PRINT**IT**RESELLER

Shared Vision

HP partners with Vision for growth

∙VISION **hp**

INTERVIEW

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PRINT IT RESELLER

printitreseller.uk   ISSUE 43 · 2017

Comment

A report from IDC highlights the enormous potential of business inkjet technology. Epson says business inkjet printing is the big growth opportunity for it in the UK. The OEM has seen a 40 per cent year-on-year increase in unit sales and hopes that by extending its existing relationship with Exertis who will now distribute the WorkForce Pro range, it can via the reseller channel continue to grow its market share even further.

In other news, Lexmark has furthered its relationship with Nuance Communications, Chris Strammiello, Worldwide Marketing and Global Alliances Director for Nuance's Document Imaging Division, explains how channel resellers are set to benefit from the evolving print ecosystem (page 20).

Although GDPR is still some way away, it is an issue that should be very much front of mind. Midshire's John Kay, warns that GDPR will affect every UK organisation that processes the personal data of EU residents. He said that he believes the uncertainty of Brexit has caused many businesses to take their foot off the gas when it comes to EU Parliamentary law, but really businesses should be striving to keep up-to-date with the latest policies. The company recently teamed up with Gemalto to run a GDPR Clinic, giving organisations concerned about data protection an opportunity to brush up on the new regulations, and learn about how the changes might require them to refresh their internal policies.

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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Keep the wolf from y

Only 2% of business printers are protected against hacking, the hacker has an open buffet on all of your files and your customer's financial and personal data. It's simple, low security on your printer gives easy access onto your system then it's only a few stepping stones to your most private information. The printer is the hacker's easy way around your firewall.

PRINTERS > NETWORK > DATA > PRIVATE AND PERSONAL INFORMATION
Protect yourself, protect your customer.

Watch the film at **https://youtu.be/U3QXMMV-Srs**

our customers' door

It's up to you to not only spot the hacking risks but completely eradicate them.

If your customers aren't taking their printer security seriously, someone else will.

It just takes one hack to destroy the future success of your business and that of your customers.

Protect your business at
hp.com/go/reinventsecurity

Tech Data®

BULLETIN

TA Triumph-Adler expands sales team

At the start of this year, to help drive expansion, TA Triumph-Adler appointed Sean Howarth, who worked at Danwood for over 18 years on national and corporate accounts as Head of Sales.

Since his appointment, Howarth has been actively recruiting new members to join the field and telesales teams. Jamie Cope (pictured) started her new role as part of the telesales team in March and a new member will be announced next month. The company will continue to recruit and says that

the team will be at full strength by the summer.

Having outgrown its HQ, TA Triumph-Adler has leased a further 1144 sq. ft. adjacent to its existing premises. Managing Director Shaun Wilkinson said: "We have been growing our UK sales year-on-year, and our combination of an outstanding software-solutions team who focus on providing the best solution rather than making a sale, has reaped benefits across the entire group."
www.triumph-adler.co.uk

Vision recognised by FT

Philip Bond

Managed print and document specialists Vision, has been recognised by the Financial Times as one of the fastest growing companies in Europe, alongside global companies Spotify, Just Eat and Skyscanner.

A special report published by the Financial Times in partnership with Statista, identifies the Top 1000 European companies with the highest percentage growth revenues between 2012 and 2015. Seventy eight of the companies on the list are based in London, making the British capital the hub for

innovation and commerce in the EU, even as the UK prepares to leave the bloc.

Vision's Chief Executive Philip Bond said: "We are delighted to receive this European recognition from the Financial Times, one of the world's leading business news and information organisations, it truly reflects the group's continued growth and success. We have a comprehensive business plan to potentially double in size by 2020 and this recognition is highly encouraging, as we continue to execute on our plans for growth." **www.visionplc.co.uk**

Keeping it in the family

Langstane has appointed the third generation of the family-run firm to its board of directors. Mark Campbell takes on the role of office Interiors Director at the Aberdeen-based business, which was founded by his grandfather and great uncles 70 years ago.

The appointment comes at a time when Langstane, which employs 106 people nationwide, is seeing signs of stability and optimism in the north east economy after battling through the oil downturn for the past two years.

Campbell who has been with Langstane for 24 years after joining straight from school, has worked across many of the company's divisions, which includes office supplies, office furniture, print, promotional products and healthcare equipment.

He said: "I am very proud to be joining my father, Jack Campbell, and Colin Campbell, on the board of directors and to be continuing the family tradition. Their attention to detail – and their ability to provide products quickly at a competitive price – allowed Langstane to grow from a small printing company into Scotland's biggest independent office supplies company." **www.langstane.co.uk**

Mark Campbell

Two dealers achieve solutions-certified status

EMS Copiers in Dublin and Document Data Group in East Kilbride, Scotland are the first dealerships to be certified under UTAX's Solutions Partner Programme.

The company launched its Solutions Partner Programme, which not only recognises the work of its growing network of partners who are providing smart, client-focused software solutions, but also provides its partners' clients with the validation of their expertise and high levels of training, last year.

The programme recognises those partners who have successfully incorporated the provision of bespoke software solutions within the hardware offer, and whose staff, following an in-depth training programme, have become accredited Solutions Certified Professionals.

John Cahill, Managing Director of EMS Copiers

(pictured) said: "This industry-wide recognition is another example of the strong, symbiotic partnership we have forged with UTAX and their ongoing support gives us another effective way of helping our sales team differentiate our company's services and offerings to our customers."

Steve Young, Joint Managing Director at Document Data Group, UTAX's largest dealer in Scotland added: "Since launching our company ten years ago, with the incalculable support of UTAX, we have successfully grown our client base using our solutions based approach to both software and hardware sales. Becoming part of their Solutions Partner Programme this year is the icing on the cake." **www.utax.co.uk/solutionspartners**

Entanet staff complete Tough Mudder

A team of 22 staff from Telford-based Entanet completed the Tough Mudder Half Midlands challenge, raising valuable funds for the stillbirth and neonatal death charity Sands.

The Entanet team comprised a mix of men and women from various departments within the company, including two who completed the challenging run dressed as Tyrannosaurus Rex dinosaurs.

The Entanet team is still accepting donations on its Just Giving web page and is hoping to reach its £6,000 target for the charity. To help hit the target staff have been running a number of other activities, including 'fun days' at its Stafford Park offices, which have included arm wrestling competitions, a baby photo quiz, ping-pong challenge, pub quiz and more. **www.enta.net**

The Entanet Tough Mudder team are aiming to raise at least £6,000 for the Sands stillbirth and neonatal death charity

Mentori programme to help partners accelerate growth

Azlan Technology Solutions, Tech Data Europe's specialist brand for value-added distribution of enterprise networking, server, storage and software solutions, is launching a programme to support partners in transforming to solutions, services and cloud-led business models that will deliver predictable and profitable growth.

The distributor has developed the Mentori Program in response to a growing need amongst partners for practical advice and pro-active support on moving from business models that depend largely on core hardware sales and software licensing revenues, to ones that generate recurring managed services and cloud subscription income and additional revenues from selling new technologies such as hybrid infrastructure, converged and composable systems, mobility and security solutions.

Created in collaboration with established expert organisations and partners, including CompTIA, EuroLAN, IDC, TSIA and Service Leadership, the programme will provide partners with business development and assessment resources and exclusive access to expert business mentors in key areas, such as defining a growth strategy and blueprint, building a cloud and services proposition, and developing systems and processes. **www.azlan.co.uk**

Ingram Micro is Dell EMC Partner of the Year

Ingram Micro has received the 2017 Dell EMC Global Distribution Partner of the Year Award.

The distributor received top honours among a global field of Dell EMC partners based on a combination of metrics, including extraordinary sales performance and commitment to the Dell EMC business.

The Distribution Partner of the Year Award honours partners for exceptional year-over-year business growth and for continuously delivering superior business development, technical and supply chain leadership, as well as committed expertise across the Dell EMC portfolio. **www.ingrammicro.com**

Exertis extends professional services portfolio

Exertis has launched Exertis Monitor, an additional post-sales service that provides a basic level of monitoring on any vendors' solutions across the entire IT infrastructure. The service will be included within its ISO27001 accredited professional services portfolio.

Resellers can now take advantage of device monitoring on switches, servers, virtual hosts, storage and UPS. Outside of these core areas, any other IP enabled device can be monitored to provide, at a minimum, availability reports. Exertis Monitor provides availability monitoring and reporting with a notification process on outages or performance issues. **www.exertis.co.uk**

New-look website

checkthatcompany.co.uk, the provider of business credit reports has launched a new-look website with a simplified set of payment options that will make it even easier for businesses to check the credit-worthiness of new and prospective customers.

The restyled website is designed to be welcoming, friendly and easy to use. A new time-based pricing model that gives users unlimited access to reports has been introduced and, for a limited period, discounted offers are available.

The service is designed to make it easy and affordable, even for small firms, to check whether they are at risk from customers or suppliers. It gives them access to the information they need about businesses and individuals and thus enables better decision-making and lowers the risk of bad debt. In addition, with the new Risk Tracker feature, users can follow firms and receive email updates whenever any details on those businesses change or new information becomes available. **www.checkthatcompany.co.uk**

DMSL seeking new BaPs partners

The broadband and hosted voice services distributor is seeking more resellers to join its Broadband and Phones (BaPs) programme, which provides them with a dedicated comparison site for broadband and hosted voice services.

The company has signed 50 partners up since launching the initiative in March, but now wants more to come on board as momentum starts to build. "We've had a great response and we are starting to see some good sales coming through, but we still want more resellers to sign up," said Managing Director John Carter. **www.broadbandandphones.co.uk**

John Carter

# Research reveals underlying change in distribution role

Distribution is changing rapidly and, especially in Europe, is finding a new role as a provider of cloud services, e-commerce, specialist logistics and support for the channel during its transition to new revenue models. This is according to a new special report for the Global Technology Distribution Council (GTDC) by IT Europa.

As well as providing coverage, onboarding and recruitment of new channels in all the markets in Europe, which usually means some element of localisation and cultural fit in IT supply, the report identifies some of the ways that distribution is now able to work to develop new business lines, especially in services, where the move to cloud adoption makes it a lot easier for developers and solution providers to create solutions, but where they still need ways to reach their markets.

Vendors cited in the report say they are using distribution for access to markets that would otherwise involve them in setting-up local offices and providing local more resources.

GTDC Europe's General Manager Peter van den Berg said: "Work closely with distributors and they will be able to guide you as to which products are going to be the winners. Distribution is no longer just about pick, pack and ship," he said, adding: "The services on offer are many and varied, and are used to complement what the channel is doing."
www.iteuropa.com
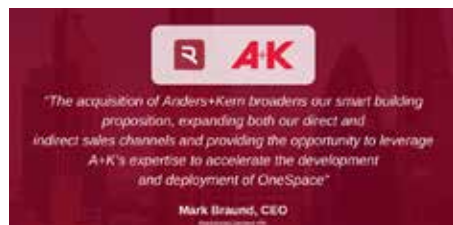
RedstoneConnect acquires Anders+Kern

RedstoneConnect has successfully acquired the entire issued share capital of Easter Road Holdings Limited and its subsidiary, Anders + Kern UK Ltd.

Anders + Kern (A+K) is an established distributor and integrator of meeting room booking systems and audio visual solutions, which are highly complementary to RedstoneConnect's OneSpace solution.

The acquisition will broaden RedstoneConnect's blue-chip customer base with existing A+K clients.

Mark Braund, CEO of RedstoneConnect said: "The acquisition broadens our smart building proposition, expanding both our direct and indirect sales channels and providing the opportunity to leverage A+K's expertise to accelerate the development and deployment of OneSpace."
www.redstoneconnectplc.com
www.anders-kern.co.uk

Integra and Findel education programme

Integra has announced a further education workshop at its forthcoming 'Celebrate 20 Years' National Conference which takes place 28 September at the Crowne Plaza, Stratford-Upon-Avon.

Member delegates are invited to attend to receive specialist advice and information about the sector from expert, Julie Collins, Chief Marketing Officer at Findel Education Limited. This session will give delegates a better understanding of the education market and the opportunities available to them. Collins will explore the nuances that exist within the sector and ways to combat the national challenges, whilst demonstrating how education is still very relevant to office product dealers.
www.integra-business.co.uk

Exertis names new commercial head for mobile division

Richard Ferguson has joined the distributor as Head of Commercial for Exertis Mobile. In this role he will be responsible for driving engagement and growing the business with the mobile division's range of device and accessories vendors across the consumer and business to business areas, reporting to Consumer Commercial Director Liam La Cumbre.

Ferguson joins from Brightstar where he spent three years, latterly as vice president OEM EMEA, responsible for setting supplier strategy, owning vendor relationships and driving the mobile budget across nine countries. Prior to that, he spent eight years with Vodafone as their commercial director defining and implementing the company's global supplier strategy and conducting procurement for all terminal equipment including handsets and tablets. He has also worked for T-Mobile and BT in senior management roles.
www.exertis.co.uk

Richard Ferguson

Star Micronics appoints James Cassar

International POS printer manufacturer Star Micronics has expanded its management team with the appointment of James Cassar as Business Development Manager, UK & Ireland.

Star's reputation and sales are growing year on year with a 16.5% unit growth in 2016. Cassar will work with the UK team to continue to strengthen partnerships with retailers, resellers and software houses, in particular. Star's philosophy to actively support direct and indirect customers via a strict distribution channel only will suit his extensive experience of 20 years plus. This experience covers the distribution channel as Business Development Manager at Ingram Micro (DC/POS division), Senior Product Specialist at manufacturer Toshiba Tec Europe, alongside direct retail experience as Store Systems Controller with Perfect Pizza and 7-Eleven.
www.Star-EMEA.com

James Cassar

Cohesity expands worldwide channel programme

Cohesity has hired Todd Palmer as Vice President of Worldwide Channels to continue building the company's partner network to keep pace with exponential revenue growth. With his proven ability to multiply revenue through channel programs, Palmer will use his long-term, trusted relationships with the partner community to expand Cohesity's channel presence and further advance its Revolution Partner Program for resellers.

In this new role, Palmer will be responsible for growing the company's footprint in the Americas, EMEA and APAC, bringing Cohesity's secondary storage platform to more mid-sized and large enterprise customers. Palmer joins Cohesity from Palo Alto Networks and will report directly to Cohesity's recently announced Vice President of Worldwide Sales, Mark Parrinello.
www.cohesity.com

Whether creating vibrant classroom materials, providing supplement learning activities or running the morning attendance report, HP provides the print supplies to keep schools on track...

Vibrant colours in the classroom can improve a child's ability to learn:

- Clear blues increase productivity and keep children calm

- Yellow heightens concentration levels

- Bold reds and oranges may increase IQ by 12 points

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By using Original Supplies from HP you can be guaranteed colour prints remain bright, vibrated and extremely high quality.
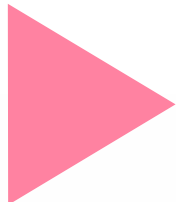
Original HP Supplies are proven to be more reliable than non-original alternatives. Cheap ink and toner cartridges can compromise a printer's performance, leaving streaked, blotchy or faded prints. Only Original HP Supplies deliver unmatched quality from the most professional looking prints.

3 ways to spot the fakes...

1. Scan the code – locate the HP security seal and use a QR scanner app to check. Alternatively use the HP SureSupply app

2. Inspect the label – 3 signs the cartridge has been tampered with; the lines in the pattern do not match, label is coloured rather than transparent or the text changes to show *'seal is void'*

3. Check online – visit **hp.com/go/ok** and enter the serial number from the security label

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A value add proposition designed to help grow print business

Xerox awarded gold for sustainability performance

In a survey conducted by global supplier sustainability ratings group, EcoVadis, Xerox has been awarded the gold recognition level in sustainability performance for the eighth consecutive year.

The OEM was ranked in the top one per cent of all supplier categories, making it the leading manufacturer in the industry for sustainability and in the top two per cent of suppliers in the category of 'manufacturer of computers and peripheral equipment'.

EcoVadis surveys 150 businesses through 100 countries on their corporate policies and looks at their environmental achievements, work practices and business practices as well as the supply chain. **www.xerox.com**

Xerox expands recruitment efforts

Following the recent introduction of new, innovative digital content management solutions, Xerox has announced an agreement with three new channel partners to bolster its presence in the SMB market.

The companies who will offer Xerox's digital solutions to small and medium sized businesses are document management specialist Arena Group, managed print and document solutions provider IT Document Solutions and office hardware and systems supplier Viking Office Systems.

"We have made substantial investments in services for the SMB market, and now we are actively recruiting strategic channel partners to expand our foothold." said Xerox UK and Ireland Managing Director, Andrew Morrison.

He continued: "We are working hard to help our partners build their businesses through offering customers some of the most innovative solutions on the market – and have significantly expanded the number of product choices and price points we're offering as a result. Our 29 new ConnectKey products are a great example of Xerox giving our channel partners the freedom to create truly bespoke workflow and MPS offerings based on customer needs."

Xerox currently supports over 50 UK channel partners and hundreds of other resellers, providing unrivalled marketing and sales support, training and resources to match its state-of-the-art technology offering. **www.xerox.co.uk**

State-of the-art storage solution

Beta Distribution has announced it is the exclusive distributor for AccelStor in the UK.

AccelStor, the software-defined all-flash array provider, build their NeoSapphire series of all-flash arrays to resolve performance bottlenecks for I/O-intensive applications like virtualisation, high-performance computing, database, and media processing.

Tony Howard, Enterprise Strategy and Operations Manager at Beta said: "AccelStor adopts a true software-defined approach to designing all-flash arrays to provide cost-effective all-flash storage with powerful performance for any scenario. A great solution for virtualisation, enterprise clouds and datacentres." **www.betadistribution.co.uk**

Service and asset lifecycle management solution

Computacenter company TeamUltra has revealed that The Barcode Warehouse (TBW) has implemented an innovative application of ServiceNow for service and asset lifecycle management. This has allowed TBW to increase operational efficiency, improve service delivery to customers, and together with mobile device management tools enhance visibility over mobile assets. **www.teamultra.net • www.thebarcodewarehouse.co.uk**

Next generation A3 printing solutions

Lexmark has unveiled nine new models in its next generation of A3 colour laser printers and smart multifunction products line-up.

The Lexmark CS920 Series and the CX920 Series feature Lexmark's fastest printing and scanning devices, as well as its highest paper capacity. The CX924 is its fastest colour laser MFP at up to 65 ppm, the CX920 Series features its fastest scanner at up to 80 ppm and both have the highest paper capacity in its colour laser line at 6,650 sheets.

"The Lexmark CS920 Series and the Lexmark CX920 Series were designed for high usage, demanding workgroups that require fast, efficient and intuitive devices," said Allen Waugerman, Senior Vice President and Chief Technology Officer, Lexmark. "These new devices marry the high end large workgroup colour A3 with all the features and functionality of our colour A4 device line-up, complementing our award-winning colour portfolio of laser print devices." **www.lexmark.co.uk**

Antalis wins RoSPA award

Antalis has been named as a winner at the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), Health and Safety Awards 2017 – achieving its sixth consecutive Gold Medal award in the prestigious annual scheme.

David Hunter, Antalis Regional Managing Director for UK, Ireland and Southern Africa said: "There's a simple rule at Antalis when it comes to our workplace: safety first and all the time. This award is testament to our team's respect for this vision and their daily commitment to keep their workplace in sound order, ensuring they and their co-workers are safe and healthy at work." **www.antalis.co.uk**

Selectec and PaperCut sign wider distribution agreement

British software developer and distributor Selectec has been appointed as an Authorised Solution Center (ASC) for PaperCut MF in the Nordic region.

This new distribution agreement with PaperCut in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland is the first step in the company's five-year growth plan.

Founder and Managing Director Paul Weston said: "We have sold PaperCut products in the UK for 10 years now and are delighted to become an Authorised Solution Center in the Nordic region. To be recognised as an ASC in additional territories is testament to the relationship we have built with PaperCut over the years." **www.selectec.com**

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Printer problems one of the top time wasters

A survey into office productivity conducted by YouGov on behalf of Brother, showed that just over a fifth of senior leaders in SME businesses believe that solving printer problems are one of the top things wasting employee time, while 20% think computer crashes are zapping productivity.

When asked about other ways of boosting productivity, just over one third of leaders said introducing mandatory regular screen breaks would have a positive impact (34%), 16% said a change office ergonomics would help and 1 in 10 (11%) said they would limit website access.

Brother UK Managing Director Phil Jones said: "Productivity is a big issue for ambitious SMEs. As the survey data shows, millions of hours of employee time are wasted through typical IT errors that many people will be all too familiar with. It's easy to overlook the common issues that have, wrongly, become part of the working day. Fixing these issues can deliver quick and long-term productivity wins that improve staff morale as well as benefitting the balance sheet. The trick is to preserve a small amount of time to look for the seemingly inconsequential things that waste time."
www.brother.co.uk

Phil Jones

Cloud is driving business transformation

The latest research from the Cloud Industry Forum (CIF) reveals that the overall cloud adoption rate in the UK now stands at 88% with 67% of users expecting to increase their adoption of cloud services over the coming year. However, while organisations are clearly taking a cloud-first approach, the industry body predicts that the vast majority of companies will be maintaining hybrid IT estates for some time to come.

The research polled 250 IT and business decision-makers in large enterprises, small to medium-sized businesses and public sector organisations. The majority of respondents (58%) described their organisation as having a hybrid approach to IT and 54% expect to eventually move their entire IT estate to remotely hosted cloud services, with 8% of the smallest organisations in the sample having already done so. Despite this, inhibitors to cloud adoption still remain, including concerns over data privacy (62%) and a lack of budget (35%), meaning that a 'cloud-everything' model is still not yet feasible for all organisations.
www.cloudindustryforum.org

Interruptions barrier to peak performance

Digital technology that helps employees achieve the nirvana like state of optimal performance could increase productivity significantly, according to research commissioned by Konica Minolta.

Employees polled said the main barriers to maintaining peak performance are interruptions, computer problems and problems accessing data when working away from their desks. These barriers can be overcome, says Konica Minolta, by investing in digital solutions – sometimes called Digital Workplace Initiatives (DWI) to change how technology, people and the workplace interact.

The research suggests that by the end of last year, finding ways to encourage employees to reach peak productivity, was the single biggest driver to implement DWIs and to do so quickly. The top three DWI projects are enabling effective mobile working (62%); effective remote working (56%) and improving collaborative working technology (49%).

Head of Marketing Francis Thornhill said: "Improving access to information, integrating systems and using technology as the catalyst for improved performance, should be at the top of every CEOs to-do list."
www.konicaminolta.co.uk

Francis Thornhill

Line of business buyers flexing their muscles

According to a new report by CompTIA, for decades, the seat of technology purchasing power belonged to the CIO's office or internal IT department. But times are changing, and a new potential buyer is emerging, the non-IT line of business executives.

CompTIA's latest study examines the habits of these new buyers, including those from marketing, finance, logistics and sales. Carolyn April, Senior Director, Industry Analysis, CompTIA said: "It's another strong signal that technology has shifted from a supporting function for business to a strategic asset. Line of business buyers are flexing their muscles and this shift is impacting the entire IT channel – vendors, distributors and solution providers."

April warns that it's incumbent on the channel to get their faces in front of line of business leaders. "Much of what business lines are buying are cloud-based software solutions which can be self-provisioned quickly within a department. For that reason, channel partners need to package what they sell differently.

"They need to speak the language of business because this new generation of buyers doesn't want to hear about the technical implications of their purchases," she explained. "Channel partners need to position themselves as consultants and service providers who can help customers make informed decisions about what they buy." **www.comptia.org**

IT budgets to rise

In its report, Mid-market IT priorities 2017, Node4 claims that despite lack of confidence in the UK's economic prospects mid-market companies are bucking the UK trend for lower IT budgets. 77% of decision-makers in companies with a turnover of £15m to £800m expect to see an IT budget increase in 2017, 35% are looking forward to a rise of 5-10%, with a further 22% anticipating an increase of over 10%. **www.node4.co.uk**

(l-r) Ian McKellar, HP Partner Business Manager UK&I; Mark Davitt, Head of Printing Solutions Channel UK&I; David Smith, CEO, Landscape; Nathalie Taieb, Head of Channel Solutions and Services, EMEA; Steve Hawkins, Chief Executive, Xeretec; Neil Sawyer, Channel Director, UK&I and Gary Tierney, Printing Business Director, UK&I

Xeretec acquires Landscape Group

With the acquisition of Landscape Group, the UK's most accredited HP MPS and Solutions Specialist, Xerox's largest MPS reseller Xeretec says it has created a new managed print powerhouse.

In addition to uniting the companies' skill sets, Xeretec says that the customer experience is enhanced too, giving them access to an even broader range of advanced A4 and A3 multifunction devices from both Xerox and HP. Landscape brings with it exciting new service offerings, including HP's Device as a Service (DaaS). This combines innovative devices, lifecycle services and HP's expertise into an all-inclusive, HP-managed solution – with per-seat, per-month cost certainty for customers.

Xeretec Chief Executive Steve Hawkins said: "The game-changing acquisition of Landscape Group is a transformational moment for Xerox, HP, our customers and our staff. Xeretec will continue to consolidate and develop its longstanding commitment to the Xerox brand, building on its exceptional track record of success."

He added: "This best-of-breed acquisition plays to the strengths of both respected brands and both resellers, while introducing new complementary HP devices and value-added services like DaaS to even more customers. With the potential it offers customers and staff, we are thrilled to see the Landscape Group become a Xeretec Group company, and we warmly welcome its team to the existing Xeretec family."

Founded in 1996, the independently-owned Landscape Group's engineers and sales team are specialists in the full range of HP printers and HP Managed Print Services. It is one of HP's Platinum Partners for Managed Print and it is also an HP Authorised Service Delivery Partner. Following the acquisition, the Landscape Group brand will remain and become a Xeretec Group company and it will continue to be based at its location in East Hampshire. To ensure consistency and assurance for its customers, all customer relationships, service and support will be served uninterrupted by the Landscape Group's staff.

Speaking about the acquisition, David Smith, Landscape's Chief Executive Officer, said: "This announcement represents a real milestone for our current and future customers, who are, without doubt, the most important part of any business. But it also brings new opportunities for our staff and partners. By combining Landscape's 20 years plus of dedicated HP expertise, the scale and nationwide reach of Xeretec and HP's impressive new entrance into the A3 MFP market place, customers now have an obvious route to investigate what a $50BN "new comer" can offer to enhance their IT infrastructure."

George Brasher, Managing Director of HP in the UK & Ireland, added: "Landscape has been a highly valued HP partner for many years and we congratulate both companies on what is an exciting acquisition. It comes at a pivotal time for HP, as we set out to disrupt and reinvent the A3 copier space and provides the perfect foundation for Landscape to play a major and highly successful role in that."
www.xeretec.co.uk

Commercial in sustainable city award finals

Business services specialist Commercial Group has been shortlisted for the Sustainable Transport category of the Sustainable City Awards.

The award scheme is run by the London Sustainability Exchange and funded by the City of London Corporation. It recognises best practice in environmental management and sustainable leadership amongst companies operating in the city.

Commercial Group's entry focused on measures that have been taken to enhance the sustainability of its office supplies delivery fleet. When the Group acquired London-based Wiles Greenworld in 2016, two innovative approaches were combined. The outcome is a progressive solution that significantly improves the fleet's environmental impact.

One element of this strategy is the deployment of hydrogen-fuelled vehicles. Commercial Office Supplies operates the largest privately-owned hydrogen-enabled fleet in the UK, several of which operate from depots in and around London. This is complemented by Wiles Greenworld's recycling service which is rooted in the collection of waste as a backload. Because vehicles are already 'on patch' the cost of collection is marginal, enabling the service to be provided to 300 London businesses free of charge. It also reduces traffic and congestion, two major factors that impact air quality in the city.

Jonathan Withey, Lead Sustainability Consultant at Wiles Greenworld, acknowledges that minimising emissions from the Group's 18 delivery vans won't make a tangible impact on city air quality. However, he says the approaches provide useful 'proofs of concept' for larger fleet operators. **www.commercial.co.uk**

James McManus

New hire by Woodbank Office Solutions

Office printer and document management specialists Woodbank Office Solutions, has appointed James McManus as Business Development Manager.

McManus will be responsible for supporting new and existing business across the Yorkshire area, as part of the company's regional expansion plans. **www.woodbankoffice.co.uk**

WHAT'S NEW

Space-saving, cost-effective and efficient

Engineered for business and featuring PrecisionCore printhead technology, Epson's latest WorkForce Pro 4-in-1 offers a compact solution for print, scan, copy and fax.

Designed for the modern work space, the WF-3720DWF provides a range of flexible printing and scanning features. For printing on the go, there's Wi-Fi connectivity to print from anywhere in the office; Wi-Fi Direct to print from compatible wireless devices without a Wi-Fi network; and NFC to print with a tap of a compatible Android device on the printer.

Combined with Epson's DURABrite Ultra Ink, the WF-3720DWF produces professional looking documents that are water, smudge and highlighter resistant. The high yield inks are also great value as they're supplied individually, so only the colour used is replaced. **www.epson.co.uk**

PRINT IT RESELLER
EDITOR'S CHOICE AWARD
EPSON : WF-3720DWF

PRINT IT RESELLER
EDITOR'S CHOICE AWARD
XEROX : DocuShare Flex

Xerox DocuShare Flex

Xerox DocuShare Flex is a new cloud-based ECM platform targeted at the channel. The new DocuShare Flex platform provides the automation, security and scalability of large-scale ECM systems in an affordable package that's easy to configure and use without IT support – making it an ideal offering for the SMB market.

"We see DocuShare Flex as a big play for the channel this year," said Andrew Morrison, Managing Director, Xerox UK and Ireland. "Optimised specifically for them, DocuShare Flex will allow our channel partners to add value to existing and new customers in a very cost-effective manner – "flex" offers out of the box or tailor solutions to the content management challenges faced by many businesses, helping transform organisations into highly efficient digital workplaces." **www.xerox.com**

Canon imageFORMULA DR-M260

A newly developed DR processor from Canon delivers improved image processing and quality without the need to rely on the performance of a stand-alone PC. This in-built performance means that all users can take advantage of the imageFORMULA DR-M260 scanner's speed and reliability. The on-board DR processor also supports innovative new image processing technology that can deliver consistently superb images particularly suitable for Optical Character Recognition (OCR).
www.canon.co.uk/ scanners/

Desktop label printers

Brother UK has launched a new range of professional label printers.

The new QL-800 series, which consists of three high-speed models, offers users versatile and professional label printing with the capability to print in two colours, a 'first' for printers in this class.
www.brother.co.uk

Outstanding colour print from Develop

Available from DSales, the new ineo+ 2060L colour production system is aimed at pay for print providers, in-plant print departments, high-volume office environments and specialist users requiring high quality colour such as graphic design and advertising agencies.

This compact entry-level colour system prints up to 61 A4 pages per minute in mono or colour and comes with a number of new features including scan & print to/from USB flash drive and a high speed colour dual scan ADF (240 ipm A4 at 300 dpi).

Paper processing is fast and reliable and for complete in-house job production, the ineo+ 2060L is available with a choice of online finishing units including hole punching, stapling, folding and booklet making. Alternatively there is stacking for up to 4,200 sheets. **www.dsales.eu**

Faster more flexible workflow

Aimed at organisations such as hotels, healthcare providers and travel companies, the new Panasonic KV-SL30 series of A4 hybrid scanners feature a flatbed which is integrated with an automatic document feeder, meaning they can handle damaged documents, booklets, passports, ID cards, envelopes and mixed-size documents easily.

Depending on the documents, the scanner allows users to choose to scan documents from either the ADF or flatbed. Users can also opt for continuous scanning from both, changing the scanning order from one to the other, before saving as a single file.

The KV-SL3066 scans at 65ppm/ 130ipm and the KV-SL3056 scans at 45ppm/90ipm, making them the fastest of all Panasonic models in the same class.
http://business. panasonic.co.uk/ communication- solutions/

PFU upgrades cloud scanning service

PFU (EMEA) has added new partners to the ScanSnap Cloud: Expensify, Intuit, Concur and Shoeboxed. ScanSnap Cloud is a free service that enables users of ScanSnap iX100 and iX500 document scanners to directly scan documents to cloud applications without needing a computer or mobile device. It intelligently sorts and routes data directly to cloud-based services of the user's choice.

Together with the cloud services that are already available for the ScanSnap Cloud ecosystem, these new additions offer users of ScanSnap iX100 and iX500 a broad variety of cloud applications to choose from. In addition, PFU also added new functionalities to the ScanSnap Cloud that help streamline the capture process.
www.fujitsu.com

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A vision shared

With a shared vision for future growth, Vision and HP make perfect partners

HP has had its eyes on the lucrative A3 copier market for many years without ever achieving the breakthrough that its size and position in the print industry warrant. Now, with the acquisition of Samsung Printing Business (including more than 6,500 printing technology patents), the launch of a new range of Laserjet and PageWide A3 and A4 MFPs and the establishment of an experienced partner network, its ambitions might finally be realised.

A 20% share of the A3 market by 2020 is nothing if not ambitious, but HP is clearly in a much better position to achieve this goal today than it was in the days of Edgeline technology and, before that, the Mopier. There are many reasons why this is so, from the strength of HP's offering in both laser and inkjet printing to the quality of the dealer network it has assembled.

In the UK and Ireland, HP has taken on approximately 25 partners to sell its A3 products, ten of whom are new to HP. One such is Vision, which has been awarded the highest level of HP Partner Accreditation.

Vision, a fast growing provider of managed print and document services, has been managing customers' print requirements since 1985, providing solutions from Canon, Ricoh and Samsung and servicing them through a nationwide network of field-based service engineers and network specialists.

The company's success in the MPS market — it was recently included in a list of Europe's 1,000 fastest growing companies compiled from 2012-2015 data by the *Financial Times* and Statista — and its position as a Samsung Global Partner are an obvious attraction to HP as it seeks to make its mark in the A3 MFP market.

Neil Sawyer, HP's UK & Ireland Channel Director, is clearly excited to have a company with Vision's experience as a partner.

He said: "We are delighted to welcome Vision to our partner network. Since launching our extended range of A3 and A4 multifunctional devices, HP has been actively working with Vision to develop a formidable customer proposition based on their fantastic reputation in the print sector. Vision will undoubtedly play a significant role in the deployment of HP's broad range of office and print room solutions to a wide number of customer across the country."

Vision is just as enthusiastic about the relationship, recognising in HP a partner with the drive and product range to support its own appetite for growth.

> **Vision will undoubtedly play a significant role in the deployment of HP's broad range of office and print room solutions**

Chief Executive Philip Bond said: "We continually review Vision's go-to-market strategy and value proposition to ensure we remain competitive and market-leading. From considerable engagement with HP's global team, we have established some significant synergies with HP's market plans as they commence the integration of Samsung's printing business. We have a comprehensive business plan to potentially double in size by 2020 and this exciting new partnership will help strengthen our market position as we continue to execute on our plans for growth."

He added: "The HP brand is widely respected in the technology market and we're looking forward to building an exciting and successful business partnership that helps Vision continuously compete and win in our core markets of Managed Print and Managed Document Solutions."

Respected brand

Strong as the Samsung brand is, Chief Operating Officer Mark Smyth sees the HP name as a key attraction that will open up new opportunities for Vision.

"HP is an established and recognised brand that's highly respected in the business-to-business and corporate space. There's an old adage that no IT Manager ever got fired for buying HP and we believe that this will help us to make further inroads into the corporate market."

As a Samsung Global Partner, one of just a handful worldwide, Vision is already familiar with the strengths of the Samsung print engine on which HP's range is built and for which HP now has the IP, R&D and manufacturing facilities. As well as continuing to support its installed base of Samsung devices, Vision will henceforth be selling and supporting HP's new range of A4 and A3 MFPs, in addition to its existing offering from Canon, Ricoh and, for a transitional period, Samsung.

Wide choice

Available to HP managed print services providers, HP's range includes 13 A3 Laserjet toner devices and three A3 PageWide MFPs with print speeds of up to 80 pages per minute in general office mode. In total, there are 54 SKUs, giving qualified channel partners the ability

to offer higher levels of customisation, industry-leading security and longer device uptime via HP's cloud-based Smart Device Services (SDS) technology, which adds advanced diagnostics, device-specific troubleshooting and remote remediation capabilities to the MPS tool sets used by HP resellers.

When HP announced its new A3 devices it promised to shake up the existing $55 billion copier market and transform business printing by delivering devices that were simpler, more reliable and easier and cheaper to service than competitor models.

Smyth is impressed with this aspect of HP's new toner devices but says it is too early to determine exactly what effect they will have on resellers' cost base and, therefore, prices for customers.

"HP is using a Samsung engine to make a device with low running costs and easy servicing, which is a key feature and desirable for all resellers. HP has said that they are more cost-effective than existing A3 MFPs, but given the current market competitiveness, it is difficult to gauge how much more affordable an HP Laserjet MFP might be for customers over the course of an MPS contract, compared to a model from another provider," he said.

Smyth is more forthright about the cost benefits of HP PageWide devices, which Vision will also be taking on.

The game-changing inkjet technology, which combines a page-wide printhead, fast-drying inks and a flat paper path, offers a high speed, economical alternative to laser MFPs for organisations that value low running costs more highly than print quality.

"PageWide is a cost-efficient, high performance technology. It is not necessarily the highest quality output device – it's not aimed at the high quality print market, but at organisations that need entry-level colour print quality at high speed. It is very cost-effective and that gives us the potential to reach new customers," he explained.

Smyth expects a great deal of interest from Government and public sector organisations, a market that Vision knows well thanks to its position on three purchasing frameworks – the National Education Printer Agreement (NEPA); Crown Commercial Service (CCS), incorporating Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation (YPO) and Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO); and the Crescent Purchasing Consortium (CPC).

"Because of their responsibilities, public sector bodies are very cost-conscious.

The game-changing inkjet technology, which combines a page-wide printhead, fast-drying inks and a flat paper path, offers a high speed, economical alternative to laser MFPs

Running costs for them are much more significant than print quality, which makes PageWide a very interesting proposition for that market," he said.

World class security

Another aspect of HP MFPs that Smyth expects to resonate with Government buyers is their world class security. With GDPR regulations coming into force in less than a year, this should also be a major consideration for commercial organisations.

"MFPs need to be secured like any other intelligent network device, not just to protect print data and printed output, but to prevent cyber-criminals from using print devices as a way into an organisation's network and IT infrastructure," he explained. "HP uses a combination of hardware and firmware to ensure that this 'back door' remains firmly locked and alarmed."

Embedded security features on HP's devices include: HP Sure Start BIOS, which validates the integrity of the BIOS at every boot cycle and, if a compromised version is discovered, restarts the device using a safe 'golden copy' of the BIOS; whitelisting to ensure that only authentic, good HP code is loaded into memory; and run-time intrusion detection, which helps protect devices while they are operational and connected to the network by checking for anomalies during firmware and memory operations and by rebooting in the event of an intrusion.

Other security features include built-in encryption to protect data stored on the hard drive, secure erase to remove sensitive information from the device and the ability to disable ports and protocols to prevent unauthorised access.

Future plans

Vision is currently three years into a five-year plan to double in size by 2020. It hopes to achieve this goal by continuing to develop its core business of managed print and document services, whilst also

Mark Smyth, *Chief Operating Officer,* and Philip Bond, *Chief Executive,* Vision

focusing on production printing, IT services, client retention and service excellence.

Production print is a fast growing part of Vision's business that offers considerable scope for an even deeper relationship with HP.

In a recent interview with *PrintIT Reseller*, Neil Sawyer pointed out that one of the benefits HP resellers enjoy is HP's commitment to growing both its core business – transactional and managed print – and new areas of operations, such as 3D print.

"Our future strategy with partners is looking beyond what the market demands today to what we know they'll be demanding in the future. A good example would be the investment we've been putting into 3D printing; we genuinely believe that is a game-changer for the future. Whether with our core or our future strategy, HP has got a very sustainable partnership with our resellers. We don't stand still and we always help them grow in areas that perhaps they hadn't explored in the past," he said.

With ambitious growth targets of its own, Vision appears to have found the perfect partner in HP. A shared vision for growth and a shared appetite for success make theirs a relationship with huge potential.

www.visionplc.co.uk

Print's volumes of opportunities

With the recent announcement that Lexmark has furthered its relationship with Nuance Communications, Chris Strammiello, Worldwide Marketing and Global Alliances Director for Nuance's Document Imaging Division, explains how channel resellers are set to benefit from the evolving print ecosystem

Chris Strammiello

To the advantage of the channel, print has been enjoying a renaissance of late. As the requirement to turn paper into digital documents for the booming digital economy has increased, the web-enabled, networked multifunction printer has found a new role within many organisations. With document capture, electronic distribution and storage now underpinning essential digital workflows, the MFP is a fundamental part of a company's technology backbone, and the way it conducts business nationally and internationally.

Evolution of the print ecosystem

However, the MFP's centre-stage role presented organisations with new challenges, ranging from device security concerns, a lack of visibility into increasing print expenditure, right through to how best to control and manage print volumes. What we have seen in response to these challenges, is an evolution of the early print ecosystem comprising device manufacturers, document imaging software providers and systems integrators and with it, has come an increasing opportunity for print resellers.

It's my belief that everyone in print – including resellers – needs to be part of this ecosystem as all parties are, to some extent, interdependent on each other if it is to deliver on its promise of helping customers reduce their print volumes and prints costs, while bolstering document security.

Collaboration benefits the channel

For resellers, this growing ecosystem should make it easier for them to address whatever their customers print pain points may be, via a combined hardware, software and services solution sell. In fact, helping the channel to address customers' needs more effectively is one of the reasons Nuance recently announced a new strategic partnership for Lexmark, to provide Nuance document imaging solutions worldwide.

Specifically, the relationship includes rights for Lexmark resellers to sell and distribute Nuance AutoStore, Equitrac Office/Express and SafeCom. In addition, Nuance will provide service and support to qualifying customers. For Lexmark, partnering with Nuance reinforces its commitment to providing world-class enterprise-ready workflow solutions that enable organisations to increase productivity and enhance document security.

The Nuance's solutions that will soon be available to Lexmark's global dealer network – and other manufacturers' – include AutoStore, which is best suited for those capture workflows where participants submit documents and data into a predefined workflow. It has been designed to provide a responsive and intuitive interface for speed in capturing critical document information with as little interaction as possible, using real-time connections to business systems for rapid and error free processing.

For resellers talking to customers that need an intelligent way to print, Nuance offers Equitrac Office. It helps reduce costs, while making printing secure and increasing user satisfaction. With Hybrid Print Control, Equitrac Office delivers organisational versatility and control, and reduces IT complexities by removing dependencies on print servers, print drivers and complex print fleets – all while managing every printed page in an organisation.

Of course, over time, user requirements for print changes and IT infrastructure evolves, so Equitrac Office lets users easily adapt to these changes with a choice of how to deploy printing – using print servers, direct IP printing or a hybrid model that includes both. This allows resellers to work with customers to tailor their print environment according to the specific needs of their business both in the short and the long term.

With security an ongoing concern for all private and public sector organisations, with

> **For Lexmark, partnering with Nuance reinforces its commitment to providing world-class enterprise-ready workflow solutions**

Nuance SafeCom resellers have a solution that helps customers boost security, cut costs, increase efficiency, reduce waste and protect the environment. Nuance SafeCom Smart Printing solutions work with nearly all types of printers, copiers and multifunction devices, making this an attractive option irrespective of the brand of print device a reseller specialises in.

Emerging print opportunities

For the channel, this strategic partnership is an example of how the print ecosystem continues to evolve to their benefit, bringing with it more opportunities to present customers with a unified solution. It's also a chance to extend the type of conversation dealers could have with new and existing customers; a line of enquiry that starts on the subject of document capture, could evolve into a discussion about intelligent print management, new devices and what solutions are available to ensure secure document release.

Not only is this is a sure fire way to add value to the conversation but, maybe more importantly, as the discussion will touch on business critical matters – ranging from security to lowering costs – there's the potential for a reseller's position to be elevated and find itself called upon to act in an advisory capacity to a company's senior management, rather than solely negotiating deals with the business' IT or procurement teams.

In the meantime, I am encouraged by the evolution of this ecosystem as it brings multiple benefits to the print industry, the print channel and the customers it serves. That's one reason why Nuance will actively work to support it, by continuing to form alliances with other solution providers to ensure print and document capture continues to deliver on its promise – an important requirement, given the key role digital document workflows play in business today.
www.nuance.co.uk

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Family and business do mix

Witham-based Essex Business Machines (EBM) sets sights on driving growth in IT services

Mark Bailey

Michael (Mick) Bailey established EBM in 2005, setting up shop in a 500 sq. ft. unit in Witham. As a service engineer with over 25 years' experience, his focus was firmly on creating a company that had excellence in customer service at its core – that philosophy remains as pertinent today as it was on day one.

EBM quickly developed an excellent reputation for its exceptional service provision and just three years later, had grown exponentially. By 2008, it had expanded in size four-fold and occupied an additional three units on the same site – bringing its total square footage to 2,000 sq. ft. It was at this point that son Mark joined the business. "I was 16 years old and fresh out of school," he said. "We had two engineers on board looking after service, but we needed to focus more on sales and that was where I started."

Mark very much learnt on his feet, quickly grasping the nuances of business,

and taking charge of the sales department, ensuring that every prospective customer receives a bespoke proposal suitable to their business. In October 2014, he was promoted to Managing Director, succeeding his father who has semi-retired, although he retains his seat on the board and continues to conduct the odd service call-out.

He says that the father-son working relationship has worked really well. "Very quickly I realised I really enjoy the business aspect, I'm happiest being strategic and working with Excel spreadsheets, whereas my father much prefers being elbow-deep in toner!" he explained.

In the three years since Mark has been at the helm, the company has doubled in size. "We've achieved a consistent 20 per cent growth year on year and we're on track to maintain that this coming year," he said.

Office move

EBM marked its tenth anniversary purchasing new premises, still in Witham. The new 2,500 sq. ft. building was purpose designed to suit their needs. It houses office space, showroom, warehouse, service division and workshop.

Last summer, the company invited local businesses, partners and clients, hosting an informal networking event to mark the official opening of the new HQ.

Nick Smith from Ricoh kicked off the day with a presentation centred on how SMEs can save a considerable amount of money with a print audit. Tim Bland from Grenke Leasing provided insight on

the benefits of leasing over purchasing office equipment, including avoiding the 'copier graveyard' situation, where broken purchased devices stack up over the years, taking up space and costing more and more money as they are continually replaced. Other speakers included Steve Pearce from Lexmark, who delivered a well-received talk on how Google Cloud integration can benefit organisations of all sizes and industries through its collaborative solutions and Brett Lewis from Konica Minolta described how big a problem paper waste is for many businesses. He provided practical advice for reducing an organisation's carbon footprint, while saving money, by cutting back on the amount of paper used through deployment of managed print services and staff education.

MP Priti Patel joined guests, cutting the ribbon to officially open the new premises. Ms Patel attended and officiated at the official opening of EBM's old premises five years ago.

Geared for growth

The company supplies, services, provides maintenance contracts and consumables for an array of office business machines within Essex and the surrounding areas and counties, including London, Kent, Suffolk, Norfolk, Herts, and Beds.

In January this year, it partnered with an IT company – IT 4 Offices. "This was a strategic move for us," Mark explained. "Our customers tell us that we do a great job for them on MPS and they're looking for a similar service across their IT infrastructure. We see managed IT services as a huge opportunity for growth, and this new collaboration will allow EBM to provide comprehensive IT consultancy, support and solutions to our growing SME customer base. Our focus is now firmly on creating opportunities to deliver managed IT services to support our strategy for future growth."

EBM now has a 12-strong team, split across its sales, customer service, accounts and after-sales service functions. "We took on four new members of staff at the start of this year and we're actively recruiting for IT specialists at the moment," Mark explained.

The business has retained its focus on

l to r: Councillor Patrick Horner Priti Patel MP Mick Bailey Mark Bailey

service and prides itself on delivering an after-sales support service that is second to none. With founder Mick stepping down from the day to day, this important function will now be headed by newly promoted Service Manager Andrew Hunt, an experienced service engineer.

Multi-vendor

The MPS specialist offers a comprehensive range of printers and MFPs and has partnered with OEMs including Ricoh, Konica Minolta and Lexmark. More recently, it announced that it had been appointed as an authorised dealer for Epson UK, in particular its unique Replaceable Ink Pack System printers – RIPS.

Epson WorkForce Pro RIPS printers provide an affordable solution for companies looking to reduce their consumable cost per page and improve their eco-credentials. When compared to equivalent laser printers, companies can save up to 80 per cent on the cost of consumables, while the devices' ultra-low power consumption technology contributes to further savings of up to 70 per cent in power usage.

Offering the highest page yield in its class, RIPS printers significantly reduce the need to stock many consumable items and parts. For the dealer, this means lower storage, transport and logistics costs, and they also eliminate the need to recycle empty cartridges, which further reduces both the customer and resellers' carbon footprint.

Mark said: "The WorkForce Pro RIPS range is a compelling choice for environmentally conscious businesses. And, as a company that prides itself on being committed to delivering on our environmental policy, supplying these devices as an alternative to laser printers very much fits with our green ethos."

He added: "We've seen massive success already with Epson's unique RIPS printers and we're very excited about the imminent launch of Epson's new 100ppm model. We saw the beta version pre-launch and it's amazing."

This multi-vendor approach is very important to EBM. Mark explained: "We are very customer-focussed and approach each client contract independently, tailoring our recommendations to suit their needs and offering the very best levels of service we can."

He continued: "It's all about delivering the right products for each customer. For example, Lexmark do great A4 models, so if A4 printing is a customers' mainstay then that's the brand we will recommend. For colour, Ricoh and Konica Minolta both have a superb offer and with RIPs, we can achieve the cost and eco-savings our customers demand."

EBM supports children's charity, Brainwave, which works with families to deliver home based therapy and exercise programmes aiding children with disabilities and additional needs in achieving greater independence. Mick has been an ambassador for the charity since 2007.
www.ebmltd.co.uk

Epson capitalising on rise of business inkjet

In a recent report, research consultancy IDC identified Epson as a driving force in the adoption of business inkjet technology

Business inkjet printers, which are more environmentally-friendly and cheaper to run than laser models, are becoming increasingly popular, the growth looks set to continue in 2017 and Epson is capitalising. The company invested €400 million in new production facilities and will allocate a further €185 million towards its PrecisionCore inkjet technology over the next three years.

Described as the next generation of inkjet printing technology, PrecisionCore features Epson's advanced thin-film piezoelectric (TFP) elements, which are produced via a MEMS manufacturing process. At the core of this proprietary technology is the PrecisionCore MicroTFP print chip that produces dots at the micron level. Each nozzle on the printhead delivers up to 50,000 droplets per second for increased precision and print quality.

This commitment to business inkjet is underlined by the release of Epson's WorkForce Enterprise, a generation of ultra-fast colour office A3 printers. With completely new printhead and linehead technology, Workforce Enterprise models are capable of producing up to 100 pages per minute, while significantly reducing power consumption. The optional WorkFlow Enterprise Finisher unit enables automatic document finishing, a 5,350-sheet max paper input with optional paper feed and a 4,000-sheet stapler and stacker to improve efficiency, saving time and effort.

Enormous potential

"IDC's report highlights the enormous potential of business inkjet technology," said Rob Clark, Managing Director, Epson UK. "With forecasts suggesting the overall business inkjet market will grow at a rate of 10.2 per cent (CAGR) up to and including 2020, Epson is leading the way, and we're delighted to be named as the most influential vendor."

He added: "Our products are encouraging businesses to make the switch from laser to inkjet. WorkForce Pro business inkjet models offer high speeds and great print quality, while improving costs of ownership and eco-benefits, such

as an 82 per cent reduction in power consumption."

Business inkjet printing is the big growth opportunity for Epson in the UK and pivotal to this is its range of Workforce Pro Replaceable Ink Pack System (RIPS) business printers that make it much easier to achieve predictable print costs.

RIPS devices have been designed exclusively for managed print services and use super high-yield ink supply units containing three years' worth of ink. The black ink pack has a capacity of 75,000 pages and each of the three colour ones contains enough ink for 50,000 pages.

Distribution agreement

This innovative WorkForce Pro range is now available to selected resellers via a newly formed distribution agreement with Exertis. The business will be managed from Exertis' specialist OA print facility in Norfolk, utilising dedicated OA account managers who will be working with new and existing Epson RIPS customers.

Jamie Brothwell, Exertis, Print General Manager said: "Epson has a very unique proposition using its business ink continuous feed technology that delivers up to 75,000 business quality prints between ink changes. The WorkForce Pro printers are known for their reliability and provide customers with a low TCO

including using up to eighty per cent less energy than competitive colour lasers. We are looking forward to offering these printers to selected resellers alongside our range of specialist pre-delivery and logistical services, and our flexible credit facilities."

Epson's WorkForce Pro RIPS printers provide exceptional reliability with lower IT support costs, increase business productivity, reduce waste by simplifying supplies management and as a result are more environmentally friendly.

As part of a managed print service, WorkForce Pro RIPS printers can help to create a distributed printer fleet that provides an easy yet secure, high quality, distributed print resource that delivers predictable print costs. In addition, Epson's Document Capture Pro software enables an automated paper capture and storage process and its Email Print for Enterprise solution enables users to securely send documents to a printer and print directly from any device that can send an email in the office.

Claire Robinson, Business Director, Epson UK said: "We've seen a 40 per cent year-on-year increase in business inkjet unit sales and are now the second largest business inkjet supplier in Europe. We are looking forward to extending our existing relationship with Exertis and the specialist services it can offer our reseller channel to continue to grow our market share even further."

Exertis provides a range of print and logistical services that includes virtual warehousing facilities, PDI, product configuration and advanced delivery services. It offers an extensive OA credit line with flexible payment terms available for customers.

www.epson.co.uk
www.exertis.co.uk

> **Epson has a very unique proposition using its business ink continuous feed technology that delivers up to 75,000 business quality prints between ink changes**

Jamie Brothwell
Print General Manager
Exertis

An added dimension

As YSoft partners roll out the latest version of the company's print management solution, *PITR* finds out what makes SafeQ6 special

Print management has been good to YSoft Corporation. The privately owned company was founded in the Czech Republic in 2000 and introduced its SafeQ print management solution in 2003. Since then, it has gone from strength to strength, to the point where it now has annual revenues of $30 million (US), 370 employees in 16 offices around the world and 14,000 customers (700 in the UK).

YSoft sells SafeQ through approximately 30 partners in the UK, among them seven leading print vendors and their networks of resellers. This includes three Platinum Partners, Xerox, Konica Minolta and Sharp, plus HP, Lexmark, Ricoh and Toshiba.

Historically, SafeQ has provided public and private sector organisations, enterprises and SMBs with everything one would expect from a print management solution, including cost recovery, document security, more efficient/productive processes and environmental benefits, such as reduced paper use and lower energy consumption.

Faced with the challenge of maintaining growth in a mature market with strong downward pressure on prices, YSoft has recently announced two developments of great significance for the future of the company and its partners. One is the establishment of YSoft Ventures to mentor, encourage and support Central and Eastern European start-ups. The other is the latest version of its print management solution, SafeQ6, now available from YSoft partners.

In addition to two major enhancements to the core product (see box), SafeQ6 provides a platform that will enable YSoft and its partners to diversify their offerings and develop new market opportunities.

"With SafeQ6, we have produced a platform for the first time," explained YSoft senior regional sales manager Nick Parkes. "There are three pillars to it: one is print management; the second is document workflow – we are looking to attract new customers and new partners through document workflow; and the third is 3D printing. We both manufacture 3D printers and develop software to support 3D printers, just as we have been doing all these years for the 2D market."

More options

In all, SafeQ now has seven modules, available individually or collectively as a suite licence. This, says Parkes, gives resellers more flexibility when selling to customers.

"If a customer needs four modules, it's more cost-effective for them to buy just four modules, but if they require five or more, it's cheaper to go for a suite licence. There are two ways to approach this: one is for the partner to lead with modules to keep the price down and get a foot in the door. Then, after proof of concept, to take the opportunity to upsell to the suite. The other is for the partner to lead with the suite, so that if there are price objections they can suggest buying just the required number of modules rather than the whole suite."

Parkes adds that SafeQ's modular approach also makes things simpler and more affordable for customers. "Document workflow is a brand new market for us, but already, through our feature set, our platform gives end customers a genuine all-in-one solution," he said.

"A lot of customers will have a print management solution coupled with document workflow from a different supplier. Yes, they are integrated and have single sign-on. But they have two different sets of licence agreements and two different sets of terms and conditions; quite often you are paying for the same modules twice; and you have two different support paths. SafeQ6 really is a genuine all-in-one solution," he said.

3D Printing

Unlike the SafeQ document workflow module, which is a logical extension of YSoft's traditional business that dovetails nicely with partners' own evolving service offerings, 3D printing is a completely new opportunity.

Next month, YSoft is planning the soft launch of an end-to-end solution developed specifically for the education sector. This includes be3D printers, manufactured by YSoft itself following its acquisition of 3D printer company be3D in 2014; the SafeQ print management solution, which allows schools to manage and control 3D printing for the first time; and be3D Academy coursework, developed by YSoft in conjunction with Telford-based Tablet Academy and educational organisations in the Czech Republic.

"Whilst schools are introducing 3D into their curriculum, many are not really pushing it as they have no control over costs, security and productivity," explained Parkes.

"3D printing takes time and schools don't want students to send a 3D model to print and then stand over the printer for

Nick Parkes, *senior regional sales manager*, YSoft

Document workflow is a brand new market for us, but already, through our feature set, our platform gives end customers a genuine all-in-one solution

ColorQube 9302

three hours to make sure no one walks up and takes their model or stops the print job. With our solution, users send models to print through YSoft SafeQ6, the world's first 3D print management solution; walk up to the 3D printer and authenticate using a card, PIN or password; and then walk away knowing no one can touch their model because the 3D printer is fully enclosed. All the doors are mechanically locked so no one can break into 3D printer whilst it's printing unless they are the owner of that job. And, because that job is going through SafeQ, we can measure its cost in time and materials."

This capability has already proved successful for YSoft in the world of 2D printing. There is every reason to suppose that it will be just as compelling in the emerging 3D sector as well.
www.ysoft.com

What's New

In addition to the workflow and 3D print modules, SafeQ6 incorporates two important enhancements to the print management solution:

❶ Client-based print roaming (CBPR), which removes the need for multi-site organisations to deploy a print server in every location. Parkes cites the example of an organisation like Birmingham City Council (not a YSoft customer), with many locations across the West Midlands. Some will have hundreds of users and quite a few MFPs and would benefit from a print server-based environment. Others might have just one MFP and a handful of users and wouldn't warrant a dedicated print server. SafeQ6 allows you to keep a print server in larger buildings, but store print jobs on (and release jobs from) a user's workstation in satellite locations. "This," explained Parkes, "reduces costs, reduces infrastructure support and administration and, because you can't always guarantee that the links between the satellite office and the data centre are going to be strong enough, mitigates any latency and time-outs by keeping documents local."

❷ Multi-tenancy, which lets a holding company, e.g. Kingfisher Group, have one installation of SafeQ that they can push out to their subsidiaries, e.g. Screwfix or B&Q. Rather than having multiple installations of SafeQ, they can have one installation and create two tenants, B&Q and Screwfix, that can each manage their own devices and their own users and generate their own reports.

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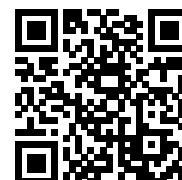
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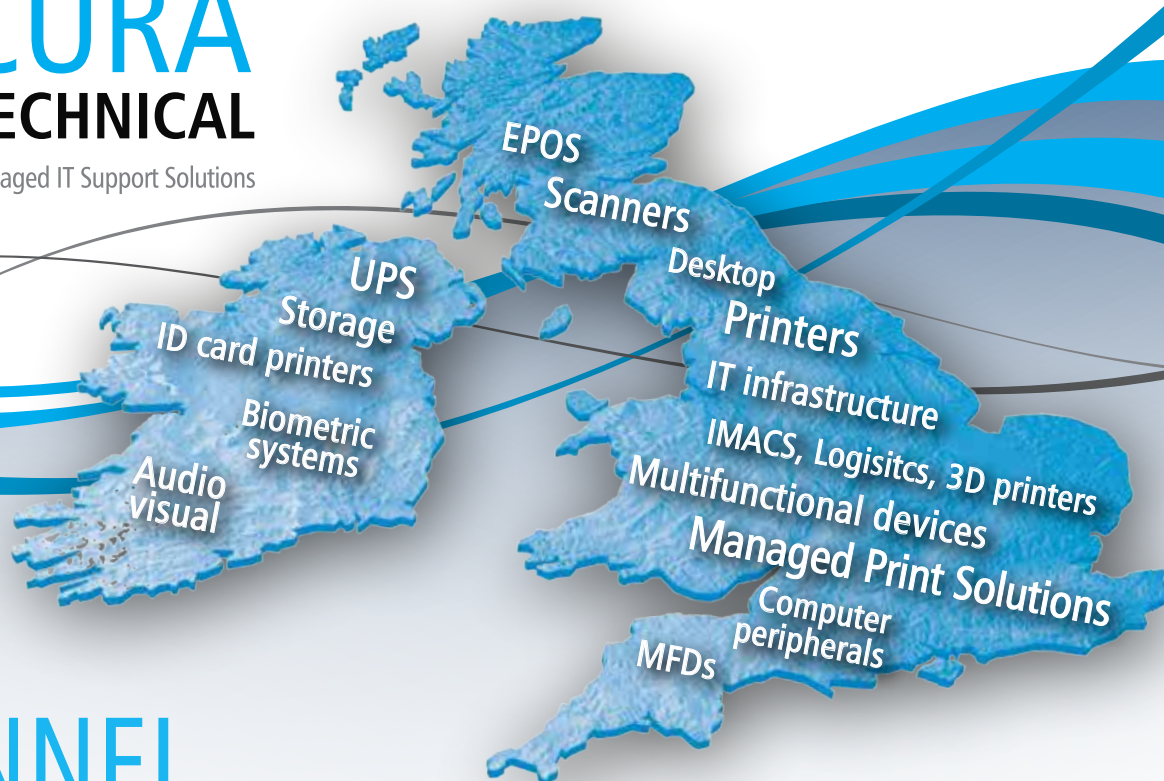
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Xeretec to showcase Xerox at The Print Show

Xerox UK distributor Xeretec, has signed up to return to The Print Show this year, describing the event as 'important' for the company

HP will showcase the quality and application scope of its Indigo press technology at The Print Show

The Print Show 2016 attracted nearly 6,000 visitors across three days at the NEC in Birmingham and organisers have said that this year's event, which takes place from October 11 to 13 at the International Centre in Telford, is well on track to smash all records.

Xeretec attended for the first time in 2016 and cites the success of its debut appearance last year as one of the key factors behind the decision to return.

Group Marketing Executive Susan Bayne, who was highly involved in the company's attendance at the show last year and also played a major role in securing Xeretec's return in 2017, said it is important for Xeretec to be in attendance due to its success at the event in 2016.

...continued

"Not only is it important to be present at The Print Show, but last year's was very successful for Xeretec," she said. "It proved to be a very busy event with good footfall and it was attended by an audience that was perfect for us.

"More than that, it served as a chance for us to catch up with many of our existing customers to talk about their changing print requirements, as well as an opportunity to meet with potential new customers.

"We think the Xeretec stand hit the right spot with visitors, too. Our Web-2-Print demonstrations and the fun of our racing car simulator kept the visitors coming and kept us busy. To that end, we made several important sales on the day, and we had lots of leads to follow up on afterwards, which helped toward a favourable return on investment."

She added: "The Print Show presented a great opportunity to engage with our customers and potential new clients. It is always interesting to find out more about their business, while spending time advising them on how our print solutions can help them to grow their business."

Bayne also gave an insight into what visitors can expect on the Xeretec stand at The Print Show 2017. Xerox equipment due to be featured in October includes the new Xerox Versant 180 and the Xerox Versant 3100, which are replacing the popular Versant 80 and Versant 2100.

"At The Print Show this year, we're looking to build on the success we enjoyed in 2016, while helping commercial printers reach their business objectives with the range of services and solutions that Xeretec offers," she said.

Debut for HP

HP, who is set to make its debut appearance at the show, has revealed further details of what visitors to the International Centre can expect this October.

HP hopes to appeal to those visitors on the lookout for kit that can help them diversify into new markets and access profitable, large-format work. The digital print giant will also be spreading the word about its hugely popular Indigo technology.

Anne Sharp, Marketing Manager, large-format printing in the UK and Ireland for HP, said: "HP sees The Print Show as a strategically important event for us this year in terms of connecting with our customers within the graphics printing market.

"HP will guide visitors through the world of applications through the HP WallArt Suite platform, an easy and innovative web-to-print experience designed to help small-to-medium sized print service providers in the decoration space and explore new possibilities to express yourself through custom wallcoverings, blinds, and other applications for interiors in the HP application area."

HP will bring a full portfolio of its wide-format inkjet technology to The Print Show both in roll-to-roll and flatbed format

She added: "We will be showcasing our HP Latex technology and PageWide XL range, with a key focus on applications both from our large-format business and Indigo business."

A packed Duplo stand at The Print Show 2016 is an indicator why the manufacturing heavyweight has returned to exhibit

The finishing touch

Duplo, which also recently confirmed its commitment to the show for a second consecutive year, is hoping to replicate the success it enjoyed at the 2016 edition.

Much like last year, Duplo will be demonstrating various solutions to visitors in attendance at the International Centre, demonstrating how this technology can help strengthen the finishing stage of the production process.

Duplo UK Marketing Manager Sarah Crumpler, said: "The Print Show is another perfect opportunity for us to showcase our print finishing systems and solutions. Exhibitions provide a great opportunity to get face-to-face with our customers in a focused environment proven by the success we had at The Print Show in 2016.

"We'll be showcasing and demonstrating how our systems can ensure operations develop the most efficient, productive and profitable post press environments – all with automated precision. We have had very successful shows in the past and are looking forward to building on that and presenting our latest additions to new and existing customers."

Impressive line-up

Digital printer manufacturer InkTec Europe, has also announced that it will exhibit this year. The company is aiming to follow up on the recent launch of the new Jetrix LXi8, a 3.2m-wide flatbed that can run at speeds of up to 206sq m/hr.

Since it was confirmed that HP will appear at the show this year, organisers have secured the signature of no less than 16 others exhibitors. In addition to both Xeretec and InkTec Europe, the likes of InnoPrinter, Nova Chrome, Z-Card, Flexpress, Supervane, The Finishing Point and Merlin Transfers have signed up.
www.theprintshow.co.uk

> At The Print Show this year, we're looking to build on the success we enjoyed in 2016, while helping commercial printers reach their business objectives

UK digital print technology supplier Xeretec to showcase Xerox digital print technology

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Midshire runs GDPR Clinic tour

Midshire partnered with international digital security giant Gemalto to raise awareness of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which is being introduced on May 25 2018

A purpose-fitted double decker bus toured the country between May 23 and June 8 to help companies across the UK prepare for this new EU data protection regulation. Dubbed the GDPR Clinic tour, the bus stopped at nine key locations between York and London.

The new law also gives a lengthy definition of what a personal data breach actually means

The GDPR is a new set of obligations from the European Parliament for businesses on issues related to the data protection rights of all European Union (EU) residents. The new regulations cover breaches and breach notification, consent, and the right to be forgotten, to name just a few.

Companies based in the EU already adhere to legislation in each member state that is consistent with GDPR's predecessor, the Data Protection Directive (DPD) of 1995, however significant changes with GDPR can result in hefty fines if found uncompliant. Overall, the new protections for EU nationals have been created to set a more harmonic degree of unification throughout the whole of the Union.

According to John Kay, Technology

Sales at Midshire, GDPR will affect every UK organisation that processes the personal data of EU residents. He said that Gemalto's GDPR Clinic is a really innovative way of giving organisations concerned about data protection an opportunity to brush up on the new regulations, and learn about how the changes might require them to refresh their internal policies.

Here, Kay answers some frequently asked questions about GDPR.

Q: So what counts as a breach?
A: Under both GDPR and its predecessor, 'personal data' means 'any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person', (or the 'Data Subject,' so the person the data belongs to). The new law also gives a lengthy definition of what a personal data breach actually means, defining it as 'a breach of security leading to the accidental or unlawful destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorised disclosure of, or access to, personal data transmitted, stored or otherwise processed.'

Now, the fact that this new definition is so long, means that businesses cannot afford to have unclear internal policies on data protection, as the new definition

has vastly increased the scope of data protection law.

Q: How will Brexit affect GDPR?
A: In a nutshell, not at all. When GDPR comes into effect on May 25 2018, the UK will still be a part of the EU and will remain in it for almost a year until leaving the Union on March 29 2019.

I think that the uncertainty of Brexit has caused many businesses to take their foot off the gas when it comes to EU Parliamentary law, but really businesses should be striving to keep up-to-date with the latest policies.

The UK government has also shown its intent on fully integrating GDPR policies in the UK, even after Brexit. It is likely that the main reason for this is for a smooth negotiation process on Britain leaving the EU, and a continued free flow of data between EU member states and the UK. The free flow of data is particularly important today, because it is crucial for data to be shared between countries for security purposes.

Additionally, it would be ideal for the UK to remain a force and beacon for other countries to look to when it comes to the data protection of its citizens by setting a high standard for such protections.

Q: What do I need to do if a breach occurs?
A: In the unfortunate event of a breach of

John Kay,
Technology Sales,
Midshire

personal data, the Data Controller (the organisation that collects a person's data) must report the breach to the supervisory authority in the member state where the company's main activity resides.

The supervisory authority is a newly formed administrative body that will be founded in each member state to manage the data protection of that country's citizens. The breach must be reported within 72 hours, and if it's late then reasons should be provided.

The data subject must also be informed straight away. Interestingly, if the data has been manipulated, for example if the data is unrecognisable and will not be traceable back to the data subject, then the data subject doesn't have to be informed, but the breach still has to be reported to the relevant supervisory authority.

Q: What will happen if I'm found to be uncompliant?

A: Remarkably steep fines. The new sanctions that can be imposed on uncompliant businesses include:

- A written warning in instances of first and non-intentional non-compliance
- Regular and thorough data protection audits
- Most repeat breaches will result in fine up to €10,000,000 or up to 2% of annual worldwide turnover, whichever is greater
- Breaches that the European Court has deemed more serious, for example breaches in consent or international data transfers, would result in a fine up to €20,000,000 or up to 4% of annual worldwide turnover, whichever is greater.

So it really is in a business' interest to be prepared for the 25 May 2018.

Q: What should I be doing now?

A: Raising awareness. The deadline for GDPR is ever approaching, so your first action should be to raise awareness of GDPR internally, making sure that your employees fully understand what and how a data breach can happen, and the fines that could occur. You should also make a comprehensive document of what data you hold, how it is gathered and how it is stored.

An important aspect of GDPR is consent, so reviewing how you are obtaining and recording consent from individuals should be a priority, discussing whether any changes need to be made. Consent from minors is also important here, you should start thinking about verifying the age of individuals and whether you need to get consent from a parent or guardian for the processing of the minor's data.

You should also ensure that you have the right procedures in place to detect, report and investigate personal data breaches. GDPR now states that all businesses should appoint a data protection officer within their organisation to take responsibility for data protection compliance. If a business works internationally, then these companies should determine which supervisory authority they will be operating under.
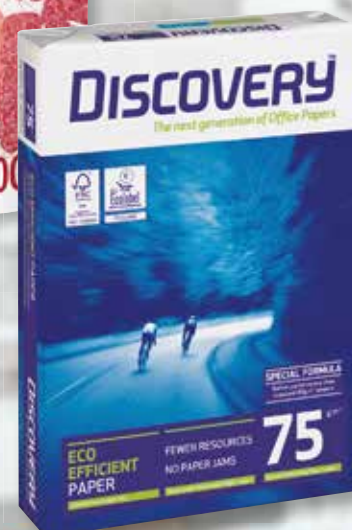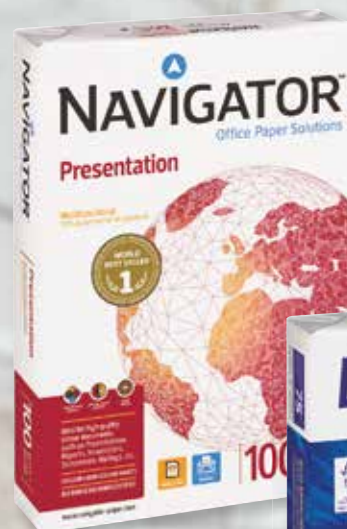
www.midshire.co.uk

A platform for growth

The biggest product launch in its history helps Xerox and its resellers target high growth areas and develop additional revenue from apps and services

Billed as the largest product launch in Xerox's 110-year history, the introduction of 29 new ConnectKey devices effectively re-boots the recently separated company's printer range, giving it a more compelling, solutions-ready offering to take to market.

In particular, the launch strengthens Xerox's portfolio in areas where it has looked weak in the past, such as A4 MFPs; it delivers a consistent user experience right across the range; and, crucially, it extends the Extensible Interface Platform (EIP) to many more devices, meaning that Xerox now has the largest solutions-enabled portfolio in the industry.

It's all about platforms today, and by solutions-enabling its new devices with EIP, Xerox is in a better position to help customers digitise document processes and workflows, whilst giving resellers the opportunity to generate additional revenue through managed document services (MDS) and apps.

The new devices are expected to play a big part in helping Xerox rebalance its business over the next three years, as it attempts to increase the proportion of its revenue from growth areas (A4 laser MFPs, managed document services) from 40% to 50%.

Expanding its A4 portfolio and making all the devices solutions-ready – previously just two of its A4 devices were solutions-enabled – will strengthen Xerox's hand in the fast growing MDS market for small and medium-sized businesses, a market that is experiencing annual growth of 4-6%, compared to 2-3% in the enterprise sector where Xerox has traditionally operated.

Since announcing its new printers/MFPs in April, Xerox has expanded its channel offering for SMBs with an enhanced basic print service for multi-brand fleets, PageConnect Services, which resellers can take on without having to undergo a certification process, and a cloud-based enterprise content management system, DocuShare Flex, that enables businesses with as few as five employees to digitise and automate business processes.

It has also recruited a number of new resellers to boost sales and expand its presence in the SMB market. These include the Arena Group, IT Document Solutions and Viking Office Systems.

These developments are all underpinned by the new ConnectKey portfolio. So, what exactly did Xerox announce at the beginning of April and why are the new devices so significant?

ConnectKey 2017

The ConnectKey 2017 launch introduces 29 printers and MFPs split across two new sub-brands: Versalink, for small user groups and SMBs with limited IT support; and Altalink, for centralised use. There are 19 new Versalink devices (12 A4 and 7 A3) and 10 mid-range Altalink MFPs (all A3) with print speeds of up to 90 pages per minute.

Both sub-brands share the same user interface, ensuring a consistent experience across all devices, and have a number of properties in common:

❶ **Intuitive User Experience.** A customisable tablet-based user interface, with tap, swipe and pinch controls, gives users the ability to personalise the display for each employee and delivers time-saving features like scan previews and a reduction in the number of steps needed to complete a task. On Altalink MFPs, for example, scan to email involves just four steps, compared to as many as 10 on other devices;

❷ **Mobile and Cloud Ready.** The devices feature easy printing from any mobile device and integration with cloud services, such as Dropbox. User-installable cloud connectors can be downloaded from the Xerox App Gallery;

❸ **Benchmark Security.** Xerox aims to make security a differentiator by not charging extra for real-time protection from internal and external security threats. Altalink devices also offer whitelisting from McAfee;

❹ **Next Generation Services.** All 29 devices support advanced, next generation managed print services, offering remote monitoring, remote configuration, device cloning, meter reading etc..

❺ **Customisation.** The EIP solutions platform empowers resellers and their customers to create customised solutions to meet specific customer challenges using the App Studio or Xerox Personalised Application Builder (PAB).

Bertrand Cerisier, VP, Global Marketing, Workplace Solutions Business Group, says that the combination of these five properties transforms what can be done with an MFP.

"The MFP today is a printing peripheral that sits in the corner. Our intention is to bring the MFP into the heart of the operation – to make it a means for people to connect to workflow processes and to connect systems together, to connect the elements where information is sitting. How do we connect things from a technology point of view?

"The first thing is to ensure that everyone in an organisation can have access to a workflow – down to every individual. ConnectKey has 29 products, starting at under 1,000 euros – solutions-capable products that bring workflow automation to the masses. And this is out of the box.

"Second, is to have a software platform, consistent across all 29 products, that enables customisation. All workers have different processes and the expectation is that we will configure our technology to their workflow and not the other way round.

"The third thing is solutions, from three main areas: our own solutions, solutions from experts like Nuance that meet a horizontal requirement in the document management world as well as sector-specific providers; and solutions from our reseller channel."

Customised apps

Solutions, or apps, were a major focus of the launch and one which Xerox is eager for resellers to make the most of a) because they are an additional source of revenue, b) because they provide a differentiator in a competitive and commoditised market and c) because they can be used to improve customers' and the reseller's own processes by integrating an organisation's MFPs with other systems

> **Xerox has expanded its channel offering for SMBs with an enhanced basic print service for multi-brand fleets**

...continued

and programmes.

Xerox says there are broadly three types of apps that can be used with its ConnectKey devices:

1 Information apps, which use an MFP's tablet interface to display information, such as the name and contact details of the reseller, QR codes to order supplies and alerts when a machine is out of toner or needs servicing;

2 Support apps that to make it easier for the reseller to manage and service MFPs, for example by automating meter reading and toner monitoring; and

3 Workflow apps that connect the MFP to different systems so that business processes can be digitised and automated.

The Xerox App Studio provides a range of template-driven tools that resellers with no in-house programming skills can use to customise ConnectKey devices, for example by adding their contact details to the display, plus an App Gallery of solutions developed by Xerox and third parties that add extra functionality, such as scan to and print from Office 365, Dropbox, GoogleDrive, OneDrive, Box etc..

Another option is to create one's own apps using the Xerox Personalised Application Builder (PAB). Introduced in 2013, this EIP SDK lets partners with programming skills create, share and sell their own solutions to customers and other resellers. To date, take-up has been slow, but with all ConnectKey devices now solutions-enabled and growing awareness of PAB's possibilities (see below), Xerox expects greater interest from resellers.

New tools

These capabilities enable resellers to develop a more consultative relationship with customers, moving from hardware sales to managed services and the development of customised solutions.

To help partners make this transition, Xerox has created a number of engagement tools, including *The Importance of Solutions*, which explains how to develop and monetise apps, and a Workflow Mapping Tool that can be used to map and re-design a customer's business processes. A database of map workflows shared by other resellers shows before and after scenarios for common business workflows. To find out more, visit **www.xerox.com**.

A platform for growth

At the ConnectKey 2017 launch, a number of Xerox partners explained how they were using Xerox PAB to generate additional business, among them Joshua Justice, President of JustTech, the Xerox App Developer of the Year.

He said: "Three years ago we were only a Xerox reseller. We didn't have any app developers at the time. We were interested in joining the PAB programme to find new ways to do things; to simplify processes; to increase value with customers; to create new differentiators; to sell more machines; and to increase managed print services revenue.

"I sent one of my IT analysts who had a very little bit of app developer experience – something he had learnt on his own, making iPhone apps. I also sent a contractor developer. I learnt that partners like me, resellers, can really get into this programme by using contracted resources. You don't have to make a big investment in full-time developers at the outset.

"We came back and started making apps for our customers. Several months later I gave an app presentation to some agent-owners in the US. After the presentation one came up to me and said 'how do we get it?'. At that point we had not even considered selling the apps to another partner, but it became obvious right away that if you make something that your customers see value in, then other partners will see value in it for their customers and want to license it from you. So, a little over two years ago we started offering apps to other partners.

"We are now working with 170 Xerox partners in the US, Europe and Canada. We have over 20,000 apps installed and are growing at a rate of 1,000 new app installs every month. The Xerox US Channels Group has licensed one of our apps and Xerox Canada has licensed another, so we are seeing a lot of growth.

"The apps we have built focus on support. Our most popular is the Firmware Connect app. Every manufacturer regularly releases firmware and software updates to fix operational issues, compatibility issues and to provide security patches, and every one has a manual step for downloading new firmware and software. The Firmware Connect app automates the process.

"When new firmware and software is released and our company approves it on our servers, devices are automatically updated overnight; all settings are kept at the devices and software is updated in sequential order. The Firmware Connect app increases customer satisfaction, improves reliability, increases network security and decreases service calls and the time it takes to update software during business hours. We have 15,000 installations and have downloaded firmware and software 170,000 times.

"Our first app was the Support Connect app, originally called the Contact Us app. With this, customers can request service and supplies from the partner right on the user interface. Many Xerox partners use Xerox Partner Print Services (XPPS) for managed print services fulfilment. We now have XPPS integration in our app, which provides even more value to our customers.

"Then, at the end of last year we released our Email Connect app. Setting up scan to email on any manufacturer's device is a cumbersome process, unless you have the installation wizard with the new Versalink devices. To set up scan to email you have to get the IP address of the machine to go to the web interface; the username and the password; and you need all the email provider's settings. Then to set up scan to email, you log in and put in 17 pieces of information on six screens. With Email Connect, you open the app, you put in your email address and password, you choose from the 30 most popular email providers in the US and Europe, and then hit Save. It's that easy; anyone can set up scan to email in an instant.

"This is important because, due to security, most users now have to reset their passwords every 30 days. If I'm a reseller, my helpdesk gets a lot of calls – 'My scan to email doesn't work because someone's changed the password'. Now you can just leave the app on the machine, they can put in their new password and it's saved; it's done. So it cuts down on the cost of the helpdesk as well.

"Revenue from licensing our apps to other partners and other divisions of Xerox now makes up over 10% of our total revenue. And that doesn't include the additional revenue we get from using apps with our own customers. Because of the extra revenue, we have just purchased our first reseller company and are in talks to acquire more. This programme has really been fantastic for us. I would say it has had three main benefits: it allows us to create new and simpler ways of doing things; it has created a new revenue stream; and it has allowed me to be a global company."

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Channel partners should capitalise on SMB's adoption of colour lasers

Hassan Masaud, product manager (ink and laser) at Brother UK, explains the work Brother is doing to support the colour laser market's growth among SMBs and why the market provides new opportunities for channel firms

Last year the colour laser market bolted on 27 per cent of growth. These models have grown in popularity among SMBs, as they've emerged as an increasingly cost effective way of providing secure, high-speed printing at large volumes easily.

More and more SMBs are looking at where they can maximise efficiency. Slow print speeds, high print costs, poor security and limited usability are common frustrations for small businesses. They are willing to make the initial investment to ensure that the time it takes for employees to print at high volumes is reduced, while documents are protected and costs are managed.

Colour lasers offer exactly this, and for users with high print volumes they are increasingly among the most suitable options. This gives channel partners a significant opportunity to capitalise on their popularity.

We've developed a new series of laser models, the L8000 and L9000 ranges, to enable channel partners to capture this increasing demand for easier, safer and scalable printing. The seven new models provide cost-effective colour printing, which can each be scaled with tower trays to fit the printing needs of a personal office or an entire department, meeting wide-ranging requirements from SMEs for volume printing via one machine.

The printers can also be customised by programming time-saving task shortcuts onto the large touchscreen interface, making routine printing or scanning easier for employees.

The high-yield toners also give users the opportunity to print in large volumes and we've incorporated Brothers own print management solution, B-guard, as well as other industry recognized solutions such as FollowMe and Papercut to allow for greater control.

With security becoming a growing concern in this market, the new models can also help keep documents and data safe with password protection functions, network user authentication and advanced network settings.

We're positioning the printers as solutions to help SMB's increase efficiency and grow their businesses. For channel partners, there is a wealth of opportunities to target this market with printer models that have traditionally been thought of as enterprise-level equipment. But, demonstrating how new machines can solve common pain points will be key in doing so.

More and more SMBs are looking at where they can maximise efficiency. Slow print speeds, high print costs, poor security and limited usability are common frustrations for small businesses

Brother UK is boosting its SMB print offering with its latest colour laser launch. The new L8000 and L9000 ranges will help channel partners capitalise on a buoyant colour laser market, which has grown 27 per cent year-on-year*

Brother strengthens SMB print portfolio with latest colour laser launch

The ICT services provider is introducing seven new models, which are all specifically designed to increase efficiency and improve workflow in SMBs and small corporates.

Having generated the largest sales growth last year**, the L8000 and L9000 series launch cements Brother's position as one of the leaders in the colour laser market.

Replacing the L8000 and L9000 models currently available, the five-strong L8000 range comprises two A4 printers and three multifunction devices. The L9000 series includes a higher volume A4 printer and the flagship MFC-L9570CDW, which features a fully customisable 17.6 cm LCD touchscreen.

Models also offer SMB's high levels of security with user authentication settings and the ability to lock certain functions. Optional lower and tower

trays also help firms scale their printing needs as they grow.

Brother's reinvented toner technology has also improved the quality of mono and colour prints produced. Both ranges are well suited to SMBs – as well as providing cost-effective printing.

Models in the L9000 series are suitable for higher volume users, with high-yield toners and print management solutions such as b-guard and PaperCut for greater control.

For further information on the L8000 and L9000 ranges, visit **www.brother. co.uk/printers/ colour-laser-printers/l8000-l9000-range**

MFC-L9570CDW

*Context data - Jan to Nov, 2015 vs 2016.
** 23 per cent year-on-year. Context market data (Jan-Nov) 2015 vs 2016

Helping the channel drive incremental sales with minimum cost

PrintIT Reseller spoke to Ian McRae, Managing Director of EKM Global, about the company's print service management software EKM Insight and the newly launched integration with HP Smart Device Services

In the late 1990s when print vendors' focus was more on box shifting than on services, McRae believed that managed print services was the future. He had racked up a 21 year tenure at HP, helping end-users get the best possible value out of their printing estates and when the business restructured, he took the opportunity to leave and establish EKM Global.

Headquartered in Warminster, the software and services company has a ten-strong workforce and is on track to continue on a steady growth trajectory that has seen it realise a 20 per cent increase year on year. The company is a supplier of professional print services to the UK government under the RM3781 framework, to the higher education sector under the NEPA framework and to schools under the Crescent framework.

"When we first launched, we did consultancy work," McRae explained. "We developed a methodology for conducting print service assessments that included looking at workflows, operational processes, applications, IT set-up etc. At the time that service was not mainstream, it was predominantly done by the OEMs for large organisations, and what we did was bring it to the fore for more companies."

He continued: "However there wasn't any software on the market that would help us to get and analyse the information

> There wasn't any software on the market that would help us to get and analyse the information we needed so we started developing our own tools

we needed so we started developing our own tools." As a result of this forward-looking approach, a number of OEMs engaged EKM to train their staff to sell solutions as opposed to hardware as the industry shifted towards a services- and solutions-led model.

Expertise in software and services

Whilst initially consultancy was its mainstay, as the business grew, its focus shifted to software design and development. In 2007, the company launched its in-house developed print service management software – EKM Insight which enables MSPs and end-users to streamline print management, giving them the tools they need to manage print in the same way they would any other IT service. The software has been designed to manage the entire print service lifecycle from strategy, design, transformation and operation, with active continuous improvement.

"It's grown exponentially since launch," McRae explained. "Today, we have thousands of users across the UK, Europe and South America, and we're now expanding into North America and Asia."

The rationale behind developing this software was a belief that printers and MFPs are an integral part of a business' IT infrastructure and as such, support and management should be handled in exactly the same way as all other IT services.
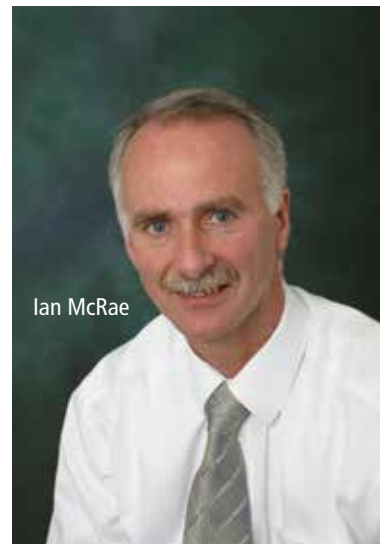
Ian McRae

"Those services should be forward-looking, planned, robust and secure, delivering an optimised service for the business and ensuring high service availability to support users doing their jobs to deliver value to the business" he added.

EKM Insight brings higher levels of sophistication to the table, taking the unique complexities associated with managing printing equipment into account. There are three core aspects:

Asset management: "It's essential to get asset management right," said McRae. "EKM Insight provides detailed and accurate information around the location of all printing assets, ensuring that consumables (and engineers) are delivered to the right location. Furthermore all asset moves and changes are updated and controlled – something we view as essential to ensure a high quality print service."

Supply chain integration: Another key differentiator in the solution is the ability to track consumables, not just

We accurately record all usage
– we can consolidate the meter readings

from a levels perspective but from a supply chain perspective. EKM Insight's intelligent demand forecasting and active supply chain management, enables the print service provider to ensure that consumables are delivered efficiently and at the right time, while simultaneously minimising stock and inventory holding.

"We provide customisation into the supply chain at the right level, consumables can be auto-ordered and shipped direct to the customer. It's also integrated with 'stock in the channel' so resellers can buy at the best price and achieve the best possible margin with minimum human touch," he added.

Incident management: The software is intelligent, it learns from the print environment, helping both end-users and service providers to achieve an optimised print service. The status of every machine is recorded and linked into an incident management system.

"We accurately record all usage – we can consolidate the meter readings – for example mono vs. colour volumes or large pages vs. small pages – making it very simple to understand and we make that information meaningful so it's service oriented," McRae explained, adding: "For resellers, service needs to be effectively planned and organised to ensure minimum cost of service delivery. The ability to monitor equipment capability, performance and usage, provides them with the opportunity to ensure the right assets are in the right locations, deliver optimal value for the end-user and reduce the cost to serve."

Our biggest USP is that we can deliver five to ten times more productivity – in comparision with other systems

Channel opportunity
Available as a secure private cloud service or on-premise service, EKM Insight provides the flexibility and value to meet the most diverse and demanding operating requirements.

For MSPs, IT resellers and dealers, the key benefits include the flexibility to provide full managed services, consumable sales automation and collaborative customer services, with the lowest operational cost.

"Our service provider clients span from SMEs, to country, regional and global

companies. We also have a significant number of channel customers who use the service to manage large fleets across multiple sites. We are now going through the process of scaling the system so it meets the needs of SMEs through to large enterprises, opening it up to many more IT channel resellers," McRae added.

He continued: "Our strategy is to enable better services to be delivered at lower prices. We enable our customers to find unique value through providing a flexible software user experience, efficient service workflows, tailored user roles, which enables collaborative work between the service provider and customer. This solution drives productivity at every point in the service and supply chain.

"Our biggest USP is that we can deliver five to ten times more productivity – in comparision with other systems. With EKM Insight, an individual can handle five to ten more devices per person. We're able to demonstrate the ROI for our larger clients and we are confident that we will be able to deliver the same degree of productivity gains to clients with smaller fleets."

McRae says there is an opportunity for vendors where print is not the mainstay. He said: "IT resellers are looking for ways to drive incremental sales with minimum cost, maximum margin and minimal inventory overheads. Some have piloted managed print services but with limited success, and this is where EKM Insight can help."

Automation step by step
EKM Insight has been designed to support channel vendors to seamlessly transform from a traditional product supply model to delivering services as an annuity revenue stream. It enables them to deliver new value to customers and reduce sales cost by incrementally adding automation step by step.

For example, EKM Insight provides a dedicated workflow that enables resellers to generate automated leads from customers for consumables. They can use the live monitoring functionality for demand forecasting and lead generation for consumables and engineering fit maintenance items, check distribution availability and purchase at the best

market price, then dropship directly to customers incurring no inventory holding costs. Furthermore the order and invoice information can be fed directly into their accounting systems.

The software will also automate processes such as new product staging and configuration, moves and change management, break/fix services and incident management. And this wholly flexible service enables the reseller to choose whether to build the services themselves or to access as a white label service. The latter enables them to benefit from a new revenue stream without investment in upfront infrastructure and service operation development.

New functionality and value
The most recent development has been the integration of EKM Insight with HP Smart Device Services, a move that McRae says provides the most advanced and leading print service management system on the market today.

Key features include the ability to fix issues remotely without VPN access, and to diagnose before dispatching an engineer, enabling faster first-time fix rates. With is solution, service providers can also cut onsite service visits by 25 per cent. The software provides fault alerts when parts need to be replaced, resellers can group these together and replace all in a single visit, reducing the cost to serve and minimising end-user disruption.

Supplies management functionality enables resellers to reduce risk and early cartridge replacement, delivering additional savings, as well as monitor and track all HP devices to get accurate page counts for every billing cycle, minimising invoice dispute overheads.

"The HP Smart Device Services integration with EKM Insight provides a logical extension to and builds on the core concepts at the heart of EKM Insight with its predictive services, powerful remote control, active asset management, advanced consumable supply chain management and pre-emptive service engineering management," said McRae in conclusion.

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Keeping it local

How has continued industry consolidation and the rise of the super dealer impacted on customer relationships? This month's panel share their thoughts, and highlight the value-add that a local reseller brings to the table

PITR: Local versus national: what is the impact on customer relationships, what are the benefits/disadvantages of working with a local/national print provider?

Matt Goodall, *Service Director,* **Office Evolution:** "When we started Office Evolution 12 years ago there was a definite trend towards dealing with larger national suppliers, at the time they had the infrastructure to adopt the fast moving technologies, train their staff and invest in the changes. Many people moved towards the idea of a single supplier for all of their branches, thinking this would be simpler and easier to manage.

"What we started to see was a real disconnect between the customer and a 'real person', customers would experience the frustration of making a call and speaking to one person, calling back five minutes later and never speaking to that same person again, this led to customers being asked to 'try' things multiple times or returning to the beginning of a scripted process. Sales staff would make the initial sale and would then not be seen for the term of the lease and a relationship with the customer was never truly formed.

"In recent years, we have seen that trend reverse, customers want to know exactly who they are dealing with, a smaller supplier can establish and maintain a relationship with the customer. The customer can speak with the same point of contact easily and they can talk with the owners or directors with ease, there is no hiding behind a faceless corporate identity.

"As a smaller supplier, we have the same access to a manufacturer's support, we have access to the market leading software and hardware and we can provide that personal level of service that customers crave. As such, we are signing contracts with more large corporate multinationals as well as our established customer base. We are accountable, contactable and responsible. The customer has what they want and that is a real connection with their supplier.

"The larger nationals also split their teams skills, a department for deliveries, one for software, one for technical another for sales etc., the processes become clunky from a customer's experience. We have recently seen a customer take delivery of new copiers from a large national, four weeks later the machines are still awaiting someone to connect them up, that is not what I call service."

Scott Walker, *Head of MPS Business Development,* **ZenOffice:** "The managed print division of ZenOffice is a local company (North-West-based) with a national…in fact, global footprint. Put simply, whilst we're based in the North-West, due to the fact we partner with Xerox and HP, we speak plain English to our customers…and the technical jargon to our partners.

"This allows us to assess, design and implement a managed print service…well, anywhere. We've got clients with sites in Australia, USA and Germany for example, but they're all managed by ZenOffice with a doorstep manufacturer service from either Xerox or HP. A lot of organisations are pleasantly surprised by our capabilities.

> We speak plain English to our customers… and the technical jargon to our partners

Mark Smyth
Chief Operating Officer
Vision

Matt Goodall
Service Director
Office Evolution

"I honestly can't see any disadvantages to our set-up (but I would say that), but the benefits are that our customers deal with dedicated account managers, their allocated 'office buddy' (so you'll always be able to speak to a human) backed by direct manufacturer service. It puts our customers in a safe pair of hands."

Mark Smyth, *Chief Operating Officer,* **Vision:** "Local versus national is often about routes to market, verticals and procurement policies. For instance, corporate clients often have a national coverage and a number of offices nationwide and are therefore better suited to a national provider. Many verticals such as legal and finance and accountancy for example have strategic offices located in major cities, normally London, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds and Glasgow etc. They control purchasing centrally and require a preferred supplier that can meet and fulfil all services for all locations whilst leveraging best price and purchasing power."

Andy Perkins, *Director,* **CSL Business Machines:** "Locally-based dealerships tend to be leaner and more efficient than the national providers. For instance last week, one of our smaller customers who are based 45 miles away, rang up and was

...continued

Sam Elphick
Sales Director
Lex Business Equipment

in desperate need of assistance. We had a man in place within the hour. This degree of flexibility can only be achieved by having local engineers and gives the local reseller a huge advantage.

"CSL concentrate on their productivity allowing them to control and reduce their costs thereby allowing them to be able to offer a service which is as financially competitive as national dealers but far more efficient and effective for their customers."

Sam Elphick, *Sales Director,* **Lex Business Equipment**: "We consider ourselves as a local print provider, but with a national reach. The majority of our clients are based within a 60-mile radius of our headquarters in Bury, Lancashire. It is though the case for several of our clients that their head office location is in Manchester, with the addition of four or five other offices throughout the country.

"The primary benefit of being a local print provider is the level of customer care we can give – from regular review meetings to discussing our clients' ongoing needs, to ensuring prompt attendance to fault calls; usually within 3-4 hours. For those clients that aren't 'local' we have excellent support from our manufacturer partners UTAX, Develop and Lexmark – with the same escalations."

Kevin Tunley, *Sales Director,* **Midshire**: "Local providers can offer greater flexibility in the level of service. Customer

relationships are usually closer, as direct contact and regular site visits are easier to plan and achieve. They also have a greater understanding of local business needs and challenges, which national suppliers may be unaware of. Many businesses now have to highlight and demonstrate their CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility), which can really only be achieved well by working with a local dealer as opposed to a national company. At Midshire, each of our offices have developed close working relationships with the local community and support a number of projects and initiatives."

PITR: **In your experience do people prefer to buy local?**

Matt Goodall: "In most cases YES – I believe that they do prefer to buy local and support the local economy both financially and as far as the jobs market goes. The old saying of people buy from people is true, and that commonality of being local, understanding the area, the challenges and the economy provides a link between you and your customers.

"Occasionally we do see prospective customers making a decision to move to a large national, or an out of area company, in many of these cases, we see them move back as soon as they possibly can to a local supplier."

Scott Walker: "On a personal level, I always try to purchase local. Sometimes it isn't possible, but I'm a firm believer in buying through 'the little guys'."

Mark Smyth: "We experience a relatively small number of clients that have a policy to buy locally and that's often based on their local business community and corporate social responsibility objectives

Andy Perkins
Director
CSL Business
Machines

– where supply chain, travel and carbon footprint for example, can have a dramatic impact on providing the client with products and services.

"This is also present with corporate and multinationals and if you have national coverage, then it's about that coverage and the availability of sales and services professional resources available locally in the field to meet their needs and demands for account management and support. The focus for most clients, especially corporate, national clients, is about the ability to meet SLAs, compared with SMEs who can be a little less driven on SLAs."

Andy Perkins: "Yes, most customers would prefer a local dealer, although there are circumstances when national and international companies have a global agreement. Even then it's interesting how many will seek to find a way of using a local reseller because they know from experience that they are likely to receive better service."

Sam Elphick: "I think more recently the emphasis on 'local' purchasing has become more prevalent. We are fortunate in that due to our long-established reputation and presence throughout the north-west, we can be as competitive price wise as the national providers, but our true advantage is our local service. On this basis, I would say that organisations do prefer working with local suppliers."

Kevin Tunley: "Most customers prefer to buy local. Generally, the feedback from customers who have experienced both national and local suppliers feel that service response and the solving of issues is easier to achieve with a local company with a flatter management structure.

"At Midshire, we have developed a network of regional offices that can offer all of the benefits of local service and account management, but have the ability to offer national coverage when the account requires. Our board of Directors and Senior Managers across this network share best practice, knowledge, ideas and strategy to ensure each office remains innovative and competitive.

"Local dealers also have the ability to offer a wider range of solutions – i.e.: network support, audio visual products and services, communications etc. Customers are always looking to reduce the stress involved in dealing with a number of different suppliers, whose products interlink within their business. So a single supplier that they can rely on and trust really helps in this respect."

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Matt Goodall: "I am sure that more companies will sell out to the nationals, but what happens is that the customer sees a change from the local service that they used to get to a national call centre, and all that comes with that.

"We have seen how many of these large companies acquire smaller companies and as they progress, their reputation become sullied and their service wains. The end result is that the short term gain may be beneficial, but the customers that don't get the service they need with look for another local supplier as soon as they can get out of their contract."

Scott Walker: "You will unfortunately always get the odd one or two customers who will automatically associate a past bad experience from a provider. However, the message mustn't be that 'it's business as usual'. Why should it be? Why would you want it to be?

"The message must be explained to customers that there is in fact change, positive change…and that they support their provider during this period of transition. Small or big, no MPS provider gets it right 100 per cent of the time…it's how you put it right that counts.

"I've had mixed messages across the board from contacts. Some aren't happy about recent acquisitions, some are indifferent, and others are embracing the change to see what it brings. Change can often be a positive thing…they just need reassurances."

Mark Smyth: "I have experienced a large number of acquisitions of varying sizes over many years and you always experience some movement of clients and employees. Clients typically do not welcome change and the integration of businesses drives change which leads to a potential impact on the client experience with account management, administration, billing process and service delivery. The outcome can result in the client voting with their feet and they go elsewhere.

"With employees it's somewhat different, it's about matching locations of services such as call centres, field engineers and account managers, where there are strong potential areas of consolidation and efficiency. The location of services both organisations provide does not often match or suit the acquiring business plans and or footprint of offices, and therefore employees are subject to reorganisation. Compensation pay plans are also a contentious issue as they vary between organisations and employees are forced to either accept changes or move on!

"Business efficiency is a key and vital component to acquisitions that comes from integration and consolidation and that's what makes acquisitions a viable formula for growth! I believe there is now some market recognition that managing an effective transition and integration of organisations can soften the blow for clients specifically and therefore minimise the client impact, whilst improving retention rates through the integration process."

Andy Perkins: "Consolidation gives the remaining local dealers more opportunities to utilise their 'fleetness of foot' in structuring their offering to individual users.

"So much of our industry is now software orientated with both local and national resellers making significant investment in their IT support teams. The local reseller is capable of personalising software implementation and ongoing support.

"The use of remote diagnostics is becoming increasingly important, but there is a danger that this will reduce the personal touch that customers value and the locally based dealers are better positioned to maintain relationships with their client base."

Kevin Tunley
Sales Director
Midshire

The use of remote diagnostics is becoming increasingly important, but there is a danger that this will reduce the personal touch that customers value

Sam Elphick: "I wouldn't say there has been much of a noticeable change in recent months to the industry, despite the consolidations which have taken place. I believe as a 'local' print provider we will still strive to offer the best service and value to our clients and to keep up to date with changing technologies and to ensure our product portfolio is strong. It is difficult to say if the situation may change should more acquisitions take place – I guess it will be a case of 'watching this space'."

Kevin Tunley: "Given the number of recent acquisitions by manufacturers, it's inevitable that there will be more to follow. Manufacturers have seen that their equipment sales have been increasingly reliant on their dealer network and are taking action to secure their route to market, by creating or increasing their direct sales capability.

"We are moving back to the majority of sales being direct from the manufacturer or via the new breed of super dealers, which will inevitably result in a reduction in choice for the end user. However, for all the reasons mentioned earlier, there will still be a market for the remaining local dealers who can develop closer relationships with their clients and add value to the sale."

www.zenoffice.com
www.officeevolution.co.uk
www.visionplc.co.uk
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Scott Walker
Head of MPS Business Development
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View from the channel

Stuart Carruthers, *Technology Sales Manager,* **Midshire Business Systems Northern**

Q: What are your customers most interested in?
A: Print mobility seems to be the most important factor from a user point of view, they want to be able to get their prints fast and without having to move very far. However, due to education from people like ourselves, management are starting to wake up to the importance of keeping their data protected. We wipe hard drives and supply equipment that can completely delete cached data on the fly.

BYOD isn't anything new, people have been using their own devices for a long time in their organisations, however, BYOD outside of your own organisation is getting more popular. For example, the ability to go to an airport and print your boarding passes from your phone to the airport's printer.

Q: Do clients have the same understanding of industry terms such as BYOD, MPS or MDS, as we do?
A: This depends to whom you speak to and the type of organisation. IT staff and senior management are normally okay with these terms. If you were to use these abbreviations in the primary education sector for example, most times they wouldn't know what you were talking about.

Q: Where are you seeing most traction at the moment, are there any verticals that are particularly strong?
A: Cloud services are definitely showing the biggest growth, as broadband has gotten faster and more reliable. More and more people are releasing their tight grip on in-house equipment and storage. I wouldn't say this was in any particular market place, but across all organisations.

Q: When selling MFPs, what are the most popular software solutions you provide and why?
A: PaperCut is by far the most popular solution sale with MFPs. Organisations have switched on to the fact that if their staff are accountable for their print budgets, they are much more likely to waste less print. Other services that come bundled in with the software are very useful too including follow me print, print redirection and many many more!

Q: Where do you get information on the latest products and solutions, and do you feel that the OEMs are doing enough to educate their channel partners?
A: Suppliers and distribution channels are an excellent source of up-to-date product information and the latest offerings. One of the factors in the process for choosing new suppliers and partners is the way they communicate information like this.

You can have the best products in the world, but if no one knows about them it matters not. I personally spend a lot of time on the web, looking for innovative ideas and new solutions that I can take to market.

Q: Is your patch particularly competitive – is it national or local competition that you face?
A: The industry is fiercely competitive, with companies constantly finding new ways of making bad deals look attractive. We know what to look for when we come across such offerings. I personally tend to compete against local suppliers rather than national suppliers. I am in a fortunate position as Midshire is small enough not to be a faceless organisation, but big enough to command excellent pricing, which we pass on to our customers.

Q: How do you spend your week – time on phone, face to face meetings with customers etc.?
A: I try to spend as much time in front of customers as possible. This business is built on good strong relationships and I have a lot of customers that I have dealt with for a long time. I'm also lucky to have built some great relationships with referees who are an important part of my success.

Q: What would make your job easier?
A: Other than a magic wand, I don't think anything could make my job easier!!!

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> More and more people are releasing their tight grip on in-house equipment and storage

> The industry is fiercely competitive, with companies constantly finding new ways of making bad deals look attractive

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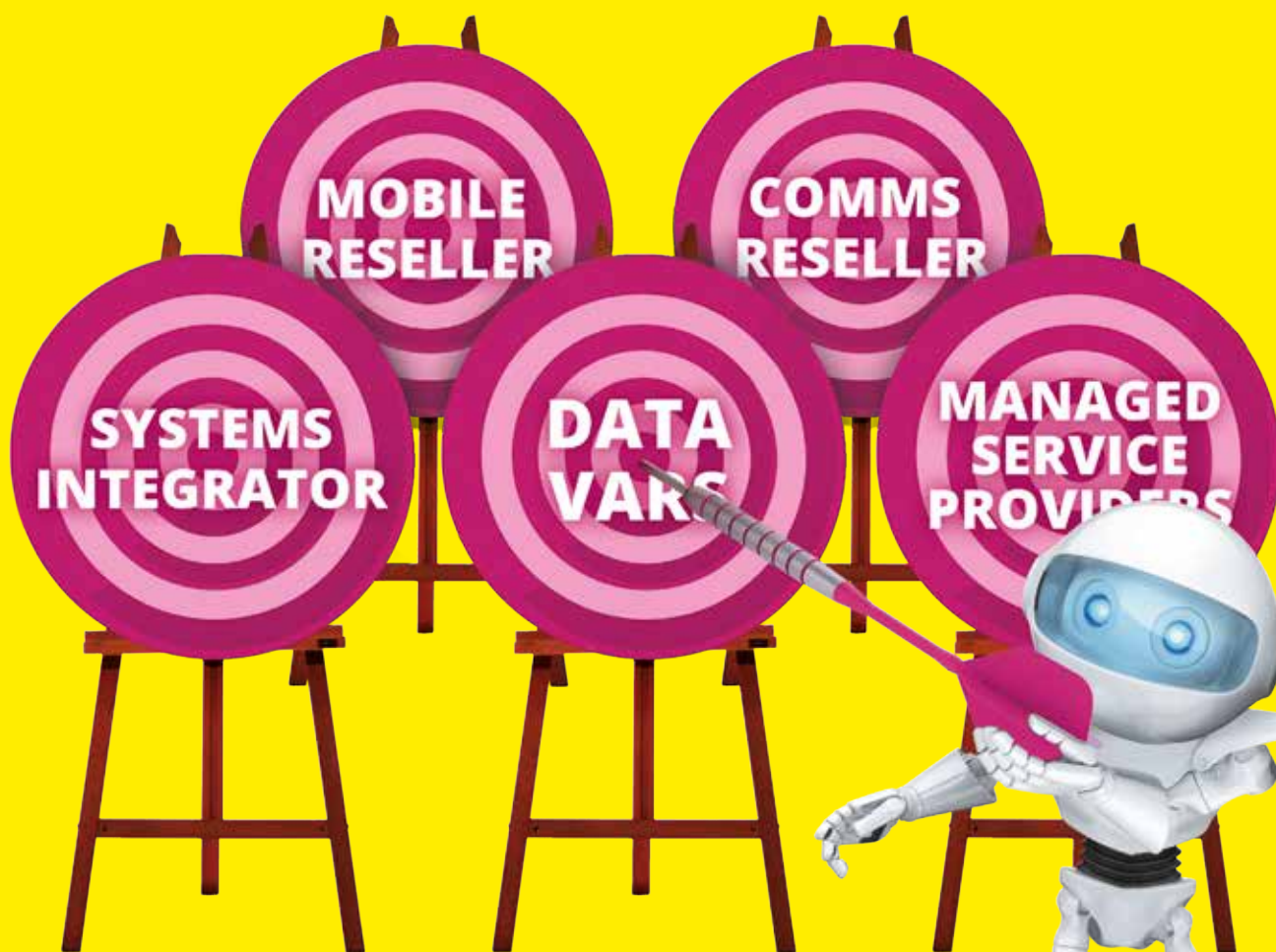## Jason Williams, *Managing Director,* **Cura Technical**

What's currently having the greatest impact on your business?
Two headlines, firstly, Brexit. Even though 90 per cent of our income is in sterling, most of our purchasing costs are related to the impact of the euro or yen, we've been impacted by the near 20 per cent decline in the value of sterling this year.

Thus, the industry has seen most if not all OEMs pass this uplift on predominately in parts and consumables. These additional costs we are finding it prohibitive to pass on, and with compounding human resource costs such as auto enrolment, this is putting many organisations in our market under sustained pressure. The second headline which I see will have an impact across our market this year is preparation to be fully compliant with GDPR.

Where do you see the next big opportunity?
Again two opportunities – one GDPR, as well as I see it, this is going to cause an impact, I do feel this will benefit organisations such as Cura, as we have always been heavily compliant with ISO, Safe Contractorship as well as just attaining Cyber Essentials PLUS, these differentiators makes Cura unique as it is becoming ever more challenging for service companies to adhere and attain these accreditations with the substantive and ongoing investment that's required to be fully compliant.

The other opportunity I feel is forthcoming and that excites me the most is the ongoing development of additive manufacturing, more commonly known as 3D printing.

What would make your day job easier?
Another one hour on each day.

What's the best bit of business advice you've been given?
Turnover – Vanity
Profit – Sanity
Cash – REALITY!

If you had had a crystal ball, would you have done anything differently?
Yes, wished I bought 100 dollars of Bitcoins in May 2010!

Describe your most embarrassing moment.
In my early twenties I went on a coach trip for a day to France where in the morning rush I inadvertently put on a pair of my girlfriends' "drain-pipe" jeans, shall we just say whilst on the journey I realised how rather tight they were. Suffice to say the whole coach enjoyed the journey at my expense.

What was your first job?
Stacking shelves at Waitrose..

What would be your dream job?
I like to think that I have it! I'm privileged to be leading a very talented team to be one of the leading IT service companies in our market.

Fine dining and good wine, or curry and a pint?
I've been very lucky in eating at some excellent restaurants in my time, however you can't beat a curry and a Cobra.

Money's not an issue, what's your perfect car… and where would you like to drive it?
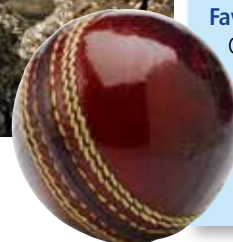Triumph Stag, traveling the Garden Route from Cape Town to Port Elizabeth.

Favourite holiday destination.
Cape Town, South Africa.

How do you like to spend your spare time?
With my children watching them both play cricket.

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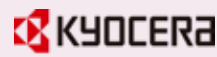
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