

Increasing the Accessibility of Cloud Printing at Pima Community College

How Wēpa developed remote release printing for visually impaired students

REQUIREMENT

Greater printing functionality for every student

Pima Community College serves the greater Tucson, Arizona area with six campus locations and multiple learning centers located throughout Pima County. The two-year college sought a more advanced print solution that would offer greater functionality and convenience to students. “We had an increasingly outdated solution in place that did not accept credit or debit, and the hardware was past its useful lifespan,” says Michael Tulino, IT Director, User Support Services. The seven unique ways to print offered by Wēpa were also a big draw. In fact, the variety of ways to print and overall convenience factor were cited as key benefits by students surveyed at the downtown campus.

“We involve our college Access and Disability Resources department whenever we’re deploying new systems,” says Mark Juzwiak, IT Manager for Pima’s Downtown and Northwest Campuses. Jon Howe, Access and

Disability Resources Director, found that while the Wēpa solution offered kiosks of varying heights to allow for wheelchair accessibility, there was no way for visually impaired students and personnel to operate them unattended.

“We have access technologies on all our student-facing computers. We wanted to be able to have that interface available for the Wēpa system,” says Howe. Computers at Pima Community College have text-to-speech and magnification software installed, and existing school printers printed directly from these computers. Juzwiak and Howe needed Wēpa to deliver full accessibility to be able to switch to cloud-based kiosks. “We want to make sure that our full range of students has equal access to all of the programs and facilities,” says Howe.

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– Jon Howe, Access and Disability Resources Director



CHALLENGE

Legal and security concerns

“We identified potential problems when it came to ADR accessibility and we gave those to Wēpa, and in turn Wēpa went out and started looking at how we could make the changes needed to allow a variety of people with ADR issues to use the system,” says Juzwiak.

Finding that solution involved a lot of collaboration between the IT and ADR departments at Pima and the project management team at Wēpa. Initially, when Wēpa requested a list of all ADR students to more easily deliver custom software to those who needed it, they discovered that it is not within ADA compliance to differentiate between students. There would have to be another way.

The team at Pima came up with another potential solution: remote release. If students could remote release jobs from any computer then they could use the accessibility software they needed while still printing with the Wēpa kiosks. But that gave rise to security concerns at Wēpa. “There would be nothing preventing someone from sending a document to any of the kiosks that we own,” says Raj Batchu, Chief Technology Officer for Wēpa.

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– Michael Tulino, IT Director,
User Support Services

SOLUTION

Location-based remote release

Ultimately, an additional conference call between Pima’s ADR and IT departments and Wēpa helped to uncover the solution. “The idea was that a computer that was co-located next to the kiosk would have this remote release software on it,” explains Howe of the collaboration.

The touchscreen interface that is so convenient for the majority of students would no longer hinder others. Wēpa developers quickly went to work custom developing software that would allow students to use the kiosks without needing to actually engage the touchscreen.

Wēpa completed the software package that would allow the kiosk interface to operate on a co-located PC running JAWS, Read & Write Gold, ZoomText and other accessibility programs utilized by Pima. “We created the whole framework where we remotely send those jobs via the cloud and the kiosk functions as if they were operating the touchscreen,” says Batchu.

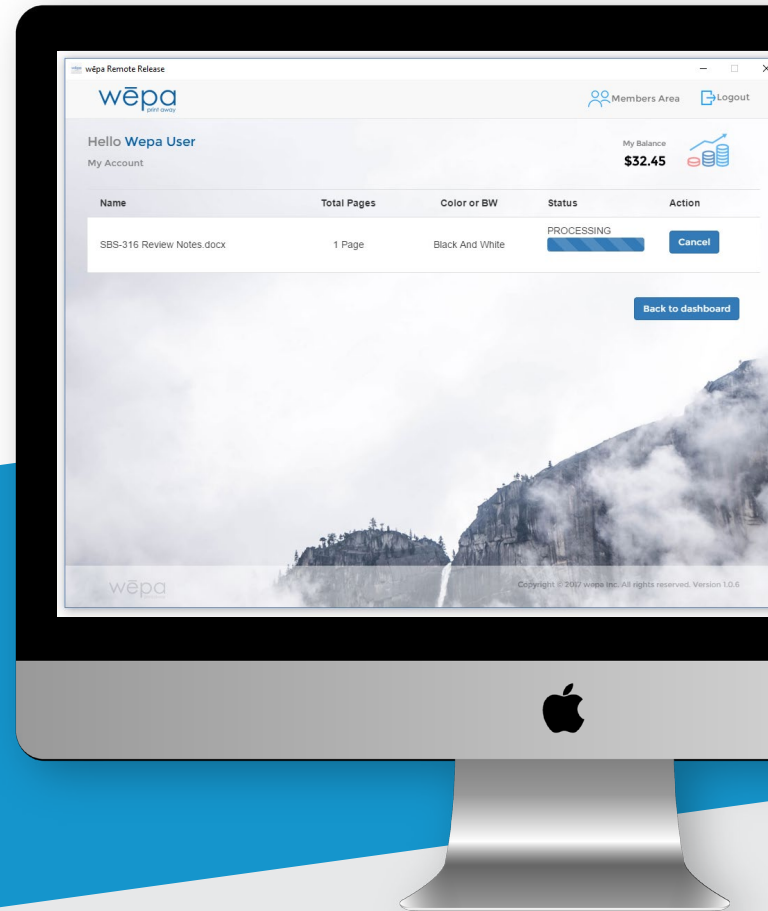
RESULT

Full accessibility to easier, more convenient student printing

After the software configuration was complete, Pima started by implementing one Wēpa kiosk with a co-located computer at its downtown Tucson campus to test the functionality. "We deployed both sets of the hardware and software solution and tested it and it worked, so we pulled our other print solution out," says Juzniak. "And now that we've tested it, we've been given the go-ahead to have the other campuses do the same."

The Wēpa kiosks are now being rolled out across Pima's campuses, where all students will be able to enjoy convenient and reliable printing. "From establishing the final contract and placement details, to the print station branding, Wēpa provided an excellent team approach to working with our expectations and delivering a quality product," says Tulino, who was part of the project implementation team. "Wēpa even took care of the installation, as well as helped conduct mini-training sessions with our support staff at each location."

Tulino says that students have adopted Wēpa quickly, and that usage has increased over the previous solution. "Students like the additional features of printing directly from a campus computer or personal device." "We appreciate the seriousness and effort with which Wēpa took this project, and we're happy to come to a solution," says Howe.



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