

Audio cast

MHEC streamlines procurement of printing services with savings and sustainability.

Midwestern public sector entities benefit from better print services and technology delivered for less.

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Narrator: The Midwestern Higher Education Compact, also known as MHEC (pronounced MECK) currently consists of 12 states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

Founded in 1991 and headquartered in Minneapolis, MHEC sponsors a variety of programs to improve processes, reduce costs and increase student access.

Like most entities in the business sector, the education and government sectors are also being asked to do more with less budget. States are giving institutions less money, and everyone is being held more accountable. Which means entities like colleges and universities are looking to reduce costs, save time and find solutions to become more efficient and further stretch their limited resources.

MHEC has partnered with Xerox for the past six years to offer industry-leading document technology for higher education institutions, and in some instances, K through 12 districts and schools, state and local governments, and not-for-profit institutions. And since 2008, MHEC has expanded the agreement to include document management services.

Hi, this is Mike Rusinko for Xerox. To find out more about this growing strategic partnership, we talked to Rob Trembath, vice president and general counsel for the Midwestern Higher Education Compact.

Trembath: MHEC was established to further higher education in the Midwest through interstate cooperation and resource sharing.

We do this in really three core areas. One is policy analysis...another core function is student access.

But one of my primary roles is to oversee our cost-savings functions, where we attempt to leverage the combined volume of the 12 states and the entities in those states to bring some value-added services to the institutions in those states.

Narrator: One of the biggest challenges for each member organization of MHEC was their original procurement process. Both public-sector and private institutions have to adhere to specific state statutes and/or applicable regulations, so there are some similarities.

But at the same time, each entity is unique, with different requirements when it comes to printing services across campus and administrative departments. This can create some real complexity—and administrative time involved—when it comes to objectively comparing and evaluating technology and services.

So MHEC put together a committee of people from its 12 member states that were familiar with print operations and print management. Following their own request for proposals, the committee selected Xerox to provide print technology and services for MHEC members.

Trembath: People will look at the product and service and immediately go to the price, but the full cost of ownership, the cost of supplies, the more efficient use of the services, the less waste, the less paper being used, less energy being used, all those things—the more space, the more time, the people freed up, all those factors go into it when you look at the total cost of ownership. That was one thing we saw Xerox was very good at—bringing value to the institutions and entities that use those machines.

Narrator: The committee and MHEC then worked closely together to come up with a contract that not only offered members preferred pricing on a full range of devices and services, but also streamlined the entire procurement process.

Trembath: It's really all the way from a simple machine to the most complex of opportunities.

It's one of the things in our contract—we specifically designed to have a very broad-range, solution-focused agreement that could be tailored specifically to the entity that wanted to use it.

Narrator: In fact, this strategic partnership between MHEC and Xerox offers member institutions extensive benefits. Members don't have to worry about sending out RFPs, comparing and evaluating equipment, talking with vendors, and negotiating contracts.

MHEC has already done this "heavy lifting" for its members, so that all these institutions have to do is focus on the printing solution that best fits their organization.

Members save valuable time and money while they enjoy upgraded printing technology and better services.

Trembath: That kind of due diligence has already been done by MHEC and a committee of their peers.

The benefits they're reaping range from the obvious, of saving money on the product or the service, saving time—the contract streamlines that procurement process, so all they have to focus on, again, is the solution that fits their campus.

Narrator: MHEC members are enjoying real economies of scale. Since 2009, members have saved more than 7 million dollars. And with best-in-class, managed print services and new ENERGY STAR multifunction devices that support green objectives, other benefits are clearly adding up.

Trembath: They knew they were going to get the price reductions and they knew they were getting quality machines, but they have found that they are saving money on their energy—the machines are more efficient; they're able to utilize their space much better than they have in the past. They have fewer machines that can do more things, and their employees are finding they have more time...it's not just the print; the people are able to be more efficient.

Narrator: And one of the best parts of this contract is its flexibility.

Trembath: What may fit on one campus doesn't always fit on another one, so it's not as easy as cookie-cutter solution. Xerox has been very good at identifying the uniqueness of the different campuses, but still fitting that all under one, easy-to-use purchasing vehicle.

Narrator: Even better, eligibility to use the MHEC agreement is growing and open to a wide variety of other public-sector institutions.

Trembath: This is a solution that you should explore and find ways to make your print management operations on your campus more efficient. Through this agreement, you have an opportunity to have Xerox do that and help you get there.

Narrator: For more information on how Xerox helps educational institutions and other public sector entities advance learning and reduce costs with a better approach to document management, visit xerox.com/services.

This podcast was recorded on August 9, 2010 and at the time of recording all information was factually accurate. Because this will reside on the Internet for a period of time, Xerox assumes no duty to update the podcast to reflect new information.

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That concludes this podcast. On behalf of Xerox, thank you for listening.

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