



Solving IT together



Why NEPA?

We caught up with Mark Hayter, Senior Procurement Manager at NEUPC (pictured right), to find out a bit more about NEPA and the benefits that universities can gain by procuring through it.



How did it all start?

The National Educational Printer Agreement (NEPA) was set up over 13 years ago by North Eastern University Purchasing Consortium (NEUPC), following the recognition that institutions have similar print requirements and that if they were to aggregate the demand they would get the best possible value from an approved supply base.

“Institutions can benefit from a bespoke framework that meets their specific set of requirements.”

What are the key benefits of procuring through NEPA?

Since Professor Ian Diamond's Report (The Diamond Report), was published in 2010, significant targets have been in place for Universities to achieve a level of at least 30% of 'non-pay' spend via collaborative routes. NEPA is one such collaborative route providing a well-respected and OJEU compliant framework

The NEPA framework was designed by education and technology experts from within the HE community, meaning it is fit for purpose for the HE sector – designed by HE for HE. It is a printer-based technology framework, as opposed to a copier-based technology.

“Competitive, Designed by HE for HE, Customisable.”

Our findings suggest institutions are copying less and printing more, so it makes sense for institutions to use printing devices rather than a copying device to avoid paying for features such as binding, stapling etc when not required on all devices. This points to the need for a framework designed specifically for printer devices and managed print services.

Another key benefit of NEPA is that it is completely flexible and free from rigid standard forms of contract, meaning that institutions can benefit from a bespoke contract addressing their specific set of requirements.

Why is the approach NEPA takes different from other frameworks?

UK university purchasing consortia take a consultative approach with their member institutions at all levels, including IT strategists, heads of procurement, category managers, buyers and equipment end users. This gives all members the opportunity to participate in framework design and provide feedback on framework performance, giving the NEPA Working Party and suppliers continual contract improvement objectives.

There is a good variety of suppliers and manufacturers to choose from on NEPA, some are print device specialists, some managed print specialists, and some that do both. This helps to ensure that the marketplace remains competitive and keeps margins low.

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What guarantees do customers get through NEPA?

Every approved NEPA reseller has a designated NEPA Manager and the NEPA Working Party manages the framework, with regular contract management reviews and dialogue that keeps products fresh and pricing competitive. Furthermore, print devices come with extended warranty periods that exceed that of the standard manufacturer warranty, and you can expect a higher level of service purchasing through NEPA than off contract.

The NEPA Working Group is able to offer help and guidance before consortia members set out their print tender requirements. Support and advice is provided on a 1-2-1 basis or through each purchasing consortium.

Who can procure through NEPA and how do they do this?

NEPA is available to any member institution of the UK University Purchasing Consortia: NEUPC, NWUPC, LUPC, SUPC, APUC, HEPW and NHS London Procurement Programme. Colleges and other public funded bodies may also access NEPA as associate or affiliated members of the UK University Purchasing Consortia.

If you are interested in finding out more about NEPA, visit

www.nepa.procureweb.ac.uk
for more details.

What should institutions look for in a print partner?

All NEPA approved Print Partners have been selected based on their offering, expertise and experience. A member institution should seek a partner that

“DTP is well recognised by existing HP customers, and is now long established and trusted within HE.”

understands that each institution is different and one size doesn't fit all. Within HE/FE there are two customer groups, staff and students, and there are dynamics behind each. For example, the revenue stream from student print services can be used to fund future investment in staff and core facilities. Institutions should work with a partner that recognises this and will work with them on delivering their own objectives.

“A member institution should seek a partner that understands that each institution is different and one size doesn't fit all.”

Institutions should work with a print partner that is happy to engage early to offer guidance and advice, a partner who is keen to understand where you are on your print journey and who is happy to offer help when it's needed. Institutions can benefit from a partner who can help them engage with senior stakeholders, helping them to understand why changes are proposed and the value it offers.

What Mark says about DTP

DTP has a very strong partnership and long-term association with Hewlett Packard (HP), which includes prestigious awards and accreditations. HP is a manufacturer with significant exposure in many HE institutions, therefore DTP is well recognised by existing HP customers and is long established and trusted within HE.

The team at DTP are always willing and able to help with customer enquiries, as well as offer impartial advice when it's needed. Howard Hall, DTP's Group Managing Director, founded the company over 26 years ago therefore he understands the sector's nuances and the value that continuity of presence brings.



DTP is the largest supplier of HP print into UK Universities.
Visit our website to read what our customers say or get in touch, we'd love to hear from you.

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