

Saving ITF from supplier sorrows

CLIENT	International Transport Workers' Federation
SECTOR	Transportation & Logistics
ADDED VALUE	<p>Highlighted overcharges and secured refund.</p> <p>Negotiated cancellation of erroneous charges.</p> <p>Resolved historical invoice dispute.</p> <p>Improved service levels & account management.</p> <p>Independent and objective market reviews.</p>

Poor service, incredibly lengthy call-out response times and ever-increasing costs saw global union federation, ITF, at the end of its tether with its photocopy supplier. Head of Systems and ICT, Samantha A'Boe, reached out to Expense Reduction Analysts (ERA) for assistance. An in-depth project unearthed massive overcharges, which were subsequently refunded, and saw ITF transition to a new, better fit supplier with industry leading service levels and account management. The cost savings on the new contract were very much an added bonus!

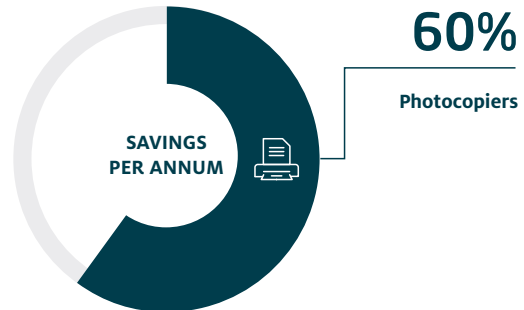
THE CLIENT

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) is a democratic, affiliate led federation recognised as the world's leading transport authority. They fight to improve working lives, connecting trade unions from 147 countries that may otherwise be isolated and helping their members to secure rights, equality and justice. They are the voice for over 18 million members working men and women across the world.

THE CHALLENGE

ERA Client Relationship Managers, David Keating and Keith McGregor, met with Samantha and two key members of the Systems team – Neil Richardson and Helen Finney. After taking time to fully understand the problems that the whole office was facing, Keith selected ERA copier specialist, Andrew Kinnear to conduct a full review.

"We'd been with our old provider for a number of years and the relationship had totally broken down – it was terrible," explained Neil. "It was, therefore, incredibly important to us that we had a reliable, co-operative and supportive supplier going forwards. None of us here have any major printer knowledge and we certainly didn't have any knowledge about the marketplace, having been with our previous supplier for such a long time. It made sense to call upon ERA's considerable experience and specialist skillset."



THE SOLUTION

Andrew's first task was to analyse the current contract, which included a mixture of new and retained copiers from a previous contract, as well as the historical data. The agreement from the incumbent supplier stated that, at the end of the rental contract, ITF would receive a rent-free period. Upon ERA's analysis, it became apparent that the current supplier had not notified the acting finance company of this 'agreement', resulting in a significant overpayment, with an outstanding invoice also due. Thanks to his existing connections with the finance company, having worked with them many times before, Andrew was able to negotiate a refund of the overpayment and a credit against the outstanding invoice. This alone saved ITF tens of thousands of pounds.



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Working with ERA has been very beneficial. There are no negatives really; they do exactly what they say on the tin and they do it with the minimum impact on our time. I'd definitely recommend their services.

NEIL RICHARDSON, IT SERVICE DESK ENGINEER, ITF

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During his review, Andrew also identified that toners and service call-outs should have been included free of charge within the rental agreements. Helen and Neil confirmed that a large invoice for ad-hoc consumables and service calls had been in dispute with the supplier for over 12 months, without sign of resolution. As a result, the incumbent now insisted upon advance payment for any service calls and the provision of consumables. This situation was having a directly negative effect on the operational copier needs of the union.

EXPERIENCED NEGOTIATOR

Andrew arranged a meeting with the supplier and, thanks to his skill and considerable experience, negotiated a full credit against the outstanding invoice. “Both Keith and Andrew were incredibly thorough and had ITF’s best interests at heart from the outset. Even before the tender process began, Andrew had worked hard to protect us and fought our corner – successfully – on a number of historical issues which resulted in significant savings,” said Neil.

Having addressed the historical technical issues, Andrew worked with key stakeholders at ITF to assess future requirements and undertook site visits to determine which solutions would be most suitable. During his site visit, Andrew noted that the current fleet was inconsistent in terms of speed, quality, reliability and age. ERA recommended upgrading the existing MFDs to faster multi-function devices with a consistent model across the fleet. Andrew also recommended installing a ‘Follow Me’ printing solution that would help reduce wastage and secure confidential documents, as well as complying with the all-important GDPR requirements.

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The whole process has been impressive. The installation went as smoothly as possible and the new supplier handed the removal and storage of the old equipment until it was collected. Obviously, we’ve got better equipment in its place. It’s been a relatively hands-off process, but the final decision was very much down to us. ERA made recommendations and offered guidance but were never pushy and it was understood that we retained full control.

NEIL RICHARDSON, IT SERVICE DESK ENGINEER, ITF

With ITF’s agreement, Andrew created a new, bespoke tender which he took out to three experienced and ethical suppliers which were known to him - all with a proven, reliable service. After presenting the results of the tenders along with his findings, ITF chose to award the contract to a local, London-based supplier. The new supplier replaced the existing machines with new Konica Minolta MFD’s which immediately improved the reliability, quality and capacity of the fleet.

ERA’s client relationships don’t end with identifying the best suppliers and saving costs. Keith and Andrew continued to work closely with ITF, ensuring the transition to the new supplier and its managed print solution was seamless, and that tendered service levels were being delivered. By undertaking quarterly audits, ERA ensures that savings are being achieved and, as its needs change, contracts are optimised where possible for the benefit of the union.

“The first quarterly review revealed that ITF had made four service call-outs in the period. Despite a Service Level Agreement of four hours, average response time from the new supplier was just one hour and 30 minutes, which the client was very happy with. During my initial review, I discovered that, under the previous provider, ITF had often had to wait days for an engineer to attend and so, this further confirmed to them that they had made the right decision.”

ANDREW KINNEAR, ERA COPIER SPECIALIST

IMPROVED SERVICE LEVELS

In addition to the improved fleet, improved service levels and the new Managed Print Solution, ERA helped to negotiate a saving of nearly 60% on previous costs. In addition, Andrew was able to secure a free rental period for the first six months, and a further 12 months free rental at the end of the contracted term. Following on from the success of this project ERA are now starting to explore other cost categories for ITF including travel and mobile communications.

