

# HP Introduces a Web Feature to Make Document Printing Mobile

*By John Markoff*

NYT August 20, 2007 PALO ALTO, Calif., Aug. 18 — Hoping to alleviate a frustration of mobile computing, Hewlett-Packard has quietly introduced a free service designed to make it possible to print documents on any printer almost anywhere in the world. Cloudprint, which was developed over a period of several months by a small group of H.P. Labs researchers, makes it possible to share, store and print documents using a mobile phone.

The service emerged as the result of a conversation begun at the laboratory this year over how the computer and printing company might benefit from the introduction of the Apple iPhone, according to Patrick Scaglia, H.P.'s director for Internet and computing platforms technologies at the research lab.

“The world is going to flip,” Mr. Scaglia said. “We want to ride the wave of the Web.”

The underlying idea is to unhook physical documents from a user's computer and printer and make it simple for travelers to take their documents with them and use them with no more than a cellphone and access to a local printer.

The service requires users to first “print” their documents to H.P. servers connected to the Internet. The system then assigns them a document code, and transmits that code to a cellphone, making it possible to retrieve and print the documents from any location.

Later, using the SMS message the service has sent to the user's cellphone, it is possible to retrieve the documents by entering the user's phone number and a document code on the Cloudprint Web site. The documents can then be retrieved as a PDF, ready to be printed at a nearby printer.

The service will include a directory service that will show the location of publicly available printers on Google Maps. The system currently works with any Windows-connected printer. A Macintosh version is also planned.

The strategy is an extension of a broader, and all-important, H.P. strategy of indirectly creating a business that will foster the sale of Hewlett-Packard ink and supplies. The strategy has been working well. On Thursday, the company said operating profits from its printing division, most of it from ink and supplies, rose 11 percent in its third quarter from a year earlier.

The service is the first of a series of initiatives the company will take in the coming months to increasingly unhook printing from desktop computers, Mr. Scaglia said. Later this month H.P. plans to announce a partnership with a major retailer that will offer a variety of Internet-connected printing services at hundreds of locations around the country.