GOING
PAPERLESS

IN A DOCUMENT HEAVY WORLD

In today's hustle and bustle of the workplace there isn't much time to consider how our daily habits can affect our production levels and the overall ambience and functionality of our environment. There is one thing consistently wreaking havoc in most office spaces however; an abundance of paper. Look around your office environment, desks are over cluttered with paper and files, storage rooms are full of large bulky cabinets and boxes upon boxes of old files, cabinets get filled with binders of corporate memos and instructional manuals. It becomes overwhelming to deal with all of the tangible information handed to us on a daily basis. But there is hope for the modern work-place. Technology has guaranteed us a more streamlined working environment, free of clutter and wasted productivity. Implementing a paperless office has become one of the growing trends in the "Going Green" revolution.

Aside from the small things organizations may implement in the office to begin cutting down on the amount of paper waste, there is one option many companies are looking to in an effort to streamline their productivity and bring their document management into the modern age. Document management software has become one of the biggest contributors of going paperless and offers high level solutions for companies whose organization depends largely on filing systems. This type of software offers companies the ability to fully digitize their documents making accessibility as simple as clicking a button. Features include organizing and indexing on multiple levels, search and retrieval options, instant view ability for multiple users, web access functions, document editing and annotations, print and e-mail capabilities, multi-format exporting options, document security, workflow management, OCR capabilities, file tracking and more. While the cost associated with going paperless may seem steep at first, in the long run it is set to save companies a monumental amount of money and time.

One of the biggest motivators of going paperless is the amount of money companies can potentially save. Organizations are always looking for effective ways to cut cost, increase the bottom line and their profitability. Companies are finding they are also able to make more usage of their office space, increase productivity, decrease overhead, purchase less printing equipment and supplies and alleviate off-site storage all together. Let's look at some cost savings that are easy to implement in this going green initiative.

- **Effective use of square footage:** With the cost of square footage for office space rising, it's getting more and more difficult for organizations to expand their offices; however, by going paperless, companies have found space right under their noses. By alleviating that dark and dusty filing room, you can find the space needed to increase your productivity without breaking your bottom line.

- **Cost of secure and fire safe filing cabinets:** Getting rid of the file room also offers more cost saving alternatives. Going paperless means there is no need for large, expensive, industrial strength filing cabinets, saving the company thousands of dollars on document storage and the consumables needed to create those files. Meaning you save on the cost of standard office supplies such as staples, paper clips, folders, paper trays, etc.

- **Warehouse costs:** Storing time sensitive data can really wreak havoc on your budget. Think about it, you're paying for boxes upon boxes of old files to sit in a storage room and gather dust all because someone may want to one day pull a file from seven years ago. When you go paperless, all of those documents are placed in a single digital file and make accessing them a cinch.

- **Ink costs for printers reduced as documents go digital:** Think about client presentations and the amount of paper and ink that is wasted by simply providing every attendee a copy of the presentation. One way to cut costs is to burn a CD of the presentation or simply e-mail the document. Many times after a presentation, the copies are no longer needed and immediately hit the waste basket. By going digital, this alone will help lower costs and cut down on unsightly paper clutter.

- **Cost of runtime for printers and copiers:** In large organizations the use of large copiers and printers are almost a necessity; however, by cutting down on the amount of paper that is printed in the organization and focusing on more digital initiatives, the organization can save tons of money in leasing and consumable cost related to the printing equipment. Many companies lease their equipment and are responsible of paying per print charges as well as the responsibility of maintenance and consumable usage. Making simple changes such as working in a digital format until the final document is complete can save a plethora of paper waste and allow the company to lease fewer machines.

- **Time spent looking for files – Time is money:** It can be a daunting task spending hours over a filing cabinet organizing or searching for a file that has been lost, on someone else's desk, or simply misfiled. Document management systems help alleviate this process by organizing files digitally and keep them readily available at your fingertips. These different document management systems allow for key wording of files for easy access and search ability.

- **Cost of losing a piece of paper or file:** It takes many man hours a year to find pieces of missing documents. By going paperless with company files and converting to electronic formats, organizations are better able to allocate their employee's time with more productive tasks rather than having them play detective and fall behind in the tasks needing to be complete. Also, if a crucial document is lost, you are not only losing money on the time spent searching for the document, but you lose the actual content of the document which in some cases may be much more than just a financial loss.

- **Cost of employees to manage a file room:** Going paperless means less overhead for the company and more efficient use of the budget. There is no need for file clerks and nasty paper cuts when documents are switched over to an electronic format.

Joining the "Green Revolution" has its perks when it comes to cost effective structure and streamlining productivity. When making the decision to be green and go paperless, there are plenty of factors to consider and it requires a bit of time and up-front cost. Once a system is put into place, and the proper steps are taken to implement a paperless office, the organizational benefits and cost savings on supplies and time will soon make the startup effort and money well worth it. Going paperless means you can find more time in your work week and feel more productive with your daily tasks. Companies ultimately save money and the work environment soon becomes more efficient all around thanks to the benefits of today's technology with the most advanced hardware and the most sophisticated document management software on the market.