

FIERCE COMPETITION AND NEW PRINTING REQUIREMENT



➤ Stay competitive

In a generation focused on reducing consumption and strong focus towards a target of « Zero Paper » distributors and resellers of MFDs and printers, and suppliers of consumables must be dynamic and agile to cope with the rapid transformation of their respective markets.



THE EVIDENCE IS CLEAR : PRINT VOLUMES ARE IN FREEFALL !

Organisations of all sizes are rationalising their printer fleets and paper usage, mandating only essential use.

Whilst in the consumer market there has been a digital revolution, from e-tickets to utility bills, electronic documentation has pushed print to the sidelines.

This creates a knock on effect where MFDs regular maintenance cycles are not adhered to, causing poorer quality, and higher risk of damage.

According to an IPSOS survey from 2008, an SMB employee prints an average of 28 pages per day (with huge variations depending on the job, the size of the company and the type of activity).

Less than 10 years later this figure has declined slightly, and is set to continue its downward trend.

However it's not all doom and gloom, we are confident this decline should stabilise, as paper will remain a fundamental requirement for businesses.



➤ What are the challenges for attracting and retaining

To attract more customers, distributors and suppliers of consumables need to focus on the most important element for their prospective clients: the cost per page. We are always looking to reduce the costs, but there comes a stage when reducing the price would result in the distributors no longer covering their initial costs.



There are a number of variables when considering the cost per page, and these can be difficult to control and standardise.

- Consumables (taking into consideration that we can choose whether or not to limit the inking rate per page, which would not be the same for a full colour communication tool or an administrative letter),
- spare parts including
- storage and logistics
- salary of the maintenance technician and support staff.

Additional business challenges facing distributors arise when finding products to take to market. Any new products needs to :

- guarantee the most attractive prices for their customers, they must reduce their costs and expenses to a minimum, whilst maintaining enough profit margin to sustain their business.
- the features and services must support potential growth opportunities.
- Be able to transform the customer relation into loyalty,
- customer satisfaction must remain a core value in research and development,
- R&D policies need to correspond to real world needs.

➤ A tool designed for distributors? Simplicity and efficiency are key!



KPAX Manage is the answer. A multi-brand and scalable solution specifically designed to meet the evolving challenges distributors face.

KPAX Manage simplifies numerous processes and provides sales teams a strong talk track to drive business growth and maintaining profitability.

Scalable and adapted to industry verticals, it will simplify numerous processes, while providing distributors and suppliers with strong sales arguments to attract new customers without sacrificing their profit margins.

HOW TO PROTECT PROFIT MARGINS AND LIMIT EXPENSES?



➤ Automate routine processes

It wasn't so long ago that distributors relied on the customer to get meter reads, usually by telephone, or by maintaining a costly fleet of field technicians collecting this data. Many improvements have been made in the area of automation, but KPAX Manage improves on this even further.



The KPAX Manager solution includes the automatic feedback from printing meters with all the details required for invoicing. It can be integrated into the company's ERP to simplify operations. All information is sent to the distributor with no prior actions required either from the distributor or from the customer. Everyone saves time, money and energy.

➤ Limit the purchase and use of consumables

Regarding the delivery of consumables, distributors also require technology to automate certain processes – and limit any counterproductive habits which might hinder them. Per page invoicing can result in reduced client accountability concerning the use of ink.

In these conditions, the client continues to order more consumables to create "buffer stocks".

Free to trigger deliveries whenever they want, they can end up placing orders without actually needing them at a given time. This generates treasury problems for the distributor.

These stocks of ink cartridges and consumables are of no use to anyone. They penalise the distributor

and are not necessarily beneficial to the client, as the average lifespan of a cartridge is generally no longer than two years. This unjustified stocking and the tendency to replace consumables before they are completely empty (to provide against shortages at a time when the printer is really needed)

are counterproductive and harmful to the planet.

KPAX Manage achieves this by providing visibility over consumable usage by automatically generating and sending out notifications relating to the changing of consumables. Powerful analytics provide insights into the behaviours of each customer through reports. Alerts are sent to the distributor to assist them in providing useful information to assist in reducing excess stocking of consumables



➤ Solve problems remotely and optimise on-site intervention

Faced with a printer breakdown companies without the required onsite IT expertise would call on the services of an external technician only to discover a minor issue that did not require their full support resulting in unnecessary downtime and costs.

To avoid this predicament businesses need a platform to help identify and differentiate printer problems that require physical intervention from those that can be fixed remotely. They also need to gain a greater understanding of each issue to ensure that they are best equipped to fix it during one on-site intervention.

The distributor was faced with expenses (travel, technician working hours) for what could be qualified as comfort for the customer. The issue here is to differentiate between breakdowns requiring physical intervention and those which can be resolved remotely.

For major problems, it is important to optimise the understanding of the problem so as to fix it in one on-site intervention (instead of two or three in some cases).



To facilitate the remote diagnostic for each printer problem, reduce unnecessary call-outs, and optimise call-outs KPAX Manage sends error codes directly to the distributor and technician's workstation.

Where possible the technician can solve the problem remotely and if onsite intervention is required then the technician can use the error code to analyse the problem.

This ensures they have the necessary knowledge, parts or tools to complete the job.

At least 15 to 30% of repairs can be carried out remotely (machine setup, restarting, updates) and with the deployment of artificial intelligence and big data this percentage will grow as develop systems capable of anticipating breakdowns and implementing preventive actions.

Industry stakeholders are ready to develop KPAX in keeping with these innovations!

Currently only the proprietary solutions of manufactures allow for restarting or updating a machine without direct contact.

HP is the exception to this, by enabling KPAX Manage to access their devices via HP Smart Devices technology.

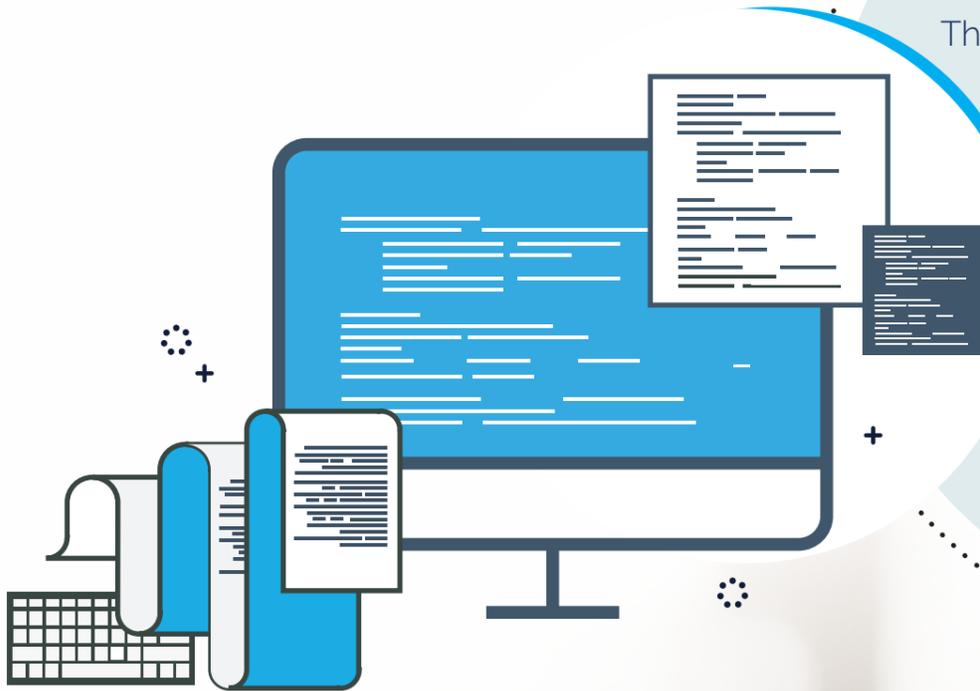
As the market evolves other manufacturers will need to rise to this challenge to stay competitive in mixed-fleet environments.



Develop new technologies for distributors and their customers

There are other ideas to help distributors to better control their profit margins. Every day, distributors are faced with huge inconsistencies in profitability from one customer to another.

If they work with a cost per page, it's easy to see that this cost will be higher for the printed poster of a communications agency than for a letter printed by a secretary.



The insights from KPAX Manage's dashboards are becoming increasingly sophisticated. The solution's objective, which is to reinvent itself constantly to cater for all needs, leads us to seriously consider the question of inking rates. One of the development possibilities is the implementation of a solution to identify the inking rate of each customer, and to provide the distributor with the elements necessary to adapt their contracts and rates.



HOW TO CREATE ADDED VALUE AND OPTIMISE YOUR SERVICES?



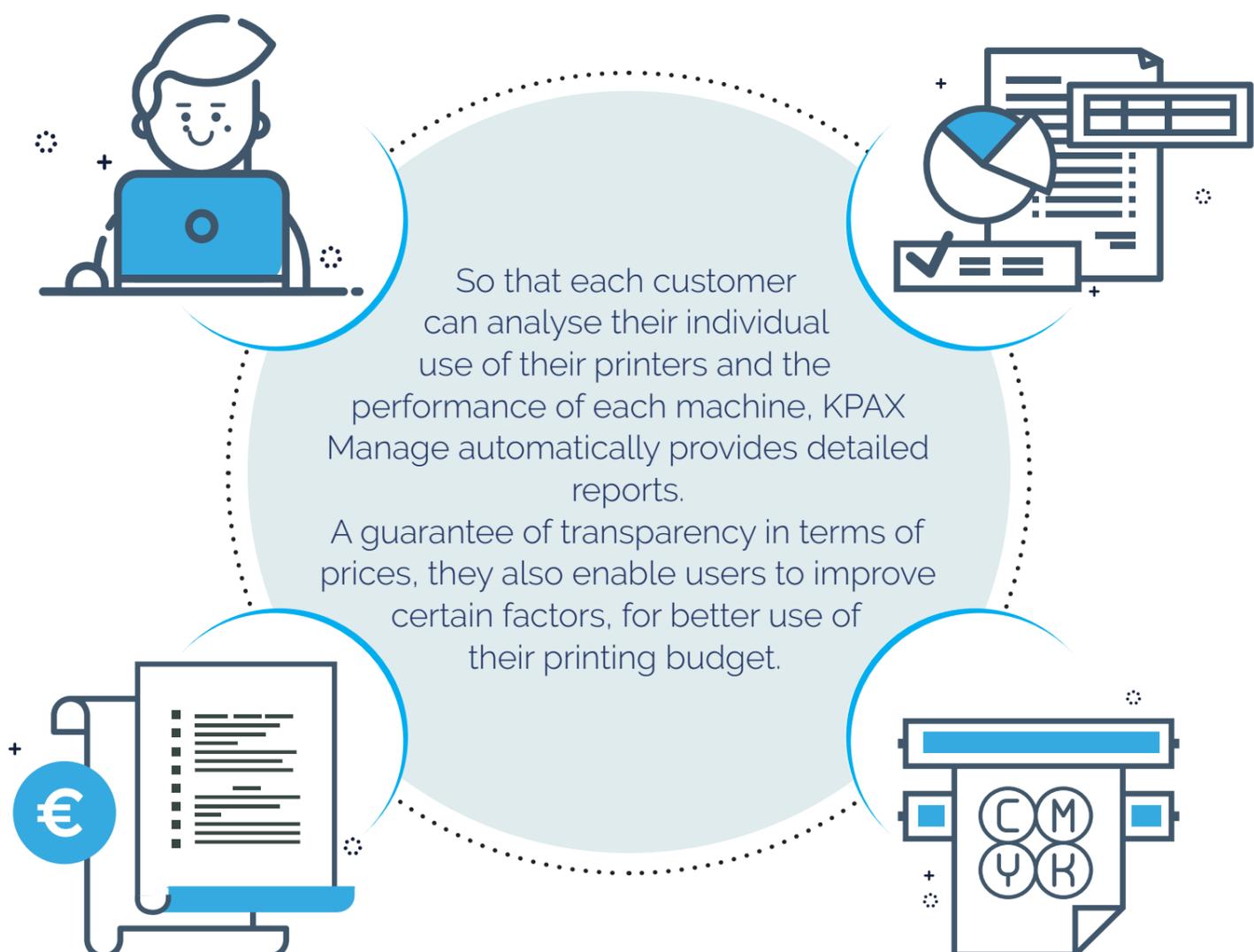
➤ Provide customers with maximum visibility of their costs

On average, only 3% of companies admit to having satisfactory information on the cost of their printing. 7 companies in every 10 are not equipped with tools enabling them to analyse their current printing fleet, their habits and their usual consumption: with this logic, they are not equipped to anticipate their expenses and to have a clear idea of what their printers cost them (in terms of consumables, but also in terms of repairs and machine replacement).

And yet, for every euro spent on printing, another €10 is spent on additional charges such as repairs, consumables or purchasing new equipment. Printers are a preoccupation for everyone, because help desk services list copy related topics as the number two reason for customer calls.



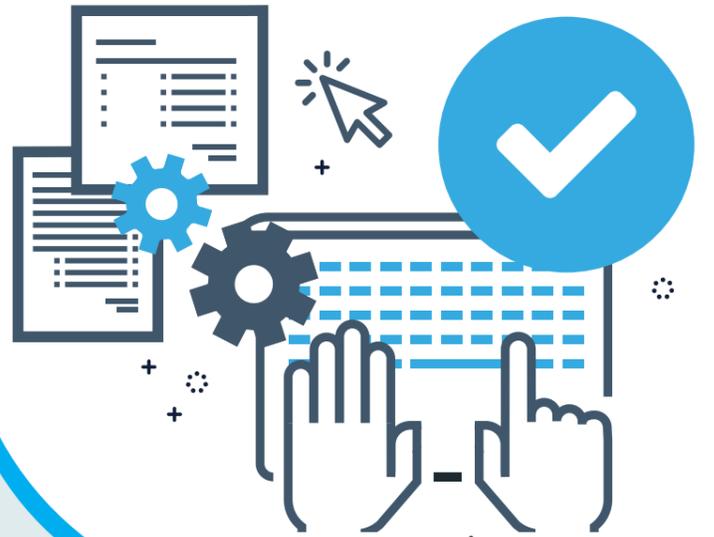
Naturally enough, many companies have implemented initiatives to rationalise the quantity of paper printed, to reduce physical printing to the strict necessity, with the aim of better managing their budgets and taking a more ecological stand. However, company managers tend to agree that there is a general lack of clarity around the costs associated with printers. They require clear and accessible tools to enable them to plan better and to find the best solutions to reduce costs (focusing their efforts on the more sensitive workstations, where they have identified a lot of unnecessary printing for example).



➤ Respond to incidents rapidly

Companies cannot afford to lose time due to a printer breakdown. A fault in the print fleet paralyses the department in question, will slow down certain employees, complicate processes and generate additional stress among the teams. To avoid all of these issues, we logically look for more reliable machines, but the breakdowns continue and they can occur at particularly stressful times.

Detecting, understanding and repairing problems is made easy with KPAX Manage. From a distance the technician can fully understand the origin of the breakdown through the colour code which is automatically sent to their interface. They can make the most appropriate decision: intervene remotely if possible, go to the customer's premises with the correct parts if necessary. The customer's satisfaction should be increased as they no longer endure breakdowns which are resolved quickly without much effort on their behalf



A device breaks down and a whole list of documents gets stuck: often, the printing fleet is not suited to the needs of the company, creating uncomfortable situations or blockages. Frequently, the problems come simply from a lack of machine maintenance, resulting in malfunctions which are rare in printers that are used correctly, updated regularly and inspected sufficiently.

When a machine stops working, the problem needs to be solved quickly. In the office, there may not be time to contact the maintenance department to explain the problem – quite apart from the fact that it is sometimes difficult to provide satisfactory answers to the technician's questions over the telephone. All in all, machine malfunctions are managed too slowly, disadvantaging companies which are therefore very receptive to the idea of new maintenance processes.

➤ Organise the delivery of consumables to reassure the customer and limit stocks

The fear of running out conditions our behaviour: not having the cartridge that the printer is requesting in the stock cupboard just when you must produce important documents; this fear is in many minds and leads to the unproductive behaviour which we mentioned earlier (overstocking, unnecessary frequent deliveries). Between the need to maintain a healthy cash flow by limiting deliveries and the desire to satisfy a customer who mustn't get stressed by the risk of running out, how can a distributor develop their business? The need for a solution which automates supply appears as a key challenge. An issue which the designers of KPAX Manage have understood and for which they have imagined specific functions.

The supply of consumables is completely automated for distributors using KPAX Manage. This is an important sales argument for customers: they know that they will not run out of supplies as the system triggers alerts at the right moment, based on level indicators. The service provider has more control over their cash flow by eliminating "comfort" deliveries, while satisfying their customers who cannot accept to run out of supplies.

At the same time, the reports allow for a detailed analysis of level variations, as well as the changes of consumables.

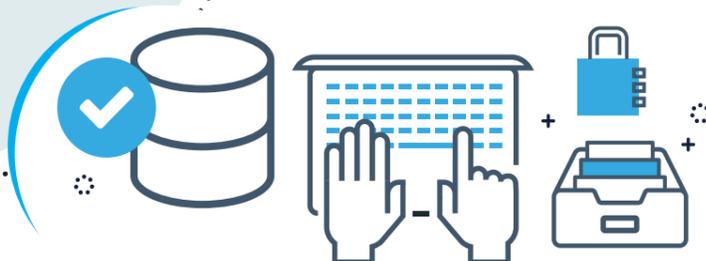


➤ Simplify and interpret the raw data so that everyone can understand and manage their fleet

In the age of Big Data, we are being overwhelmed by information. Modern technology enables us to gather huge quantities of data relating to printers, their use, consumable changes, updates and any defects. And yet, companies are often not interested in this information because they don't have time to study it or may simply not have the IT skills required to interpret it correctly and to be able to use it.

Through its different offers, KPAX Manage provides their customers with partial or complete control over their environment with the tools available to them. Freedom over their configurations provides them with the possibility to focus on the configurations that they need to understand, and for them to receive information on these elements in the interfaces designed specifically with the aim of being legible. At the same time, the KPAX Manage "WIKI" community data base provides each stakeholder with 24h access to the technical information concerning their machine.

The KPAX Manage Wiki centralises key information from around 500 different printer models. All customers can benefit from this information which is freely accessible, understandable and presented in such a way as to help them to optimise their current printing fleet. All the available content has been validated upstream by the KPAX Manage teams to guarantee its trustworthiness and clarity. Each customer has at their fingertips the necessary resources for identifying a problem of over or under-utilisation, a coverage rate or even the references of spare parts, in case of breakdown.



HOW TO DEVELOP A TOOL SIMPLY AND EFFICIENTLY?



➤ Optimise operational costs without creating new ones

To use a Fleet Management solution to improve the efficiency of the maintenance team, the solution must be easy to deploy, configure, manage and maintain.

Such a solution becomes unhelpful if it generates extra work, or worse still, if it makes the maintenance team's job more difficult. To achieve this improvement, it is important to ensure that the technologies and procedures have been tried and tested for the deployment of software agents in the end clients' systems, to improve the collection of (MIB) data on multifunction copiers and to guarantee the stability of the agents when in production.



Deployment of the agents needs to be easy,

Quick and efficient. It needs to be easily doable in just a few minutes either remotely or on-site and in a common technical environment.



A fleet management solution will constantly improve the quality of the collection of information on devices as it can always do better,

Because the new firmware on multifunction copiers and printers has an impact on the information available in MIB or simply because there are constantly new models appearing.

This is the very essence of a fleet management software solution, it is essential to ensure that a procedure is in place, that it works well and that it is updated frequently.



When an organisation such as a very small business does not have IT resources and a server,

the software agent is not in the right conditions to remain operational, there is a high risk of disconnection.

The disconnection of agents has consequences on invoicing (meter readings), on the quality of the service produced (no information on consumables and failures) and requires the intervention of a technician to reconnect the agent.

As such, distributors who deploy software agents to manage multifunction copier fleets in SMB environments see between 15% and 30% of the agents in production disconnected once a year, whatever the solution. The maintenance department must intervene, and the consequences can be serious.



Bluemega has developed the KPAX Manage Liberty hardware device. KPAX Manage Liberty is a hardware agent which, once connected to the client's network, collects information from the printing systems to send data to the KPAX Manage server (SaaS or On-Site).

This autonomous electronic device avoids the need for installing software (agent or DCA) on the client infrastructure, it also avoids constraints relating to installation, configuration and securing a mini PC such as Raspberry Pi: KPAX Manage Liberty does not include an operating system and as such is not at risk from viruses;



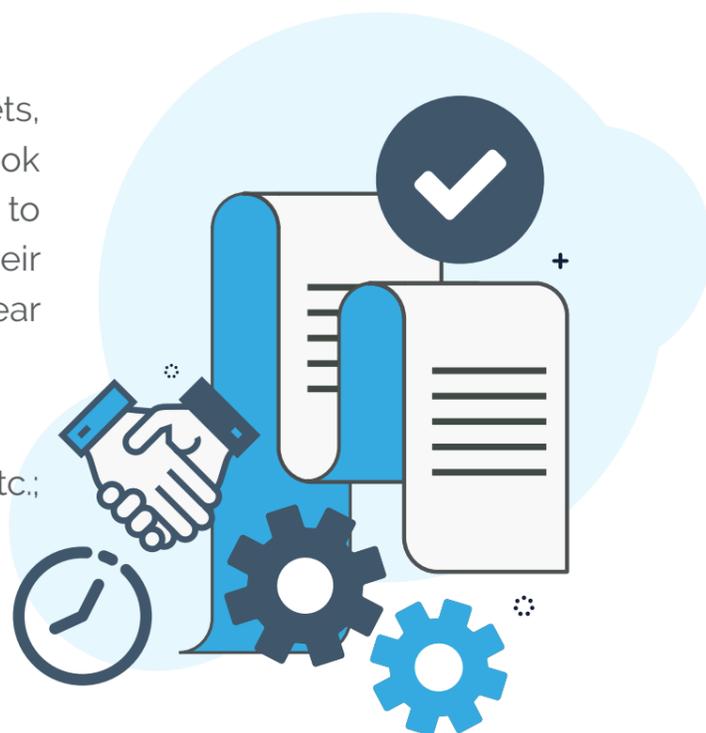
KPAX Manage Liberty is therefore safer for IT networks (no operating system = no security breaches). All the information handled by KPAX Manage Liberty is secured by the highest existing levels of encryption, similar to those used in banking or military environments. This unique and revolutionary technology is developed in-house by the Bluemega team. It simplifies the implementation and daily management of agents in poorly adapted client environments (no server, no control over workstations, lack of IT skills, Mac environment...). With KPAX Manage Liberty, the collection of our clients' printing system data is simplified.



➤ Remote deployment, the solution to all installation problems

Whenever a service provider, managing several printing fleets, launches a new solution their customers will be tempted to look to the competition if the implementation process appears to be complicated. When they delegate the maintenance of their fleet to a service provider, business managers are very clear about their expectations:

- Improved visibility of prices;
- No worry about consumable stocks, cartridge delivery, etc.;
- Reliable assistance in case of breakdown;
- Implementation with no constraints (financial, technical or time).



For example, if the customer has to wait to receive the code for their licence before using the programme, they will already start getting impatient in view of this restriction, reducing their satisfaction and leading to doubts about the quality of their intermediary. Ideally, you should choose a solution which can be installed easily, without specific IT knowledge, in no more than 10 minutes or so.

For the distributor, the remote deployment solution comes with its own advantages:

- It is not necessary to dispatch a technician; the process can be carried out remotely.
- The simplicity of the implementation reduces calls to the technical department which can thus focus on real problems

The development of KPAX Manage leans towards extremely simple deployment. In concrete terms, four key stages have been identified: once they have been executed, the data collection agent becomes operational on the customer's premises. An installation guide has been designed specifically for customers with simple explanations of the process step by step. It can be downloaded by e-mail, with no need for the intervention of a technician at any stage!



➤ After deployment, remote management

The installation of a remote data collection agent is the first essential step towards designing a simple and effective solution for the distributors of printers and their customers. However, what comes next is the huge challenge: as far as possible, the idea is to simplify all interventions so that the most commonplace can be carried out remotely, to reduce the costs related to technician call-outs.

Remote administration, like deployment without physical intervention, is a good argument for both parties (customer and service provider):

- The customer appreciates the fact that their problem is solved quickly without requiring an actual appointment with a technician.
- By eliminating unnecessary call-outs, the service provider can focus on their core activity, i.e. replacing parts and carrying out complex repairs.

All the data collection agents operating with KPAX Manage can be configured remotely. Several processes which used to require the presence of a professional can now be carried out remotely: changes to IP address ranges, data collection planning or technical configuration (wait time or number of simultaneous connections). Thanks to improved general supervision, we can reduce certain breakdown risks. Moreover, maintenance is simplified, in case of system breakdowns the problem will be sorted out quickly and efficiently. The administration is in no way intrusive, it is fully transparent, allowing for a healthy and productive relationship between the distributor and their contacts.



➤ Simplicity and efficiency, without sacrificing security

The management of a printing fleet must comply with certain productivity targets. In order for distributors to protect their profit margins, the deployment of simple, accessible and innovative solutions such as KPAX Manage is an excellent opportunity and is profitable for the customers too. However, this development towards cost reduction, better breakdown management and the optimisation of consumable deliveries mustn't overshadow the imperative need for security.

Over half of all employees need to scan or print confidential documents. Security breaches can cause a company to lose a lot of money, put them in a difficult situation or even endanger their activity. Just one printer can open the door to hackers, who could then infiltrate the network causing all sorts of problems.

Finally, KPAX Manage doesn't focus solely on these two major selling points: simplicity and efficiency. It is also important to secure the process. For this reason, all data collected is scrambled by Microsoft cryptography technologies.

While 59% of businesses are aware of the importance of securing their printing infrastructure, 40% of top managers prefer to secure their IT systems and equipment more globally without focusing on their printing processes more specifically. However, it's important to remember that one single multipurpose printer can have over 200 setup and security parameters.

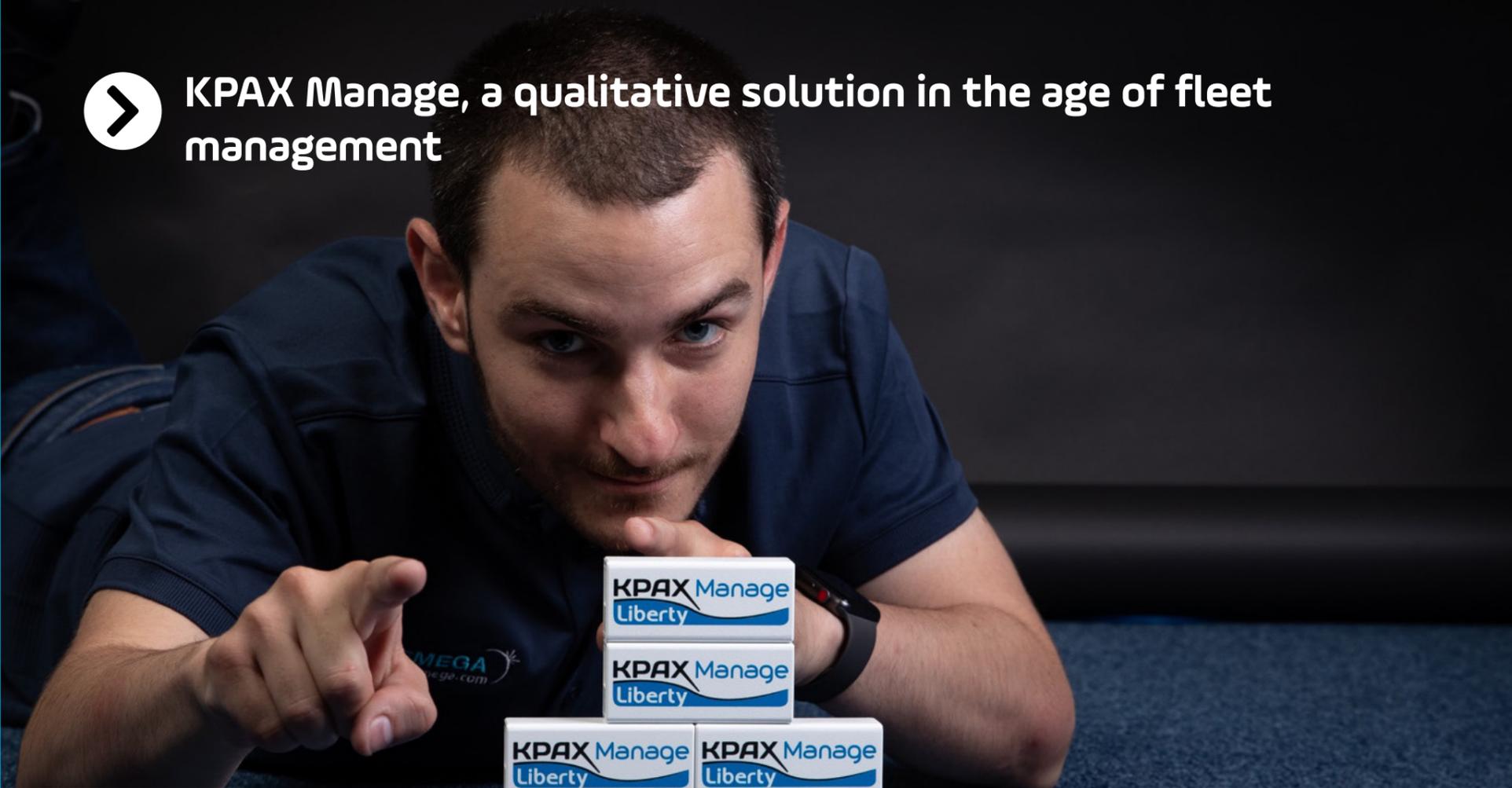


**KPAX MANAGE,
A QUALITATIVE SOLUTION
IN THE AGE OF FLEET
MANAGEMENT**





KPAX Manage, a qualitative solution in the age of fleet management



There is a similar trend in all companies: professionals wish to focus on their core activity. They are open to any reasonable means of saving time on tasks in which they have no added value, explaining the rising popularity of fleet management. Whether it's a fleet of computers, cars or printers, the expectations are the same: a need to know what each investment really costs, to control budgets, and to rely on a professional capable of solving all problems and avoiding the breakdowns that paralyse the business (breakdowns to cars, printers or computers are issues that all managers would be happy to do without!).

This management outsourcing, also called "fleet management", fulfils the objectives of simplification. Industry stakeholders must be flexible, providing solutions that really simplifying the daily operations of their customers. When you look at the point of view of the distributors of printers and copiers, managing numerous multi-brand fleets, you can see how the implementation of services adapted to requirements is essential for the development of revenue as the customer portfolio will stagnate or diminish if the offer does not correspond to demand.

However, in this highly competitive market where the price per page needs to be constantly reduced, distributors still need to protect their margins, to satisfy their customers without endangering their own situations.

Focusing on solving most problems remotely, automating the collection of data on ink levels and printed page quality, and with easy to install services accessible to all customers, KPAX Manage ticks all of these boxes. This scalable solution, which is already at the cutting edge of innovation, is continuously studied by passionate designers, with the aim of continuing these improvements, towards the use of big data and artificial intelligence. Big ambitions for a system which will undisputedly change the lives of printer distributors.



KPAX Manage

<http://www.kpax-manage.com/eng/>