



## Futiva Hosted White Paper – The Future of the Fax Machine

We have a dilemma on our hands. Offices all over the world are transforming into breeding grounds and becoming infested with giant beige colored dinosaurs. Ok, we admit they aren't literally dinosaurs. What we are talking about however is the ever lingering fax machine, a device that in 2014 celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. In the last 10 years this device has become less necessary than ever, and even one of the most despised pieces of technology, albeit outdated, in the office. Newer and more cost effective solutions like email, e-signature, and all-in-one printer-copier-scanners have quickly replaced the fax machine. No matter the multitude of ways to do away with a fax, some users still insist. Let us touch on the some of the ways you can stop relying on that dinosaur in the corner of your already crowded office space and start implementing easier, more reliable, and cheaper ways to get your documents from one location to the other.

1. **Email Documents:** Moving to an electronic format like e-mail can have many benefits. Emails are almost instantaneous in delivery time, while multipage faxes can take several minutes to complete. Moreover with faxing, the quality of your document takes a big hit at the expense of hard to read pages, smears, and marks. While emailing retains all original quality, no questions asked. Most likely you are already faxing a document that was typed or created on a computer and then printed out before faxing. You can eliminate the last step in this process by simply creating an email and attaching the file. Or you can easily just send an email with important information typed in the body of the email itself.
2. **Scanning and Emailing:** In many use cases businesses are now taking advantage of the all-in-one printer-copier-scanner. These devices will allow you to scan multipage documents and send them directly to your PC as a PDF file. The PDF file can then be attached to an email and sent to the intended recipient. Aside from being a more eco-friendly option, scanning is typically a much a higher resolution than faxing. This means the quality of your document will not suffer as it might during the traditional fax method. There are also some smart phone apps that allow you to snap a picture of a document and text or email the snapshot right away.

3. **FTP/Upload:** Some businesses will give users the option to upload documents to an FTP site. This is typically a document repository in which large amounts of data can be stored. Users are typically granted access with a predetermined username and password. Aside from FTP access, other companies may also offer a web-based interface for you to upload documents directly to them rather than emailing or faxing.

## **But I absolutely must fax...**

If you find yourself among the ever shrinking number of businesses still relying on the traditional use of a fax machine you aren't completely alone. According to a *PCWorld* article from Jan 2014 titled [\*"Why the fax still lives \(and how to kill it\)"\*](#) author Christopher Null states the biggest culprits to the survival of the fax machine are doctors, lawyers, and sales professionals. Among other reasons these groups stated that privacy, HIPPA, and standing out in a digital world by using the paper options were all reasons to keep a traditional fax line. In all reality just because you have sent a fax doesn't mean it's going to a fax machine. In today's age many fax numbers don't actually reach a machine at all. They go to email, smartphones, and even cloud based storage systems, making the argument that electronic methods are less safe versus the fax machine obsolete and often inaccurate.

The time to change is quickly approaching however. Major carriers are already making big moves and big spends to collapse the ever burdened Publically Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) and transitioning to IP based telephony cloud systems, relying more on bandwidth and internet connectivity than copper telephone line. Those who chose to "stick it out" will ultimately suffer the most. Call completion and termination issues will only get worse as these infrastructures, especially in remote areas lack maintenance. Aging fax machines will become ever less compatible to newer forms of technology, leading to frustration for the end user.

Whatever the reasoning for hanging on to that old dinosaur may be, eventually it will turn into a fossil, and it's only a matter of time. Futiva Hosted Communications is well positioned to help your business find new ways of operating all in an effort to reduce waste, cut down on expense, and make your office more productive.