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VOX POP

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Nigel Allen, Marketing Director, KYOCERA Document Solutions

Comment

With commoditisation driving a decline in hardware profit margins, the print channel needs to look beyond transactional sales towards building a services model that enables recurring revenue, new incremental revenue streams and longer term customer relationships. A new Quocirca report (page 28) provides a competitive overview of some of the key channel MPS offerings in the European market.

Brexit continues to impact heavily on the print and IT sectors among others, with economic uncertainty, currency fluctuations, price hikes and a slowdown in buying decisions, just some of the concerns raised by this month's panel of dealers (page 20).

Xerotec's Steve Hawkins believes that for economic reasons, print in 2017 will be characterised by customer caution. But that said the channel remains buoyant and optimistic about the future. Midshire insists that this year offers significant opportunities, brought about by new and exciting technology that will hopefully continue to give it a competitive edge, Office Evolution is looking forward to another record breaking year, and Vision is proactively looking to make a number of right fit acquisitions.

And talking of acquisitions, at the end of last year KYOCERA Document Solutions completed the landmark acquisition of Annodata, one of the UK's largest independent providers of managed print and ICT services.

Marketing Director Nigel Allen spoke to PITR about how the deal has provided Kyocera with an opportunity to future-proof both its own and its partners' businesses. He also said that the company will be drawing on Annodata's expertise to strengthen the offering of its Channel Partner Programme for the UK and Ireland with the addition of ICT services (page 40).

And finally, if you've got any news about your business to share, would like to be included on our monthly Vox Pop panel, have a compelling business success story or simply wish to comment on any industry issues, please get in touch with us at editorial@printitreseller.co.uk

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BULLETIN

Government tenders decline by 20%

According to technology solutions provider hSo, uncertainty around Brexit has caused a slowdown in the number of government tenders to the technology sector. Data collated from Crown Commercial Service shows that in the run up to the Brexit vote in June, government tenders were steadily being issued, however since the vote and confirmation that the UK electorate wishes to leave the European Union, there has been a slowdown.

In the nine months running up to the UK's EU Referendum there had been 815 tenders per month on average, but in the subsequent five months, there were only 652 per month, representing a decline of 20%.

Chris Evans, Managing Director of hSo said: "In respect to public sector government tenders issued, there has been a slowdown since the EU Referendum. It's understandable, given the appointment of a new Prime Minister that the new administration is accustoming itself and looking to make its mark. However, this shouldn't prevent them from maintaining the momentum that was evident earlier in the year ahead of the Brexit vote.

"Before the vote there was clearly a big push by private and public sector SMEs to reign in their IT and network infrastructure spend, but since then as economic activity has slowed, there's now even greater reason for businesses to look at more cost efficient network, telephony and hosting solutions." www.hso.co.uk

Photizo Group launches enterprise MPS loyalty study

The multi-phase study will begin in April with a quantitative study of enterprise MPS customers in the USA, Canada, Germany, France and the UK, followed by in-depth interviews to understand the critical dynamics associated with satisfaction and switching behaviour.

Photizo Group is launching this study to assist clients in addressing this serious information gap and to identify growth opportunities in competitors' accounts, by identifying the types of customers who are most likely to switch.

Ed Crowley, CEO of Photizo Group said: "Many vendors are making a serious error in assuming that their existing customer loyalty or satisfaction study is adequately identifying threats to their customer base. Without an understanding of how your customer satisfaction and loyalty compares to your competitors, it's easy to overestimate the strength of your customer relationships."

Research and analysis into MPS customer defection rates by Photizo Group indicates that 33% of MPS contract holders are considering either switching MPS vendors or bringing their outsourced MPS project internal.

www.photizogroup.com

Enterprise spending nudged downwards in 2016

New data from Synergy Research Group, shows that across seven key enterprise infrastructure segments, vendor revenues for the last four quarters declined by 1% on an annualised basis.

Aggregate revenues for the last four quarters reached \$88 billion, with revenue in each of the last twelve quarters typically in the \$20-23 billion range. Data centre servers comprise the largest segment of the market though revenues here declined by almost 5% in 2016. Switches and routers are the second-largest segment and they experienced growth of 1%. WLAN grew the most, while the enterprise voice and telepresence markets continued to be challenged by aggressive price competition and market disruption.

Cisco is the market leader in six of the seven segments with the exception of data centre servers where HPE is the leader. The number two ranked vendors in the other segments

are Dell EMC (enterprise data centre servers), Avaya (enterprise voice systems), Juniper (network security), Microsoft (UC applications) and Polycom (telepresence). Vendors who have been achieving steady market share growth in these highly competitive markets include Palo Alto Networks (network security), Arista Networks (Ethernet switching), Huawei (Ethernet switching), HPE (WLAN) and Dell EMC (servers).

"Cisco continues to control a third of the enterprise infrastructure market and remains in a league of its own despite a variety of challenges," said Synergy Research Group's founder and Chief Analyst Jeremy Duke.

"HPE is the only broad-based competitor to challenge Cisco's dominance, though it does not compete in all of the major segments. The main disruption to the market is being provided by the growth of cloud and hosted solutions, which are redefining markets and enabling new competitors to emerge." www.srgresearch.com



IT channel's cloud conundrum

Four in ten companies surveyed for CompTIA's Sixth Annual State of the Channel report say cloud computing is the number one reason to be optimistic about the channel's future. But at the same time, cloud computing is one of the main reasons that a third of channel firms surveyed are thinking negatively about the days ahead. Channel respondents describing the cloud's impact in the last five years as 'extremely positive' has gone from 63% to 37% in the last two years.

The Sixth Annual State of the Channel study also found that channel firms view vendor-based perks such as sales spiffs, volume/upfront discounts, back-end rebates and technical training provided as less important to their bottom line. The number one reason vendor benefits have declined in significance is that channel firms say they are relying more on their own sales and marketing efforts. www.comptia.org



£10k raised for charity

DMC Business Machines has raised over £10,000 for Starlight Children's Foundation.

In March 2016, the business' own remanufactured toner brand, planitgreen celebrated its fourth year of business, setting a target to raise £10,000 for the charity. The company hit its first and second quarterly micro targets of £2,500 and £5,000 each with a month to spare and by October, had already raised £7,000.

Thanks to an incredible third quarter of fundraising events, donations and great sales figures, the team managed to hit the total target before Christmas. This achievement was seen as the perfect way to end 2016 and leaves the business with three months to exceed the target by as much as possible. www.yourdd.co.uk

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Spicers secures three-year deal

Having historically sat within a dealer group structure, Southampton-based A&A Business Supplies Ltd recently made the decision to become a fully independent dealer and has signed a new three-year contract with Spicers.

A&A Founder Steve Taylor said: "The market is changing. New categories and products are entering our space and the way we communicate

with our customers and prospects is evolving at a much faster pace. I have been impressed with the direction, service and flexibility of Spicers, especially their bespoke marketing service."

He added: "Spicers understands our needs, the direction we want to go in and will flex to help us achieve our goals. Moving to become an independent dealer with Spicers just felt like the right thing to do." www.spicers.co.uk



ThinPrint appoints Northamber

In a drive to proactively expand its presence in the UK and accelerate print management sales across different verticals, including SMB and Education, ThinPrint has appointed Northamber as a UK distributor.

ThinPrint offers a unique technology to the channel which utilises its Advanced Adaptive Compression process which adapts to print job content and the available bandwidth and reduces print data by up to 98%.

Northamber has a long and successful track record in both print and network infrastructure solutions and sees the ThinPrint announcement as an important addition to its growing portfolio of best-in-class products, further reinforcing it as the primary destination for resellers looking for solutions expertise whilst being able to deliver a further level of value add to their legacy print customer base. Alex Phillips, Director of Strategy, Northamber said: "As technologies evolve and these partners are becoming more reliant on infrastructure and networked devices, ThinPrint is the perfect value-add to bring infrastructure and imaging together helping the channel to mature with technology." www.northamber.com

Exertis adds Epson to AV business

Exertis has been appointed by Epson UK as a distributor for its consumer projector range. The range features a wide choice of models up to full HD resolution, with versatile connectivity, brightness of up to 3200 lumens and wireless capabilities.

Ian Aitken, Exertis AV General Manager said: "This appointment is testimony to the success our AV team has had in building and growing our AV business right across the market with our retail, IT and AV channel partners. It also means we now have an Epson solution to suit a wide range of needs and budgets, whether it's home cinema or gaming, education or business presentation."

www.exertis.co.uk

Tech Data makes tough quotes easier

Tech Data has introduced a new Panasonic configurator tool designed to make it easier for resellers to build accurate and detailed quotes on the Toughbook and Toughpad range of ruggedised laptops and tablets.

Scott Newman, Tech Data Category Manager for Panasonic said the tool will make a big difference to partners. "Panasonic is still the ruggedised system of choice for blue light, military and other public sector organisations and the new configurator tool will definitely help partners to advance their opportunities with greater speed and accuracy."

Panasonic Toughbook and Toughpad systems are capable of withstanding the most testing conditions and are dust, water, vibration and drop proof from a height of up to 180cm.

www.techdata.com

Ingram Micro expands vendor portfolio

Ingram Micro has partnered with software vendor Flexcom to become their first UK distributor. As a strong solution partner, Flexcom will complement Ingram Micro's vendor portfolio and its extensive portfolio of products, will help Ingram Micro customers offer more professional solutions.

Julian Thompson, Senior Director – Advanced Solutions, Ingram Micro UK & Ireland said that Flexcom products will offer great value to Ingram Micro's telephony and collaboration resellers. "As a value added vendor these products will simplify and scale customers' collaboration processes and increase productivity around unified communications, reducing time spent on managing the infrastructure by up to 85%."

Christopher Baehr, CEO, Flexcom added: "We view Ingram Micro as a catalyst for joint business acceleration in the UK and welcome the new business opportunities ahead, working with the excellent reseller community."

www.ingrammicro.com



Nycomm dials-up multi-million-pound acquisition deal

Manchester-based communications supply specialist The Nycomm Group, has announced a major new acquisition by snapping up fellow communications-related business Pennine Group in a multi-million-pound deal.

The Pennine Group, a £14 million turnover operation which is a distributor of the analogue and IP handset businesses Interquartz UK and Yealink UK, is set for further growth under the Nycomm umbrella. In addition to an unparalleled portfolio of products, Nycomm will also benefit from the addition of Pennine's Managing Director Andy Roberts, to its board.

The Nycomm Group employs almost 300 staff from offices in Manchester, Leeds, Altrincham, London and now Bury.

www.nycomm.co.uk



Chris Kiaie,
Managing
Director,
ORIUM

CMS Distribution partners with ORIUM

With this agreement, ORIUM's range of products and services through CMS Distribution will not only help resellers and their end customers easily prepare for the new GDPR directive, but will also provide channel partners with access to technical pre-sales, recurring business opportunities and cost effective data management solutions.

ORIUM Managing Director Chris Kiaie said: "I'm delighted we are partnering with CMS to distribute our CX:Protect and CX:inSync product set. With GDPR on the horizon, a growing mobile workforce and the need for organisations to control their ever growing corporate data, this is an ideal time for reseller partners to speak to us about our fantastic data management products and the recurring revenue opportunities they bring."

www.cmsdistribution.com

Exertis gains ISO 20071 accreditation

Exertis' professional services division, which provides a range of managed services for its partners, has gained ISO 20071 accreditation, the international standard for information security.

Technical Services Director Ian Gilbey said: "This certification provides our partners and resellers with even greater confidence in the way they engage with our range of professional services and sends an important message that Exertis manages security risks effectively and in the correct manner."

Exertis professional services provide a wide range of pre- and post-sale services to support resellers' business from straightforward 'break-fix' through to a 24/7/365 complete, white-label, managed service. Exertis uniquely delivers all services with fully qualified engineers and support staff and from its own Network Operation Centre (NOC).

www.exertis.co.uk



Eurostat win

Nationwide office supplies company Eurostat has successfully secured a new account worth £250,000, a move it attributes to being onboard with the Spicers Alliance programme and the additional support of SPOT Group's experts that comes with this.

Sales Director, Alan Candlish said: "I have been incredibly impressed with how the Spicers team took over the implementation of the new account. Winning an account with 60 branches nationwide

for everyday stationery items, as well as their print orders and marketing products, is a salesman's dream!"

He added: "If we had attempted this venture by ourselves, there is no doubt in my mind we would have won and then lost this account within four weeks as there were so many processes that were alien to us. However, the ease and efficiency that SPOT group worked with us and with our client was fantastic." www.eurostat.co.uk

Tech Data and OKI join forces

Tech Data is now distributing the full range of OKI business LED printers and multifunctional devices in the UK. The two companies have formed a partnership that extends choice and brings new growth potential to Tech Data's reseller customers serving the corporate, SMB and public sector markets.

As well as extending the distributor's B2B portfolio, the agreement enables OKI to benefit from the extensive market reach and logistical capabilities of Tech Data in the UK and Ireland.

Tech Data has underlined its commitment to making the partnership a success by appointing Ruari Metcalfe as its dedicated OKI Business Development Manager. He will be responsible for supporting OKI partners in identifying opportunities, getting the best out of the Shinrai Partner Programme, and growing their sales.

Simon Tetlow, OKI Head of Channel said: "With our new colour portfolio, we can offer resellers impressive and attractive business solutions to take to their customers. We have an excellent channel programme and a firm commitment to supporting our partners and helping them grow. Tech Data's unrivalled reach and resources will enable us to bring the benefits to more resellers and businesses across the UK." www.oki.co.uk/techdata



Agilitas maintain ISO high standards

Inventory-as-a-service solutions provider Agilitas IT Solutions has announced the successful re-certification of ISO9001:2008 Quality Management and ISO14001:2004 Environmental Management Standards.

Operations Director John Street, said: "We are delighted to have achieved ISO re-certification by continuing to demonstrate best practice across the entire business."

www.agilitas.co.uk



Print Audit acquires NeoStream Technologies

The acquisition will allow Print Audit and its Premier members to fully manage a customer's document workflow for printed and digital content as well as provide full intranet and communications capabilities. NeoStream capabilities will be rolled out initially in North America with international rollout at a later date.

John MacInnes, President at Print Audit said: "Print Audit is transforming and we're helping our Premier members to do the same. The acquisition of NeoStream Technologies will ensure they have the opportunity to manage and monetise the entire document lifecycle, printed or not."

Existing NeoStream customers will experience the same levels of service and support that they are accustomed to. Print Audit Premier members will have the opportunity to offer NeoStream's solutions exclusively and at a discounted rate for a limited time by upgrading to Premier Plus. The NeoStream solutions line-up is not included in the standard Premier membership and details about Premier Plus will be provided upon request. www.printaudit.com

Midshire ranked in the Top 100

For the first time in the company's history, the Midshire Group has achieved a spot on the list of Top 100 Value Added Resellers (VARs) in the UK 2016. The office technology sales and service provider



has been ranked 94 on the list, for its positive and consistent growth in recent years.

The Top 100 VARs is an annual report of the

most successful and well deserved UK resellers, with the featured businesses this year boasting a combined revenue of £12.72 billion, compared with last year's £11.08 billion.

Achieving a place on the Top 100 VARs list comes at the end of an amazing year for Midshire. The company was named Best Office Technology Supplier in the UK by Corporate Vision and also won Best SME Support at the Talk of Manchester Awards, whilst its hosted desktop product, Desktop Monster, won Best Technology Product. www.midshire.co.uk

CityDocs

Apogee acquires CityDocs

Apogee has completed the acquisition of the CityDocs group of companies, one of the UK's leading specialist providers of in-house and outsourced print and digital document services.

This is the firm's third acquisition since it secured a significant investment from private equity firm Equistone Partners Europe in September last year. Acquisitions in Wales and Germany earlier in the year have since been followed by Scotland, Ireland and now CityDocs. Apogee will continue to make further strategic acquisitions to drive growth in the UK and Europe.

Based in the City of London with additional operations in London SE1 and Manchester, CityDocs delivers digital document scanning, processing, hosting and full reprographic services on a project or ongoing basis. CityDocs' specialist legal document services operation is the market-leading provider of forensic technology, eDisclosure and eBibles to London-based firms, chambers and in-house counsel, whilst its managed print services team provide office and production print technology, supported through its own in-house service operations. Also within the group is Willow Graphics, the company's visual communications operation which provides creative services, large format and digital printing.

www.apogeeecorp.com

Lexmark partners with Dalton Ellis

Lexmark has entered into an exclusive partnership in the UK with channel partner, Dalton Ellis, to create the sustainable Carbon Neutral Programme.

Combining technology with environmentally friendly processes, the programme encourages sustainability by providing end-users with a package that consists of recycled Woodland Trust paper, a Lexmark printer/multifunctional device and access to Lexmark's Cartridge Collection Programme (LCCP), a service that offers free cartridge collection and a recycling and reuse process for all ink cartridges.

Dalton Ellis supplements these services with additional environmentally friendly practices. The entire Carbon Neutral Programme, from start to finish offsets carbon emissions, making the initiative completely sustainable.

www.lexmark.co.uk



Vision scores public sector hat-trick

Vision ended 2016 scoring a hat-trick in public sector wins. The company was awarded three major frameworks including the National Education Printer Agreement (NEPA), Crown Commercial Service (CCS) incorporating Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation (YPO), Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) and Crescent Purchasing Consortium (CPC).

The company says that the success comes off the back of its continued investment in and development of its public sector team, offering, and routes to market. Its winning formula has resulted in significant wins within higher and further education, healthcare including NHS trusts, universities and colleges.

The Group's scalability and resources are well placed to compete and win in public sector and being awarded all three major frameworks will become the catalyst for continued growth and success.

Leon Wragg, Vision's Head of Public Sector said: "This is an outstanding achievement and I



Leon Wragg,
Head of
Public Sector,
Vision

am delighted our hard work and investment over the past six years has been recognised by three major frameworks. This recognition confirms our place as one of the market leaders, providing managed print solutions, content and document management to the public sector."

www.visionplc.co.uk

Lex Business Equipment scoops award

The Bury-based, family-run technology firm which celebrates its 36th trading anniversary this year, won the Best in Class Technology award at the Made in Bury Business Awards (MIBBA).

The MIBBAs, now in its fourth year, is one of the showpiece events in the Bury business



calendar; championing local businesses and celebrating their outstanding achievements.

The judging panel chose Lex as the winner due to its ability to demonstrate consistently high service standards, exceptional standards of customer care and because they have identified new income streams as well as investing in workforce development.

Commenting on the win, Managing Director, Wayne Elphick said: "It is an exciting time for Lex as we continue to grow and develop, our company has diversified to offer much more than a conventional office equipment provider, and this is a tremendous achievement for all of us. We are a Bury business, who employ local people and we are proud to continue to support the business community."

The award was collected by Director Sam Elphick, Suzanne Elphick and Adam Wilcox.

www.lexbusiness.co.uk

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Print 2025: Where next for the print industry?

Quocirca is embarking on a major study to explore the future of the print industry. The report will profile the industry's most innovative vendors and through end-user research, examine how digital disruption will fundamentally change business and service models.

This ground-breaking study will provide unique, in-depth insights on key questions and challenges faced by the print industry in today's era of digital disruption. It will deliver strategic recommendations for industry players, as well as thought leadership targeted at end-users.

The research and analysis company is looking for partners to sponsor the research. Louella Fernandes, Associate Director for Print Services and Solutions said: "By joining us as a sponsor on this study you can shape its direction, while raising your company's profile around key digital trends such as digital transformation, IoT, security, gamification, 3D printing and augmented reality." www.quocirca.com



in brief...

More cybercriminals targeting UK businesses

According to new analysis from specialist business ISP, Beaming, UK businesses were, on average, subjected to almost 230,000 cyberattacks each during 2016. The volume of attacks hitting individual company firewalls passed the 1,000 per day mark, on average, for the first time in November last year.

Cyber criminals have shifted their focus to connected devices such as networked security cameras and building control systems that can be controlled remotely over the internet. There was a 310% increase in the volume of attacks seeking out Internet of Things devices between the first and final quarters of 2016. By the end of last year, more than 90% of cyberattacks on UK businesses sought to take control of connected devices in the workplace.

Beaming's analysis indicates that the number of inbound threats against UK businesses has grown. The company recorded a fivefold increase in the number of unique IP addresses used to launch attacks against UK businesses during 2016. More than 98% originated from outside of the UK. www.beaming.biz

UK SMEs urged to settle for more

New research from Cambridge & Counties Bank reveals that around a third (30%) of business deposit accounts are paying 0.1% Gross/AER or less on balances of £25,000, highlighting the real opportunity for UK businesses to shop around.

The niche bank reveals that in the current low yield environment there are now only seventeen providers offering businesses an interest rate of more than 1% Gross/AER or more on balances of £25,000, a figure which has fallen by around two thirds (64%) from the number available back in December 2015.

Mike Kirsopp, Chief Executive Officer said: "There is a significant spread of rates on the market so businesses have a great opportunity to shop around to get a better return on their deposits. It's all too easy to stick with the same old bank but we'd urge SMEs to make it their New Year resolution to settle for more and take advantage of the higher rates that are available on the market".

www.ccbank.co.uk



DSales introduces new mobile ID and print authentication

The latest version of ineoPRINT now supports ID and print authentication via a mobile device. This means DSales now offers both NFC authentication for Android and Bluetooth LE authentication for iOS.

During pre-launch trials at the Develop London Technology Centre, Andrew Critchlow, DSales (UK) Technical and Training Manager said: "This solution is ideal for customers who want to control which users have access to the MFP using user authentication via mobile devices. Develop is providing leading edge solutions to meet the growing demand for mobile print."

The Develop ineoPRINT app is free to download for the Android and Apple iOS operating systems. www.dsales.co.uk

Canon hits sustainability milestone

Miraisha, one of Canon Europe's core sustainability programmes has reached its two-year anniversary. The programme, which is run closely with Canon Central & North Africa aims to promote job opportunities in Africa by offering workshops to photographers, videographers, film-makers and print business owners. To date it has trained over 2,500 participants.

Stuart Poore, Director of Sustainability at Canon Europe said: "The Miraisha programme truly embodies our corporate philosophy of Kyosei: living and working together for the common good. In just two years, it has already achieved impressive results and had a major impact on the lives and businesses of participants; more than 140 photographers have received work with a paid commission and more than 20 have received awards and recognition for their work." www.canon-europe.com



Armor Office Printing strengthens European commercial teams

On the back of new appointments within its UK and Netherlands operations, the company has continued expansion of its commercial teams in other regions.

Tom Straehnz has joined AOP Germany as Managing Director and Head of Sales with a brief to promote the OWA brand by using the back selling approach the company has developed in other countries in Europe. And Miquel Parrado has been appointed Head of Sales for the Iberian region. Parrado has previously worked for ADVEO, ADIMPO and IngramMicro and brings a wealth of market knowledge to efficiently develop the OWA brand at distributor level. www.armor-print.com/en

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Niall Wall

CMS Distribution expands leadership team

IT specialist distributor CMS Distribution has appointed Niall Wall as Non-Executive Director.

Wall brings with him a wealth of leadership experience from various CEO positions held at Ardagh Group, Sterile Waste Group and Tipperary Crystal.

Commenting on the appointment Wall said: "I am delighted to join the board as I believe CMS Distribution is at a very exciting stage of its evolution in a very, very exciting industry."

www.cmsdistribution.com

Kodak Alaris names Marc Jourlait CEO

Marc Jourlait has taken the helm as CEO of Kodak Alaris Holdings Ltd. Interim CEO Jeff Goodman will return to his role as COO to support Jourlait during the next few months.

The company says that Jourlait's arrival and Goodman's transition will position it in a strong, future-facing direction to best serve its customers.

Jourlait joins Kodak Alaris from Navico, the global leader in marine electronics for recreational and commercial use where he was Deputy CEO. He has previously held leadership roles with Apple, HP, Seagate, Technicolor and Bose.

www.kodakalaris.co.uk/go/IMnews



Marc Jourlait

Purple makes high profile appointment

Richard Roberts, former MD Commercial and Partner Sales for Cisco UKI, relishes new role as Purple's VP EMEA.

Roberts is set to supercharge Purple's EMEA partnerships and continue its fast growth. He will be responsible for leading the regional team and driving revenue through and with Purple's customers, distributors and channel partners.

He joins Purple at a time of impressive global traction with major service providers, a series of large customer wins and huge growth in platform usage. Purple now boasts 18 million users, with deployments in 73 countries, with offices in the UK, Spain, the US, Singapore and Australia; with more international locations coming soon.

Commenting on his new role he said: "This is the opportunity I have been looking for and I am thrilled to be joining the team. I have been involved with Purple for the past three years, during which time the business has flourished in a challenging market. The proposition has evolved to capture the imagination of even the largest of customers." www.purple.AI



Richard Roberts

Nuvias plans to further grow its Southern European business

Patric Berger has been appointed Regional Vice President South for pan-EMEA high value distributor Nuvias Group.

In his new role, he will be responsible for all business aspects within the Southern European region, which includes France, Italy, Spain, Malta and the Mediterranean. Berger is also tasked with growing Nuvias' business in this area. He will be based at the Group's French office in Versailles.

www.nuvias.com

Panasonic to focus on expansion

Panasonic Toughbook has appointed Sylvaine Smith as its Head of Partner Management for Europe to further expand its share of the rugged notebook, tablet and handheld markets with industry solution-focused partnerships.

Smith will drive market expansion by focusing on bringing together an exclusive group of existing and new resellers, system integrators and ISVs to offer business customers complete technology solutions for their mobile workforces.

Panasonic's Engage Channel Programme, with more than 1,000 partners across Europe and 30 Registered ISVs, is being enhanced with Certified ISV partner status. Certified ISVs will offer solutions that have been designed, tested and pre-approved by Panasonic engineers for use with their devices. Certified ISVs are being recruited to offer end-to-end solutions across all vertical industry sectors.

www.business.panasonic.co.uk/computer-product/partners

Xerox appoints new MD

Xerox has announced the appointment of Andrew Morrison as Managing Director for the UK and Ireland.

In his new role, Morrison will lead and grow the document outsourcing business. He also will oversee plans to expand reach in the SMB segment through an increased channel partner presence.

"As digital technology advances, the way businesses and organisations communicate, connect and work is changing. By connecting the paper and digital worlds, Xerox helps many organisations in their digital journey," said Morrison. "Working with the team I look forward to making 2017 a defining year for Xerox in terms of growth by aligning to a set of common financial goals and driving for efficiency and productivity for the advantage of our customers."

During the past 15 years Morrison has held a number of divisional, country, regional and global organisational positions at Xerox.

www.xerox.com



Kim Thurgood

Spicers Alliance strengthened

Spicers' continued commitment to helping forward-thinking dealers grow and prosper in an ever changing and diversifying market place, has led to the appointment of Kim Thurgood as Alliance Development Director.

Time spent with both wholesalers, as well as XPD, combined with her active involvement with many dealers, made her the top choice to drive the Spicers Alliance programme forward.

Jeff Whiteway, SPOT Group CEO said: "We are thrilled to have Kim as part of the Spicers team. We have restructured our business over the last 18 months to position ourselves as a true supply chain partner for progressive dealers. We are pleased Kim shares our vision and I am certain she will support our customers to maximise the opportunity."

www.spicers.co.uk

Counting up the years

Wholesale voice and data communications provider Entanet completed its twentieth year of trading at the end of 2016 and marked the New Year announcing that its sales team has chalked up a century of sales service to partners

The connectivity wholesaler ended 2016 on a high, set to cap 20 years of consistent growth by closing in on the £36 million turnover target it set at the start of the year.

Last year was one that featured a number of outstanding achievements for the company. Key successes include: year-on-year revenue growth of over 12 per cent (forecast), achievement of the BS EN ISO 9001:2015 quality management accreditation, launch of a new synergy partner portal to make it even easier for partners to do business, creation of an apprenticeship scheme, an increase in headcount from 100 to 115, and four industry awards.

Chief Executive Elsa Chen said that the company's continued success has been driven by its partners and that its firm commitment to its channel would remain to be at the heart of its strategy.

"The success of Entanet is wholly dependent on the success of our partners," she said. "We recognise that resellers need to have confidence, not only in the quality of the services that their suppliers deliver, but also that they understand what's important in providing connectivity solutions and appreciate the challenges that resellers face today. Our business is built on the strong foundations of solid customer service, network superiority and competitive agility, which is exactly what resellers need to thrive in such a competitive environment."

Chen added: "The technology and the market is moving even faster now and this is an exciting time for resellers who can identify and capture opportunities. Entanet is well-placed to support them in delivering positive results for their customers by helping them to succeed through the effective use of technology."

Century of sales service

Entanet started the New Year with a celebration of more than a century of combined experience and commitment to the channel within its sales team. With the turn of the year, the industry experience of the 19-strong team now totals 107 years, underlining the depth of knowledge it can offer to partners.

Sales Manager Paul North, himself a veteran at the company of more than a



(l-r) Oliver Ginger, Technical Support Apprentice, Elsa Chen, CEO, Jak Mason, Technical Support Apprentice, Shannon Thomas, HR Assistant, Tim Robert, HR Manager, Hannah Jinks, Customer Services Apprentice and Daniel Saxon, Customer Services Apprentice

decade, said: "Entanet has a reputation for recruiting and retaining the best talent. That's down to our commitment to career development, giving staff responsibility and promoting from within. This provides consistency and enables us to build strong relationships with our partners. We really get to know our partners' businesses, their objectives for growth and the challenges they face in an increasingly crowded marketplace."

He added: "The feedback from our partners is that our people are the best in the business. The care and loyalty shown by our staff and the expertise they've developed over the years in designing solutions, which are often extremely complex and involve multiple technologies, is one of the main reasons for our continued success."

Apprenticeship scheme

The company's newly launched first apprenticeship scheme which has seen Entanet recruit four apprentices across the core business areas of customer services and technical support, was established as part of its commitment to investing in the local community.

"The introduction of our apprenticeship scheme perfectly complements our previously established programme of undergraduate placement and demonstrates our commitment to finding and keeping the best young talent in the local area,"

Our business is built on the strong foundations of solid customer service, network superiority and competitive agility

Chen explained. "We've been located in Telford for the last 20 years and have no plans to change that as we're committed to investing in the local economy. As a technology business with a pioneering spirit, we recognise that the best way for us to secure our future with the best is to attract them early in their careers."

The scheme which runs in conjunction with the Telford College of Arts and Technology (TCAT) is open to those aged 17 and over wishing to pursue a career in the technology industry.

HR Manager Tim Roberts said: "We chose TCAT as our apprenticeship partner because of their superior local reputation and their flexibility in tailoring the customer services and IT professional competence courses to our needs. The four candidates that we've hired have settled in extremely well and have demonstrated great skill in learning what each of their roles entails. We're committed to promoting from within and foresee that each of these individuals will build great careers with Entanet."

As well as personalised account management and service, Entanet partners have access to product training, business development, sales and technical support, and white-labelled services. There are no minimum sales requirements or investment commitments for resellers who want to become an Entanet partner.

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Research suggests reluctance to embrace new tech

Research undertaken by cloud communications provider 8x8 and the Institute of Directors (IoD), has exposed a rift between attitudes of company directors and IT managers, when it comes to embracing new technology

The study compared the views of mid-level 'hands on' IT managers with those of the senior directors across more than 260 UK businesses.

The survey results suggests IT managers feel senior leaders in their organisations are holding back the adoption of new technology which could have a positive impact on their business.

67 per cent of senior business leaders and middle managers say UK businesses are too wary of adopting new technology such as cloud communications, and only 56 per cent think the senior team in their business invests sufficient resources to stay up to date with the latest technology.

The research revealed a suspicion, held by 45 per cent of IT managers, that senior business leaders hold back technology for reasons of 'self-preservation', whereby they are reluctant to embrace new tech that will disrupt their own position or the status quo within their organisations.

A difference of opinion

IT managers are far less optimistic than senior directors when asked if their organisation makes full use of the latest technology. 49 per cent of C-suite respondents believe that their companies



Kevin Scott-Cowell, UK Managing Director, 8x8

do make full use of the latest technology compared with 34 per cent of IT managers.

IT managers are more likely to admit that their business could be more up to speed with the latest technology, over half (54 per cent) agreed with this, versus 47 per cent of senior directors. 35 per cent of IT managers also felt that insufficient budget is directed toward technology implementation, in contrast just 20 per cent of senior business leaders shared the same sentiment.

Kevin Scott-Cowell, 8x8 UK Managing Director said: "We frequently hear anecdotal evidence that IT managers face significant opposition from senior leaders when it comes to adopting new technologies such as cloud communications, this research suggests this is something which is widely felt.


"Certainly, many senior leaders fear replacing expensive legacy IT systems that they have invested in. Their reluctance to do so in order to preserve the status quo, can be damaging to businesses who are losing out on the many benefits to staff productivity and ultimately, the potential for business growth," he added.

"Senior business leaders obviously bring vast experience and decision-making skills," said Lysanne Currie, Group Editor and Head of Content Publishing, IoD. "The results of this study suggest that mid-level IT managers and the wider technology community needs to do more to explain the benefits of embracing newer forms of technology, such as a shift to cloud communications, and talk the language which the Board and Directors understand." www.8x8.co.uk

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Print Predictions 2017

As we begin another New Year, *PrintIT Reseller* asked a panel of the UK's leading dealerships to consider what 2017 holds for the print and IT sectors

2016 was an eventful year in the print industry, what has impacted most on your business?

Mark Smyth, Operations Director, Vision:

"In our financial year 2016, Vision has seen some great wins from all sectors. We have also experienced some slowdown in the months leading up to Brexit with economic uncertainty impacting on and delaying some decisions. Plans to leave the European Union has also resulted in currency fluctuations and we have been impacted by price increases from supply chain and vendors, resulting in some increases being passed on to clients, something we always aim to avoid where possible."

Phil Powell, Managing Director,

Midshire Group: "Thankfully our business hasn't really been affected by anything so far this year. The news of Brexit did suggest that maybe there could be some uncertainty about buying decisions being delayed, but the reality of the situation is that growth remains steady across all of our businesses, at around 11 per cent year on year."

Matt Goodall, Service Director, Office

Evolution: "The Brexit decision impacted prices from suppliers. Although we did not choose to pass these on to our customers, it was evident that customers were more cautious when making decisions about purchasing or leasing equipment. "The other big impact this year was customer awareness of controlling costs and wastage at their offices. We have seen a huge increase in the supply of software



Colin Griffin,
Managing
Director,
Blackbox
Solutions

We see the integration of document solutions and IT services as vital to our ability to sustain continued growth

such as Papercut and this has increased our customer base and its security."

Colin Griffin, Managing Director,

Blackbox Solutions: "Looking back, the past year has certainly been eventful for Blackbox Solutions. The business has continued to grow and our close relationship with Samsung has seen us move to third in Samsung's UK dealer rankings, up from 30th just two years ago.

"We moved to new headquarters in Maidstone at the start of the year, which has given us plenty of opportunities for new business growth, and we've launched a Copy Shop in the centre of town to expand the range of services we can offer to local businesses.

"We see the integration of document solutions and IT services as vital to our ability to sustain continued growth. Blackbox launched our in-house IT division early in 2016 and we've seen increasing demand for IT services from our clients, who have consolidated their document solutions and IT accounts with us, as well as picking up new accounts which is very encouraging.

"The new premises have also given us the opportunity to launch an in-house data centre which has allowed us to provide additional services to our customers."

Clive Hamilton, Group Managing Director, Pinnacle Complete Office

Solutions: "Developments in technology have enabled us to generate new revenue streams in security, cloud services and

content management, however this is very much all wrapped in document workflow opportunities."

Steve Hawkins, Managing Director,

Xeretec: "Interestingly, the thing that impacted our business most isn't related to any political or economic turbulence, but something far closer to home; managed print service.

"Specifically, the number of companies that have come to us because they have been dissatisfied with their current managed print service provider where they haven't realised the benefits they were promised. We've seen considerable growth from those clients and anticipate this trend will continue in 2017."

What are the biggest challenges facing the channel currently?

Mark Smyth: "Our market and the channel, remains fiercely competitive, with margins squeezed continually and this means you must remain as efficient as possible in all areas. Currency fluctuations and economic uncertainty, are adding to pricing pressure and this will further expose any business weakness and inefficiencies."

Phil Powell: "Some of our suppliers have announced price increases, which so far haven't affected us due to the stock we are holding and the availability of alternative suppliers. Unless the pound does recover, I do feel that our long-term buy prices will increase. However, all of our competitors will be facing the same challenges as us."

Matt Goodall: "The channel faces challenges from companies that aren't traditional imaging suppliers, offering machines that have alleged lower running costs and simpler maintenance, but as we have seen in the past, these often result in high TCO and greater waste, as units cannot have individual components replaced.

"Dealers need to focus on the associated products such as software

Continued...



Mark Smyth,
Operations
Director,
Vision

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...continued



Phil Powell,
Managing Director,
Midshire Group

and mobile printing, to stay up to date with the market and continue to offer the solutions that the market demands. Dealers that ignore mobile and BYOD printing will rapidly be left behind."

Colin Griffin: "I think the biggest challenge facing our sector is adjusting to the potential impacts of Brexit. At Blackbox, we don't conduct much trade with Europe directly, but of course we're operating in a global economy and elements of our supply chain are located in Europe. Obviously, Britain's future access to the single market, the current currency fluctuations and threat of inflation, all have the potential to affect our business, and the UK economy as a whole, but it remains to be seen what the effects of the referendum result will be.

"We're now seeing caution and increased price sensitivity among some of our customers. Due to the uncertain economic climate, it's only natural that businesses will exhibit more caution when it comes to investment in new technology and pay closer attention to their expenditure, including print and IT costs, which has potential to squeeze our profits.

"However, business' caution also presents opportunities for us to sell other services, such as print management software to help businesses keep a better handle on their print costs. I think we're going to hear a lot about 'efficiency' and 'productivity' over the coming year!"

Clive Hamilton: "Recruitment of good sales staff that have the ability to add real value to customers rather than just sell on price."

*Clive Hamilton, Group Managing Director,
Pinnacle Complete Office Solutions*

I think that both distributors and resellers will face the ongoing challenge of demonstrating to customers how they can differentiate their services

Steve Hawkins: "Broadly, there are of course concerns about Brexit. But many companies, especially those that have an international presence, will probably press ahead with their plans anyway. Overall though, I think the channel will have to prove how and where, it is adding value against a backdrop of tighter budgets.

"I think that both distributors and resellers will face the ongoing challenge of demonstrating to customers how they can differentiate their services. Agility will be key, too; how quickly can the channel either anticipate or respond to customers' changing needs."

What are your print predictions for 2017? What do you believe will be the major trends and developments within the print and IT sectors?

Mark Smyth: "We see market developments with managed printing solutions as the platform and foundation for digital transformation. This customer journey can really start to make business impact, improving business processes and efficiency, combined with increased security controls as data protection and new legislation is introduced and tightened.

"With organisations in their second and even third generation of managed print, our prediction is that clients will be focusing on digital transformation, quality of service, as well as costs, and I do not believe cost will be the only driver as was previously the case."

Phil Powell: "My print predictions from reading the trade press, would suggest that page volumes will fall. I have been

expecting to see this for the last three years or so, but so far the average revenue billed per customer has remained steady and this is despite reducing page costs.

"Page volumes are also remaining steady per device, the biggest positive impact to our business has been the move to colour as more and more customers print and copy in colour which is typically eight to ten times more expensive than black and white."

Matt Goodall: "The reduction of waste through software control, on and offsite printing and mobile solutions. In the IT sector, the expansion of single point cloud storage and the unification of data, will form a large part of the challenges in 2017."

Colin Griffin: "I think we'll continue to see businesses expanding their investment in cloud technology. We see that many businesses want to support their increasingly mobile workforce with solutions that enable employees to access and print information from their devices, irrespective of where they are.

"While some companies have been slow to take-up cloud storage and document archiving solutions, many are realising the advantage of cloud-connected printers and this trend will continue as more businesses cotton on to the benefits.

"As a result of the current economic climate, we're also seeing businesses seeking to consolidate and streamline the number of suppliers they use. Following the launch of our IT division earlier in the year, we've picked up plenty of accounts for IT services with our existing document solutions customers, and we're also able to market MFDs and bolt-on software solutions to our IT clients. Ultimately, I think print vendors will need to offer IT services and support in conjunction with document solutions, or risk losing clients to competitors that do.

"The print industry has already faced years of disruption due to the advent of many new digital technologies, which means information is increasingly read, shared and distributed online rather than on paper. Further innovations like 3D printing promise to shake-up the market further. That said, print still remains an incredibly popular format and over the coming years, we'll see manufacturers work to improve the way they connect their print offerings into the digital and online world.

"This is already happening, with mobile and cloud printing and smart





Steve Hawkins,
Managing Director,
Xeretec

multifunctional devices that feature an expanding range of customisable apps, which incorporate print devices into the digital document workflow. To ensure that print devices remain relevant to the modern office environment, manufacturers will investigate further opportunities to make MFDs an integral component in the digitisation, dissemination and archiving of documents."

Clive Hamilton: "Content management, cyber security, cloud services, high end inkjet, production, 3D printing and developments in A4 printing; both from a technology point of view and of course the inclusion of a varied number of apps that enable far easier print and workflow ability from your print devices.

"We all know that printed pages are declining, but document creation is on the up; we have to help the clients manage those documents and digitise their legacy documents."

Steve Hawkins: "For economic reasons, print in 2017 will be characterised by customer caution, but I think that will be true across all industries.

"Within this industry specifically, I think customers will start to show more interest in device security. Security attacks aren't going to go away, and as the realisation that MFPs could be breached increases, it's likely that more customers will ensure that their MFP is included as part of a company's broader security policy.

"I doubt that the BYOD model will fade, as it's now an established template for workers in the digital economy. With that in mind from a print perspective, it's likely we'll see more interest in mobile print solutions."

Security attacks aren't going to go away, and as the realisation that MFPs could be breached increases, it's likely that more customers will ensure that their MFP is included as part of a company's broader security policy

Matt Goodall,
Service Director,
Office Evolution

What does 2017 hold for your business?

Mark Smyth: "Vision's business plan for FY2017 continues to focus on our core offerings of managed printing solutions, managed document solutions and unified communications, with routes to market through our key sales channels in commercial, strategic corporate and public sector.

"Over the past two years, we have focused on strengthening the team in all of these important planned growth areas, with key appointments including head of strategic corporate clients, head of public sector and head of enterprise services, finance and administration areas, to support and sustain our continued growth.

"We have another aggressive budget and plan for FY2017 with double-digit growth targeted for a fifth consecutive year. We have recently enjoyed fantastic success with public sector frameworks and awards that provides Vision with the required compliance and tools to compete and win, within government, local and county councils, education and the NHS and we aim to capitalise on these opportunities with our public sector team.

"We also plan to continue our target of the right fit acquisitions and we are highly committed to acquiring in our sector in 2017!"

Phil Powell: "Next year offers significant opportunities, brought about by new and exciting technology that will hopefully continue to give the Midshire Group a competitive edge, and guarantee our continued growth.

"We forecast by the end of our financial year in August 2017, group turnover will be circa £35,000,000 with around 250 staff working from our four offices in Birmingham, Manchester,



Sheffield and Cardiff. We are proud of the fact that this has been achieved purely by organic growth, brought about by the retention of our loyal customers and the addition of new customers attracted to Midshire by what we can offer in advance of our competitors.

"Our own in-house hosted desktop product – Desktop Monster was nominated for two awards and we are confident this will be an exciting growth area for Midshire into 2017."

Matt Goodall: "We have continued to grow throughout 2016, expanding both our team and customer base. Our intentions in 2017 are to continue the approach of simple straightforward business backed up with a superb service.

"Customers have proven to like this and have been extremely loyal. Through this, combined with our investment in software training and new products from Develop, we expect another record breaking year."

Colin Griffin: "We're currently in the final stages of launching a new service management system, Service Accent. This platform will yield significant time and cost savings by providing access to up-to-date and accurate information, whilst enhancing the level of service provided to clients by speeding up maintenance and repairs and minimising equipment downtime.

"We've continued to experience growth in our document solutions and IT services and we're looking at options to expand our sales team to ensure we can continue to meet demand. We're looking forward to a busy year in 2017!"

Clive Hamilton: "Exciting opportunities in our industry offering real scope for expansion, through change and organic growth and of course through mergers and acquisitions."

Steve Hawkins: "Despite some caution, we're quietly optimistic that with some deft moves and constant attention to customer needs and requirements, as well as evolving our service and offering, we'll come out of 2017 even stronger and with more highly satisfied customers."

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Annodata: the next stage

Following the announcement of Kyocera's acquisition of Annodata, *PrintIT Reseller* spoke to Andrew Harman about what the acquisition means for the company he co-founded. For more coverage, including comments from Kyocera, please turn to page 40.

PITR: How did Annodata end up being bought by Kyocera?

Harman: We went out to the market about 12 months ago and at the end of the day we looked at the strategic benefits of being with Kyocera. They were looking at how we had developed and enhanced our proposition with IT services, which is the way the market is going. Cloud hosting, mobile telephony and a wider client offering beyond our traditional MFP/printer proposition have given us us a strategic advantage. Kyocera considered us not only because we are a business they can put into a direct proposition, but also because they can utilise the services we have been selling to our clients over the last two years.



Andrew Harman, co-founder, Annodata

PITR: Are you going to be run completely separately?

Harman: We are going to be independent and we are keeping the name Annodata. The exciting news, which was one of the reasons for doing this deal with Kyocera, is that they want us to keep all our staff. In fact, we are currently in the process of taking on an additional eight people this month (December) and another 10 or 12 next month (January), so there's quite a big expansion in place.

PITR: What are you taking on the new recruits for?

Harman: One thing is to support the recent Crown Commercial Services framework that Kyocera has won a place on (see page 41) and the framework we are on in conjunction with them (see overleaf). Another is to support some of the resellers in Kyocera's dealer channel. We will be able to offer additional services to Kyocera dealers that they currently don't have, like the cloud offering and IP services. Kyocera will be able to offer that out to their clients, along with nationwide service.

PITR: So the idea is for dealers to sell IT services delivered by you?

Harman: Effectively, Kyocera's strategy is to go to their partner channel and explain how the introduction of Annodata will give them the ability to offer digital services, saying 'Now you will be able to provide digital services to your clients, which you couldn't do before' – the majority of resellers are very localised and don't have that national service capability. Secondly, it gives Kyocera an easy route to market that they can take to their clients. Rather than investing in infrastructure themselves, dealers can utilise the services that Kyocera have acquired to offer cloud hosting, IT services, mobile print. So it gives Kyocera a proposition that they can promote and offer out to the dealer community. The third point is that Kyocera has been awarded the main Government contract and has an obligation to support that, so we are beefing

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up our operation to support the potential roll-out of that.

PITR: Kyocera make a big thing about being 100% channel, but clearly lines become blurred when they buy a dealer that continues to operate as an independent organisation. It gets confusing...

Harman: We'll be putting down some firm ground rules both to help the dealer community support their clients and to protect our clients. We are not going to be going after the dealer principal clients. There's enough opportunity to target the likes of Xerox – there's 90% of the market that we can all go after and grab. It's a great opportunity for all of us.

PITR: At the moment you also sell Canon and Ricoh. Is that mainly on the production side and how will that be affected?

Harman: The Kyocera proposition at the lower level has always been, and will continue to be, a very good fit for the market going forward. The market for production devices is smaller and includes Xerox, Konica Minolta, Ricoh and Canon.



We need to make a decision on what is going to be the best fit for us going forward.

PITR: Currently, what is the breakdown of your business between office print and IT services & telecoms?

Harman: IT services and telecoms/mobile, where we partner with HP, Microsoft, O2 and Mitel, plus the hosting services business make up 15-20% of ongoing sales and revenues and this is growing. Five years ago, the list price of a 50 copies per minute machine was a lot higher than it is today and the cost per copy was a lot higher. Annuities and overall revenues are being driven down, so just to stand still you have to sell 30% more today than five years ago. Strategically, we made the decision to look at new annuities and new services because unless you embrace additional services you are going to be left behind. Kyocera have that in their strategy too; they get that.

PITR: The acquisition of Keltec in 2014 gave you expertise in IT services, but a lot of other dealers have been slow to move into that part of the market. Why do you think that is?

Harman: Because it's not cheap – it's an expensive investment to go into that market and there isn't a short-term return. And many dealers want to follow and not lead. Sometimes, they will be guided by certain manufacturers who can't decide themselves what direction to go in. Then you've got the big IT resellers coming into the market, so the whole market is getting consolidated.

I think we will see an acceleration in the next 12 months. We are doing a lot more cloud hosting deals; that's becoming very common in our proposition to the client. IT directors are looking to work with a partner that can not only support them in the short-term, but help them with their journey going forward and take the pressure off their day to day work.

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We are doing a lot more cloud hosting deals; that's becoming very common in our proposition to the client

PITR: Is Kyocera's own cloud infrastructure, with Telehouse for example, something that you can exploit?

Harman: One of Annodata's big strengths is our flexibility. We are nimble and we understand the requirements of SME clients. The idea of the big data centre, big global accounts works for some clients, but small clients need Annodata because we are a lot more flexible, a lot more agile and the client sweet spot we are selling into absolutely fits the proposition we have been developing for the last two years. Kyocera see it as stage one – let's really embrace it and roll it out to our customers and our dealer partners in the UK and take it across Europe afterwards.

PITR: Will you be staying with the company for the foreseeable future?

Harman: One of the things that's important for Kyocera and for me is that the legacy of Annodata doesn't just continue but moves forward. The management team is staying in place and is quite excited by that. As regards me personally, I am contracted to Kyocera for the foreseeable future to make sure that this works for both parties.

www.annodata.co.uk

Framework success

Managed services provider (MSP) Annodata, recently acquired by Kyocera, has achieved a position on the Crescent Purchasing Consortium (CPC) framework for Multifunctional Devices & Associated Print Services.

The CPC aims to drive best value purchasing arrangements for the education sector and broader elements of the Public Sector, by providing members with specialist advice on best spending practices and by producing EU-tendered purchasing frameworks covering a wide variety of

products and services.

To achieve a place on the CPC framework, suppliers are evaluated on a range of criteria, including their ability to execute, pricing, support services and service portfolio. Annodata was ranked highest of all suppliers on Lot 1 (Multifunctional / Reprographic Devices and Associated Print Services and Supplies) and also secured a position on Lot 3 (Managed Print and Document Services).



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Channels to MPS

Quocirca has published a competitive overview of some of the key channel MPS offerings in the European market. The report also includes highlights from a Quocirca study, conducted in April 2016, investigating attitudes to solutions and services amongst 300 resellers in the UK, France and Germany. Louella Fernandes, Associate Director for Print Services and Solutions at Quocirca, shares her thoughts

The print channel faces challenging times. Hardware commoditisation and shrinking margins are creating the need to create new revenue opportunities around services and software.

The top concern for the channel today is competition from other resellers, noted by 56 per cent of reseller survey respondents. This was strongest in the UK, where 65 per cent reported it as a top concern. Resellers are also challenged with decreasing marketing development funds (MDF), reduced leads from vendors and a lack of marketing resources, particularly in the UK and France.

Redefining the role of the channel

The dynamic change in the way customers wish to purchase, consume and pay for their IT products and solutions is redefining the role of the channel. The momentum of cloud computing, evolution of customer choice and continued margin erosion, means that channel partners need to build a new business model that is both sustainable and flexible for the longer term.

With commoditisation driving a decline in hardware profit margins, the print channel needs to look beyond transactional sales towards building a services model that enables recurring revenue, new incremental revenue streams and longer term customer relationships.

Channel-packaged MPS offerings aimed at smaller and mid-market businesses vary in depth and scale. An entry-level MPS for example, offers a way for smaller organisations to purchase printers combined with supplies, maintenance and support, through an all-inclusive contract. Customers can choose to purchase devices outright or lease them.

With some contracts, users only pay for what they print. However, there may still be a commitment to a service contract for a minimum period. Depending on their capabilities, resellers may offer additional services as part of an MPS, such as assessments, device consolidation consultancy or document workflow solutions. Some also offer flexible packages



Louella Fernandes,
Associate Director,
Print Services and
Solutions,
Quocirca

Resellers that want to offer MPS may find themselves with a need to build new platforms and design new services

that enable businesses to scale up their usage as they grow.

Untapped opportunity

The channel plays a critical role in how print manufacturers address the largely untapped SMB opportunity. However, resellers face many challenges in making the transition to MPS. For many, the service delivery, billing and internal processing involved with MPS, requires a step into the unknown.

Resellers that want to offer MPS may find themselves with a need to build new platforms and design new services, alongside managing billing processes and service delivery to support their customers' demands. Dealers must ensure they can execute successfully in bringing new MPS offerings to market. They need to understand exactly what their customers want and position their offering to address this.

Without previous experience in MPS, this can present a high risk. In many cases, these challenges can be too high an obstacle to overcome, particularly for smaller resellers that do not have the time, resources or funds to invest in an entirely new business model.

Making MPS accessible

More print manufacturers are simplifying and expanding their channel propositions to make MPS accessible, regardless of the MPS maturity of the channel partner.

Today, many print manufacturers are leveraging existing enterprise MPS infrastructure to develop flexible channel-led MPS offerings. Because of the disparate nature of the printer and copier reseller channel, manufacturers recognise the need to develop a broad range of modular services with options to suit the expertise and maturity of each of their channel partners.

The report provides a comprehensive overview of the MPS programmes from major vendors including HP, Lexmark, Samsung and Xerox. These vendors are developing a broad range of support; including centralised portals, technical resources and support, as well as marketing and financial aid, generally accessible via cloud-based platforms. This helps resellers maximise their chances of succeeding.

Xerox has an established lead here with decades of experience in delivering MPS through its channel partners. It has a broad continuum of offerings from a single device to full MPS and perhaps one of the most advanced channel partner communities in the industry.

HP is catching up, having spent the past few years refining and simplifying its channel-led MPS programmes. From simple 'print-as-a-service' to broader MPS offerings, HP has removed the complexity of its previous patchwork model for MPS. Its acquisition of Samsung's printer business and its push into the A3/copier market relies on effective engagement of the channel. As such, the coming year will be critical for HP in recruiting not only the right type of partners for its A3 business, but also in driving momentum in its traditional channel base.

A full report is available to purchase separately directly from Quocirca.
www.quocirca.com

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Kodak Alaris Information Management launches all-new partner programme

With the launch of its new global partner programme, Kodak Alaris is targeting further growth within the channel. The company is aiming to significantly increase its share of channel business in 2017 and beyond, providing a modern portal experience that empowers partners to grow their business and earn more with Kodak Alaris

Kodak Alaris Information Management (IM) business has upped the ante in terms of supporting channel partners to expand their businesses. The reinvigorated partner programme provides a variety of tools and resources to enable resellers and distributors to better connect with customers, and grow – through lead generation, expanded rewards and marketing programmes, greater margin opportunities and solutions that help partners secure recurrent revenue streams. The key elements of the programme will be consistent across all of the countries in which Kodak Alaris IM division operates.

Three-tiered programme

Kodak Alaris' new partner programme has three tiers, with membership at each level determined by a number of criteria including annual revenue, certified sales staff, accredited technical resources and



whether the partner offers Kodak Alaris service.

Registered partners have access to sales tools and incentives via a dedicated web portal. Premiere partners enjoy additional benefits including marketing tools and partnership commitment incentives, while Elite partners are able to tap into comprehensive sales and marketing resources, expanded rewards and partnership commitment incentives.

Odile Silva Di Mascio, Partner Marketing and Campaign Manager, Kodak Alaris said: "Over 90 per cent of our business is conducted through the channel. From order fulfillment and supply chain management, to solution implementation and managing the business relationship, our partners drive our success. This new programme puts partners at the centre of our relationship with customers."

Expand, connect, grow

The new programme is underpinned by three key pillars designed to help partners:

- **Expand** their offerings with a portfolio of world-class distributed and production scanners, capture solutions and service;
- **Connect** with customers via leads through demand generation programs, sales enablers, content-driven marketing and state-of-the-art automation tools, delivered by the partner portal;
- **Grow** profitable revenue with a lucrative channel programme that includes best-in-class sales tools, training and incentives.

Odile added: "We pride ourselves on being easy to work with, each of our partners has a single point of contact for

continued...



Odile Silva Di Mascio,
Partner Marketing and
Campaign Manager,
Kodak Alaris

Elite partners are able to tap into comprehensive sales and marketing resources, expanded rewards and partnership commitment incentives

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all resources and assistance. Secondly, we are committed to providing our partners with a competitive advantage, ensuring they fully understand what they're selling, through the provision of in-depth product information that can be accessed and digested quickly, as well as technical support, training and assistance as and when required. Finally, we're dedicated to helping our partners make more money, and through this programme, we will offer tailored incentives as well as the support they need to close sales and win new business."

One of the major new developments in the revamped partner programme has been the launch of a dedicated partner portal. The mobile responsive site is easy to use. Access is via a one click, single sign-on process, enabling partners to conduct business anywhere, from any device. Furthermore, opportunity management, business planning, market development funds and support requests, are all fully integrated with Kodak Alaris' CRM system, streamlining processes and saving time for partners.

Business generation

Kodak Alaris is offering partners its full support across the entire selling cycle. As part of its commitment to help resellers win new business, the company will run a number of global campaigns. Partners will be able to build a pipeline with qualified leads secured from demand generation programmes driven by Kodak Alaris IM.

A new streamlined process within the partner portal enables resellers to seamlessly register deals, faster, with fewer steps. Comprehensive pre-sales support with co-branded collateral, sales tools, training and support, is also available. Kodak Alaris will vet, qualify and analyse the customer need, as well as develop a solution, and importantly, the reseller retains ownership of each lead.

In addition, the portal affords easy access to a range of marketing automation tools and assets, enabling resellers to create bespoke campaigns.

As part of the newly launched partner programme, Kodak Alaris has also redesigned reseller benefits and bonuses, and introduced a number of selling and partnership incentives. Access to additional incentives increases in line with the resellers' business commitment to Kodak Alaris.

An integrated approach

Kodak Alaris believes that there is a tremendous opportunity for resellers to grow their businesses by helping customers with their information management challenges. "Our partners have access



Kodak Alaris has also redesigned reseller benefits and bonuses, and introduced a number of selling and partnership incentives

to best-in-class technology that enables organisations to capture, recognise and extract information from data; innovative software to share and integrate data with business processes and applications; as well as professional service, training, support and consultation – all of which combined, will help them win more deals," Odile said.

"The digital age is upon us and paper-based processes are no longer viable. Businesses need to be more responsive and ensure that information is readily available anytime, anywhere and from any device. The cost savings associated with removing paper can be significant, enabling organisations to focus on innovation, growth and the future, and that's a compelling message for partners to communicate to customers," she added.

Odile argues that the fact that we are managing more information than ever, makes the requirement to create efficient systems to handle it much more pressing. "Businesses are dealing with an explosion of data, which is complicated by the mix of paper and digital. According to InfoTrends,

more than 58 per cent of external inputs companies receive is still in paper format," she said.

"Organisations should be getting smarter about data, taking steps to adapt their business models and processes to combine both hard copy and digital files, to ensure that information is no longer an under-utilised asset," she added. "This presents an opportunity for the channel to get stickier with customers, by opening up a new conversation that encourages them to look closer at their document management and archive processes and to propose a solution that will help them to use data to drive business efficiency, growth and profitability."

Growth areas

Kodak Alaris has identified a number of traditionally paper-intensive sectors such as financial services, legal and healthcare, as huge growth areas for the channel. "Digital transformation is central to the Government's plans for transforming the NHS as it works towards achieving a paper-free health and care system by 2020 for example," said Odile.

The AIIM 'Paper-Free in 2016, Are we there yet?' report also confirms the significant opportunity that the move toward digital transformation and paperless working practices present. "25 per cent of the businesses polled indicated that they run a totally paper-free environment, which suggests that the majority of firms are still ripe to target," she commented.

In the same report, 42 per cent of respondents cited higher productivity as one of the biggest benefits of removing paper, and two-thirds said that the demand for paperless processes is on the rise.

The AIIM research points to the fact that in many cases, people aren't aware that there is an alternative way – 39 per cent of the businesses surveyed cited a lack of understanding and awareness when it comes to paper-free options. "Herein lies a fantastic opportunity for the channel to increase their customers' understanding of digital transformation and talk to them about the better, faster and more cost-efficient technological options that are available to them," Odile said in conclusion.

Kodak Alaris will officially launch the new programme in the EMEA region on February 1 during its Partner Summit in Lisbon. Other regions will launch later in the year.

For more information on the Kodak Alaris partner programme please visit www.kodakalaris.co.uk/en-gb/b2b/partner-programs





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Print Audit EMEA expands its offer

Phil Madders, Managing Director of Print Audit EMEA, shared details of some exciting new product launches and explained how the company is geared to deliver further value-added opportunities for partners in 2017



Phil Madders, Managing Director, Print Audit EMEA

Since the launch of its Premier partner programme in 2014, the number of channel partners has more than doubled. Madders estimates that across Europe, the company currently has in excess of 300 resellers signed up.

The company extended Premier membership via its European-wide distribution partners – the main ones being Katun, Toshiba (Italy), Olivetti and Ricoh (UK), and according to Madders, this played a key role in meeting its objective to proactively target further expansion by growing its network significantly.

“Across the past two years, as a business we have enjoyed steady consistent growth year on year,” he said. “In 2016, our overall business grew by 24 per cent and we’re targeting to continue that growth trajectory through 2017.”

Madders sees much of this future growth coming from a number of new products it is adding to its portfolio. “We also assumed responsibility for the Middle East and Africa regions last year which will also add to the growth,” he explained.

Comprehensive and scalable

The company’s suite of products is designed to support resellers delivering managed print services to provide customers with the opportunity to reduce the cost and environmental impact of printing. “Print audits seem to have come full circle and are very much back in fashion,” Madders commented. “We’ve seen an increasing number of enquiries from channel partners for user and device assessment tools in recent months,” he added.

The offering is comprehensive and scalable, from Print Audit Facilities Manager, which simplifies MPS delivery for the reseller by remotely collecting meter readings, automating supplies fulfilment and providing service information across the fleet; to Print Audit 6, which enables users to account for every document produced per individual user, allows limits to be set by volume, or to

restrict colour printing, and via its embedded option tracks copying, scanning and faxing, to permit accurate internal recharging by department if required.

New solutions

Print Audit is introducing some new products for 2017. These include MySalesDrive, a new auditing tool designed to streamline data collection. This new solution will enable dealers to seamlessly build proposals and produce reports on total cost of ownership and environmental impact. “We did a soft launch to partners the first week of January and it was really well received with two signing up on the spot,” Madders said.

The company has also partnered with a UK based company to develop a solution that enables partners to improve how they analyse and leverage data collected from customers’ fleets. “We have developed a dashboard that interrogates our device management and assessment software and provides business intelligence. It marries device utilisation, user behaviour, application utilisation and toner usage. It also updates automatically and provides partners with a quick view of key performance indicators, from our MPS portfolio,” Madders explained.

The new solution which will be launched in Q1 this year, will also have the capability to plug into other software such as service management systems, a functionality that will enable resellers to bring different silos of information into one place. This can be used internally to run the business, and as a

sales tool for key accounts or winning new business. It takes complex data and makes it simple to analyse and present.

“Our core product range remains extremely relevant but we are focusing on enhancing and refining what we do, extending our offer and giving dealers added value,” Madders added.

Seat-based billing

One major development is within seat-based billing (SBB) for managed print. “This is a totally new concept and is being driven out of head office in Canada,” Madders said. “We have just partnered with Great America Leasing to present the market’s first SBB financing options for managed print. That’s something we’re looking at closely, with a view to rolling out across other regions.”

Whilst SBB is a model widely adopted in the IT sector, up until now it hasn’t gained any traction within the print world. “It’s about aligning the dealers’ offer with the customer need,” Madders commented. “There is a disconnect between the customers’ wish to print less and save more, and the dealers’ desire for them to increase volumes in a bid to secure revenues. What we are proposing is a move away from the traditional cost per page model, which means that reductions in volume actually benefits both parties in the deal. It’s quite radical, but it was designed in partnership with 29 US office equipment dealers and is already winning business. A number of our UK partners are looking at it as a way of protecting margins.”

Print Audit sells exclusively to the channel and offers partners a flexible subscription plan that provides access to all of its products for a low monthly fee. Madders said: “The Premier pricing model is totally flexible, we’ve designed it to support dealers for whom MPS is a new area, as well as those who require the ability to seamlessly adjust the number of licences they deploy as customer requirements change.”

He added: “The biggest challenge the channel is facing now is pressure on margin and we can help them to add value to customers’ businesses and ensure recurrent revenues. We’re committed to supporting partners in moving their businesses forward.” www.paebusiness.com

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Integra celebrates 20 years

2017 is set to be an exciting one for the UK and Ireland's leading office and IT supplies dealer group. *PrintIT Reseller* caught up with Aidan McDonough, Integra Business Solutions' CEO, to talk about the group's past, present and future

Integra was founded in 1997 as a result of a merger between NDA and Instat, the first dealer group of its kind, so technically speaking, whilst this year marks the group's 20th anniversary, its heritage actually spans closer to three decades.

Today, the group, which has continued to maintain its strong position within the industry, despite many challenges over the years, boasts a membership of around 250 independent dealers. "Our membership has remained stable over the past couple of years, the majority of members have been with us since the beginning and many former Instat members chose to stay with us post-merger," McDonough explained.

"As an industry we've faced some tough challenges during the last two decades. The number of independent dealerships continues to shrink, largely down to the increasing trend for mergers and acquisitions, but also in part due to business failures. We have seen margins eroded in areas including EOS and new opportunities come on the back of new categories such as managed print, 3D printers, FM and furniture for example. However despite the ever-changing climate, we have continued to grow and strengthen the business for our members," he added.

Integra dealers have access to exceptional buying power. This is further boosted by the fact that Integra is a member of Business Products Groups International (BPGI), of which McDonough is Chairman. "Integra membership is very much about supporting dealers to run their business, ensuring they have the right tools and information to make conducting business easier," McDonough said.



Aidan McDonough,
CEO, Integra
Business Solutions

With price increases a major concern for the channel post-Brexit, the group announced a price freeze on all Initiative products

Key differentiators

He added: "We pride ourselves on what we firmly believe is a unique offer in terms of differentiated marketing programmes, creative services, flexible IT solutions, and other added value and managed support services."

Integra sees its 'Initiative' brand as a key differentiator for members who have exclusive access to over 800 products supported by a comprehensive marketing programme, consumer website and ongoing promotions.

With price increases a major concern for the channel post-Brexit, the group announced a price freeze on all Initiative products up until December 2016. "We felt it was key to offer stable pricing that our members could rely on and the price freeze was designed to allow them to maintain their margins," McDonough said.

Integra's 2017 Marketing Programme, Open for Business, features a wide range of marketing material in both printed and digital formats, enabling dealers to adopt a multi-faceted approach to promoting their products and services.

It now incorporates new marketing solution 'Infuse'. This all-encompassing offering gives members access to a range of flexible, managed services to generate awareness and help support the marketing function within their businesses.

Co-operative model

In October 2015, Integra purchased 100% of the group's share capital from independent investor, Hemel Holdings Ltd.

"The board took the decision to conduct the buyback as we believed that the interests of our members were not best



served by a private investor," McDonough said. "What we have done now is to revert to a co-operative model, creating a business that is owned and run by the dealers and we have recently issued shares to all our members. This not only allows us to protect our members' best interests, but also to continue our focused approach to growth and the further development of services and solutions to benefit the independent dealer and our industry partners."

Integra will be holding elections to appoint three new non-executive directors to the board early this year.

The repurchase was swiftly followed by the group unveiling its new company name, Integra Business Solutions and new corporate identity, a move designed to further emphasise its commitment to remaining ahead of the game in a dynamically changing industry.

"The new company name and identity was designed to better reflect the dealer group we have evolved into and to underpin our core values and vision for a bright future with dynamic, progressive dealers," McDonough explained.

National Conference

Integra's 'Celebrating 20 Years' National Conference will take place at the Crowne Plaza, Stratford-Upon-Avon on September 28. Members and key partners will be invited to celebrate in style and to enjoy an exciting line-up of guest speakers and entertainment at a 'Glanz & Glamour' Gala Dinner.

To celebrate its milestone anniversary and to thank members for their continued support, Integra will also be announcing some exciting initiatives throughout 2017 in the form of special supplier promotions, additional pricing support, rebates and prize draws, with some overseas trips to be won.

"Integra's 20th Anniversary marks an important milestone and is a reflection of the ongoing support and commitment shown by our members and key partners. As a group we are all looking forward to continued success in 2017," McDonough said in conclusion.

www.integra-business.co.uk

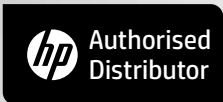




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Ref. U6M82E

¹ Compared with the majority of color laser AiOs < €500, August 2015; market share as reported by IDC as of Q2 2015. Cost-per-page (CPP) comparisons for laser supplies are based on published specifications of the manufacturers' highest-capacity cartridges and long-life consumables. CPP comparisons for high-capacity HP ink supplies are based on published specifications of the manufacturers' highest-capacity cartridges. CPP based on high-capacity ink cartridges' estimated street price and page yield. ISO yield based on continuous printing in default mode. For more information, see <http://www.hp.com/go/learnabouthsupplies>.
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Lyreco has scooped three high profile awards recognising its commitment to becoming a more sustainable business and lowering its environmental footprint

Lyreco celebrates triple award win



Roger Wolens from The Green Organization with Mike Tuzzio – Public Sector Divisional Director (Lyreco) and Manel Roura – QSS Manager (Lyreco)

The company earned a Green Apple Award for its ongoing strategy to reduce its impact on the environment. The Green Apple Environment Awards, launched in 1994 by The Green Organisation, have become well established as one of the most popular environmental campaigns in the world.

As a result of the win, Lyreco has been invited to have its winning paper published in The Green Book, the leading international work of reference on environmental best practice, so other organisations around the world can follow and learn from its example.

The workplace and office supplies specialist also picked up the Environment and Sustainability Award at the SHD Logistics Awards, which celebrate excellence in the logistics industry. In the event review, the judges said: "Zero landfill and its reduction in electricity consumption by 39 per cent is impressive and the overall approach is highly comprehensive."

It also scooped the Environmental Award at the British Office Supplies & Services (BOSS) Industry Awards for the fifth year in a row. In the BOSS magazine, the judges reported: "Above and beyond

the criteria, Lyreco's submission stood out, which clearly demonstrated evidence of the fantastic environmental work they are doing."

Managing Director Peter Hradisky said: "These awards are external verification that our five-year strategy to reduce our environmental impact in every step of Lyreco's business is working."

Eco-Future strategy

The company launched its five-year 'Eco-Future' mid-term sustainable strategy which has three areas of development – environmental protection, social responsibility and economic success, in 2012.

Lyreco's vision for this strategy is to be the 'Reference for Sustainable Workplace Supplies Solutions'. It has implemented a series of environmentally-friendly initiatives in its Telford-based HQ and National Distribution Centre (NDC), as well as its network of 27 Regional Distribution Centres and satellite centres in the UK and Ireland.

Last year it installed a roof mounted solar photovoltaic system – the fourth largest in the UK – at its National Distribution Centre. The system is capable of generating 3.22 GWh/year which is more than the 2.75 GWh used by Lyreco



in 2015. This initiative will make Lyreco head office and the NDC electrically carbon neutral.

The project on its own, will help the company to reduce 1,700 tonnes of CO2 per year, equivalent to 10 per cent of the total company CO2 emissions. In the last four years, it has reduced its carbon footprint by 10 per cent and the solar PV project will bring the company on target to meet its Eco-Future carbon footprint reduction of 20 per cent by the end of 2017.

Other energy efficiency measures introduced, include replacing legacy energy-intensive halogen lamps in the 55,000 sq. m. NDC with new high efficiency T5 luminaries with dual sensors. This resulted in a 60 per cent saving in electricity consumption. LED lighting has been gradually introduced into the three-storey head office building and car park areas and the main compressor and heating have also been replaced. A monthly energy committee has raised the profile of energy management, and the firm has achieved an overall 39 per cent electricity savings in the last four years.

Waste reduction

The company also achieved zero landfill at the National Distribution Centre and head office with a recycling rate of 97 per cent. Since 2012, general waste has been reduced by 42 per cent – from 91 to 53 tonnes a year. And, working in partnership with NISP (National Industrial Symbiosis Programme), it has developed several resource efficiency case studies.

A local company re-uses its pallet toppers which used to be recycled as mulch. Additionally, waxed paper coming from label backing (in spools) is used by a regional company to produce packaging protection material, reducing its yearly landfill by 2.25 tonnes. In addition all head

These awards are external verification that our five-year strategy to reduce our environmental impact in every step of Lyreco's business is working

office (including kitchen and restaurant) waste food (7.2 tonnes a year) is diverted to a local anaerobic digester to produce electricity and fertilisers.

Green products selection is carried out through green claims standard ISO 14020, ensuring transparency in its criteria. Lyreco also has a well-established social auditing programme for all Lyreco branded products manufactured in developing countries which covers social, human rights and health, safety and environmental conditions. Lyreco is committed to carry out audits at all manufacturing sites for imported products to ensure good management of environment, social and human rights. As a consequence, a number of manufacturing sites have been de-listed due to not reaching the required standard.

The firm is also committed to sustainable packaging by not repacking goods, using recyclable material and optimising parcels, it also offers recycling of batteries, toners and paper to its customers.

Two years ago it introduced TomTom Telematics and tracking systems to the 315 vans in its fleet, with the aim of increasing fuel efficiency and promoting safer driver behaviour. In that time, it has achieved a 13 per cent saving in fuel/delivery in the UK and a 32 per cent reduction in Ireland, through improved route optimisation.

Employee engagement

To engage employees in sustainability issues, Lyreco has established two annual environmental awareness campaigns – Christmas and World Environmental Day. Donations and money raised on the campaigns is given to the Woodland Trust to support various conservation projects. A monthly "Eco-future bulletin" is also issued to enhance internal sustainability communication.

Its biodiversity protection plan includes the development of an internal eco garden in partnership with Shropshire Wildlife Trust and with the support of internal

employees. With the engagement of customers and suppliers in the project, Lyreco reconverted a picnic area to a conservation area where employees can still enjoy lunch breaks.

The next step on the project is water harvesting including the introduction of SUDS to top up the natural pond. Re-use of materials in the project such as using the old conveyor belt as a weed control membrane in paths and picnic areas, was an integral part of the planning.

Another project developed in 2016 was the introduction of two beehives at head office, a move designed to raise awareness on biodiversity protection and especially on the bee population decline.

Community presence

Lyreco is a BESST steering committee member, a local resource efficiency club with over 70 members with the aim of enhancing the environmental performance of local businesses. It organises environmental best practice visits and workshops on environmental management and sustainability topics to support members.

In addition, the company is a key member of the Telford Crisis Network committee group, which was set up to provide support to individuals and families in financial crisis. As well as providing support on the steering group, it has carried out a number of internal campaigns for food collection.

"We continuously strive to be a more sustainable organisation by researching ways we can reduce our environmental impact and increase our contribution to local community and society while engaging employees, suppliers and customers, on the journey," Hradisky said.

"Sustainability is embedded in all areas of our business and I am looking forward to seeing what we can achieve in the next five years," he added.

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Quality, Safety and Sustainability Manager Manel Roura and Facilities Manager Jamie Mills, of Lyreco with some of the honey made by the company's bees, one of the firm's sustainability projects

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* Infosource Market Trends, 2016



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KYOCERA acquires Annodata

KYOCERA Document Solutions has completed the landmark acquisition of Annodata, one of the UK's largest independent providers of managed print and ICT services

This is not the first channel acquisition the company has made. In February 2016, Kyocera UK bought the remaining 80 per cent share of a smaller UK dealership. But importantly, the acquisition of Annodata was led by Kyocera Corporation in Japan, a move which characterises the size of the deal, as well as one which signals the company's intention to draw on Annodata's expertise to strengthen its channel partner programme with the addition of ICT services, on a global scale.

Founded in 1988, Annodata is a national managed services provider. The company brings together a range of specialist services including managed print services, unified communications, document management and software, mobile telephony, communication services and cloud hosting services.

Commenting on the deal, Hironao Katsukura, Kyocera UK Managing Director said that the UK has been a major success story over the past seven years and that the acquisition gives Kyocera a great platform to further grow throughout the region in the coming years. "Annodata is a well-established, influential national

player with similar business ideals to our own, as well as having important vendors, technologies and a very strong value-adding culture in common," he added.

Independence to remain

Kyocera UK Marketing Director Nigel Allen, told *PrintIT Reseller* that although overall responsibility of the business will rest with Kyocera, Annodata will remain a completely separate business entity, with its own independent strategy and management team. "Annodata will continue to work as an independent dealership and we will keep the brand, albeit referencing that Annodata is now part of the Kyocera family," he said.

Annodata co-founders Andrew and Tim Harman, will continue to support the Annodata management team, bringing a wealth of knowledge and customer relationships gained from almost 30 years at the helm of the business.

Andrew Harman said: "This marks a significant opportunity for our partners, customers and people as we become part of the global Kyocera family and continue the journey we started back in 1988. With the significant resources and support of Kyocera we can remain committed to our principles, innovate new solutions and services tailored to rapidly changing market needs, and ensure we are well placed to meet customer demands."

Customer choice

The dealership has long-standing relationships with a number of printer manufacturers including Canon, Kyocera, HP and Ricoh. One could argue that this could present a potential conflict and begs the question that Annodata will ultimately become a single-line reseller. But Allen insists that will not necessarily be the case.

"We are one of Annodata's largest print suppliers and have about 55 per cent of MIF," he said. "Yes, we do of course want to further increase our sales, but what we have to do is respect their customers' wishes. As a manufacturer, we have to accept that some customers chose

Tim Harman,
co-founder,
Annodata



Annodata will remain a completely separate business entity, with its own independent strategy and management team

to partner with an independent reseller as opposed to an OEM. That's a route many businesses go down in order to have choice."

Allen acknowledged that other vendors have particular strengths in certain markets, which makes them a better fit for some customers. "We respect that," he said, adding that it will be ultimately down to the other manufacturers if they wish to continue partnering with a business that is now wholly owned by a competitor.

There were a number of reasons behind the acquisition. First and foremost, according to Allen, was the fact that Annodata has successfully developed its offer and is successfully delivering ICT services. "The deal significantly increases our capabilities, adding further value to our already extensive product offering with the addition of ICT services," he explained.

A changing marketplace

"Over the past twelve months we've seen a lot of consolidation in the market,



from the OEMs' point of view – Foxconn Technology Group acquired Sharp, Samsung sold its printing business to HP and more recently Lexmark announced the completion of its acquisition by Apex Technology and PAG Asia Capital. The number of resellers is also shrinking, with many being bought up by some of the bigger players and their operations integrated into their businesses," Allen said.

Allen believes that this pattern will continue. "We will see more moves, a number of dealership business owners have got to an age or a point where they are weighing up options and reviewing what they want to do in the future. I firmly believe that there will be more consolidation and the market will shrink further."

He added that the acquisition provided Kyocera with an opportunity to future-proof both its own and its partners' businesses. "We needed to secure our route to market. Print is an important market for us but we also see a real value-add in the ability to widen our offer and extend further into the ICT solutions arena. Over the past four years Annodata has been very successful integrating this into their business model and winning deals that don't involve print."

Strengthen channel offering

Kyocera will be drawing on the expertise of Annodata to strengthen the offering of its Channel Partner Programme for the UK and Ireland with the addition of ICT services.

"We will be looking at Annodata's model and developing it so that our other channel partners can benefit on a global scale," Allen explained. "Our dealers have a loyal customer base and evolving their go to market strategy and having the ability to offer new services, presents a great opportunity for them to secure more margin and more revenue."

A sound approach when you consider that IDC believes that in the current market, imaging vendors need to extend their capabilities beyond managed print to incorporate ICT services. Mick Heys, VP Printing Imaging and Document Solutions at IDC said: "Such enhanced offerings will allow them and their channel partners to secure a stronger foothold in existing accounts and to win new business."

Kyocera believes that the channel's



contribution in supporting its growth is crucial and remains committed to this as its primary route to market. "We are a channel business, the UK operation is 100 per cent channel, there are a few variations here and there, but worldwide, the vast majority of our business is transacted through our channel partners," Allen said.

"Over the past few years, the company has bucked the trend in terms of sales when compared to sector performance. Our plan for next year is to maintain double-digit growth and we will achieve that via our channel partners and by finding the best routes to market in an ever changing landscape," he added.

"The message to our channel partners is a strong one and the news has been well received. We are a transparent company, we contacted our customers to tell them about this deal and explain the rationale behind it. In the main they agree that it is a good move.

"This acquisition adds significant capabilities to our overall proposition for the channel and maintains our commitment to support resellers of all sizes to increase expertise and leverage our solutions to better align their services with the rapidly evolving needs of customers, which ultimately boosts value," Allen said in conclusion.

kyoceradocumentsolutions.co.uk

Our plan for next year is to maintain double-digit growth and we will achieve that via our channel partners and by finding the best routes to market



Crown Commercial Service

KYOCERA wins place on government framework

KYOCERA has been awarded a place on the Government's Crown Commercial Service (CCS) RM3781 framework.

The company has secured a presence on Lot 2 for Multifunctional Devices and Print Management Software and Services for its printers, multifunctional products and portfolio of software solutions.

The CCS RM3781 framework was announced in August last year, with the aim of catering for the public sector's multifunctional device, managed print services and records information management needs. Valued at between £500 million and £700 million over the four-year term, the framework agreement is split into seven Lots and will serve public sector organisations including local and central government, as well as NHS organisations, catering for a reduction in print volumes and increasing move towards the digitisation of records. The framework is awarded for a maximum four-year period.

Sales Director Graham Cox said: "We're delighted to have been successful in our application to join the Crown Commercial Service RM3781 framework Lot 2. We're proud of our long tradition in working with the public sector over the past 25 years to solve print problems and reduce costs and see this as a glowing endorsement of our track record."

He added: "Organisations throughout the public sector are facing increasing pressures. They're experiencing a growing demand for public services, higher than they've ever seen before, coupled with constant budget restrictions and central initiatives to digitise services. This is another route for our customers to procure print services in a compliant and cost-effective way and we're delighted to be working with our strong network of trusted partners to support the UK Government's efforts."

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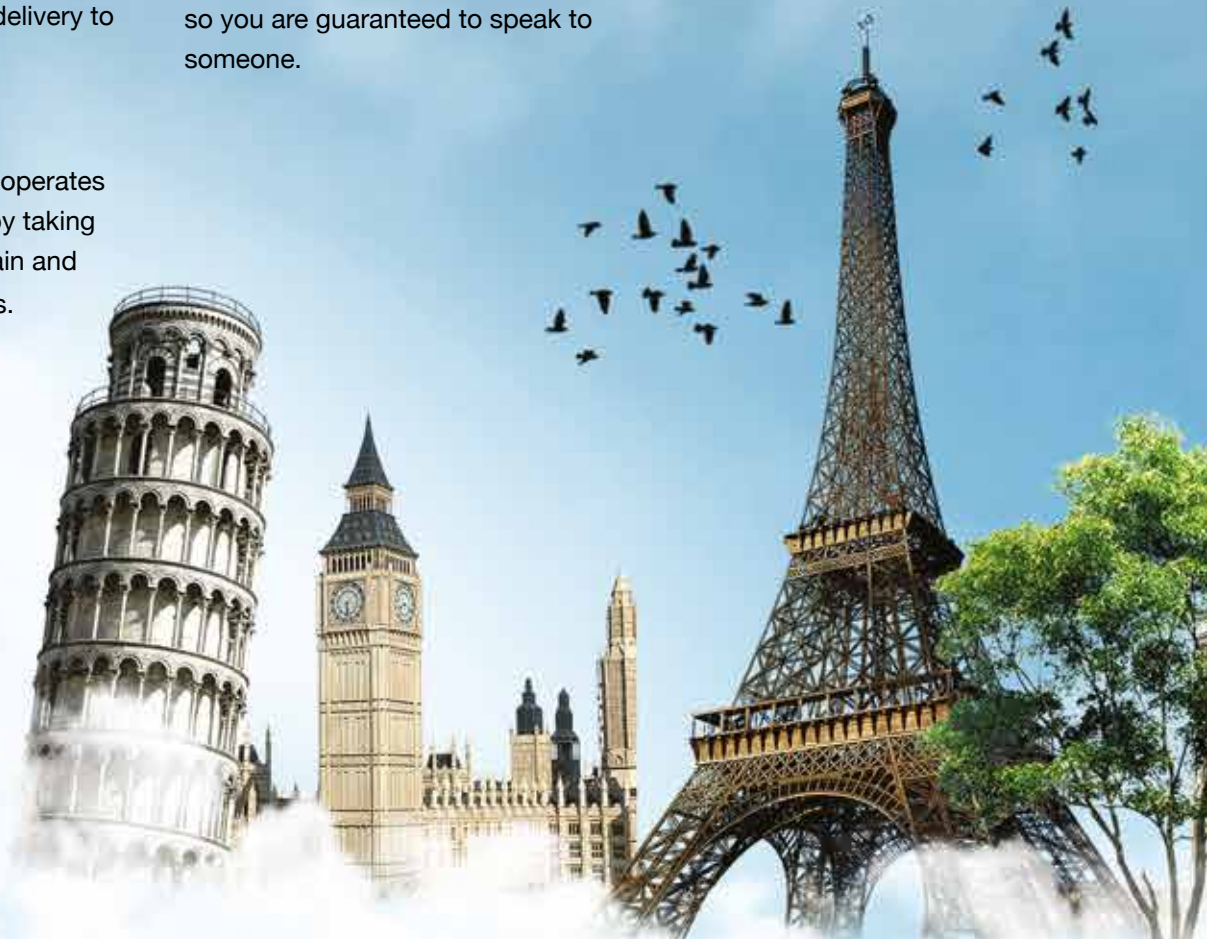
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VOW Green Light

VOW's Green Light event which took place on December 2 at the Hilton Birmingham Metropole, NEC, played host to around 400 reseller delegates

Managing Director Adrian Butler kicked off the 'Transformation is now' themed pioneering cross-category event opening by asserting the fact that he wants resellers to "have confidence in our commitments".

Butler's address included an update on VOW's strategy and focus areas for 2017, focusing on the value of wholesale, how the industry can counteract threats from giants such as Amazon, latest market trends and growth areas.

He also provided an update on VOW's performance and the Group's financial results, as well as outlining how the wholesaler had spent 2016 getting in shape and is now set to kick off 2017 with renewed vigour and focus.

Having seen unprecedented levels of price increases post-Brexit – over 200 core brands have increased on average by six per cent, Butler suggested that dependent on the mix, the increases could be up to 20 per cent in some instances. "It's market-wide," he said, "You have got to pass the price increases through."



Keynote speakers

The event included a packed agenda of content. The morning's keynote speakers included 'The Telephone Assassin' Anthony Stears, who shared ideas designed to get businesses talking again and stop people from hiding behind emails and social media. His insightful presentation centred on helping the audience find new ways to get in front of more of their ideal customers and getting more business from their existing customers.

The session covered top tips on how to avoid rejection, get past the gatekeeper, perfect a pitch and quickly build rapport over the phone.



Geoff Ramm

Geoff Ramm's lively 'Celebrity Service' keynote speech challenged the audience to think smarter and create better, leaving them with the mindset to continually stay ahead of the competition. His delivery was both energetic and entertaining, as he took delegates on a journey of memorable customer service and marketing ideas. Ramm outlined what is different about Celebrity Service, arming delegates with a number of different techniques to apply in their own businesses to open up new opportunities.

Ruth Marshall-Johnson from The Future Laboratory discussed key workplace trends and shared insight into what is driving transformation in the workplace, including how Digital Mindsets, Bleisure, the New Worker and Womanomics are having an influence. She explained why it is important to embrace new forms of workplace flexibility and use highly visual communication to cut across all divides of the workforce. Practical examples and an Innovator's Toolkit to enable delegates to respond to the impact of these trends on their businesses, were shared on the day.

Anthony Stears,
'The Telephone
Assassin'

Ruth Marshall-
Johnson,
The Future
Laboratory



Exhibition

Attendees also took the opportunity to visit the exhibition where more than 80 exhibitors including headline sponsors ExaClair, ACCO and Fellowes, promoted new products and the latest innovations to help resellers kick start plans for 2017.

As an event exclusive, Polaroid Play showcased its brand new Polaroid Play 3D Pen that will be commercially available from February.

The very first VOW Immersive Experience which aims to capture the imagination with a conceptualised display of workplace environments took centre stage at the exhibition. Designed to demonstrate new category and product ideas to drive sales growth, the walkthrough stand with a showroom-style layout featured reception, washroom, kitchen, office, meeting room and classroom environments, with products relevant to each area.



Focus sessions

Focus sessions taking place in the afternoon included a session by Matt Trimmer on how resellers can transform their Google Analytics and AdWords. Trimmer is the Principal Consultant and Managing Director of ivantage, a leading provider of hands-on, in depth and detailed training for digital professionals. He is listed on Google.com with only 14 others authorised to train exclusively for Google's Seminars Success programme. Today, he is one of the world's leading experts in Google Analytics, Google Tag

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Manager, Search Engine Optimisation and Digital Marketing.

In research conducted by ACCO Brands, nearly half of office workers expressed an interest in products specifically aimed at improving their health and wellbeing, representing significant new business and revenue opportunities for office products resellers. With this in mind, ACCO's Strategic Account Manager Charlie Wallis led a session on workplace wellbeing, arming delegates with the knowledge to boost sales of desktop and individual workspace solutions.

David Thomas, who is known for having one of the world's most powerful memories, hosted an immediate memory transformation workshop. During this interactive session, Thomas shared his strategies with delegates.

'The Telephone Assassin' Anthony Stears, also conducted an additional focus session for delegates looking to learn more about transforming their sales calls and VOW's Technology Category Director Gilly Blackburn, held an exclusive focus session for HP attended partners, providing an overview of the likely changes that are to be implemented in 2017.

Ricky Gervais lookalike Tim Oliver, who is one of the stars of Lookalikes on Channel 4, also made a special appearance during the day and evening. The lively David Brent from 'The Office' impersonator, entertained the audience in style. From awkward dances to completely inappropriate, cringe worthy behaviour both on and off stage, he successfully had the audience in stitches as he brought The Office to life.

Commercial and Marketing Director, Heather McManus, who was also the host and compère for the event, said: "I am very proud of the VOW team who have once again raised the bar at Green Light to make this an integral part of the industry's event calendar. Feedback received on the day has told us that the theme of 'Transformation is Now', the exciting array of new products at the exhibition, the content and agenda of the day has all helped kick start plans for 2017 and equip our reseller delegates with valuable ideas." www.greenlightevent.com

Green Light Gala Awards

The Green Light Gala Awards ceremony was held in the evening, with the awards jointly presented by VOW's Channel Director Nikki Todd and National Sales Director Martin Weedall. The evening ended with a grand after-party, another first since Green Light's inception.

SUPPLIER AWARDS

This year saw the introduction of new supplier award categories. The winners announced on the night included:

SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR
Brother



Brother

SUPPLIER ACCOUNT MANAGER OF THE YEAR
Helen Wade, Fellowes

PRODUCT OF THE YEAR
Bi-Silque Ultrabrite Boards



Helen Wade, Fellowes

STAND OF THE SHOW
Pukka Pads



Bi-Silque Ultrabrite Boards

PARTNER AWARDS

VOW partners also received awards across a range of categories:

DIAMOND VENTURE PARTNER
1st place Commercial
2nd place ACS
3rd place Nectere



Commercial

GOLD VENTURE PARTNER
1st place L & S Office Supplies
2nd place William West
3rd place Chariot Office Supplies

RED VENTURE PARTNER
1st place Inkost
2nd place Emphasis Group
3rd place Principal Office Supplies



Nectere

BEST NEWCOMER
Ian Smith

IRELAND NEWCOMER
Elwood

FS RESELLER OF THE YEAR
Commercial

TECHNOLOGY RESELLER OF THE YEAR
Moorside Office

FURNITURE RESELLER OF THE YEAR
Compleat



Ian Smith

Strategic focus on the value of wholesale

VOW UK Managing Director Adrian Butler, spoke to *PrintIT Reseller* about the wholesaler's strategic decision to move away from non-core activities, and its renewed commitment to focus wholly on delivering the value of wholesale to its channel customers

VOW is the biggest company in the EVO Group, bringing in around £300 million of the group's combined £550 million turnover last year. As part of a review that saw the group simplify its structure in 2016, a strategic decision to focus on core activities and put a stop on non-core undertakings was made.

This meant calling it a day on the bokz reseller programme, an initiative designed to grow dealers' businesses by combining their customer facing skills with EVO's logistics, procurement and marketing capabilities;

Headroom, the group's marketing and business services agency; and VOW's managed print services (MPS) programme. It was this news in particular, that received a mixed response from the channel.

First foray

VOW first entered the MPS space towards the end of 2011, partnering with M2 to deliver it on behalf of members of its then VOW+ partner programme.

Butler explained: "We did our research and looked at the facts. MPS had been

Continued...



Adrian Butler,
Managing Director,
VOW UK



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around for a number of years, and deployments were largely within the top-end mid-market and lower end corporate sector, a dealer's sweet spot.

"However trends showed that it had come down a level and was becoming ever more prevalent within businesses with one to two devices, there was a market there for our customers and so we did something about entering it."

He added: "Most of our resellers have a top tier of clients who are prime for MPS, but as a wholesaler we didn't have the infrastructure in place to provide a complete end-to-end solution. We didn't have any service engineers or a team to handle first line calls for example, so we partnered with M2. This partnership with M2 worked really well and we enjoyed and continue to enjoy, a successful business relationship."

VOW saw some early successes with a number of its partners signing up, however over time it became evident that not all were content with the offer. "In essence, the end-users' contract was with M2, the reseller got a commission on each deal, but as time went on, many weren't comfortable with the fact that they didn't own the customer relationship, an issue that's problematic across any number of areas, and one which is not exclusive to MPS contracts," Butler explained.

VOW-led MPS

With contraction in both the OP and EOS markets, VOW saw MPS as an opportunity for its resellers to plug revenue gaps and increase customer wallet share. With this in mind, in 2014 it structured a new offer in consultation with the MPSA (Managed Print Services Association). Its aim was to provide a more flexible and accessible solution, with improved invoicing, reporting and communication tools which would enable resellers to secure customers and expand the services they currently provide.

The initiative was designed to help resellers derive all the benefits of a brand agnostic, customer-focussed managed print

There was a market there for our customers and so we did something about entering it

As a wholesale partner, people trust us to get the right goods on the shelf, accurately pick, fulfil and deliver their orders on time



service and initial interest was high – some 78 per cent of the resellers who attended the launch event signed up.

"We built on this, invested heavily in people and infrastructure, to develop a VOW-led managed print solution," Butler said, adding: "We invested in category specialists, internal sales support, and a team of administrators as well as people to take first line calls, monitor and manage the MPS contracts."

The service delivery was provisioned through Cura Technical, who according to Butler, provided a first class service.

"We really felt we'd got something there and we did see some deals won. 18 months on, some partners were confident running their own contracts, but overall we weren't seeing sufficient traction. We had to look at the business case, and this led us to take the hard decision to cease what was essentially a non-core activity and divert the investment back into our core business," he said.

Butler explained that experience has shown that dealers trust and have confidence in VOW, but are not comfortable in handing work over to a third-party. "When it comes down to delivering managed print services, we're

not positioned to deliver it all in-house. The only real way to become an expert is if you acquire a business and that's not our core," he said.

"As a wholesale partner, people trust us to get the right goods on the shelf, accurately pick, fulfil and deliver their orders on time, and so we made a strategic decision to stick with what we're best at – being a great wholesaler from a service point of view," he added.

One could argue that by pulling out of MPS, the wholesaler could potentially lose the revenue associated with consumables fulfilment. But Butler disagrees: "If our resellers can make money through MPS, then ultimately that makes their business healthier. As a wholesaler that means I've got a healthy profitable reseller."

"I suppose you could look at it from the point of view that if a reseller has an MPS contract and isn't fulfilling toner through you then they're moving away from you. But I don't see it that way. It's not always about VOW getting more spend, it's about longevity and with over 2,200 resellers, we have a very healthy client base, the channel is a lot more resilient than people think," he said in conclusion.

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60 seconds with...

Nigel Allen, Marketing Director,
KYOCERA Document Solutions

What's currently having the greatest impact on your business?

The impact of Brexit is still yet to be fully understood and it will be some time before anyone really has a clear view – even if/when it will happen! Although we have still managed to grow our sales again, which is good in a tough environment.

Where do you see the next big opportunity?

Our channel partners are well placed to make the most of their excellent relationship in selling managed print to expand their portfolio into managed content services (MCS). The amount of information we have access to now is unprecedented, and companies are crying out for help to manage all the content they have.

What would make your day job easier?

Another five hours a day!

What's the best bit of business advice you've been given?

Either do it or don't do it, nothing in between. Procrastination slows down good business momentum.

If you had had a crystal ball, would you have done anything differently?

Get hold of the crystal ball earlier in my life.

Describe your most embarrassing moment.

Not able to.



What was your first job?

A paper round.

What would be your dream job?

Sometimes I miss the stress-free paper round!

Fine dining and good wine, or curry and a pint?

My choice would be a good pint and fine wine paired with a packet of crisps or pizza. Motto: spend the money on the wine.

Money's not an issue, what's your perfect car ... and where would you like to drive it?

While I have no strong desire re: cars, an Audi R8 would be nice. I would like to drive anywhere without traffic and speed cameras and not to work!

Favourite holiday destination.

My favourite country has to be Turkey which I've been visiting for a number of years. Croatia is beautiful too. However, it's all about the company when it comes to the perfect holiday.

How do you like to spend your spare time?

I'm a season ticket holder at Brentford and also like quality time with family.



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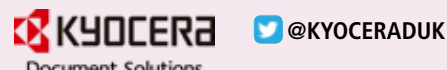
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