



Case Study: Leading Utility Company

Ricoh deploys intelligent lockers to ease IT burden and expedite employee onboarding for a Fortune 500 utility company

About our customer

This public utility company employs about 17,000 people worldwide and is a leading energy provider and holding company in North America. Generating and distributing electric and natural gas, their networks serve over 40 million consumers. While Ricoh has provided many types of services and solutions over a decade of partnership, this case study looks at the benefits of smart lockers as well as a recent implementation of how the company worked with us to deploy intelligent IT and vendor lockers and streamline IT operations.

Challenge

- Slow employee laptop onboarding process
- Hard to maintain accountability for IT assets and supplies
- Access to necessary supplies was difficult for employees
- Remote and hybrid work environments present difficulties for mail and parcel deliveries

With the uptick in remote and hybrid workers, IT resources were limited — and having to support six separate campuses from one location added a level of complexity to the IT support equation. As such, the IT department struggled with quickly onboarding new employees with laptops and equipment, such as power cords, keyboards, headsets, and other IT supplies. Often, it would take two weeks or longer to receive the items because IT was bogged down in processes, emails, tracking, answering ServiceNow inbound tickets, and the overall coordination of the supplies. The combination was time-consuming, and it became apparent that these processes should be automated.

Similarly, employees who occasionally came into the office needed a central location to pick up their mail or packages. Ricoh was already ingrained in many aspects of managed services and technology solutions, so the utility company reached out to the Ricoh team for a solution.

Solution

- Low/no-touch intelligent IT and vending lockers
- Apex Trajectory cloud software for lockers
- Workflows and APIs connecting the lockers, support and inventory applications
- 40 Ricoh FTEs for Fulfillment Services and Managed Services
- Change management consulting, including branding, communication and website

The Ricoh team worked closely with the utility company to develop an overall, end-to-end plan for installing minimal/no-touch lockers for IT devices and supplies, including stocking and tracking inventory, support, budgeting, billing, and change management. The initial rollout included three locations, with the other three locations as part of the next phase.

Creating a streamlined workflow was critical to success. For the intelligent IT lockers, once the order is placed online, users select a method of obtaining a laptop at the locker device. The lockers are pre-stocked and inventory is managed and monitored by the Ricoh Service Team utilizing the Apex Trajectory cloud software. A one-time user code is issued to the requestor via email, and they key in the code at the device and the appropriate locker door will open so the employee can securely retrieve the assigned laptop.

For the vending lockers, a user walks up to the device and selects the items, using their badge as authentication. The supplies are dispensed and a flat data file is sent to billing for ingestion and chargeback within SAP. Supplies in the device are under the threshold that requires a manager's approval.

For both types of lockers, API data exchange connects with the ServiceNow support tickets and SAP for cost allocation and inventory — more benefits of smart lockers.

Once the lockers were deployed, the Ricoh team led an organizational change management effort, including determining the stakeholders, communications, locations, branding, collateral, Q&A, videos, website, tech support, demos, training, surveys, support, documentation, and repackaging deliverables.

“It’s been great working with the Ricoh team. They are onsite, knowledgeable, and had the foresight to implement cloud-based, intelligent lockers that help us drive efficiency.”

— Director of IT, Public Utility Company



Results

- Employee onboarding time cut by 80% with easy access to IT supplies
- Accountability for all IT assets with inventory reporting and tracking
- Frees the company's IT team to focus on higher-value projects due to automation
- Workflow is integrated with reporting

The change management activities led to a smooth transition for employees. The IT department is no longer burdened with tedious logistics and can focus more on value-added and forward-looking projects. The smart lockers seamlessly connect with other applications for a simplified, automated workflow, and reporting and audits are expedited.

New employees now get their laptops and supplies within the first two days instead of two weeks, cutting the cycle time down by 80%. All employees can easily and quickly access supplies from the vending lockers immediately. And remote and hybrid employees can conveniently pick up mail or parcels when they are in the office.

“We’ve had great feedback from employees and the IT team. As a company, we are more efficient and can sustain growth thanks to the locker system.”

— Director of IT, Public Utility Company

“We’ve had great feedback from employees and the IT team. As a company, we are more efficient and can sustain growth thanks to the locker system,” stated the IT Director. “We’re looking forward to installing the rest of the campus’ lockers in our second phase of the project.”



To learn more about the [benefits of smart lockers](#) or watch a quick video about how to make your workspace more efficient, [click here](#).