Managing KU-IT Printers Introduction

Printing is a feature that has been incorporated into Windows operating systems, and has evolved over the years. Printing in Windows Server 2016 has not changed much from earlier versions, and provides you with the ability to create print servers that you can share with users in your organization.

With Windows printing, the physical device that renders output onto paper is a print   
device. A printer is, in effect, the queue for one or more print devices. A print server can support multiple printers (as can individual client workstations). The print device has a driver that converts your documents to the printed form on a given print device. Some drivers come with Windows—others you need to obtain from the printer vendor.

You use both the printers—that is, the printing device and printer port—when you create a new printer on your print server. In many organizations, printers are often stand-alone devices with just a TCP/IP connection. You can also connect a print device to your server using the server's local USB, parallel, or serial port.

Microsoft did not change the basic print architecture in Windows Server 2016. Windows Server 2012 introduced a new driver architecture, version 4, which Windows Server 2016 supports. This driver model enables two different driver types: printer class drivers and model-specific drivers. The former provides a single driver for a variety of specific printing device models, whereas latter is used for just a single model. Increasingly, print device manufacturers are implementing more generic drivers that can simplify organizational roll- out for printer drivers.

Another change in Windows Server 2012, carried over into Windows Server 2016, is that you no longer use the print server to distribute printer drivers. Clients can use the point and print feature to send print jobs to the server. Additionally, you can use tools such as the System Center Configuration Manager or Group Policies to distribute print drivers to clients.

The KU-IT Printer SOP’s (Standard Operation Procedures) cover installing, managing, and updating printers, print drivers, and printer ports on a Windows Server 2016 print server. You may find that some of the administration tools used in the SOP's are not available on Windows Server Core. To enable full management, you need to have the full GUI (including the *Desktop Experience* for any GUI utilities).