

U.S. government wasteful in printing, Lexmark says

May 14 2009, By Scott Sloan

Lexmark International released the results of a survey this week that suggests that the federal government wastes more than \$1 million daily on printing.

The study, based on the survey as well as federal and Lexmark's proprietary [printing](#) data, suggests that the government spends nearly \$1.3 billion annually on employee printing, and nearly \$450 million of that is described as wasteful.

The Lexington-based company noted that the amount of waste is more than four times the \$100 million that President Barack Obama has called upon federal agency chiefs to eliminate from their administrative budgets.

"We thought this would be a great way to show some opportunity for cost savings that wouldn't require cutting programs," said Brian Henderson, Lexmark's federal information solutions director.

The survey of 380 federal government employees, conducted in March by O'Keeffe & Company, reported that 92 percent say they don't need all the documents they print in a day.

The average federal employee will print 7,200 pages annually, the company said, and discard 35 percent of them on the same day they're printed.

Henderson said he was surprised by the relatively small disparity in printing habits between employees of different age groups. Members of Generation Y, he said, are presumed to be more conscious of the environment but printed 29 pages daily, nearly the same as the 31 printed by baby boomers.

Lexmark already has a significant presence in the [federal government](#), but the company said many agencies don't have a printing strategy, which could lead to cost savings.

He suggested two immediate cost-saving measures. The first would require employees to flash their badges on a card reader that would only then print the documents. Many documents, Lexmark has noted, are printed but never picked up. The second would be to develop digital systems for documents and processes that were previously paper-based.

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