

The People-less Office

Discover the real benefit of paper-less working



We used to talk about “the paperless office” – the dream that all information will be communicated electronically and there will be no need for physical documents and paperwork to be used anymore.

This all started when computers in the workplace started to become mainstream in the 1980s.

Although, those who predicted the world would soon be paperless were ridiculed almost as much as those who forecast the world would end sometime soon.

But, some predictions are becoming reality.

Changing the Status Quo

Organisations typically still receive and produce paper in sizeable quantities, so even though the paperless office may still be a long way off, paperless processing is an achievable goal.

Furthermore, even where electronic documents are in the mix, communication internally and externally is often via email and attachments, leading to duplicates, errors and lost documents in the same way as with paper.

The inefficiency is often moved from one medium (paper) to another (email).

The cost to your organisation

Staff are still involved in checking, correcting, extracting and updating information.

At best this leads to inconsistent results and quality - at worst it leads to errors which can have serious consequences and cost for the organisation.

A key piece of the paperless processing jigsaw is the method of viewing and interacting with documents and data ... mobile technology has now matured sufficiently to address the requirements of practicality and affordability that has enabled wide scale adoption.

Furthermore, in many parts of the world, internet connection speeds and reliability have now increased significantly to support access to information remotely and on the move.

What is next?

What many now predict is the “people-less” office ... a natural extension from what we’ve discussed previously. The adoption of the latest technologies means that many of us can work anytime and anywhere – and often more effectively too.

To achieve this requires effective, affordable technology to automate paperless processing of documents and information.

Whilst this may be considered progress – for many it’s another radical step that changes our working culture and the way we live and contribute to society.

The negative view, is that it could have a devastating effect on employment numbers – and also the demand for office space, already affected by recent global economic change, will continue to decline.

We prefer the positive view – the “glass-half-full” perspective sees a bright future with most mundane tasks being removed from the workplace.

Staff will be spending their time on more stimulating and fulfilling work aligned to the core functions of their company.

This is a win-win for employees and employers – lower costs and access to flexible skills wherever they might be, will boost job creation.

The demand for more skilled staff will increase particularly in customer facing, service delivery roles ... the human brain and the human touch is still ahead of current technology ...for now at least!

Find out more

If you’d like to know more about technologies to support paperless and people-less environments, please contact the author, Mark Altman – mark.altman@altmanIM.com
Mark Altman - March 2015

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