Vendor Profile

MPS Monitor Offers Value Beyond Traditional Device Management with Cloud-Native Architecture and Microsoft Integration

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IDC OPINION

MPS Monitor is a device and fleet management provider that is expanding its global presence while looking to drive innovation and differentiation through its product platform. IDC sees:

- MPS Monitor as a strategic player in the market, providing added value to customers and channel partners alike with a robust solution that offers capabilities beyond traditional device management platforms.
- With its cloud-based architecture, vendor-agnostic approach, security focus, and direct integration with HP Inc.'s Smart Device Services (SDS) and Microsoft Universal Print (UP), MPS Monitor is uniquely positioned to help meet the evolving needs of the hybrid workforce.

IN THIS VENDOR PROFILE

This IDC Vendor Profile examines MPS Monitor, a provider of device management solutions designed to help service providers and organizations remotely monitor and manage the overall print fleet. This document provides an overview of important characteristics of the vendor including company strategy, partnerships, go-to-market (GTM) plans, product portfolio, and future road map. The document also looks at the device and print management market, focusing on the competitive landscape and MPS Monitor's positioning in the overall market.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Company Overview

MPS Monitor was founded in Milan in 2010 by a group of IT professionals with experience in office copying and printing. Headquartered in Italy, the company found success in Europe and has recently broadened its market coverage by opening two more offices: one in the United States and one in Asia. The company articulates a vision based on "building from scratch the best software platform for monitoring and managing print devices and managed print services (MPS)." MPS Monitor not only is the name of the company but also serves as the name of the firm's flagship product. Sold through hardcopy OEMs and indirect channel partners, MPS Monitor works closely with office equipment dealers, MPS providers, and aftermarket supplies resellers primarily in the United States and Western Europe. More recently, MPS Monitor has made strategic investments to re-architect and redesign its technology platform as part of a broader effort to grow market penetration and expand geographic coverage into areas such as Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

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While it has been in the market for quite some time, MPS Monitor has gained significant traction and penetration in recent years, fueled by ongoing market expansion and the continued migration of MPS. Like many independent software vendors (ISVs) in the device and print management space, MPS Monitor has benefited from increased MPS adoption in the SMB sector. In 2020, for example, MPS Monitor reported 40% year-over-year revenue growth. From a market coverage perspective, MPS Monitor is broadly represented, with approximately 2,000 active dealers and over 45,000 registered user accounts scattered across 50+ countries worldwide. With support infrastructure located in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA); North and South America; and Asia/Pacific, MPS Monitor is currently tracking 900,000 print devices producing 28 billion pages per year.

Product Offering

MPS Monitor 2.0 is the latest version of the company's flagship product. Designed from the beginning as a cloud-native solution, MPS Monitor is a device management platform that enables the remote monitoring and management of printers and MFPs. The software platform is leveraged by dealers for billing, meter reading, automated supplies fulfillment, and other fleet management processes. From the beginning, MPS Monitor sought to develop a fully cloud-based software-as-a-service (SaaS) remote fleet monitoring platform to aid dealers and MPS providers worldwide, with a focus on improving service levels, optimizing dealer operations, reducing costs, and improving overall service margins.

Core capabilities and features of the platform include:

- Remote monitoring and data collection from printing devices of any brand and model
- Automated meter reading
- Detection of consumables levels, including alert management and reporting of low supplies
- Automated management of supply ordering and fulfillment processes for toner and other consumables
- Management of cost-per-page (CPP) and toner-based billing contracts
- Automatic provision of contract dashboards, closing balances, timetables, and other reporting
- Data integration via API with external back-end systems, such as service and ticketing systems, external databases, ERP platforms, and CRM systems

Version 2.0 of MPS Monitor adds to the core functionality through a range of innovative features designed to help dealers and MPS providers keep pace with evolving market needs. Key enhancements include:

- An intuitive and updated user interface that provides guided navigation, instruction, and video tutorials for every function
- Advanced, robust multiplatform Data Collection Agent (DCA) technology, with versions for all main server and client platforms (Windows, Mac, Linux, and Raspberry) and embedded OEM brands (HP Inc., Lexmark, Samsung, and Kyocera)
- Unique DCA clustering technology providing full redundancy and maximum reliability to the data collection process
- Embedded analytics and predictive supplies intelligence that provides insight on data collected and enables dealers/MPS providers to forecast usage, plan operations, and optimize resources

- Integration with HP Smart Devices Services 2.0 that allows HP Inc.'s partners to remotely diagnose and fix many hardware problems without any onsite intervention
- Integration with Microsoft Universal Print that allows customers with legacy print devices to connect directly into Microsoft's recently introduced cloud-based print management service

Company Strategy

MPS Monitor competes primarily with device management solutions providers including PrintFleet and Print Audit (both owned by ECI). A decade ago, PrintFleet and Print Audit did not have a strong presence in Europe, which helped drive early growth for MPS Monitor at the outset. Today, MPS Monitor has carved out a strong position in the device management space, thanks to the value-added capabilities of its solution. MPS Monitor is looking to increase market penetration through global expansion and continued product innovation.

MPS Monitor is differentiated from other device management solutions in a variety of ways, but the primary value proposition is seen in four key areas explained in the sections that follow.

Cloud-Native Architecture

As previously mentioned, MPS Monitor was built from the ground up as a cloud-based solution. In contrast, most competitive device and print management solutions were initially designed for on-premises deployment, typically requiring a dedicated server. While competitors are working to migrate from an on-premises architecture to a cloud-based approach, MPS Monitor's cloud-native architecture provides the firm with some distinct advantages in terms of driving feature deployment and supporting various integration efforts.

Most hardcopy vendors and ISVs are working hard to push print and device management architecture to the cloud, and for good reason. Customers are showing increased interest in cloud-based printing, not only to reduce costs but also to lessen the burden on IT and move to a more flexible, predictable billing model. While cloud migration was already well underway, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a dramatic impact on the structure of the workforce, leading to more remote employees and the need to create stable and secure work-from-home (WFH) environments. Enabling a more secure print solution for the newly emerging hybrid workforce will be critical for businesses of all sizes.

Meanwhile, technology suppliers view the cloud as a key enabler for driving greater adoption of print and device management through the print-as-a-service model, particularly for smaller businesses with limited IT resources and budgets. MPS Monitor is sold as a service based on a monthly, quarterly, semiannual, or annual subscription. Because it is sold under a pay-per-use model, MPS Monitor requires no up-front investment in hardware or software licenses. The cloud provisioning and deployment model means that customers can take a "try before you buy" approach, requesting a demo that can be activated in minutes with just a simple registration.

Vendor-Agnostic Solution

MPS Monitor is a vendor-agnostic solution, meaning it can be used to monitor and manage devices from multiple manufacturers. Indeed, the firm has established partnerships with virtually every major printing equipment supplier. The need to support multivendor print fleets has long been an important aspect for MPS providers. For most organizations, the existing print fleet is complex and has grown organically over time to include multiple brands and a mix of devices. This issue, however, is becoming increasingly important as customers look to move print infrastructure to the cloud. Most legacy print

hardware is not cloud ready, which means those devices are unable to connect directly to a cloud-based print management system without something in between to facilitate the connection.

While hardcopy OEMs are committed to bringing new cloud-ready printers and MFPs to market, it will likely be too costly and disruptive for many businesses to replace all their legacy print devices with new hardware. Instead, customers will need to deploy some type of on-premises connector or look to third-party providers such as MPS Monitor to help facilitate the connection between new cloud-based offerings and legacy printing hardware. The work MPS Monitor is doing to integrate directly with Microsoft Universal Print is one example (see the Partnerships and Integration section for more details).

Security

MPS Monitor takes a holistic approach to security that starts with its advanced, multiplatform Data Collection Agent and extends through its flexible cloud infrastructure. MPS Monitor supports all main server and client platforms (Windows, Mac, Linux, and Raspberry) as well as most printer OEM embedded systems. Foundationally, the MPS Monitor platform is built on a security strategy that includes ISO 27001 and GDPR compliance and extends through features such as secure authentication, SSO, and printer policy management.

With over 200,000 DCAs installed worldwide, MPS Monitor stresses the importance of providing a platform that not only enables strong cybersecurity protection but also ensures maximum confidentiality, integrity, and availability of customer/client data. This latter point is a major stickler for dealers when it comes to the cloud: most understand the benefits of migrating to cloud-based solutions but are wary of exposing sensitive customer data to bad actors or competitors. MPS Monitor can be deployed in a hybrid cloud environment so that only data collected from printers is stored in the MPS Monitor Cloud Database, while sensitive and business-critical data is stored locally inside the subscribers' own network.

Partnerships and Integration

Like most ISVs, MPS Monitor has partnered with a variety of technology companies to further extend the value of its solution, providing embedded connectivity or direct integration with key applications and systems in the document solutions space. While much of its partnership activity is well known, certain areas may come as a surprise to some companies that follow the office printing market. For example, MPS Monitor has worked with HP Inc. to enable support for its printers and MFPs, but the relationship goes well beyond the typical platform integration.

In 2016, HP Inc. introduced Smart Device Services, an umbrella term for a set of cloud-based tools and embedded technologies designed to improve the serviceability of its machines. Utilizing device sensors, analytics, and remote monitoring capabilities, SDS provides a remote platform to diagnose, predict, and resolve service issues to minimize downtime for the customer and reduce service costs for channel partners. SDS effectively allows HP Inc.'s channel partners to offer advanced service capabilities such as the ability to diagnose before dispatching a service tech, on-demand service training, remote supplies management, collecting and billing for missing printers, and remote remediation.

MPS Monitor also has a strong working relationship with Microsoft. MPS Monitor 2.0 uses Microsoft Power BI technology as its core business intelligence (BI) platform, using analytics to create sophisticated usage reports and interactive visualizations to make faster and more effective business

decisions. More recently, MPS Monitor announced direct connectivity with Microsoft Universal Print, the cloud-based print platform that runs in the Microsoft Azure cloud and is designed to provide users with a convenient cloud-based printing experience, eliminating the need for on-premises print servers.

Through this integration, dealers and MPS providers can deploy Microsoft Universal Print with the added ability to manage the entire print fleet from a single platform. Customers that have already deployed MPS Monitor can use it to directly activate all Universal Print functions for their clients including print policies, print queues, and pull printing. Service providers can leverage MPS Monitor to enable automatic device registration while providing their Microsoft 365 customers with remote monitoring and management, user management, and job tracking, all from a single, integrated SaaS-based offering.

MPS Monitor has also worked to provide direct integration for its solution with the various business platforms and ERP systems that office equipment dealers use to run their businesses. Currently, MPS Monitor integrates directly with e-automate and FORZA in the U.S. market, with all three Asolvi platforms (Evatic, Vantage Online, and 2Serv) in the EU, and with Jim2 in Australia, plus several other local platforms.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

The document solutions market (which includes device management, print management, and enterprise output management) is forecast to grow to $1.86 billion in 2024 at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 0.5% for 2019–2024 (see *Worldwide and U.S. Document Solutions Software Forecast, 2020–2024,* IDC #US45237320, June 2020). Specifically, the device management software subsegment where MPS Monitor fits is forecast to reach $124.4 million by 2024, representing a CAGR of 0.2% over the forecast period. Today, device management software is typically sold as part of a bundled solution, which means that revenue driven from device management as a standalone solution will be relatively flat going forward.

Nevertheless, IDC views the functions of device management as critically important because these features enable organizations to gain greater control of hardcopy output infrastructure and better visibility into print volume and print spend. Overall, device management in the United States is projected to decline slightly over the forecast period, with growth tied to MPS engagements and print management suite solutions. The highest growth is anticipated from the print management subsegment, through cloud deployments and in regions outside of the United States. These trends signal continued growth opportunities for MPS Monitor, given its cloud-native architecture and the work it is doing with formidable partners such as HP Inc. and Microsoft.

It is also important to consider the potential impact that the COVID-19 pandemic might have on the market for device and print management solutions. IDC fully expects to see customers migrate more aggressively to cloud-based tools and infrastructure to further reduce costs and drive more proactive policies for remote monitoring and management. These trends could be further solidified as organizations are forced to create better management and security policies for remote employees and to mitigate longer-term risks associated with the need for onsite service personnel. Once again, MPS Monitor is uniquely positioned to take advantage of these trends as customers continue to look to move print and print infrastructure to the cloud.

ESSENTIAL GUIDANCE

IDC recommends that organizations evaluate the current state of their printing environment and look to make transformative technology investments that can address both traditional and digital output. A focus on driving print output and document workflow maturity can enhance and increase worker productivity and collaboration. The utilization of device and print management software improves security of document workflows, reduces costs, and increases printing visibility. Businesses should also continue to follow the shift to 3rd Platform technologies (cloud, mobile, data analytics, and social media) as this is causing significant disruption in the office workplace. IDC recommends that organizations seek out solutions for managing devices, output, and secure access to information with a focus on improving productivity and mobility in the workplace.

Advice for MPS Monitor

- As MPS Monitor expands integrations with additional ERP platforms and print management systems, it is critical to educate dealers on the importance of these value-added capabilities. MPS Monitor needs to support its channel with ample education and training, so partners can fully leverage new capabilities and expand market opportunities.
- As it looks to expand its global presence, MPS Monitor should look to raise its brand awareness and take advantage of its unique position in the market, bolstered by its key partnerships with HP Inc. and Microsoft.

LEARN MORE

Related Research

- *IDC MaturityScape Benchmark: Print and Document Management 3.0 in the United States, 2021* (IDC #US45912520, December 2020)
- *Managing Print Security for the Hybrid Workforce* (IDC #US47100920, December 2020)
- *Worldwide and U.S. Document Solutions Software Forecast, 2020-2024* (IDC #US45237320, June 2020)
- *Worldwide and U.S. Device and Print Management Market Shares, 2019: Shift to Cloud Continues to Drive Growth* (IDC #US45237520, June 2020)

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