WHY USE A PRINT SERVER?

Abstract

We have a pretty difficult question Why Using a Print Server? That we are going to answer in this white paper. We will identify the network size that suits best using a print server and the key benefits of using such a server in our LAN.

Background

End users may connect and print to shared printers in several ways. For example, Microsoft Windows supports sharing printers using a direct Internet Protocol (IP) connection.

A small office may have several users sharing a printer attached directly to the office data network. In this type of environment, each user often acts as the administrator of an individual machine or there is a single person who performs computer administration and management tasks in addition to their other responsibilities. With no existing server and limited network traffic, a direct IP connection may be the least expensive way to configure and share a printer.

A larger office may have an individual or a team of individuals whose primary job is system administration and whose primary responsibility is the maintenance and support of the organization's computers and data network. Frequently in organizations of this size, users are discouraged, if not prohibited, from installing or modifying their computer configuration. The administrative tools and features, such as Point and Print, provided by the print server may be of considerable benefit in this environment.

Policies and Standards

Using direct IP connections to share printers may be sufficient for the printing needs of a small office or in those office configurations are not large enough, or complex enough, to require a dedicated system administrator. However, as offices and users grow, there likely will come a time when sharing printers using print servers will be more effective and less complicated than sharing them using direct IP connections. Using a print server to share and manage printers, offers many advantages to both the end user and the administrator as the number of users grows and may also offer a way to avoid many of the problems experienced with direct IP printer connections in larger environments.

Key Benefits

Managing Print Jobs

Had that same user sent the same job to a printer served by a print server, the system administrator, or a user with Manage Documents permission to the printer, could delete the job from the queue and more quickly allow other users to use the printer. The system administrator could also identify the user and alert them of the problem. Because the unprinted documents are in a print queue on the print server, they will not be lost when the printer is reset.

Job Prioritization

When a shared printer has to serve many users using a direct IP printer connection, it is impossible to schedule one print job ahead of another. If some users of the printer need priority access to print a document immediately, they may not be able to do so using a direct IP printer connection. Using a print server makes providing this type of priority access to a printer very easy to implement.

Print Spooling

Competition for a printer occurs when many people are trying to print directly to a shared printer using a direct IP connection. As a result, some or all of the users of that printer may experience less than optimal overall performance. Without an effective queuing system, each user is forced to wait until the printer is available. A print server eliminates this bottleneck by queuing each job on the print server, thereby freeing the user's computer more quickly.

Conclusions and Summary

Using a Print Server is obviously the solution for medium – large networks where the features provided by the print server are mandatory.

About Amplusnet

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