



Fight back against the budget bully

Fax machines are demanding and costly – traits electronic faxing won't tolerate.

GFI FaxMaker™

Network fax server software for Exchange/SMTP/Lotus

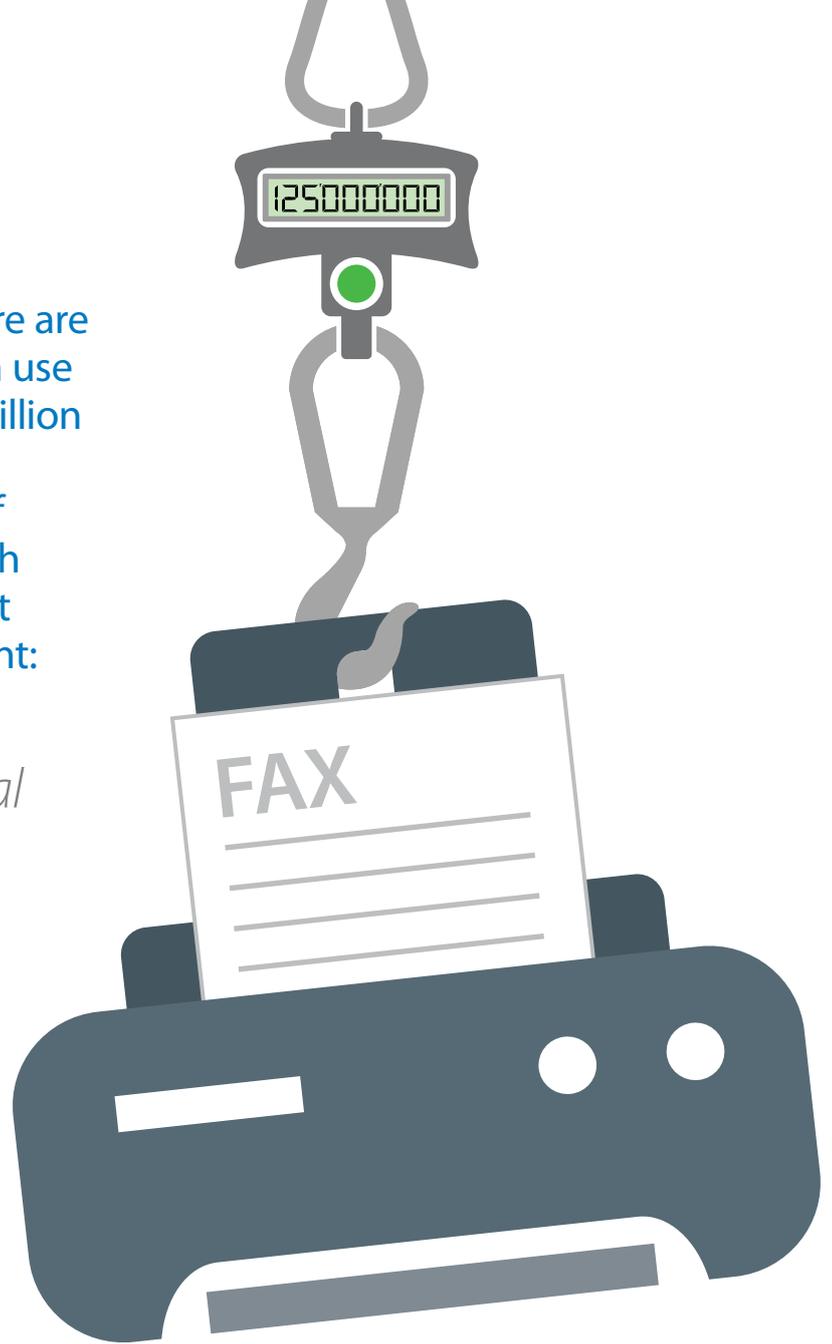
The estimates vary slightly, but there are roughly 125 million fax machines in use around the world. And nearly six million machines are purchased annually. Considering the outdated nature of the technology, it's debatable which statistic is more dumbfounding. But both statistics speak to a larger point:

Unlike the dinosaur, traditional faxing is far from extinct.

Of course, just because paper-based faxing is still quite common hardly makes it the best option – particularly for small to mid-sized businesses with limited staff and resources. Simply put, there are cost-effective and time-saving alternatives that offer a more functional way to fax.

Integrating a network or online faxing solution considerably reduces overhead costs. At the same time, both options also increase efficiency, which boosts productivity and impacts the bottom line for the better. By leveraging existing word processing and messaging applications, businesses can expand their use of these applications without the need for additional software or unexpected training costs.

This white paper explores the advantages businesses gain by integrating network or online faxing. It also explains why, beyond boosting communications, these faxing solutions enable businesses to better deal with data security issues and meet compliance regulations. While email plays an important role in these efforts, it doesn't meet specific needs that network and online faxing solutions are designed to handle.



The state of the fax

It wasn't too long ago that traditional faxing seemed destined to disappear. Those high maintenance machines that transmitted documents over phone lines were exceptional for their time. But conventional wisdom maintained they'd give way to email messaging. At best, faxing would be reduced to a small niche where email couldn't match the fax machine's capabilities.

Of course, faxing remains a critical tool in many industries. According to a GFI survey, 72% of U.S. businesses (60% in the UK) still rely on traditional, paper-based faxing. Furthermore,



54% of respondents (42% UK) maintain faxing is a central part of their daily workflow with customers, vendors and co-workers.

Still think faxing is in its final act? While no longer in its heyday, faxing continues to serve an important role in industries such as healthcare, insurance, law, education, finance and manufacturing, just to name a few.

“As long as businesses have some customers who require (faxes), it doesn’t really disappear,” Gartner Research analyst Ken Weilerstein told CNN Money in 2013. “The demand clearly decreases, but that doesn’t mean you can pull the plug on it.”

Rather than bank on a funeral for faxing, plenty of software companies recognize that the service still has value – particularly when it comes to transmitting signed documents, meeting compliance and fulfilling e-discovery requests. There’s a level of trust that doesn’t exist with email attachments, hence the abundance of fax server software that offers a more functional and affordable way to fax.

Faxing by the numbers

Email can be insecure and risky – plus it has a number of intrinsic problems of its own. Faxes solve many of these issues. But manual faxing

is antiquated, and it creates quite a few hassles and headaches.

The most popular solutions have been to replace standalone fax machines with integrated network fax server software, or transition to online faxing. Both options enable users to quickly and easily send, receive and manage fax communications directly from their desktop.

With these solutions, users compose faxes in their word processor (or another application) or create a new message in their email client (e.g., Outlook® or Lotus Notes®). Phone numbers are selected from the email clients’ address list, or entered manually. Traffic is managed through the Exchange/SMTP mail server, which receives and routes faxes.

Top-of-the-line solutions also enable users to send and receive faxes from wireless devices such as laptops, smartphones and tablets. This is critical. GFI found that 57% of computer-using small business employees have, at some point, worked outside the office. Moreover, 43% used a mobile device for connecting remotely to their company’s network.

Think of the time, effort and money this saves. Paper faxing often sabotages productivity. Maybe the phone line is busy or the ink



cartridge is empty. Perhaps paper is missing. And time devoted to clearing such hurdles – sometimes as much as 10 minutes – takes away from revenue-generating jobs.

Strictly in terms of finances, consider the cost of manual faxing. The per-page transmission rates of a global office supply giant are \$.99 (local); \$1.49 (long-distance); and \$5.99 (international). To apply simple math, let’s round the local rate to \$1 per page and assume all faxes are just one page. The cost adds up quickly as Table 1 shows:

Faxes per day	Daily cost	Weekly cost	Annual cost
10	\$10	\$50	\$2,600
25	\$25	\$125	\$6,500
50	\$50	\$250	\$13,000
100	\$100	\$500	\$26,000

These costs are actually low since they don’t account for overhead expenses associated with paper and maintenance/upkeep. And remember: These figures apply only to local faxes, all of which are a single page.

Consider the cost-effective alternatives of network and online faxing. When employees complete a to-be-faxed document, they:

1. Print to the fax application from the word processor.
2. Select the recipient from the address book or enter the phone number.
3. Click “send.” If necessary, the fax will continue to be resent without user intervention.

The total time is no more than a minute. Using the same figures, the cost of a single fax drops from \$1 each to \$0.10. Table 2 shows the daily, weekly and annual savings for a business that sends an average of 50 faxes a day:

	Manual (cost = \$1/page)	Network/online (cost = \$0.10)	Savings
Day	\$50	\$5	\$45/day
Week	\$250	\$25	\$225/week
Year	\$13,000	\$1,300	\$11,700/year

What business couldn’t improve operations by repurposing such savings?

There’s also the matter of production faxing – a key requirement for any company whose day-to-day operations consist of delivering large numbers of paper documents to customers and partners. Production faxing allows companies to deliver business-critical documents (i.e., purchase orders, invoices, order confirmations, bills of lading, financial reports and mortgage tables) without the need to print, mail or manually fax a document both electronically and automatically.

Mailing a document involves physically printing it, enclosing it in an envelope, and mailing it at a cost similar to manual faxing. If an organization’s day-to-day operations involve sending multiple documents per day, the annual cost can be a significant piece of a company’s operational expenses. With production faxing, a company can reduce these costs by up to 90% – simply by automating fax delivery and reducing costs to print, mail or fax a document.



Improved security – and more

With network and online faxing, end users can send, receive, view, print and save faxes from their PC, laptop or mobile device, eliminating the pile of paper required to feed a communal fax machine.

Automatic inbound routing via direct inward dial (DID) – in which end users are assigned a personal, secure fax number – sends faxes directly to the user’s desktop. Because the fax is received in the user’s account, only the authorized individual sees it, and it won’t be inadvertently discarded or misrouted.

Consider how this differs from the traditional method: When a fax arrives at a communal fax machine, the chances of it disappearing or being misrouted increase with each passing moment. It’s easy to imagine a fax mistakenly being mixed with other documents, accidentally thrown away or, perhaps most concerning, left in the open for everyone to see.

In addition, depending on your business needs, automated faxing solutions can offer the following advantages:

1. Incoming and outgoing fax queue sorting (view faxes by any number of variables, including sender, status and destination)
2. Improved fax quality, formatting capability and document legibility for a professional appearance
3. Ability to add attachments to the fax
4. Delivery to email clients, network folders, printers and multi-function devices
5. Delivery to mobile devices
6. Eliminate unwanted documents using junk fax filters
7. Fax broadcasting capabilities for sending personalized fax messages to a large number of recipients
8. Fax archiving to retain key records with the need for hard copies
9. Consolidation of fax server operations, and the ability to standardize them
10. Possible use of real-time Fax over IP (FoIP) functionality and/or APIs for integration to and automation of back office systems

Conclusion

The simple and painless process of transitioning to a network or online faxing solution significantly increases a company's efficiency and productivity. A modern faxing solution also saves thousands of dollars in labor and overhead costs. Furthermore, faxed documents are more secure, readily prepared, and add an appearance of professionalism to the company's business communications.

Integrated network and online faxing solutions are among the most cost-effective options on the market. The return on investment is high, and the benefits of executing the solution present themselves immediately.

About GFI FaxMaker® and GFI FaxMaker® Online

GFI FaxMaker and GFI FaxMaker Online are leading fax solutions for small to mid-sized businesses. They make sending and receiving faxes simple, efficient and affordable by solving the well-documented hassles associated with manual faxing. GFI FaxMaker and GFI FaxMaker Online enable users to send and receive faxes directly from their email client and provide APIs for application integration and automation. For more information about these products and to download your free trial, please visit the web pages for [GFI FaxMaker](#) and [GFI FaxMaker Online](#).

About GFI Software

GFI Software develops quality IT solutions for small to mid-sized businesses with generally up to 1,000 users. GFI offers two main technology solutions: GFI MAX™, which enables managed service providers (MSPs) to deliver superior services to their customers; and GFI Cloud™, which empowers companies with their own internal IT teams to manage and maintain their networks via the cloud. Serving an expanding customer base of more than 200,000 companies, GFI's product line also includes collaboration, network security, anti-spam, patch management, faxing, mail archiving and web monitoring. GFI is a channel-focused company with thousands of partners throughout the world. The company has received numerous awards and industry accolades, and is a longtime Microsoft® Gold ISV Partner.

For more information about GFI, please visit <http://www.gfi.com>.



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