Reducing waste and improving accuracy in line with GDPR principles with Toshiba TEC Duplex Thermal Printers.

River Island invest in Duplex Thermal Technology to drive faster processing speeds, reduce waste and make their operation fit for the future.

Before working with Duplex Thermal Printers, the team at River Island used two different printers at each workstation: a simplex direct thermal printer for the shipping labels and laser printer for despatch notes. This required three different consumables: direct thermal shipping labels for the thermal printer, despatch note paper with integrated return labels and laser toner cartridges to print them through the laser printer. There was also the waste from the thermal label backer to remove. The laser printers were becoming increasingly unreliable, causing downtime and the purchase, storage and distribution of all the consumables was time consuming.

The laser printers were also bulky with running costs that were much higher due to the cost of toner cartridges and the amount of toner that is required to print quality barcodes. In addition to excessive power consumption, the high frequency of having to change toner cartridges and load despatch notes into infeed trays also resulted in wear and tear and reliability issues with the printers.

“IT was a great opportunity for us to simplify this process, have fewer touches, deliver faster processing speeds and reduce waste. What’s more, we could gain further efficiencies using the fastship consumable by not enclosing paperwork with the order.”

Amanda Gibson at DuplexThermalPrinters.com
As an agile and ambitious enterprise, River Island wanted to make their operation fit for the future.

“The DB-EA4d has a small footprint only 24cm x 20cm, this frees up space on the workstation and having just one consumable to reload makes it user-friendly for staff and super quick and easy to maintain. The duplex labels are in fanfolded stacks of 750 at the back of the printer, which means less frequent media changes and less manual handling. In this particular case it resulted in 66% less purchasing, storage and distribution of consumables.”

Julian Pickford, Director at DuplexThermalPrinters.com

The Toshiba DB-EA4D printers are compact, rugged and robust devices designed to provide a low-cost, easy to manage and environmentally friendly solution. They offer a reliable, efficient and easy-to-use alternative to traditional single-sided printers, being faster and more environmentally friendly than laser printers using toner cartridges. The duplex thermal printer simultaneously prints on both sides of a two sided label material at speeds of up to six inches per second, which dramatically reduces printing time.

The ‘fast-ship’ consumable was custom designed by the team at DuplexThermalPrinters for River Island. It provides a shipping label and a tear bar to allow the customer to peel back and reveal their returns note including a Royal Mail returns label with adhesive, still maintaining a simple and convenient customer experience for returning an item. The fast-ship is an innovative label/document which can also be used for gift applications and to cross-sell and upsell on additional products or services.

“The fast-ship design is user friendly and the staff found it easy to handle. It also eliminates the risk of data ending up in the wrong place.” commented Fran Symons of River Island.

The new print solution has reduced errors and improved accuracy, eliminating the risk of mismatching returns note with shipping labels in line with GDPR principles. The auto feed functionality of the printer also makes it quick and easy to reload.

Thanks to the agile and dedicated IT Scrum team efforts with integration at River Island and after carrying out trials with the new printers, they reported immediate and significant improvements:

- The despatch note became a returns note and reduced to a third of its original size
- Lower overhead costs by using one printer instead of two
- Less manual handling and print processing time was halved

This was a crucial boost to their operation and the decision was made to go live with the solution at the start of November 2019 ready for the Black Friday sales and ahead of the Christmas shopping season. In addition to operational efficiencies, this has also had a significant environmental impact on their operation.

“This is the first time we have had all the workstation printers fully operational through peak. The laser printers were prone to jamming and other faults that took them temporarily out of service. Staff loved the simplicity of the Toshiba printer.”

Fran Symons of River Island

“Work station up time was 100%
Footprint is small
User friendly for staff, super easy to reload
No risk of data ending up in the wrong place
Really customer friendly in terms of removal of the original data
Covering the middle ground between paperless and a full despatch note”

About Paperuk.com

Paperuk.com is a leading supplier of Duplex Thermal Print Solutions and the design and supply of despatch/return documents, carrier labels and gift message solutions to many of the UK’s most successful multi-channel retailers including John Lewis and ASOS.

They provide innovative, trusted print solutions that help businesses improve their workplace performance, save time and money and enhance the customer experience of their brand.

Their specialist division www.duplexthermalprinters.com now offers Duplex Thermal Print Solutions specifically to ecommerce businesses and fulfilment operations in the Retail Sector. Paperuk.com prides itself on its innovation and expertise in print and label solutions.

Founded in 1985, the parent company Pioneer Print Solutions celebrates 35 years in business and continues to achieve year on year profitable growth.