



CASE STUDY

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.

DuplexThermalPrinters.com, a division of PaperUK.com, are the UK's number one provider of end to end duplex thermal print and label solutions for fulfilment and ship from store and have earned a strong reputation as a business innovator. With over 20 years experience of designing and implementing print and label solutions for various applications in the retail sector, the team recognised how effective duplex thermal printer solutions could be in an ecommerce operation and created a specialist division and website: www.duplexthermalprinters.com.

On the back of their success with shoe retailer Schuh, they approached River Island with a duplex thermal proposal in 2019 which would deliver faster processing speeds, reduce their waste and help them work more efficiently.

River Island is a successful omnichannel retailer with a DC based in Milton Keynes fulfilling online orders across more than 70 packing benches. The 40,000 square metre DC split between 2 units is located on 23 acres at Magna Park, fulfilling on average over 125,000 online orders per week and growing.

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.



CUSTOMER PROFILE

RIVER ISLAND

SPREADING THE JOY OF *Fashion* SINCE 1988

RIVER ISLAND IS A RETAILING SUCCESS STORY WITH OVER 350 STORES IN THE UK, IRELAND, ASIA, EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST AND A DISTRIBUTION FACILITY OF OVER 40,000 SQM.

GOALS

- Faster fulfilment
- Streamline processes
- Reduce printer downtime at workstations
- Improve accuracy in line with GDPR principles
- Reduce waste

CHALLENGE

Having a robust and reliable print and labelling solution in order fulfilment that keeps pace with their operational demands and is in line with brand attributes is critical to their workplace performance and customer experience.

SOLUTION

A Duplex Thermal Print Solution using Toshiba DB-EA4D printers and a duplex fastship consumable.

BUSINESS OUTCOME

- Print processing speed halved
- Lower operating costs from using 1 printer instead of 2
- 66% less purchasing, storage and distribution of consumables
- Workstation uptime was 100%
- Improved accuracy by eliminating the risk of mismatching returns note with shipping label in line with GDPR principles
- Reduced waste by now using 1 consumable instead of 3



“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

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document solutions for multi-channel retailers

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.

- 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

“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

“The solution recommended to us by DuplexThermalPrinters.com has helped us cover the middle ground between going paperless and the full despatch note” observed Fran Symons, River Island. *“We wanted to reduce waste and still provide a convenient returns experience and the fastship allowed us to achieve that.”*

“This is a versatile high-performance printer that is affordable but most importantly is very reliable in mission critical operations” explains Amanda Gibson at DuplexThermalPrinters.com. *“It is a tried and tested solution which delivers low running costs and has excellent environmental credentials. To hear that workstation uptime was 100% at River Island as a result of our solution, was very rewarding.”*

DuplexThermalPrinters.com offer a free one-month trial on a duplex thermal printer with labels, offering a one stop solution from consumable design to printer hardware, label supply, software, integration and support maintenance. Lease options also available.

TOSHIBA

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.

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