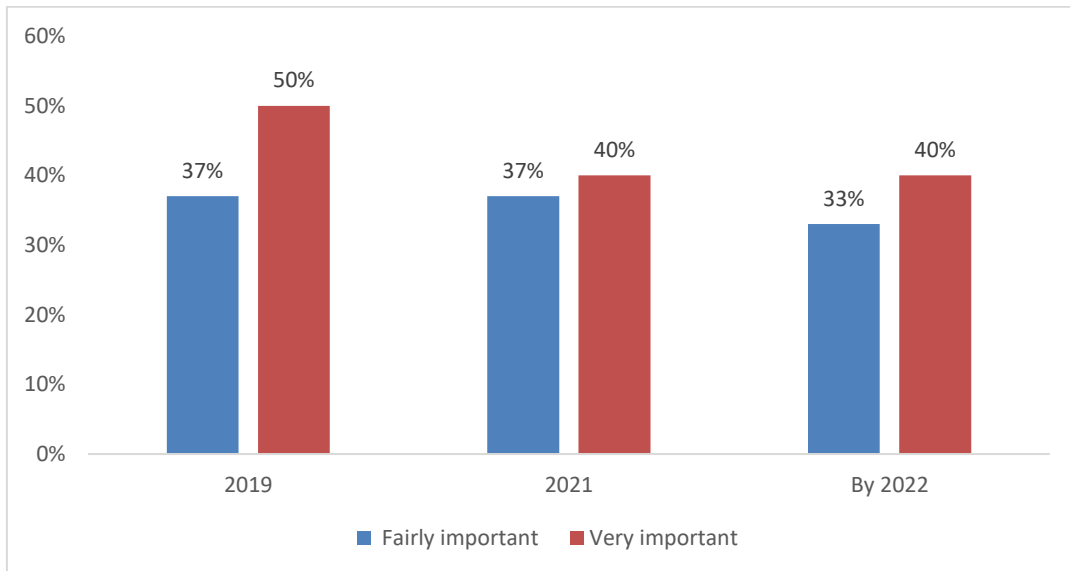


Figure 1. Importance of paper to daily business

Overall, 50% of respondents reported a decrease in office print volumes since the onset of the pandemic (figure 2). 12% of respondents have seen a fall of over 20% in office print volumes, rising to 26% in the UK and falling to 6% in Germany. Only 1% have seen print volumes increase by more than 20%, with only 9% seeing print volumes grow by between 11% and 20%, rising to 15% in the USA and falling to 8% in Germany.

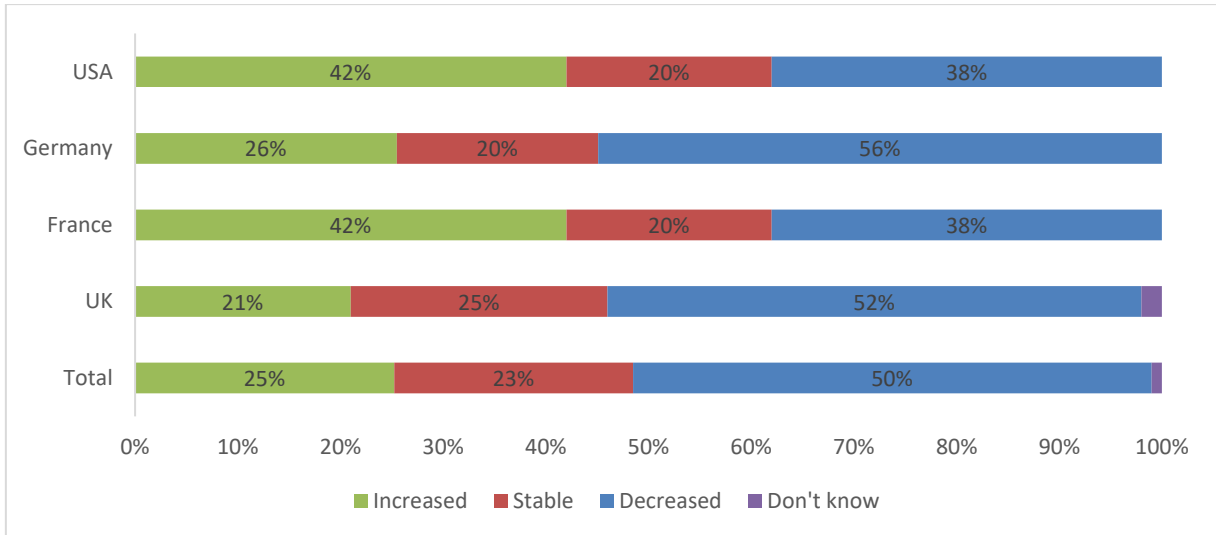


Figure 2. What impact has COVID-19 had on your office print volumes (since the onset of the pandemic in March 2020)?

Figure 2 shows the consolidated responses across those stating various levels of increase, decrease and stability in print volumes. When the actual stated percentages are taken and an overall measure taken of the percentage increase/decrease, then the figures shown in figure 3 are created.

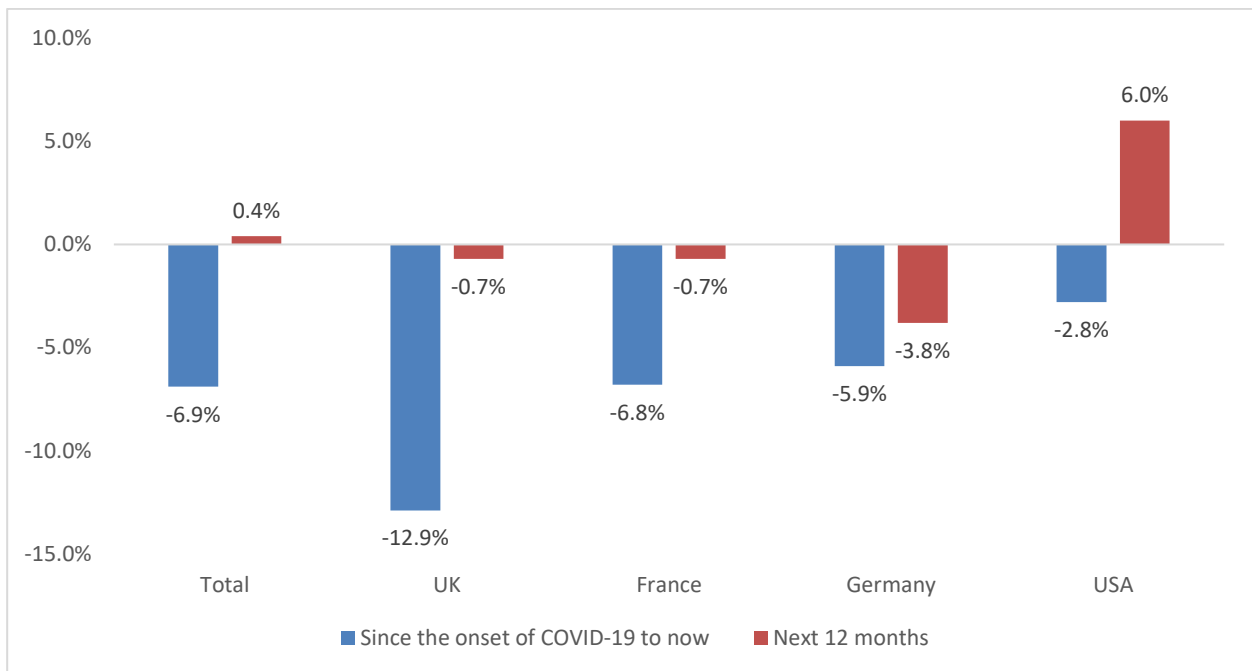


Figure 3. Actual/expected change in print volume (overall average)

Overall, the research shows that there has been a 6.9% fall in office print volumes since the pandemic started (figure 3). The UK has seen the biggest overall fall at 12.9%, with the US the smallest fall at 2.8%.

Although the overall expectation around office print volume growth over the next 12 months is only just positive (0.4%), this is heavily skewed by the findings for the US. When looking at expectations around any rebound in office print volumes over the next 12 months, the US is very optimistic, with an expectation for an overall 6%

growth in office print volumes. However, all other countries expect to see a continued fall in office print volumes, with Germany expecting to see a continued decrease of 3.8%.

Larger organisations have seen a greater fall in print volumes, with 16% seeing a decrease of more than 20% against only 7% of smaller organisations. 25% of public sector organisations have seen a fall of more than 20%, against only 6% of the industrial sector. Those with an out-tasked MPS agreement have seen the greatest fall in print volumes, with 22% seeing a greater than 20% fall, compared to only 9% who have a fully-outsourced MPS agreement.

Although offices reopening may lead to a recovery in print volumes, many organisations will be implementing flexible work policies alongside operating offices at reduced capacity. Overall, 44% will keep existing office sites, but with reduced capacity, while a further 23% will consolidate office locations with one HQ office remaining open (figure 4).

This of course has implications for office print volumes, and with remote work set to continue and even be permanent for some organisations, MPS providers will need to capture opportunities for supporting organisations with hybrid workplace printing capabilities (home and office) alongside digital workflow and collaboration services as organisations set up their adoption of digital technologies.

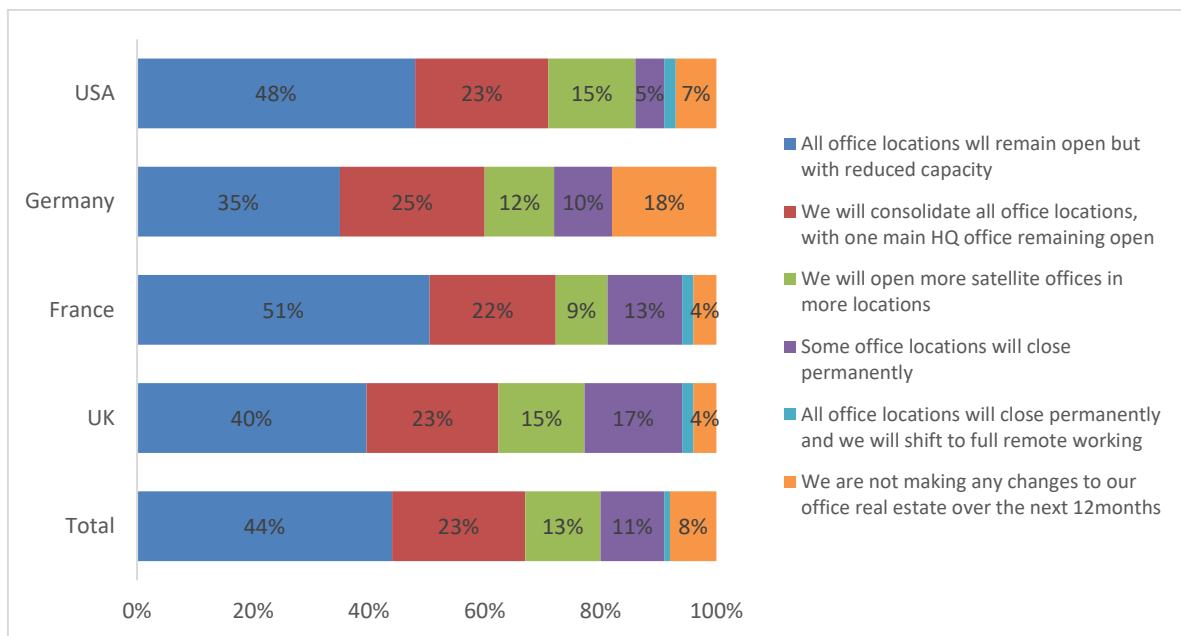


Figure 4. How do you expect your office locations to operate over the next 12 months?

The shift to home printing and office print recovery

In contrast, respondents are more positive about home printing volumes. Over the next 12 months, 40% expect home print volumes to increase, rising to 53% of respondents in the US (figure 5). Notably, just 23% of French organisations expect an increase in home printing volumes. This can be seen as a correlation between the US having a far higher expectation of employees continuing to work remotely (43%) than France (36%).

Professional services expect to see the largest increase in home print volumes, with 50% expecting to see an increase, although the same group also has the highest score for reduced home printing at 28%. Only 30% of public sector respondents expect to see growth, with 26% expecting a decrease.

When it comes to office print volumes, 42% of professional services respondents expect to see an overall increase, against only 30% of public sector respondents. Conversely, 36% of public sector respondents expect to see a decrease, against 32% of professional services.

Although home printing is set to hold up due to the shift to remote working, the volumes will not be sufficient to offset the steeper decline in office print volumes. Overall, 38% of respondents expect to see a growth in office printing over the next 12 months. Germany expects to see the least growth in office printing (24%) against 60% of US respondents. However, 33% of all respondents expect to see a decrease in office print volumes, against only 25% expecting home print volumes to fall.

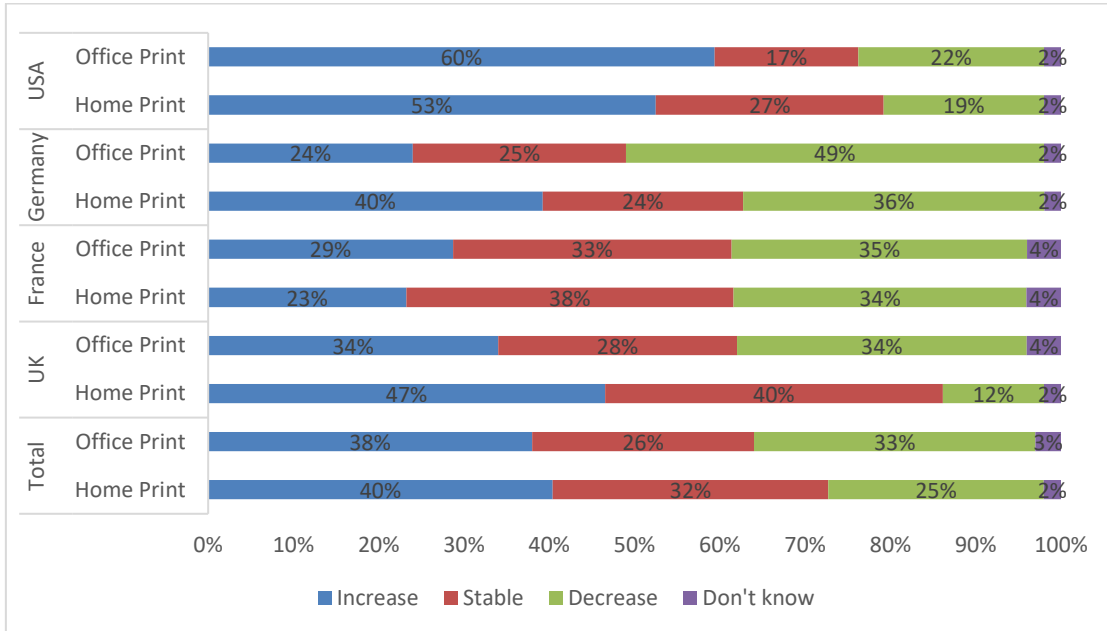


Figure 5. How do you expect your home and office printing volumes to change over the next 12 months?

Just over a third of organisations (35%) indicate that they have provisioned home printers for all employees (figure 6). This rises to 40% in the US and drops to 26% in the UK. The financial services sector is most likely to have provided printers to all employees (53%). Overall, just 14% indicate that they have not provided any home printers. It is more likely to be organisations that use a fully outsourced MPS that are providing printers to all employees (54%) compared to 22% of those using a hybrid MPS model.

While 52% indicated that they used their MPS supplier to procure their home printers, 44% indicated that these were purchased online – 10% of which used a B2B online store such as Amazon Business. This highlights the changing nature of B2B purchasing, particularly through the pandemic where speed of purchase and delivery was critical to ensuring remote workers were set up quickly for home working.

Notably, just 35% of organisations say that they are reimbursing employees for printing running costs. It is highly likely that most organisations are yet to deploy effective tools for monitoring and managing home printing, but are more likely to have these capabilities if their MPS provider is utilising cloud print management tools to manage both the office and home environments.

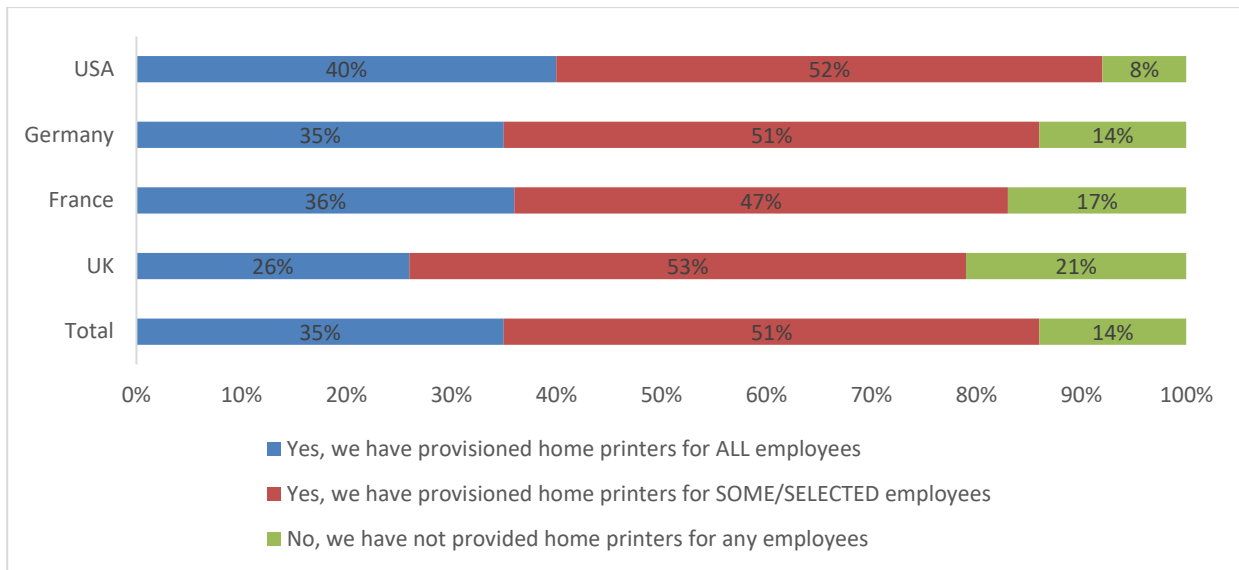


Figure 6. Provisioning of home printers

Outlook for MPS spending

MPS spending looks set to slow compared to our previous study conducted in 2019. Overall, 53% report that they expect to increase MPS spending over the next 12 months (figure 7). This compares to 79% of respondents in 2019 (figure 8). While just 1% expected a decline in MPS spending in 2019, this is now 16%, rising to 27% of UK respondents. The US continues to be most positive with 73% expecting an increase in spend, compared to 84% in 2019. The UK expects to see the greatest fall in MPS spending, with 25% stating that they expect to see spend decrease somewhat and a further 2% expecting to see it decrease significantly. Against this, only 7% in the US expect to see spend decrease somewhat and 2% decrease significantly.

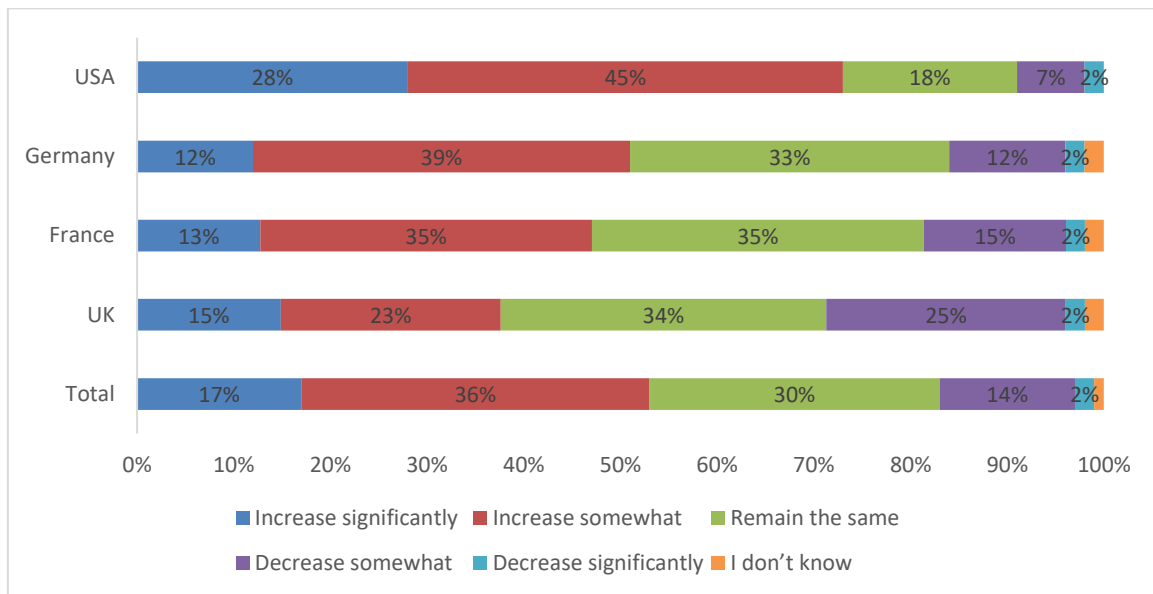


Figure 7. MPS spending plans over the next 12 months by country

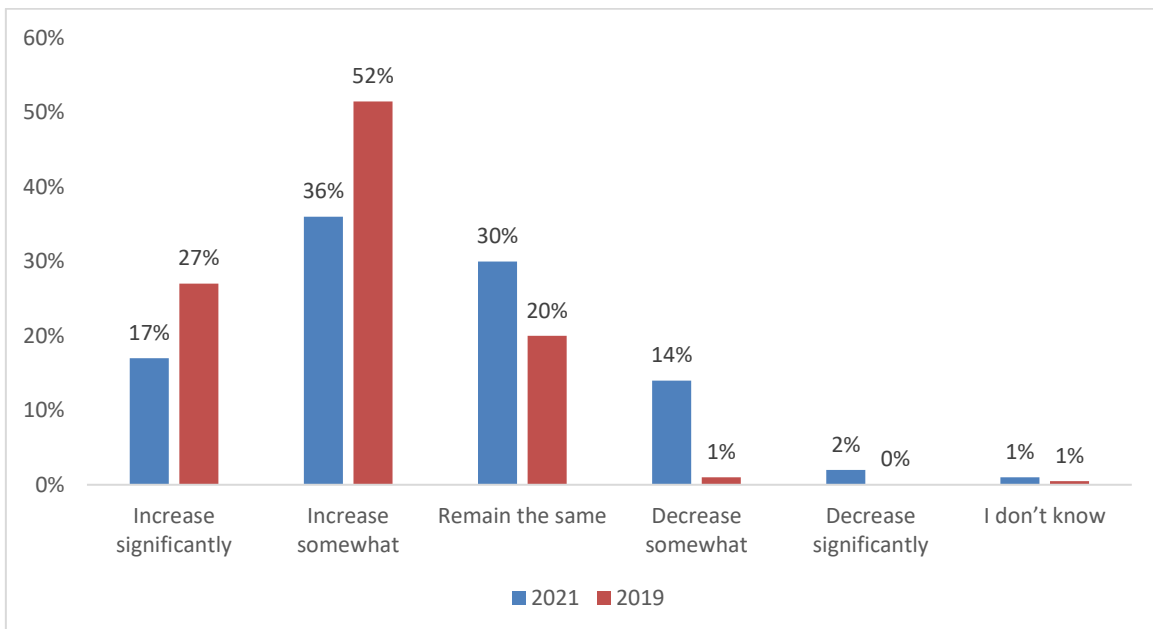


Figure 8. MPS spending plans over the next 12 months, 2021 versus 2019

The digitisation opportunity

This continued reliance on printing creates ongoing opportunities for the optimisation of the print infrastructure as well as improved digitisation – especially relating to workflow. Reducing dependence on print not only leads to lower costs – both financial and environmental – but also improved employee productivity and efficiency of processes that remain paper-based. This is particularly evident as a result of the pandemic, which has disrupted formerly paper-based processes and prompted organisations to implement digital workarounds. 37% of organisations currently agree that MPS is *very important* to digital transformation, unchanged from 2019 (figure 9). US organisations are the most positive (52%), Germany the least (27%).

Retail businesses place a higher importance on MPS as an enabler for digital transformation – 53% say it is very important, compared to just 28% in the public sector. This aligns with the fact that fewer public sector organisations say that paper is very important to their business (28%) compared to 47% in the retail sector.

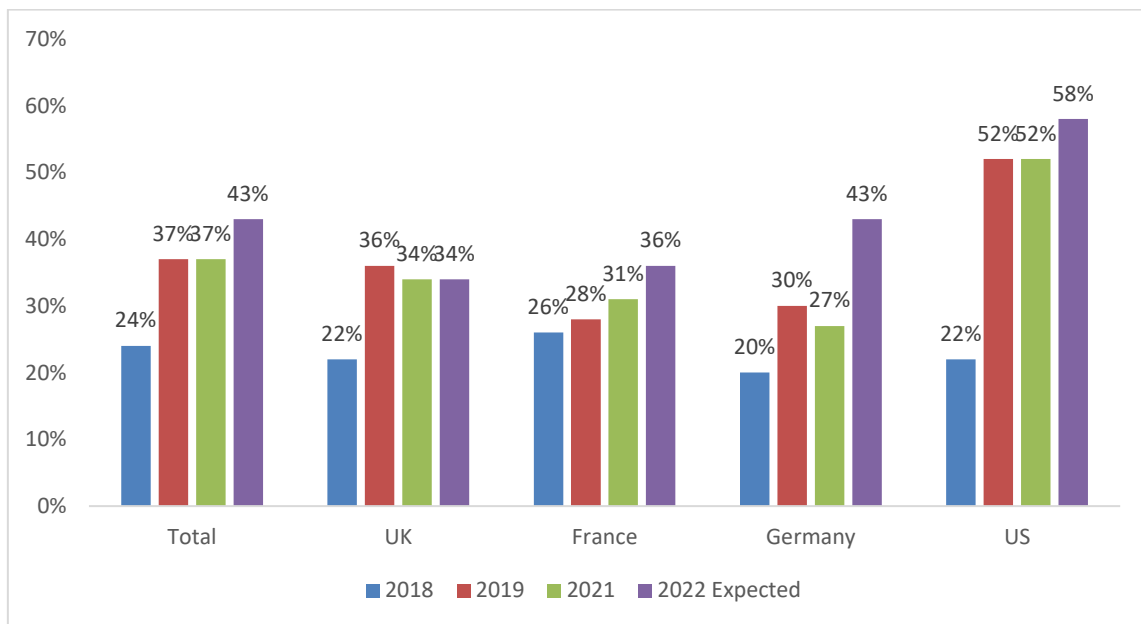


Figure 9. Importance of MPS to digital transformation (very important responses)

Hybrid print and digital workplace measures

As organisations embrace remote working, they are putting measures in place to support the print and digital requirements of their employees. A fully outsourced MPS enables an organisation to take advantage of a range of print solutions that can deliver a more connected and efficient print infrastructure for the hybrid workplace. Unsurprisingly, the transition to digital documents tops the list as organisations accelerate the use of digital technologies (figure 10).

Overall, 46% of organisations indicate that they provide approved printers to selected remote workers with a further 34% planning to offer this. This rises to 57% in the US and drops to 40% in the UK. Retail organisations (56%) are most likely to be providing printers to remote workers, which aligns with their stated higher print volumes. Notably, organisations using a fully outsourced MPS are more likely to be provisioning printers for remote workers (56%) compared to those that use a hybrid MPS (42%).

Some organisations are minimising printing completely. 43% have already implemented some form of content security or DLP to prevent sensitive or confidential documents being printed. This rises to 45% in France and 50% in the US, with the Professional and Financial Services sectors most likely to have implemented this technology (49% and 47% respectively).

The US is much further ahead in terms of revising their BYOD security policies to support employee use of their own home printers. While 57% of US organisations indicated they have changed their BYOD policies for home printing, this falls to 36% in the UK, 31% in France and 29% in Germany. It is more prevalent in the Retail and Professional Sectors (44%).

While 39% indicate that they have implemented a cloud print management platform, this rises to 52% in the US, 48% in larger organisations and 51% in the Finance sector. A shift to a more distributed print environment based on A4 MFPs is more likely to be adopted in the US where 53% indicate they have implemented this. This is least likely in the UK where just 26% say they have changed from an A3 to A4 distributed model.

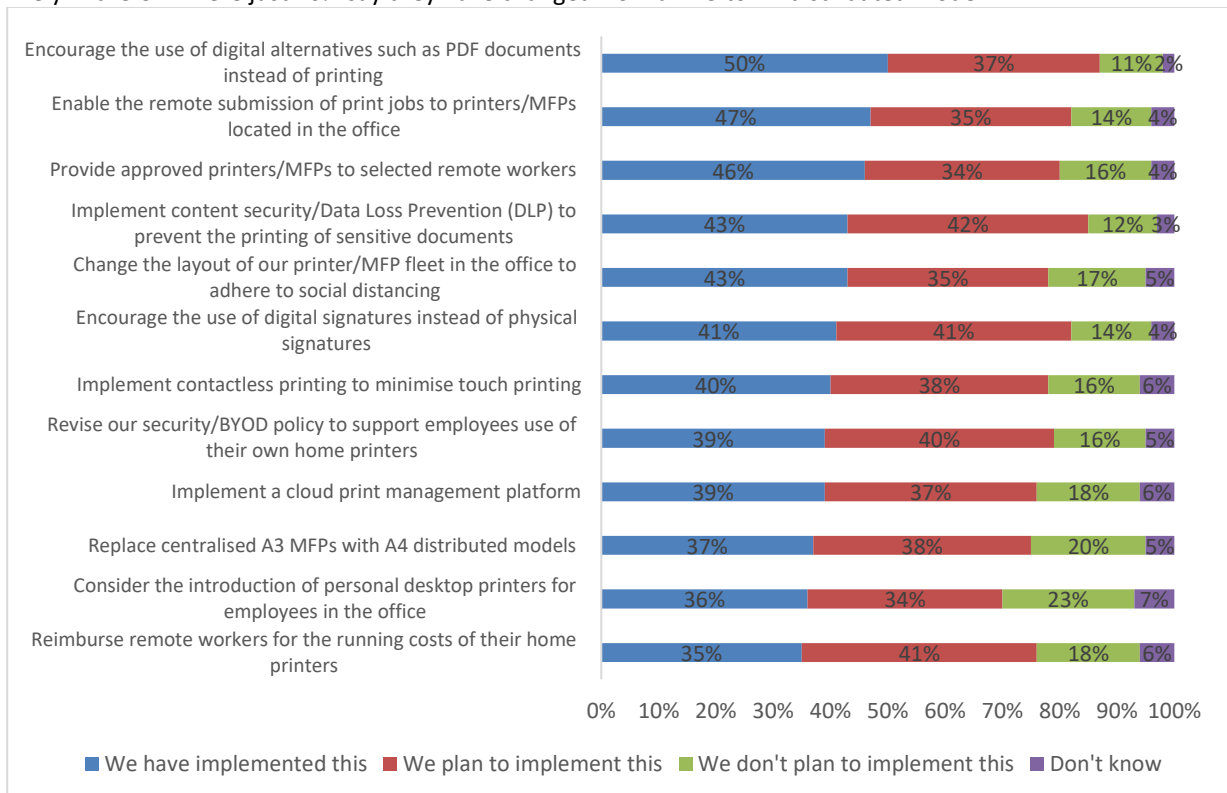


Figure 10. Print related measures in place

Service, security, sustainability and digitisation lead MPS drivers

When it comes to the importance of areas considered as goals when looking at an MPS agreement, respondents look to improvements in service quality (4.26) and regulatory compliance (4.23) as their two strongest criteria (figure 11). Areas such as delivering/creating innovation (3.98) and managing and monitoring home printing are seen as the least important goals.

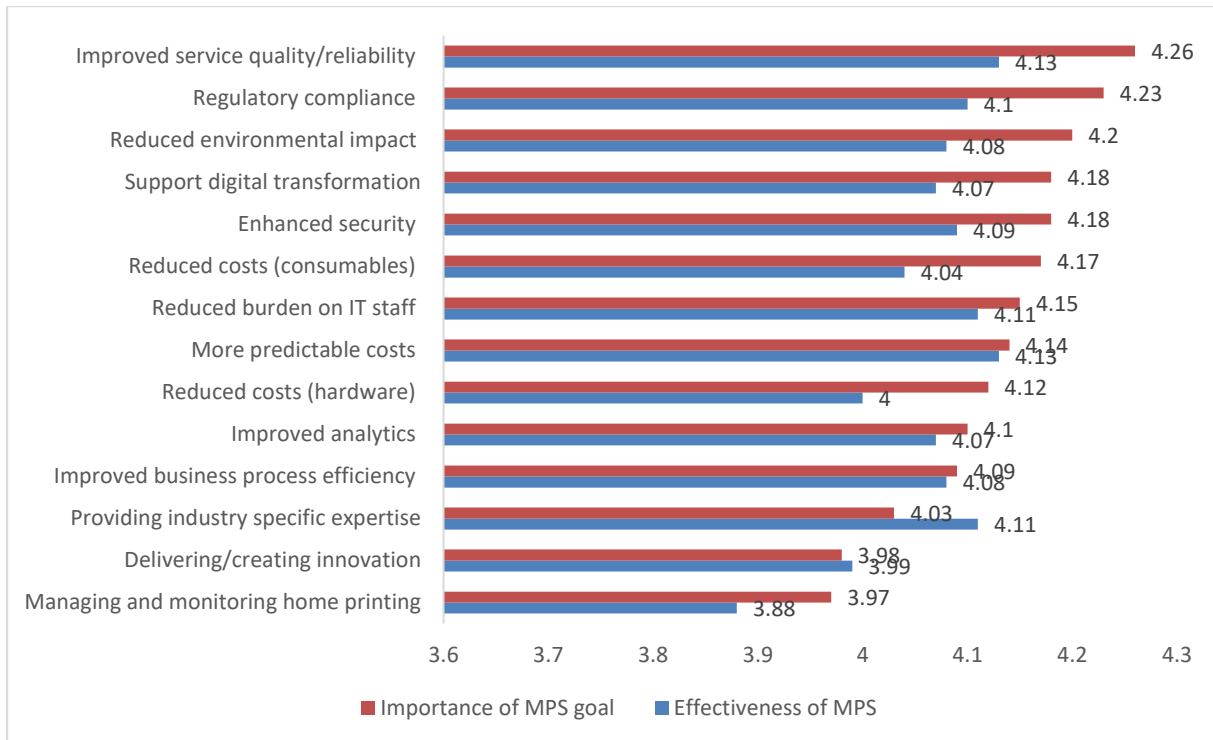


Figure 11. MPS satisfaction gap (goal versus achievement of MPS goal – average scores shown where 1= not important/not effective to 5= very important/very effective)

However, those areas seen as most important tend to have the largest gap between the importance of the goal and the respondents’ satisfaction with how effective the MPS agreement is in meeting that goal. For example, there are 0.13 point gaps between the importance and satisfaction for improved service quality/reliability as well as for reducing the costs of consumables. There is also a 0.12 point gap for regulatory compliance, reducing environmental impact and reducing the cost of hardware.

Although the importance of providing industry specific expertise is seen as being low, respondents perceive that their MPS agreements are beating their goals – as is the case (just) with delivering/creating innovation.

It is apparent that MPS providers need to focus on those areas where there is the largest gap between importance and perceived effectiveness, as well as looking to educate on areas not yet seen as being important, such as the management of home printing, which have now shown themselves to be of critical importance at a business level due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Notably, those that are using a fully outsourced MPS, rather than a hybrid version, are most likely to report that their MPS is more effective (figure 12). This is particularly the case in areas such as industry expertise, reducing environmental impact and providing solutions for digital transformation. In addition, although home printing was not stated as a top goal for MPS, a fully outsourced MPS outperforms a hybrid approach to MPS.

Fully outsourced MPS providers are more likely to have a comprehensive view of the full printing and imaging environment and through strategic reviews and in-depth analytics can help organisations optimise their print infrastructure with the appropriate hardware, software and services – across both print and digital technologies.

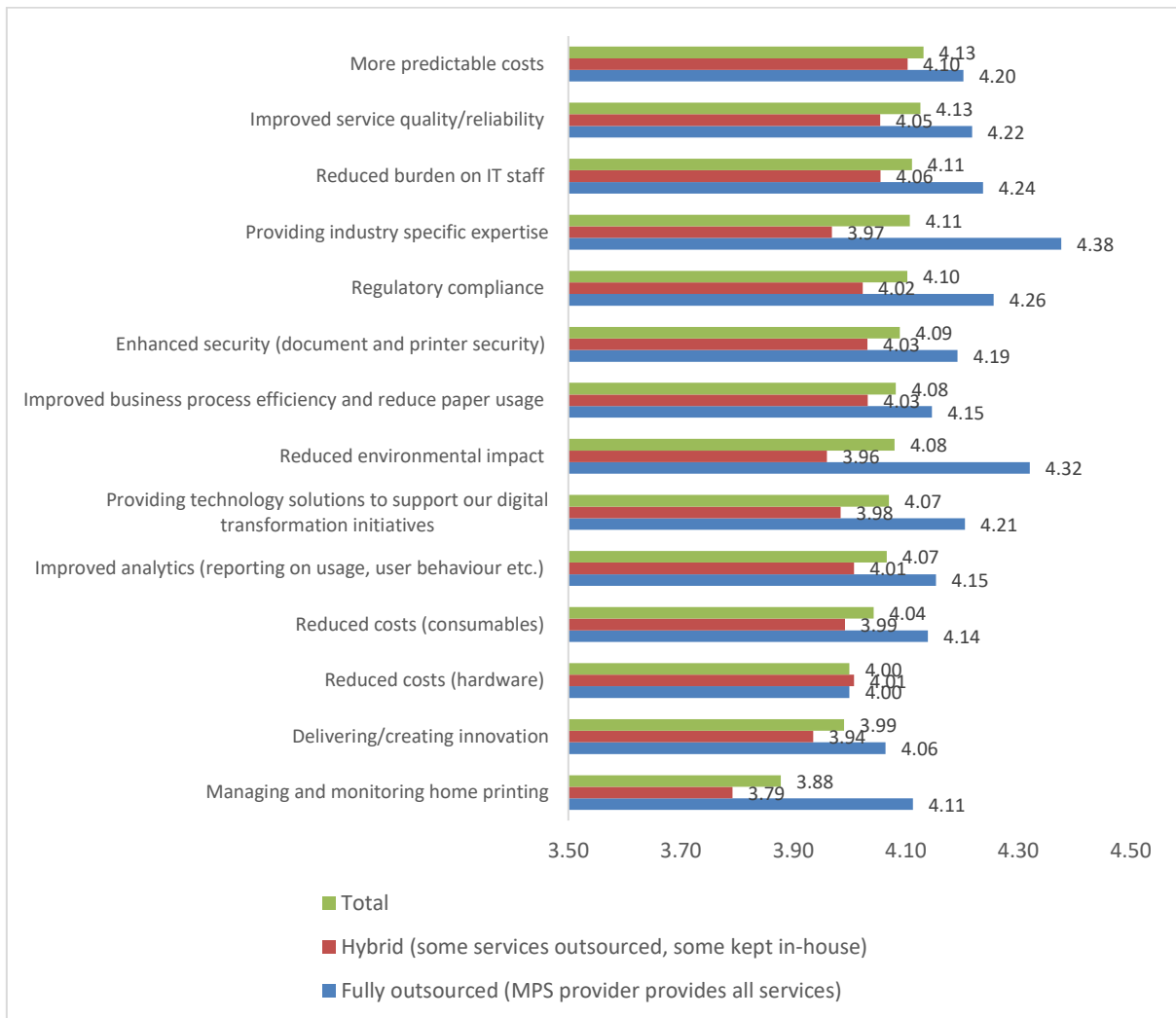


Figure 12. Effectiveness of MPS (Average score)

On the whole, most organisations are satisfied with their MPS provider’s performance over the past year. 30% state that they are very satisfied, rising to 42% in the US and dropping to 21% in the UK (figure 13). Retail respondents are the most satisfied - 40% are very satisfied, compared to 18% in the public sector. General satisfaction with the performance of MPS has held up during COVID-19, with 75% remaining quite or very satisfied with the performance, compared to 79% prior to the pandemic. However, loyalty is low: 38% plan to change their provider at the end of the contract, rising to 45% in the UK and falling to 33% in the US.

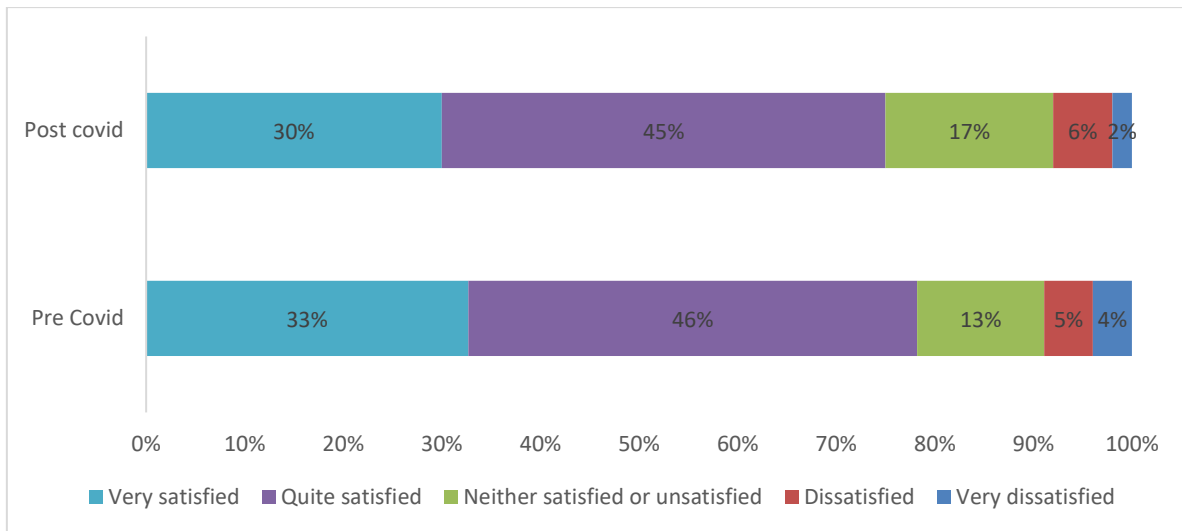


Figure 13. Satisfaction levels with MPS

The workplace services opportunity

Quocirca defines workplace services as those which include communication and collaboration capabilities that enhance productivity. Such services usually include consultancy to evaluate how an organisation is using its current facilities and identify where improvements can be generated through the use of video conferencing, cloud, voice, wireless presentation devices, touchscreen interactive whiteboards, digital signage and so on. Today, capabilities vary significantly by provider, although most are repositioning their MPS offerings within this wider category, either directly or through partners.

Overall, 56% of organisations rank workplace services in their top three selection criteria that would make them more likely to choose a specific MPS agreement (see figure 14). This rises to 69% in Germany, falling to 47% in France which ranks cloud print services higher (51%). This is followed by Cloud Print Services (45%), which has moved higher on the agenda since our 2019 report, followed by sustainability services (30%) and managed security services (29%). There is variation by region for managed security services, with only 24% of German respondents placing it in their top three compared to 32% of UK respondents.

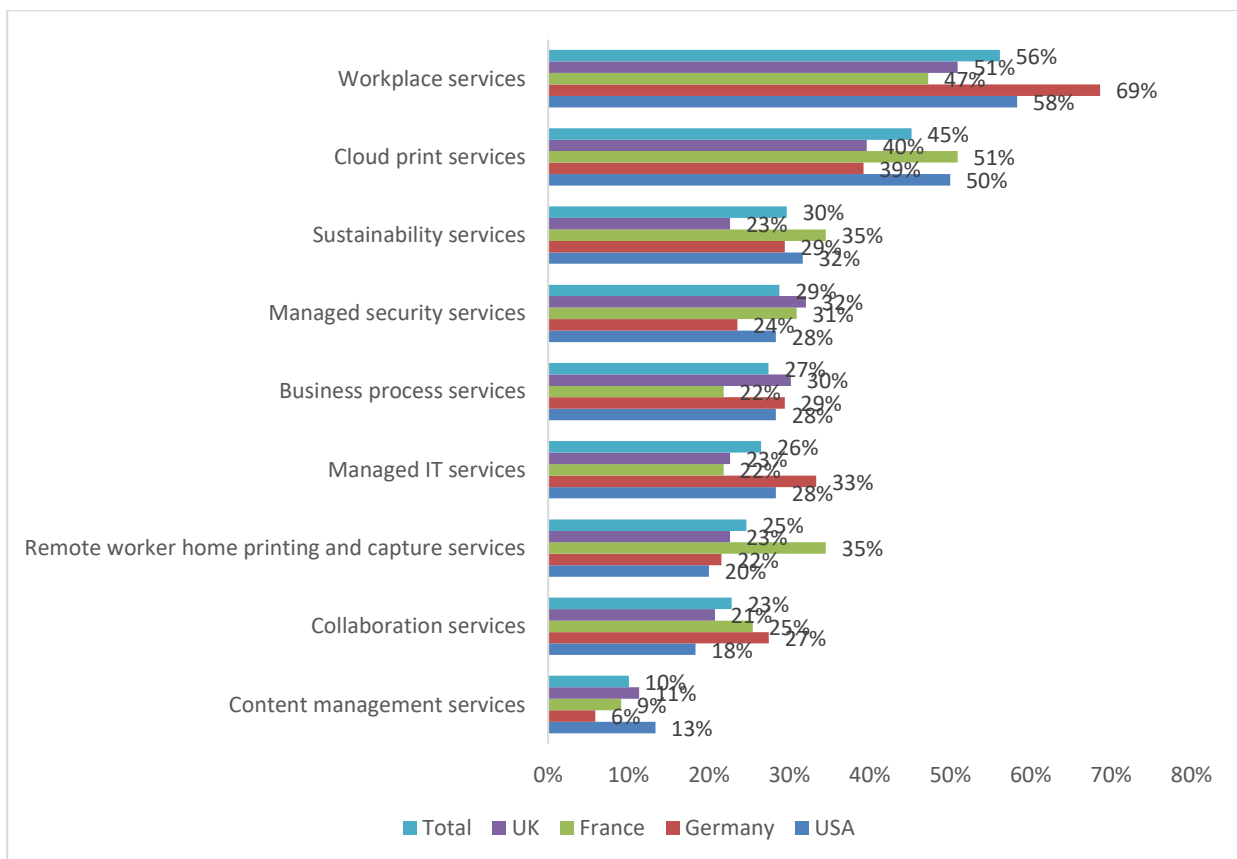


Figure 14. What additional services would be more likely to make you select an MPS provider?

Cloud is certainly a key opportunity for MPS providers, many of whom are developing broader cloud print management portfolios. While the majority are managing print jobs on-premise, three quarters of organisations expect cloud-based print management to increase between now and 2025. Quocirca will be publishing a dedicated report on the Cloud Print Services market in April 2021.

Future opportunities for MPS providers

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the world – likely for ever. MPS providers must respond to these changes to both remain relevant and also maintain levels of competitiveness against others in the market. This will involve the creation, provisioning and management of a range of different services.

MPS offerings continue to mature – and need to change to better embrace and support the issues organisations are now facing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Such changes must not be carried out to the exclusion of other much-needed additions to MPS, however – there are continuing requirements around enhanced security, analytics and intelligent IoT services. It is still the case that the best way to offer wide-ranging MPS services that best support a diverse and distributed workforce will be through the use of public cloud as a main platform.

Embrace the cloud opportunity

MPS providers must embrace cloud as a means of offering rapidly deliverable services provisioned on an ongoing subscription level. Public cloud is rapidly becoming the platform of choice for many organisations looking for flexibility and scalability. For those providing services, cloud offers a means of maintaining control and optimising support, so cutting down on support costs.

By moving to a cloud-first model and investing in in-house cloud expertise, MPS providers gain an environment that they maintain full control of, and also open up the opportunity to enter into agreements with third-party providers to offer adjacent services, such as content management and IT management. AWS, Microsoft Azure and Google remain the dominant public cloud providers, and are increasingly being used by print OEMs to provide their services to the channel. As enterprises become more prescriptive about the platforms they wish to use, these partnerships will become critical.

However, not all the market is yet ready to move to cloud. MPS providers should still look to provide at least a degree of on-premise capability, slowly moving customers who are willing to pay a premium for such services to a hybrid on-premise/cloud model and then to a fully cloud-based model. Some customers will want to maintain some services on-premise for the foreseeable future due to security and compliance concerns – this may be a possibility for premium pricing.

Bridge the remote and office working gap with integrated solutions and services

The biggest change between our previous MPS research and this report has been the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Lockdown, furloughs and working from home have changed how people work, with many employees exchanging the office environment for their home. Information security is a major issue for organisations, as they do not see any easy ways of maintaining control over information when it is being accessed from an employee's home, rather than in the more controllable confines of the office. MPS providers need to look at how their offerings can better embrace home printing, and also provide services in information management and security control.

Alongside such technical services, MPS providers should also look at how best to support the home worker with the provision of suitable printers and the continuous monitoring of and provision of consumables. Tying the lifecycle management of home print devices into existing MPS agreements can make a lot of sense to the business: they can cut costs through access to better pricing for devices and consumables while gaining better control of the device as part of an overall MPS agreement.

Broaden collaborative and workplace services

MPS providers should be looking to the provision of distributed collaboration systems that organisations are already investing in to support their distributed workforce, such as cloud-based synchronised file share platforms. To better support home workers, services such as managed desktops and IP-based telephony services can also provide valuable capabilities to businesses and workers alike. Visual communication and collaboration solutions, such as videoconferencing and screen sharing, also help in ensuring that distributed workers can still work effectively across locations.

Shift to a zero-trust security model

The threat landscape is expanding, with the traditional network perimeter no longer enough to secure a remote and diverse workforce that connects via multiple devices and accesses the corporate network from distributed locations, often over public networks. Today's organisations should be operating on a 'zero-trust' model: assume that everything is a security risk, and so create an environment that can deal with the possible threats.

Many leading MPS vendors have expanded their security assessments and monitoring capabilities and this will be vital in closing any security gaps around the hybrid workplace. Alongside this, investments in data leak prevention (DLP) and digital rights management (DRM) to provide their customers with the information control needed may well provide rapid payback.

Quocirca's Print Security 2020 study¹ shows that the pandemic has resulted in lower overall confidence in organisation's trust levels in their own security capabilities. This uncovers a nascent market ripe for the channel to provide services into. Security information and event management services should be part of a broader offering, helping organisations to create a security environment that crosses over their own network's boundaries to embrace the home working environment. Such a solution will provide levels of remote monitoring that are required to rapidly identify and deal with security issues. Combined with machine learning (ML) and artificial intelligence (AI), such monitoring can kick off automated events that can deal with security issues quickly and effectively.

Unlock the value of analytics

As the IT platform becomes more complex, it is generating more data. That data, on its own, is meaningless; it needs to be collected and analysed to be useful. Printers are major data hubs and most MPS providers already provide good analytics for the print environment. However, printers can no longer be looked at in isolation from the rest of the environment; they are part of information workflows and are also part of the increasingly complex Internet of Things (IoT) environment.

MPS providers need to look at how best to ensure that they can provide analytics across more than the print environment, alongside ensuring that the data created by the areas under their control can be best used by other environments, such as building information management (BIM) systems and so on.

¹ Quocirca Print Security Landscape 2020 <https://print2025.com/reports/print-security-2020/>

Vendor profile: Konica Minolta

Quocirca opinion

Konica Minolta retains a position in the Quocirca's MPS market leadership category, as it continues to expand its IT-services led strategy. Konica Minolta positions its business as a smart data and digital IT services company. It has invested heavily in organic growth in the form of acquisitions, particularly in IT services, which has enabled it to deliver on its strategy to provide integrated IT services and become a reliable partner for digital workplaces.

Its offering is comprehensive, spanning digital print, IoT, artificial intelligence and augmented reality solutions. The company also delivers consultancy and services to optimise business processes with intelligent workflow automation, and implements solutions in the field of IT infrastructure and IT security as well as cloud environments.

In support of an 'Intelligent Connected Workplace', Konica Minolta offers cloud, IT, managed print and video solution services for remote working, collaboration, workflow management and automation and security.

Managed Print Services

The vendor continues to strengthen its MPS delivery network, especially for global customers. It is actively enhancing its fleet optimisation, management and reporting capability, with a focus on global standardisation. It differentiates itself on consistent global reporting, enabled through its global customer portal. The centralised infrastructure provides the backbone for fleet monitoring, process automation and contract management. The company also continues to invest in its sales resources, with comprehensive training programmes for consultative sales, solution sales and project management.

Print management

Konica Minolta also offers a suite of solutions designed to help customers expand their digital transformation from MFP fleet management into content capturing and workflow management. For example Dispatcher Suite; an integrated all-in-one print & workflow platform that combines Dispatcher Paragon - a feature-rich print management solution that offers a highly secure print environment that allows users and print related costs to be managed efficiently - with Dispatcher Phoenix - Konica Minolta's capturing and document workflow management solution.

Managed IT and Application Services

Through its product, solutions and services portfolio, Konica Minolta aims to help customers to achieve an Intelligent Connected Workplace.

Workplace Hub, an all-in-one IT and MFP platform that combines infrastructure, services and software into a single fully or partly managed IT service is central to this strategy. Instead of disparate IT infrastructure elements that are managed separately, Konica Minolta has worked with technology leaders HP Enterprise, Sophos and Microsoft, to integrate various IT components into a unified IT ecosystem. The vendor has made this platform available to its channel partners, the primary route to market for its predominantly SME customer base - and a specific target for Workplace Hub.

Workplace Hub combines software with high quality bizhub i-Series printing and scanning capabilities alongside a set of managed services to deliver a powerful solution for the intelligent connected workplace. The advanced solution offers customers print and copy speeds ranging from 25ppm to 65ppm and scanning speeds range from 100/200ipm to 140/280ipm. Workplace Hub also offers a comprehensive portfolio of services and applications including print and document management, collaboration solution, firewall technology, backup management and remote monitoring and management.

Konica Minolta is now opening its Workplace Hub ecosystem to the Windows Operating System (OS) in a bid to significantly increase flexibility in application support, while also ensuring compatibility with a wide range of Microsoft and other third-party solutions.

Konica Minolta's Managed IT Services Portfolio is not only tied to Workplace Hub, but is also available flexibly according to companies' individual needs.

Cloud Services

Konica Minolta continues to advance its capabilities to further drive the Intelligent Connected Workplace as the digital workplace evolves. These include cloud enablement and services as well as app-enabled print platforms. One example is the bizhub Evolution on-demand cloud platform for optimised information management solutions. bizhub Evolution enables customers to access a variety of custom features from any connected bizhub device or using a PC, laptop, smartphone or tablet, without having to install software onto devices or within their existing IT infrastructure. The bizhub Evolution Store allows organisations to expand their capabilities as user requirements change, and customers only pay for the features they actually use. Konica Minolta manages all services, including keeping them up to date. In addition to workflow services, cloud fax and cloud print services are also available. Depending on the customer's environment, the latter is also available with Microsoft Universal Print Integration.

The vendor has also launched its global Cloud Printing Service, through which it manages customers' printers, servers, drivers, applications and network, ensuring the infrastructure is always up to date and meets the latest security standards. Moreover, the print feature is integrated into Konica Minolta's bizhub Evolution cloud platform, which enables companies to seamlessly provision various cloud services including cloud print, fax, document conversion and translation to their end-users.

Konica Minolta's Cloud Print Service is a multi-tenancy SaaS solution with options for private cloud or hybrid solutions that converts an existing print environment to a cloud-based service. Customers benefit from the usual as-a-service advantages like consumption-based pricing and the ability to easily flex the solution up or down as needs change.

Cloud printing solutions from Konica Minolta offer users the flexibility of location-independent printing, while at the same time unburdening IT from the complexity of managing disparate IT systems.

Security Services

Through its various acquisitions, Konica Minolta has sought to enhance its credentials within the IT security services domain, with offerings aimed at protecting a customer's digital assets. As a result, it has developed scalable solutions to meet the IT security needs of organisations of all sizes, and address a wide array of threats - from harmful email attachments to third-party intruders attempting to gain access to customer data. Additionally, Konica Minolta provides vulnerability management to assess and monitor a customer's critical IT systems.

Security is an integral element in all of its Intelligent Connected Workplace services and built in to all of its solutions for digital workplaces, including infrastructure, cloud services, managed content services, managed video solutions and managed print services.

Remote services and support

2020 saw Konica Minolta introduce a number of innovations to support remote services and support. These include Remote Desktop Support, online product training via its free i-Training platform, and its Remote Visual Support tool, AIRe Link, which enables companies to identify or solve problems on their print devices themselves while being supported by Konica Minolta remotely. Konica Minolta saved 3,814 on-site customer visits across Europe during the internal pilot usage in 2020.

For many years, Konica Minolta has managed more than 730,000 of its multifunctional products remotely through CS Remote Care. It has now launched next-generation Remote Support technology, a move that will upgrade its value delivery to the next level by fully utilising its proprietary remote technologies, platforms, infrastructure and related services. It plans to roll out the Konica Minolta Gateway to its existing customer base as well as implementing it as standard for new clients.

The new Remote Service platform allows remote firmware updates by attended as well as unattended access. Connected systems to the Remote Service platform will automatically receive value additions through the next update.

Summary

Konica Minolta has carved out a strong market position in the mature MPS market and continues to expand its proposition beyond print to encompass broader IT, ECM and business process-centric solutions and services. Its strong reputation for service delivery is boosted by an expansive direct sales force and loyal channel network.

The vendor is taking a holistic approach that enables its solutions to be seamlessly integrated with each other to optimise customer workflows and processes - both digital and in print. For example, its smart bizhub MFP devices are a two-way link between printed, physical workflow steps and virtual, digital ones and the Konica Minolta MarketPlace platform, an integral part of Workplace Hub, can be used by internal IT teams as a powerful platform for easily implementing and managing new applications. Konica Minolta ensures that these solutions are updated regularly and are compatible with the customer's IT system.

Konica Minolta's portfolio provides its customers with a broad range of XaaS offerings based on monthly subscription fees – from application monitoring, back-up management to printing as-a-service. At the same time, this ensures their IT is always up-to-date and meets the latest security standards.

About Quocirca

Quocirca is a global market insight and research firm specialising in analysing the convergence of print and digital technologies in the future workplace.

Since 2006, Quocirca has played an influential role in advising clients on major shifts in the market. Quocirca's consulting and research are at the forefront of the rapidly evolving print services and solutions market, trusted by clients who are seeking new strategies to address disruptive technologies. Quocirca has pioneered research in many emerging market areas. More than 10 years ago Quocirca was the first to analyse the competitive global market landscape for managed print services (MPS), followed by the first global competitive review of the print security market.

More recently Quocirca reinforced its leading and unique approach in the market, publishing the first study looking at the smart, connected future of print in the digital workplace. The Global Print 2025 study provides unparalleled insight into the impact of digital disruption, from both an industry executive and end-user perspective.

For more information, please visit www.quocirca.com.

Report Notes

This report has been written independently by Quocirca Ltd. During the preparation of this report, Quocirca has spoken to a number of suppliers involved in the areas covered. We are grateful for their time and insights. Quocirca has obtained information from multiple sources in putting together this analysis. These sources include, but are not limited to, the vendors themselves. Although Quocirca has attempted wherever possible to validate the information received from each vendor, Quocirca cannot be held responsible for any errors in any information supplied.

Although Quocirca has taken what steps it can to ensure that the information provided in this report is true and reflects real market conditions, Quocirca cannot take any responsibility for the ultimate reliability of the details presented. Therefore, Quocirca expressly disclaims all warranties and claims as to the validity of the data presented here, including any and all consequential losses incurred by any organisation or individual taking any action based on such data.

© Copyright 2021, Quocirca. All rights reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the express written permission from Quocirca. The information contained herein is subject to change without notice. All other trademarks mentioned herein are the property of their respective owners.