

Plant City Church of God



“Since I have been here, there has not been a company I have worked with that has given us the customer service Danwood has given.”

Kristen Toney, Office Manager, Plant City Church of God

Background

Plant City Church of God, tucked into a quiet corner of west central Florida 24 miles east of Tampa, is more than simply a congregation. It is a bustling community of 2,200 souls comprising over two dozen nations of origin, in all ages and conditions of life. The ministries reflect that variety. The Bright Beginnings day care, ministries for youth, men, women, singles, young married people; a food ministry feeding 500 or more needy people every week; the Proclaim Bookstore; a musical Worship Arts ministry and its outreach program; the Plant City Academy of the Arts - all these reflect the diverse commitments to the people who find their spiritual home there.

The tools supporting these extensive and varied programs need to be versatile and cost-effective. That is especially true of the copier. Office manager Kristen Toney explains.

“When I arrived on this job about a year ago, the church had a second-hand machine purchased from a print shop. It was a thorn in my flesh, an absolute nightmare. I’d never dealt with anything like it before. If it didn’t smell like it was about to spontaneously combust, it was burning papers. Sunday school teachers would be lining up to get their papers and the Monster was chewing up their documents. It was horrible, so I started doing a little research.

Benefits

- Increased productivity derived from greater reliability and simplicity of operation
- Lower monthly expense
- Better cost control
- Better service through long term relationship and expertise



Plant City Church of God

The Solution

"There are a lot of copier companies out there. I discovered that they all figured out what I was doing and they all tried to come and sell me something. When we make a major purchase it goes before the board of directors. So it took a little while to put my proposal together and persuade them that we really did need this. And once they had given their blessing to proceed, Phillip Johnson of Danwood came out with a proposal. The monthly cost was even smaller than our cost with the Monster, but we were not going to be running into the issues that we constantly had with the Monster. It was really a win-win situation as far as I was concerned."



Danwood offered a Sharp MX-3500N, a versatile workhorse able to print any document generated anywhere on the church's network, in vibrant color at the crisp rate of 35 copies per minute, and fold, staple, and finish the product to meet any purpose.

Toney notes that things went well, despite potential complications. "We were in the process of moving all of our computers from PCs over to Mac. With this being a brand new machine with new drivers, everything prints as it should. On the old machine, I had to 'back door' everything using work-around techniques to fool the Monster into doing what was needed. The new machine does everything we need on the Macs", says Toney.

The best machine in the world may not be enough without the support the customer requires. Toney was pleased with Danwood support. "The customer service we received was something we had not been able to receive before. The only issues we had were computer related. When Danwood came out, if there was anything they didn't understand, they got on the phone to get information. With our copier service in the past, it was always, 'Hmm, that's a problem. We're not sure how to fix that.'"

She is very pleased with the performance of the machine: "The print quality is absolutely wonderful. We do a lot of our own pamphlets. We do our bulletins every week. The new machine will actually fold and staple them without messing up the entire job. Flyers, posters - those are all things that we were not able to do with the old machine.

The demands on the machine can be very substantial, she notes. "Every week our bulletin is a four-page booklet printed front and back, about four or five hundred. If our youth ministry designs a new pamphlet, they want to print that out for about 300 people for Wednesday night. The Family Care ministry is also able to produce what they need, and that covers all of our members."

Being able to do a lot of work quickly and simply matters. Toney is glad that the church's Sharp includes a port for a "jump drive" an inexpensive chip that stores documents for a user or a group. "On a Sunday morning when we need to print something right away, you don't have to boot up a computer. That's awesome, not only for the staff, but for the pastors when they need something quickly."

The Sharp machine does not require an expert to operate it. About a dozen people working in the church office need to use the machine. "It's so simple, it's almost amusing. I get questions like, 'How do I use color and how do I switch to black and white?' I tell them 'push the color button, and when you're ready, push the black and white button.'"

Controlling costs is always important, especially for an enterprise relying on voluntary offerings. Says Toney, "One of the things we can do that we could not do with the old machine is give everyone a code, so that at the end of the month when I do the meter reading if we are way off, I can go back and see who did what. Before, we might have 13,000 copies and we did not know where they went. There were a few people who felt they were free to use the machine and they were helping themselves. Now they don't have a code. No code, no copies. The control is a great aspect.

Installation

"We traded in the Monster and a Riso. They took both of those away. They looked at the Monster and said, 'What is this?' because it was so huge. The Sharp takes up far less space. It's so much smaller that people would say, 'Are you sure it can do what I need it to do?', but it does. The Danwood people were here on site, hooked everything up and didn't leave until everything worked. We had a few issues with the Macs and the codes and they worked on that a couple of weeks. If they didn't know the answer they went away and did their research and got it working. The transition time was nowhere what we thought it would be. And we were very pleased."

The Outcome

"Since I have been here, there has not been a company I have worked with that has given us the customer service Danwood has given. When I call about something, I'm not wondering, 'Oh, I wonder if they will be able to handle this.' It's taken care of. Any issues have been quickly taken care of. It's been a great learning experience. As far as I'm concerned we'll be with Danwood for a long time."