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MAY/JUNE 2016

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Toshiba introduces the next generation of print

LOGISTICS

Trade Copiers to start selling new machines to local firms

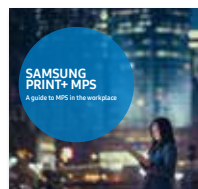
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MPS

Samsung launches flexible channel MPS programme

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ENGAGEMENT

Carl Day explains Toshiba's new approach to customer engagement

PAGE 48





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Stephen Armistead, Managing Director of Trade Copiers

Comment

Our Winchester office receives a large number of unsolicited sales calls, usually at the most inconvenient time. We could take steps to minimise the problem, but have chosen not to largely because we have an interest in selling and are always on the look-out for successful sales people. This exposes us to a very broad range of sales techniques, many so ill-judged and/or dodgy that you wonder how the cold-caller ever makes a sale. The answer, of course, is that many don't. So, when Carl Day, Sales Director at Toshiba TEC UK, started explaining to *PITR* what he thought was wrong with sales techniques and customer engagement in the print industry, his words rang true. It takes a lot of confidence and intuition to break with the prevailing orthodoxy, especially when your livelihood is at stake. The Toshiba Masters programme introduced in 2014 gives participants the opportunity to test their ideas with science and evidence-based research. The results, so far, have been very impressive, including a 75% increase in sales of Toshiba MFPs by the dozen or so Toshiba partners that have taken part. What the course has taught Day is the subject of our feature on page 48.

Developing a new sales technique is one way of disrupting the status quo. Another is to adopt new technology. *PITR* has just returned from the Samsung European Partner Summit in Budapest where there was much talk of changing the paradigm in the printer industry through the use of mobile and cloud technologies. Samsung's Android-based MFPs give resellers a platform to make real changes to their operations and those of their customers. At the event, which we report on in more detail in the next issue, Samsung made some significant additions to its offering, bringing impressive new capabilities to resellers. These include its new managed print service (see page 40) and a number of new apps. Samsung's desire to bring together its smartphone and printing technologies can look a little forced at times. Some apps are much more useful than others. That said, impressive applications are now emerging that simplify everything from document workflow and device security to faxing (find out more in the next issue). Talk of a paradigm shift might not be so fanciful after all.

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BULLETIN

GDPR to be introduced 'through the back door'

The EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) due to be introduced by EU member states by May 2018 represents a huge threat to business continuity warns Henley Business School.

The way in which organisations collect, use, transfer and store the personal data of millions of EU customers and clients must comply with the GDPR or companies will face punitive fines of up to 4% of global turnover or €20m.

One of the key changes brought about by the GDPR is the need for organisations to record how they obtained consent for processing the personal data and financial information of EU citizens and for how long that consent remains valid.

In addition, all communication with a customer or client must be age appropriate.

Ardi Kolah, co-programme director of Henley Business School, warns that failure to observe these basic requirements could lead to corrective measures

being imposed by the Supervisory Authority (Information Commissioner's Office) and the Regulator (Financial Conduct Authority), in addition to financial penalties and, in the worst cases, cessation of all personal data processing.

He said: "Firms will now face a raft of guidance from the ICO that will be in alignment with these new data protection principles and this will effectively introduce the GDPR 'through the back door' well before the deadline of the two-year transition has expired."

In preparation for the changes, Henley Business School has launched an online executive education programme to train the next generation of Data Protection Officers (DPO) required to be appointed under the GDPR.

The five-month DPO Programme combines online learning with face-to-face interaction at residential introductory and integration workshops.

www.henley.ac.uk



Augmented reality fiver

The Bank of England has enlisted the help of augmented reality app Blippar to promote the new £5 note, due to enter



circulation in September. The public is being invited to download the free Blippar app to their smartphone and 'blipp' (scan) any Bank of England banknote to see the new fiver – the UK's first polymer banknote – on-screen. People can take selfies of themselves with the new note, watch video content and find out more about its security features. www.blippar.com

All round appeal

Epson has introduced a basic MPS for smaller businesses that operates in a similar way to a mobile phone contract to bring peace of mind and convenience to smaller businesses.

Print365 packages cover all servicing and supplies for a low monthly fee, with no hidden or additional charges. Epson is offering a choice of three-year packages, up to a maximum of 300,000 prints over the contract period.

An easy-to-install assessment tool lets end users analyse their printing needs before purchasing.

www.epson.eu

Konica Minolta buys ProcessFlows

ProcessFlows Holdings Ltd, a provider of technology and services for the capture, processing and delivery of documents, voice and data, has been acquired by Konica Minolta Business Solutions (UK) Ltd.

The Winchester-based company has more than 1,200 customers and long-term supplier relationships with Nuance (Equitrac and Safecom), OpenText (Rightfax and Alchemy), Hyland Onbase, Readsoft, Intuitive Dashboards and AVST CallXpress.

Neil Dingley, Managing Director of Konica Minolta Business Solutions (UK) Ltd, said: "The coming together of Konica Minolta Business Solutions and ProcessFlows builds synergies with our existing managed print services and Managed Content Services, workflow and storage businesses. It will enable us to offer clients the benefits of agile process-based IT services solutions."

www.konicaminolta.co.uk
www.ProcessFlows.co.uk



The best of the best

Samsung Electronics and Canon are just behind Sony at the top the latest UK RepTrak ranking of consumer tech company reputations.

The ranking, based on more than 3,200 interviews with members of the public, measures a company's reputation for products and services, innovation, workplace, governance, citizenship, leadership and performance. Apple has the highest ranking for innovation, but loses ground when it comes to Governance and Citizenship.

2016 RepTrak Ranking & Score

1	Sony	83.0
2	Samsung Electronics	81.8
3	Canon	80.8
4	Intel	80.2
5	Panasonic	80.0
6	Philips Electronics	79.6
7	Microsoft	79.3
8	HP Inc.	77.8
9	Dell	77.2
10	Apple	77.0
11	Toshiba	76.2
12	LG Corporation	75.0
13	Fujifilm	73.6
14	Sharp	72.6
15	Fujitsu	71.8

Download the full 2016 UK RepTrak report at <https://www.reputationinstitute.com/research>

Kyocera introduces free box collections

KYOCERA Document Solutions UK has enhanced its toner recycling programme with the introduction of a free box collection service for high volume customers.

The provision of fully branded boxes in a choice of two sizes is being carried out in partnership with LPR which will collect and recycle all Kyocera toner

cassettes, turning them into plastic granules for re-use in a variety of manufacturing processes.

KYOCERA expects the European initiative, which UK customers can access via KYOCERA's UK website, to increase its toner cartridge recycling rate by 64% in the first year alone. It already operates a single toner returns service. kyoceradocumentsolutions.co.uk



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[KX-MB2500 Series]



DP-MB310



KX-MB2270
[KX-MB2200 Series]



KX-MB2001



KX-MB2061

The DP-MB310 has received BLI awards.



For more information on the full range of Panasonic Printers, Scanners and MFPs simply visit
<http://business.panasonic.co.uk/communication-solutions> or call 0207 022 6530.

Panasonic System Communications Company Europe, Panasonic House, Willoughby Road, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 8FP



Available
from:



www.betadistribution.com

Apogee completes Kon-x Wales acquisition



Apogee has completed its acquisition of Kon-x Wales, the first of several it plans to make this year.

Established in 2005, Kon-x Wales provides print and document hardware and software for multiple manufacturers and supports an installed base of over 2,000 devices. Directors Aled Williams and Arwel Griffiths will continue to lead the business from its Bangor base.

Jason Collins, Apogee Joint CEO, said: "This is a great acquisition for Apogee as it gives us a new operations hub in North Wales and local staff with valuable expertise. Kon-x Wales is an excellent business with very strong client relationships and a reputation for superb local service and we are looking forward to welcoming them into the group to drive our growth in this part of the country."

www.apogeecorp.com



Document Data Group takes space in Eurocentral

Document Data Group has opened new premises at Eurocentral on the M8 in Lanarkshire, 30 minutes from both Edinburgh and Glasgow airports.

The UTAX and Canon dealer will maintain its current East Kilbride headquarters and use the additional 2000sq. ft. of space at Eurocentral for a showroom, boardroom, three executive offices and an open plan sales area.

The opening of the new facility follows three years of record sales and increased profits for the supplier of MFPs, managed print services and document management solutions.

Operation Director Justin Longmuir said: "Continual re-investment in the Group over recent years allows us to move into this state-of-the-art, world class facility. It will be the face - the shop window - of Document Data Group."

He added: "Initially we will occupy just under 2,000 sq. ft., but that will expand very quickly to 3,000 sq. ft., and there is capacity within the building to extend to 9,000 sq. ft., which is not beyond the bounds of possibility given our current rate of growth." documentdatagroup.com

See Papercut data in more detail

NewField IT has released a PaperCut connector for its CompleteView User Analytics software. The connector will enable organisations to explore data generated by PaperCut in great detail to support fact-based decision-making.

CompleteView User Analytics takes data generated by Equitrac, SafeCom, Print Audit and now, PaperCut and displays it in a graphical format that makes complex data easier to explore and understand.

Bob Hoskins, Head of Innovation at NewField IT, said: "Analytics is a critical deliverable in any services engagement. CompleteView User Analytics gives clients full insight into their printing environment and enables a deep-dive into user behaviours to drive real cost savings both up-front and in the future." NewField IT plans to launch additional connectors throughout 2016.

www.newfieldit.com

Xerox for NEPA

Six regional higher education procurement and purchasing consortia, led by the North Eastern Universities Purchasing Consortia (NEUPC), have selected Xerox as a supplier of tech and managed print services for the National Education Printer Agreement (NEPA). The NEPA framework agreement for the higher and further education sectors has an estimated value of £10 million this year and will run for two years, with the possibility of two one-year extensions.

www.xerox.com



First steps

FT Solutions, a communication and branding solutions provider, has taken its first steps in 3D printing with the installation of a ProJet 660Pro full colour 3D printer from Canon. One of the first services it plans to offer is the printing of lifelike figurines of customers beside their favourite sports person or celebrity. FT Solutions managing director Tom Gurd believes the company's new FT3D division could generate more than £500,000 of business in its first year.

www.canon.co.uk • www.ftolutions.co.uk

Annodata makes the grade

Annodata is one of four IT service providers to appear in The Sunday Times BDO Profit Track 2016, a ranking of Britain's fastest growing private companies. With a 91.28% increase in profitability since 2012, the MSP was ranked 24th on the list.

CEO Rod Tonna-Barthet said: "As a company, we have evolved our strategy over the past few years as we set in place the foundations needed to grow the businesses and ensure we remain at the forefront of technological innovation. I'm delighted that the efforts of the whole team at Annodata have been independently recognised by the Profit Track 100 as being one of the most profitable businesses in the country."

www.annodata.co.uk



Copyrite automates processes with 2serv

Copyrite Digital Systems has selected Purpose Software's 2serv service management solution to enhance operational efficiency and further automate workflow processes.

The Liverpool-based Ricoh Premier Partner is deploying the software on a subscription basis without the need for any upfront capital expenditure.

A key factor in Copyrite's decision to deploy 2serv is that it integrates tightly with Sage, giving a single point of access and eliminating the need to rekey data into separate systems. A live link ensures that invoices created in 2serv are immediately available in Sage.

Copyrite will also be installing 2roam to increase the productivity of its field service team. The mobile application empowers engineers equipped with tablets, smartphones and other mobile devices to access and update 2serv from any location.

Copyrite Digital Systems Service Manager Ray Allan said: "As well as improving the efficiency of our service operation, 2serv will give us greater control over the end-to-end stock management process. It will enhance our ability to provide a responsive, customer-focused service by ensuring that we always have the optimum stock levels to meet all SLAs." www.copyritesystems.co.uk

Printer consumables top the list for bargain hunters

Four out of five small businesses like to shop around to get the best deal on printer consumables, according to a survey of 726 senior SME decision-makers by Applegate Marketplace.

Research by the creator of the Applegate PRO online buying tool suggests that smaller businesses are 50% to 100% more likely to shop around and compare prices on everyday items than larger SMEs with 100 or more employees.

Applegate PRO streamlines request for quotation and purchase order processes, making it quicker and easier for small businesses to source multiple quotes for products and services. www.applegatepro.com

Percentage of SMEs that shop around before making a purchase

	Sole-trader	Small	Medium
Printer cartridges	83%	79%	33%
Printer paper	53%	52%	22%
Printers	48%	46%	36%
Batteries	29%	27%	11%
Light bulbs	20%	20%	10%
Tea bags	13%	15%	9%
Toilet roll	17%	20%	11%

Microsoft Partner

Silver Small and Midmarket Cloud Solutions

Midshire achieves Microsoft Partner Network competency

Midshire has achieved its second Microsoft Partner Network competency. To go with its Authorised Education Partner status, it has now been named a Silver Small and Midmarket Cloud Solutions Provider.

Philip Sundet, Midshire Northern IT Manager, said: "We understand that one solution doesn't fit all organisations, so we provide flexible options, such as IT services to a private-cloud, public-cloud or hybrid-cloud. I'm pleased that as a department we have now achieved two Microsoft competencies, both of which help to confirm our proficiency in providing IT services to all types of organisation."



Samsung extends partnership with Ubiquitech

Samsung Electronics has expanded its worldwide partnership with Danish software vendor Ubiquitech, enabling users of its MultiXpress series MFPs to improve their document security as well as print management.

The Ubiquitech print management solution prevents confidential information from being leaked by identifying registered users and only allowing documents to be printed by, or shared with, authorised personnel.

In addition, all print tasks are tracked and registered. To reduce duplicate or unnecessary printing, users can view all print jobs on the Android-based Smart UX MFP display. Ubiquitech's solutions can run on IBM Power and IBM System Z, as well as Windows, giving enterprise customer the option to consolidate all Windows Print Servers into a single IBM System Z or Power platform.

www.samsung.com



Photobooks bring stability to consumer photo print market

After years of falling revenue, including double-digit declines in 2013 and 2014, the consumer photo print market is showing signs of stabilisation thanks in part to strong demand for photobooks, up 12.5% in 2015.

According to the Futuresource Consulting report, *The Impact of Apps on Photo Printing*, growth in photobooks is being driven by new printing apps; greater ownership of portable devices; increased use of photo sharing and social media; and the desire of consumers to make their digital memories more tangible.

Research analyst Polina Vorms said: "The number of images captured and stored on mobile devices is growing exponentially, and better camera resolution is providing consumers with more images worth printing. A whole generation of consumers is finding physical prints unexplored fun. If just 1% of these unprinted digital memories were converted into a physical print, the photo prints market could double in size in one year."

The new report complements Futuresource Consulting's recent *Consumer Photo Sharing Report*, which forecasts significant growth in the use of

mobile devices for image capture. By the end of 2016, it expects as many as 638 million images to be captured on smartphones every day in Western Europe. A further 55 million will be captured on digital cameras.

www.futuresource-consulting.com

New from Duplo, the Powis Photopress offers a new way of creating photobooks.

The 'entry level system' turns single-sided digital prints into layflat photobooks, using pressure rather than heat to laminate single-sided photos to sheets enclosed within hard or soft covers. www.duploulouk.com



Canon uniflow in the cloud

Canon has released a scalable, server-less cloud-based version of its uniFLOW print and scan management solution for small and medium-sized businesses. The output management platform combines secure pull printing and mobile printing with detailed reporting so that administrators can track printing and copying costs and ensure they are charged to the correct cost centre or project. Central reporting on print fleet usage and performance also helps administrators identify areas where printing costs and the environmental impact of printing can be reduced.

www.canon.co.uk



Compatible with Canon's uniFLOW print/scan management solution, the new Canon i-SENSYS MF410 and i-SENSYS MF510 A4 MFPs offer B&W printing and copying, colour scanning, a compact footprint and fast print speeds of 33 and 40ppm respectively.

Banner wins public sector contract



Following a formal OJEU tender, Crown Commercial Service has awarded Banner a multi-million pound, four-year contract to supply the UK public sector with office products, paper, catering, janitorial, small business machines and electronic media.

Managing Director, Richard Costin said: "I am delighted that we have won this new Framework. The Banner team has worked tirelessly in winning this bid and I look forward to increasing the number of organisations that join and benefit from the added value that this new agreement offers the public sector."

Cloud bundle for cloud novices

Data centre operator Next Generation Data and its channel distribution partner Exertis UK have introduced a data centre-as-a-service (DCaaS) bundle for resellers whose customers are taking their first steps into cloud services, such as unified communications hosting and disaster recovery management.

Combining rack server hardware from the likes of Dell, Lenovo and Fujitsu and NGD's Data Cube ready-to-run DCaaS hosting platform, the bundle includes a quarter rack configuration, connectivity, power supply, cooling infrastructure and a wide range of high speed network connectivity options. Half rack and full racks are also available. The solution is run through Exertis' own billing system, which allows resellers to bill end users with their own logo and headers without having to invest in a platform of their own.

Gareth Bray, head of commercial enterprise at Exertis, said: "For under £15 per day our data centre infrastructure package allows resellers easy access to high margin annuity revenues, plus additional product and accessories sales opportunities, all with the peace of mind that comes from having NGD's secure, resilient data centre facilities and engineering support services behind them." www.exertis.co.uk

Samsung returns with Exertis

Marking Samsung's return to the Windows PC market, the Galaxy TabPro S 2-in-1 Windows 10 device is available exclusively from Exertis.

It is available in three versions to suit all home and business needs, including Home and Pro Wi-Fi models and a ProLTE model that delivers full blown portability and lightning fast 4G connection.

An Exertis evaluation programme enables all models to be trialled and evaluated for up to four weeks.

Exertis is also the exclusive distribution partner for Samsung's interactive large format display – a PC-free, 'out-of-the-box' interactive solution that requires no extra hardware or cables.

Midshire wins 'One Stop' contract

Midshire has won a contract to supply a record number of Ricoh GELJET printers to the One Stop Stores chain of more than 900 convenience stores, following successful trials in 12 stores across three regions.

Amanda Sanderson from One Stop Stores said: "The Ricoh devices were chosen because of their ease of use, low maintenance, green impact, print quality and time saving features. As well as saving staff time and space in-store, the environmental aspect was a key consideration for me when working on the project. The sizeable reduction in power consumption significantly lowered our overall carbon footprint, which was an important factor." www.midshire.co.uk



Synaxon partners with A+K

Reseller services group Synaxon UK has entered into a partnership with audio visual distributor Anders+Kern (A+K), giving members access to A+K's exclusive range of digital signage, projectors, room booking solutions and technical services.

Synaxon UK Managing Director Derek Jones, said: "Our members can purchase the full A+K product range via the EGIS platform, or directly from A+K with all of their related services and support. A+K are providing a very specialist and focused service to our members in a growing area of the market. There is very real potential for B2B resellers to grow their audio visual equipment and solutions sales, especially within the education sector, so this really is a great opportunity for most Synaxon members."

Integra and VOW extend trading agreement

Integra and VOW have announced a three-year extended Trading Agreement to run until the end of 2019.

Integra Purchasing Director Neil Basham said: "I am delighted to be continuing our already strong partnership, which began over 30 years ago. During that time we have experienced many changes and challenges within the industry, and even within the group itself, but VOW has never faltered in its commitment to Integra and our members."

Martin Weedall, VOW's National Sales Director, added: "We remain fully committed to working in partnership with the group. We see Integra playing a fundamental role in our plans for growth within the dealer channel and look forward to the next phase of our journey together."

www.integraofficesolutions.co.uk
www.voweurope.com

Distributor of the Year

Wick Hill, a specialist in the value-added distribution of high growth security solutions, has won the 'Distributor of the Year' award at the IT Europa European IT and Software Excellence Awards 2016. The pan-European awards recognise best practice and service excellence in the IT community.

www.wickhill.com

Rapid evolution

VOW is celebrating the rapid take-up of the Evolve-IT e-commerce package by resellers in the UK and Ireland. Within 12 months of its launch, over 70% of Smooth-e users have already converted to the e-commerce platform developed by Evolution Software. Evolve-IT gives resellers and their customers rapid access to VOW's eplus and epremium catalogues, integrating with leading back-office solutions such as Horizon, Progress, Vision, Prima, Pulse, Calidore, OP-Connect, Oasis and Microsoft Dynamics NA.

Spicers committed to wholesaling excellence

Wholesaler Spicers is continuing to develop its operational infrastructure to support dealer customers and create additional capacity for growth. It has retained a major Regional Distribution Centre in London to service the London and home counties market, and is continuing to reconfigure its Smethwick site, which is due to go live next year.

www.spicers.co.uk

Xerox targets verticals with workflow solutions

Xerox has introduced 15 new workflow solutions designed to automate time-consuming tasks in the manufacturing, banking and higher education sectors.

As well as cutting the time taken to perform certain tasks from days to minutes, the new solutions integrate information from multiple sources (paper and digital) and eliminate errors associated with manual processing.



The new solutions are designed to:

- help manufacturers bring products to market faster by streamlining the creation and production of supporting documentation;
- streamline client onboarding for banks;
- support banks' omni-channel strategies by enabling customers to complete banking transactions on a variety of screens including mobile devices, online portals and smart ATMs;
- enhance compliance and records management by keeping track of critical documentation and automatically alerting employees if data is misplaced; and
- streamline bursary application processing so that qualifying students get the support they need more quickly.

Each workflow solution is configurable with professional services support for design, delivery and implementation.

www.xerox.co.uk

Armor enters industrial print market

Armor is launching a new business specialising in the development and production of high quality industrial inks suitable for a range of print applications from food packaging to high-tech materials like skis or heat shapeable items (e.g. helmets, phones or car parts).

In the medium-term, it aims to develop functional inks such as conductive inks for printed electronics, insulating inks or photo-catalytic inks that can help clean the air.

Armor Inks Lab R&D is centred in France and Germany, with final ink formulations done in Germany and manufacturing in Poland.



Did you know?

57% of office workers print more documents today than they did three years ago.

78% of decision-makers view document printing as essential or very important to their business.

(source: Canon Europe, Office Insights 2016, a survey of 1,000 business decision-makers and end-users in 10 countries across Central and Eastern Europe, Eurasia, the Middle East and Africa.)



New packaging cuts costs

Jet Tec is introducing new post-friendly packaging for its entire Jet Tec inkjet cartridge range. The smaller packaging enables the company's mail order and online resellers to save up to £2.40 per package sent. Compared to the previous blister packs, the new packaging also uses less plastic, takes up less room in storage and is easier for end users to open. www.jettec.com

DSales (UK) goes big

Develop has launched a mono production print system suitable for in-house CRD printrooms and other high volume print environments. The Develop ineo 1100 has a print speed of 100ppm, a paper capacity of up to 9,250 sheets and a maximum monthly output volume of 2.25 million sheets. Output is at 1200 x 1200 dpi on media up to SRA3 and between 40 and 300gsm in weight (350gsm optionally). A single-pass duplex colour scanner and a broad range of finishing options offer additional flexibility. With support for Konica Minolta's OpenAPI technology, the ineo 1100 can be used with third party accounting, authentication or scanning applications, such as YSoft SafeQ or Nuance eCopy Sharescan.

www.dsales.eu



Half price labellers

Brother UK is offering partners an exclusive half-price discount on select models of P-Touch handheld and desktop label printers, including the PT-H500, PT-P700, PT-P750W, PT-D450VP and flagship PT-D600VP. The offer runs until the end of June.

New PrintFleet data collection tool

PrintFleet has expanded its family of print management software solutions with a new rapid data collection tool.

Introduced to replace the company's legacy SuitePro key, the QuickAssess key provides a detailed 'snapshot' of a print environment, gathering device data needed for billing, supply and service management, including meter reads, toner and non-toner supply levels, device status, vendor error codes, serial numbers, etc..

It is compatible with any MPS program and offers multiple scan and display options, as well as a comparison feature that can be used to compare data from separate 'snapshots'.

PrintFleet has been named 'Best Print Management Solution Provider 2016' by *CEO Insight* magazine. www.printfleet.com



Esselte appoints Tech Data as distributor

Tech Data Europe has entered a Europe-wide agreement with the Esselte Group to distribute products from the Leitz brand of premium products. These include the Icon label printer; the Complete range of accessories for mobile professionals; and iLAM laminators. Hugo Graça, vice president of PC Components, Printers & Supplies at Tech Data Europe, said: "Tech Data's scale, coupled with our strength in online sales, offers a great platform to accelerate the growth of these product lines across Europe."

www.techdata.eu

On the shortlist

Lex Business Equipment Sales Director Sam Elphick was one of three candidates on the shortlist for *Young IT Professional of 2016* at last month's Insider Young Professionals Awards.

The awards, held at The Lowry Hotel in Manchester, celebrate the North West's up and coming business stars.

Elphick said: "It is incredibly humbling to be nominated for such a sought-after award and, even more so, to be shortlisted to the final three, against some very tough competition."

Elphick joined the family firm in 2007. He was appointed sales manager in 2009 and Sales Director last year. www.lexbusiness.co.uk



Sam Halstead

Emily Davy

Enhanced support for print channel

Technology products distributor Exertis has strengthened its specialist print and channel support following a period of consistent growth. New appointments include a Ricoh specialist (Sam Halstead); an Oki specialist (Emily Davy); three field-based channel account managers dedicated to print; and two business managers to oversee the office automation (OA) and commercial sectors.

Jamie Brothwell, print general manager at Exertis, said: "The print business has grown significantly year-on-year and the time is right to invest in the specialist and channel support teams. Customers can now directly benefit from our more in-depth knowledge of vendor technologies, increased face-to-face touch points and accelerated insight into opportunities, such as office automation". www.exertis.co.uk

Kodak Alaris strengthens senior team

Kodak Alaris has appointed Rick Costanzo as president and general manager of its Information Management (IM) division.

The IM division operates in 27 countries and delivers hardware, software and services that enable customers to automate business processes and accelerate their digital transformation.

Previously, Costanzo held senior positions at SAP, where he was executive vice president for the telecommunications industry and enterprise mobility solutions, and at BlackBerry, where he was executive vice president of Global Sales and Regional Marketing.

He said: "Our channel partners are on the front line. Their efforts directly impact our ability to deliver value to end-customers. So we are rapidly rolling out new training and marketing programs to help them function more effectively as an extended arm of Kodak Alaris."



Rick Costanzo

Channel CSR

Abseil for autism

Simon Chapman, Managing Director of Kent-based Temple Knight, has successfully completed the biggest challenge of his life, abseiling 230 feet down the side of 50 Bank Street, Canary Wharf.

He undertook the challenge, which he describes as 'far out of his comfort zone', to raise money for the National Autistic Society.

Chapman said: "My son was diagnosed with ASD last summer and it's been difficult trying to understand his condition and seek help so we can educate ourselves in how to best support his needs. Apart from raising money for The National Autistic Society, I also hope to raise awareness of ASD conditions."

<https://www.justgiving.com/Simon-Chapman6>

DMC sets £10k fundraising target

DMC has set a target to raise £10,000 for the Starlight Children's Foundation before planitgreen's fifth birthday next March. It aims to do this through on-the-box donations (25p for every planitgreen toner sold), as well as staff fundraising activities and sporting events. Starlight Children's Foundation grants once-in-a-lifetime wishes for seriously and terminally ill children. www.dmcplc.co.uk

Goats for Gorkha

Xeretec and its employees have raised thousands of pounds to help victims of the Nepalese earthquake, which devastated parts of the Gorkha region last April.

Through a combination of staff fund-raising initiatives and a matching donation from Xeretec, £5,000 has been raised to buy 100 goats for villagers affected by the earthquake, which measured 7.8 on the Richter scale.

Goats are a financial life-line for thousands of affected families. Milk provides sustenance; young kid goats are sold or traded for other goods and services; and older female goats are sold for breeding. www.xeretec.co.uk



LTS reinforces sales team

Lombard, the UK's largest asset finance provider, has strengthened the sales team in its specialist technology division, Lombard Technology Services (LTS).

As part of its growth strategy, LTS is implementing a new structure, including Regional Sales Directors for London, the North and the South; a Head of Large Corporate; and a Head of Business Support. All will report to Keith Nowland, Head of Sales at LTS.

The new Regional Sales Directors are Paul Smuts (London), Neil Atherton (South) and Mark Barrow (North). Andy Reid has been made Head of Large Corporate and Karen Lyons is now Head of Business Support.

Duane Snelling, Managing Director of LTS, said: "The new team will enable us to expand our capacity, while allowing us to work more closely and effectively with our colleagues within Lombard, NatWest and the Royal Bank of Scotland."

He added: "We know there is a growing demand for investment in technology. Our new team means that we are equipped to manage this and to support our customers' funding needs and also to manage their assets effectively throughout their useful working life."



Keith Nowland

Senior appointment at Spicers

Spicers has appointed Ian Oakes as Regional Sales Director for the Southern Region. A former Spicers employee, Oakes has more than 25 years' experience in the office supplies sector, including senior roles in both dealer and wholesale businesses. www.spicers.co.uk

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A springboard for growth

On March 30, Sharp announced a strategic alliance with Hon Hai, aka Foxconn, the contract electronics manufacturer best known for its relationship with Apple. The Taiwanese company took a 66% stake in Sharp in return for an investment of €3.1 billion. Following the announcement, *PrintIT Reseller* spoke to Jun Ashida, President of Sharp Information Systems Europe, about what the agreement means for Sharp and for its Document Solutions Business in particular.

PrintIT Reseller: Why does Sharp refer to Foxconn's investment as an alliance and not a take-over?

Jun Ashida (JA): Because it is an investment of €3.1 billion by Foxconn in Sharp. We continue to be Sharp, an independent company. We are the ones who decide our strategy, our direction and also how we maximise the power of that investment.

PITR: Do you have a specific figure on what is being invested in the Business Solutions Group?

JA: Roughly €310 million. But this is not an investment from Foxconn; it is Sharp's investment. Foxconn is investing €3.1 billion to become a major stakeholder in Sharp. Thereafter, what we choose to invest in is up to us. Sharp's investment plan is divided into several product categories – display technologies, consumer electronics and so on – including Business Solutions Group, our B2B business, which is getting a total of €310 million. How we invest that is something we are now discussing.

PITR: What does Foxconn bring to Sharp, other than cash and stability?

JA: This collaboration, this alliance obviously brings stability to Sharp

Corporation – there is much less to worry about in our global day-to-day business operations and Foxconn's financial backing lets us pursue our investment goals more positively. Another major benefit is the opportunity for synergy. Foxconn has the most advanced manufacturing technology and massive purchasing power, which offers major possibilities for Sharp. Then, there are things that we have that they don't, like the Sharp brand and product innovation and technology. The synergy of those ingredients gives us major opportunities, which both parties want to pursue.

PITR: Foxconn is reported to want Sharp's expertise in displays. Does the alliance make it more or less likely that Sharp Business Solutions Group will be sold?

JA: (laughing) Business Solutions Group has been, and continues to be, one of Sharp's core businesses. In fact, it is probably becoming more important. That's also how Foxconn sees it. They view this as a big opportunity as well. So there are no such discussions. Rather, we are having very positive talks with them about what the synergy between the two companies can do for Business Solutions, as part of Sharp. Of course, in their joint press conference, our President Mr Takahashi

Jun Ashida,
President
Sharp
Information
Systems Europe



Foxconn has the most advanced manufacturing technology and massive purchasing power, which offers major possibilities for Sharp

and Mr Terry Gou [founder and CEO of Foxconn] emphasised the technology synergy of the display areas. This will benefit Sharp overall and should also benefit Business Solutions Group.

PITR: Will Sharp Business Solutions Group continue to be run as a separate business, in line with your recent corporate restructuring?

JA: Yes. Inside the Sharp Corporation we have created five internal, virtual companies, one of which is the Business Solutions Group. That structure remains the same. The direction remains the same.

PITR: Last autumn, you said you were focusing very much on the B2B market and withdrawing from some consumer markets in Europe. Yet Mr Gou wants to make Sharp a massive consumer brand again.

JA: You are right. Sharp Corporation has been restructuring the consumer electronics (CE) business, starting in Europe. Apart from the Italian and Russian markets, we basically ceased our Sharp brand CE business in Europe. At this stage, there have been no particular discussions about the European CE business. But you are right, Mr Gou wants to invest in the consumer electronics and home appliances areas. I am not sure if you are familiar with our latest product, the Robohon, an AI-integrated smart mobile phone and robot lookalike. That is one area of consumer electronics in which Sharp will want to go



Continued...

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...continued



further and where Foxconn is willing to help Sharp invest.

PITR: Mr Gou also mentioned an air purifier.

JA: I don't know about that specifically. But Sharp's ideas already include investment in the consumer electronics area, particularly where internet of things technology can contribute to the smart home, and that could include air conditioners or refrigerators or microwave ovens.

PITR: Has uncertainty over Sharp's future been damaging to Sharp Business Solutions Group globally and in the UK specifically?

JA: I don't believe it has been a major problem, as Business Solutions' performance has been strong and steady. But I would like to personally thank all our partners and customers, because they will have heard reports that Sharp's overall situation hasn't been great, even if Business Solutions has been OK. That might have concerned some partners and customers. Yet they continued to do business with us. I think that's a really good thing for us, because we can now go back to them and say 'Thank you. Sharp Corporation has been going through some difficult times. However, our business is stable and strong and with this alliance we can now do even better. I want to say thank you for your continuing support for Sharp Business Solutions. Now we want to go even further'.

The UK perspective

Paul Leach, UK Sales Director for the Indirect Division Sharp Business Systems, says that news of the alliance has been well received by Sharp's UK channel partners.

PITR: Has the uncertainty over Sharp's future damaged Sharp in the UK?

PL: We haven't seen any major decline. There has been a level of uncertainty, but apart from that it has been business as usual. Now the announcement's been made, there is a level of excitement specifically in the dealer community because they can see the opportunity that such an alliance will bring.

PITR: The actual MFP side of the business has been doing well hasn't it?

PL: Yes. We've just launched a new range of MFPs on the A3 colour side and we've had strong sales-through performance on those products, along with the Integrated Office. We've now reached out to the dealer community and have fully launched the visual solutions panels, the Big Pads and the interactive panels to further strengthen our messaging regarding the integrated office.



PITR: How has the reseller community received that message?

PL: Enthusiastically – trying to understand the best way to take technology forward, especially when, as more BYOD devices come onto the market, they can see the ease of connectivity within the Sharp product range that enables different devices all to connect together. There is certainly lots of enthusiasm and dealers are starting to take on board the message that we've really got to move from selling just the box to the integrated office, to find the bottlenecks within business, and education especially, and to help improve that sales cycle.

PITR: Have many traditional copier dealers taken on your AV products?

PL: Yes.

PITR: Have you had to do anything in particular to encourage them to do that?

PL: We had to build an infrastructure to support the product group, especially on the installation side. We now offer that, and warranty and servicing, to the dealer community as a package. Apart from that, we've done some vertical marketing campaigns that we offer to resellers and some roadshows. So, as a manufacturer, we are investing in support to help our dealers push this technology into the wider space.

As an example of Sharp innovation, Jun Ashida cites the RoBoHoN, a robotic Android smartphone developed in conjunction with robotics expert Tomotaka Takahashi, project associate professor at the University of Tokyo's Research Center for Advanced Science and Technology. Described as the world's first mobile robotic phone, the RoBoHoN can move its arms, walk on two legs and interact with its owner through speech, reading out new messages, for example, or announcing diary entries. In addition to standard smartphone functions like phone, email, camera and app support, the RoBoHoN incorporates a compact laser projector capable of projecting photos, videos and maps onto a screen or wall. RoBoHoN is currently only available in Japan.



Sharp introduces managed IT services for SMEs

Sharp Business Systems is building on its experience of managed print services with the launch of Optimised IT Services for small and medium-sized businesses.

The new offering, which has already proved successful in the US, provides SMEs with a choice of network support services that they can pick and choose from or select in their entirety, effectively handing over the management of their IT network to one trusted partner.

Sharp Optimised IT Services include: Optimised Professional Services for advice on technology selection and implementation; Optimised Monitoring & Management, including remote network monitoring to identify potential problems before they happen; Optimised Helpdesk for 24/7 technical support; Optimised Hardware Maintenance offering warranty support and technical repairs; and Optimised Data Protection for comprehensive data restoration and disaster recovery through the cloud.

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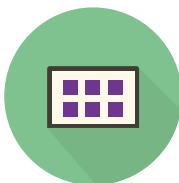


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Spanning 19 new models the e-STUDIO2500AC series, e-STUDIO5005AC series, e-STUDIO5008A series, e-STUDIO7506AC series and e-STUDIO8508A series incorporate colour and mono MFPs offering prints speeds between 20 and 85 pages per minute. A refreshed new look, intuitive tablet-like interface and innovative functionality create the perfect solution.



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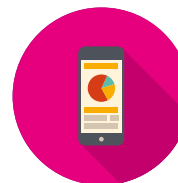
Toshiba's new e-BRIDGE Next MFPs have been created to help businesses to produce more with less effort.

With a large touch screen, document handling has never been easier. Users can work with a system that is fully customisable to meet their requirements. Swipe through personalised menus, access complex workflows at the touch of a button and also pinch and zoom into documents in the real-time preview.

Behind the Scenes



With an open platform architecture, Toshiba can create bespoke workflows that fit your businesses needs perfectly. Sitting quietly behind the scenes, these workflows can help you to simplify complex work tasks of scanning, archiving and document management, increasing the productivity of your business in an instant.



Flexibility

With mobile printing becoming more and more important; Toshiba's new systems give you full flexibility; you decide what you

want to print, how you want to share information and where it should be saved. Optional e-BRIDGE Plus connectors for Microsoft One Drive, Google Drive, and Dropbox give you direct access to cloud services and let you send your documents directly to, or print from the app of your choice via the MFP.

Optional multi-station print features allow you to decide where you want to print within your network, without the need of a server. Simply walk up to any system and collect your job where it suits you best.



Go Green

e-BRIDGE Next devices are RoHS and ENERGY STAR 2 compliant. Delivered carbon neutral through Toshiba's Carbon Zero

Scheme, you can print knowing there's minimal impact of the environment.



Innovative Functionality

The e-BRIDGE Next devices come packed full of innovation all in a small footprint. With functionality such as

Multi-station Print, Job Reservation, Print Around and USB capabilities your business can enjoy a smooth flow of documents. Whether you're printing, scanning, copying or faxing information, Toshiba's devices will keep everything running smoothly. Letting you focus on what's truly important.

Command Attention

It's important that an MFP is powerful, reliable, and efficient. Combine this with brilliant colours and you have even more ways

to make your documents impactful. Toshiba's e-BRIDGE Next devices now offer up to 1200x1200 dpi and with the Advanced Toshiba e-BRIDGE controller technology businesses can now produce high-quality, professional documents in colour and monochrome.

Safer Than Ever

With MFPs being able to store large amounts of data, they have become an integral part of business networks and are often a critical

point of vulnerability. Sensitive data and business critical information can easily be accessed unauthorised if proper security measures are not in place.

Whether you are looking for document security, device security or access security - our new systems have it all. The range of e-BRIDGE Next models are configured with the Toshiba Secure HDD without compromising on efficiency and performance.

Toshiba e-BRIDGE Next systems also support the use of card readers. This way you can protect your business critical data and make sure that what is yours, stays yours. All it takes to authenticate a user is a swipe of an ID card for immediate access to individual functions and documents.

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New Panasonic A4 MFP also prints occasional A3

Panasonic has become the latest vendor to blur the lines between A4 and A3 devices, with the launch of the DP-MB500 series of mono MFPs.



Combining the low cost and high speed of an A4 MFP with the ability to print/copy in sizes up to A3, the DP-MB500 series represents a significant introduction for Panasonic as it continues to strengthen its position in the printer market, which it re-entered last year after pulling out in 2010.

In particular, it enables the company to target both A4 and A3 users with the same machines.

There are two models in the range, the DP-MB545 with print/copy speeds of 45

pages per minute (ppm) and the 36ppm DP-MB357.

Both models print on two sides of the page at their rated speed, have a paper capacity of 1,750 sheets, long-life consumables and a maximum monthly print volume of 150,000 pages, including up to 2,000 A3 pages per month.

Useful features include WiFi connectivity, support for printing from mobile devices and password-protected printing to maintain document security.

Panasonic hopes the launch of the new printers will enable it to attract OA dealers that may have sold Panasonic copiers and printers in the past, as well as telecoms dealers, stationery companies and IT service providers that are looking to get into print for the first time.

A spokesperson told *PITR* that the new devices have a number of qualities that are likely to be welcomed by the channel including a low cost per page, offering resellers the opportunity to make good margin on supplies; simplicity – “there’s just one option on these machines and that’s a cassette” – so it can be set up in one quarter of the time it takes to install competitor products; excellent reliability, with a very low failure rate; and a small reseller base, which makes it more likely that the channel can maintain good margins on the hardware.

The devices can also be offered as part of an MPS, using either the reseller’s own resources or those provided by DMC Business Machines, a distributor of the new printers.

Sam Saunders, marketing and communications manager of DMC Business Machines, which has been a partner of Panasonic’s for over 20 years, told *PrintIT*

Reseller that the DP-MB500 series fills a big gap in the market.

He said: “What excites us at DMC is the versatility of these products. You have small, super-quick desktop devices that are A4 in footprint size but A3 in capability. In our current portfolio we do have access to large, floor-standing A3 multifunctional devices or very expensive high-end professional A3 devices. But currently across our vendors there isn’t a product that allows desktop A3 at a reasonable purchase price and a decent total cost of ownership, so that’s very exciting for us and our resellers. It plugs a huge gap in our portfolio.”

A3 output is still popular for proofs and spreadsheets, but according to most estimates currently accounts for less than 5% of the pages printed in offices. With the DP-MB500 series, small businesses and workgroups with limited A3 printing requirements no longer have to buy separate A4 and A3 devices or spend extra on a bulky A3 MFP. They can cover all their needs with one single, compact, affordable device.

Another benefit for resellers, says Saunders, is the Panasonic name. “Panasonic is a world renowned name. There are certain print vendors people may not have heard of, but when you hear the Panasonic name you think ‘OK, that’s a great product’,” he said.

He added: “Panasonic aren’t going to saturate the market with this product. There will only be a few selected partners, such as ourselves, where resellers can purchase these devices. They will not be competing against the High Street.”

www.panasonic.co.uk

Enterprise class for SMBs

Building on the launch of its L6000 workgroup range, covered in the last issue, Brother has introduced an additional 13 new mono laser printers/MFPs for smaller businesses or workgroups with up to 5 or 10 users (depending on model).

Like the L6000 range, the L6300, L6600, L6800 and L5000 devices incorporate enterprise-class productivity and security features. These include Active Directory integration, LDAP, NFC secure

function lock, secure print, IP-sec and secure PDF.

Other features include print speeds of 40 and 46ppm, large paper capacities, high yield toner cartridges and a Brother Solutions Interface for integration with third party applications and managed print services.

The new MFPs also offer 100ipm colour scanning directly to SharePoint and cloud applications like Dropbox, One Drive and Google.

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Sowing the seeds of business efficiency

Toshiba has unified its imaging and thermal divisions, bringing new opportunities for printer resellers. Here we look at how one of the UK's leading garden centres is using Toshiba mobile printers in its UK stores

In 1865, James Dobbie set up J Dobbie Choice Seeds & Flowers of Renfrew and his business soon flourished, creating a legacy that now incorporates 35 stores across the UK.

In 2008, the company became part of Tesco and, with its parent company's backing and support, Dobbies continues to thrive.

With an ever-expanding inventory designed to appeal to the latest tastes in gardening and related areas, clear and easy to read labelling is a major factor in the creation of a high quality customer experience.

"With such a diverse range, we want our customers to be able to identify the prices of goods quickly and easily," explained Dobbies loss prevention manager Karen Canavan. "What's more, plants by their very nature can have a short shelf life, so any discounts and price reductions need to be clearly marked in order to make sure stock isn't wasted."

Dobbies stores used to rely on office-based devices for all their printing, including labelling. This was time-consuming, as employees had to carry information between the printer and the plant, product or shelf being labelled, and the quality of the finished label was often less than satisfactory.

Making a change

Recognising that something needed to be done to improve the efficiency of the labelling process, Canavan invited Toshiba TEC to come in and explain the options.

"We have had a successful working relationship with Toshiba TEC for many years. I'd already heard about the advances in mobile printing and labelling technology and felt that this would tick many of the boxes in terms of increasing resource efficiency, enhancing overall accuracy and avoiding mistakes. We knew that Tesco had adopted

a similar system, so felt there was much to gain from such an investment," she said.

After trialling a number of products, Dobbies selected Toshiba TEC's B-EP4DL portable printer.

Compact and stylish, the B-EP4DL four-inch portable device offers big printer technology in a tiny package. It utilises high endurance lithium-ion battery technology for many hours of operation and, as standard, features a clear backlit LCD screen and Wi-Fi and USB 2.0 connectivity. Rubber corners help the B-EP4DL withstand drops of up to 1.8m.

"We have rolled out the B-EP4DL devices so that there are typically three per store," explained Canavan.

"The effect has been quite dramatic in terms of productivity, and staff now spend much less time labelling each product. It has also made a big difference to how we manage stock inventory."

For example, Dobbies can now easily print labels to indicate discounts and reductions and incorporate this information into barcodes. These labels are far more aesthetically pleasing and easier for customers to read, as well as saving employees significant amounts of time and reducing wastage.

Summing up, Canavan said: "The B-EP4DL is helping us to work faster and smarter. Not only that, the devices have proven to be highly reliable, robust and durable in what is a pretty physical environment. To cap it all, when it's needed, we know we have excellent support and back-up from Toshiba TEC."

www.toshibatec.co.uk



Labels are far more aesthetically pleasing and easier for customers to read

Zebra earns its stripes

Zebra Technologies Corporation has won a Red Dot product design award for its ZD410 desktop label printer.

Designed for the smallest of work spaces, the ultra-compact 2-inch direct thermal printer is ideal for printing high-quality product and shelf labels, discount labels and receipts.

The ability to print price and discount labels on demand is becoming increasingly important for retailers that want to maintain a consistent experience and pricing across every customer touch point, including in-store, online and mobile.

For flexibility, the printer comes with fixed, Wi-Fi and Bluetooth connectivity. Five status icons enable users to identify and rectify printer issues instantly, while IT can remotely manage devices through an easy-to-use web-based interface.

With field-installable connectivity and media handling options, businesses can customise the ZD410 to meet their specific needs, maximising printer functionality and uptime.

Zebra has also received Red Dot awards for its DS3600 scanner, TC8000 touch mobile computer and TC70 touch computer.

www.zebra.com



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For more information, please visit
**[business.panasonic.co.uk/
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Playing to its strengths

Penrith-based Trade Copiers is leveraging its massive stock holding capacity to establish a complementary operation supplying new equipment to local businesses

The family-run company's core business is buying used multifunctional printers from a large number of dealers and OEMs and reselling them all over the world.

Established in 2002 by Managing Director Stephen Armistead, who works alongside his two sons and daughter, Trade Copiers initially traded within the UK, but having steadily built up a network of contacts overseas, it now conducts about 95% of its business abroad. It ships used machines by the container-load all over the world to destinations including UAE, China, Singapore and Malaysia and to a lesser extent within the EU.

Fuelled by ever growing global demand for second-hand devices in full working order, Trade Copiers has achieved sustained year on year growth. Turnover this year was 20% up on last year and Armistead is targeting a further 20% to 30% growth next year. He added: "Further growth is firmly on the agenda. We hope to double in size over the next three years."

The company's core business is supplemented by a secondary branch that supplies consumables. "This is an additional service we offer to customers and is complementary to our main business," explained Armistead. "We only deal in original supplies, keep large up-to-date stocks and offer fast delivery and competitive pricing."

Further expansion

Trade Copiers is now planning to expand its operations further with the establishment of a new dual-line dealership to supply MFPs and printers to local companies. "We are in talks with a number of OEMs and we will also create a local service operation," said Armistead.

"It's the next natural progression for us. We already supply equipment locally on a small scale and we know a lot of people. We're looking to really ramp that up. It's a massive opportunity to create a new revenue stream, especially within service. That's where much of the growth will come from in the next couple of years."

The company is currently recruiting for this new venture and has up to five vacancies to fill across both sales and service.



On the road

Meanwhile, the export side of the business continues to be extremely successful, with orders coming in thick and fast from customers worldwide. The firm has a fleet of lorries on the road five days a week, collecting used MFPs and wide format printers that are then taken back to Penrith where they are wiped of all data prior to resale.

"We deal mostly with trading posts and we ship by the container-load. A lot of the countries we sell into buy in bulk and then ship on to final destinations. We are moving kit in and out all the time," explained Armistead.

In an average month, Trade Copiers exports in excess of 1,000 machines. "We have massive capacity here and can process significantly more devices than we are currently handling. We can carry up to 3,000 machines on-site and it makes

We invested heavily and secured a much bigger site, which provided us with space to build additional warehousing and office accommodation to support future growth

commercial sense to leverage our capability and utilise that space to hold stocks of new equipment as well," he said.

Armistead acknowledges that it will take some time to get into a positive position with this new venture but says the business is strong. Last year, Trade Copiers, which started out renting 100 sq. ft. in a warehouse, purchased new premises incorporating a 25,000 sq. ft. warehouse.

Significant investment

"We invested heavily and secured a much bigger site, which importantly provided us with space to build additional warehousing and office accommodation to support future growth," he said.

The company has added two extensions, including a new loading dock, and has already embarked on Phase Two, which includes a major office refurbishment.

In addition, Trade Copiers has invested a quarter of a million pounds in its transport fleet. The acquisition of two 26 tonne HGVs for making collections and deliveries across the UK and Europe plus another 7 tonne van brings the total number of vehicles in the company's fleet to five. Professional livery promotes the brand on every vehicle.

Headcount, too, has grown in line with business growth. There are now more than 20 staff based in the Penrith office and the firm recently recruited more sales professionals to drive further growth.

www.tradecopiers.co.uk





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Partnering for growth

Anglo Office is transforming how companies in London manage their non-core expenditure to support business growth. *P1TR* finds out more from Managing Director Gary Naphtali



Gary Naphtali,
Managing Director.
Anglo Office

Gary Naphtali is well known in the industry as co-founder of P1, an established provider of training and development programs for the channel. Five years ago, P1 signed a three-month contract with Anglo Office to provide sales and marketing support, HR and management resource, as well as assisting with recruitment.

"The contract kept getting extended. In fact, Anglo became P1's biggest client," explained Naphtali. "It grew to the point where I was spending three days a week working with them and becoming ever more tightly embedded in their day-to-day [operations]."

In 2014 the relationship deepened when Naphtali identified an acquisition opportunity, assisted with the purchase of Almo and managed the integration of its sales and marketing functions. Six months ago, he became even more involved when Anglo founder Glen Doyle announced that he wanted to semi-retire and was considering selling the business.

"Anglo is a strong business; turnover is approaching £11m and it has a healthy balance sheet," Naphtali explained. "We opened up discussions and explored ways in which we could take the business forward via a management buyout."

The outcome of these negotiations was that Doyle and former owner Russell

Hodson both retained a share of the business, with Naphtali and IT Director Steve Newland completing an MBO for the remaining majority shares. Newland and Naphtali, who is no longer involved with P1 operationally, also brought in Finance Director Nick Jones.

A single source

More important than these changes, says Naphtali, is the expansion of Anglo's service offering to meet the needs of customers in the mid-market sector who typically deal with multiple suppliers across numerous product categories.

"The biggest business transformation was identifying a new opportunity in managed services that was worth millions," he said. "We found that within mid-sized companies the supply chain was in the main largely unmanaged. Our approach was to transform how they manage non-core expenditure, providing a service that simplified the procurement of anything for the office."

When asked for more details of Anglo's offer, he added: "Imagine tipping your office upside down. Everything that falls out except for the people, Anglo can supply."

In order to do this, Anglo has partnered with a number of specialists in each category. "It's a really simple premise, but the ability to supply across any category has paid dividends, not only in terms of

the new business we pick up, but also in the fact that we're successfully ring-fencing customers, making it difficult for a competitor to come in and take even the smallest chunk of their spend," explained Naphtali.

On the print side, Anglo has partnered with three suppliers: a local print provider delivering ad hoc fast turnaround jobs on behalf of customers; a specialist in digital print; and a print management company.

"From the customers' perspective, it's just one of the services we offer," Naphtali said. "We take a lower margin in areas where we use a third-party provider, but we don't have any associated operating costs. We might take a 4% to 5% margin hit, but we've cut operating costs by up to 20%. Ultimately that means Anglo makes more profit and is more competitive."

Managed services

MPS is another area in which Anglo has gained traction, after launching AngloTech in a joint venture with Canon, Ricoh and Olivetti reseller TechnoCopy.

"If you're delivering true MPS, you have to have credibility and strong relationships with OEMs, as well as the ability to deliver a service agreement. [Do it on your own] and you could potentially spend more money getting it off the ground than you would make in return. It would certainly take a lot longer. TechnoCopy has a ready-made prospect and client base and a team of sales people it would have to fund anyway, so it's a win-win," Naphtali explained.

MPS deals secured in AngloTech's first six months have generated a quarter of a million pounds in sales and ongoing discussions with clients are potentially worth a further £900,000 – with only 10% of Anglo's client base engaged so far.

"Importantly, we own the service contracts which provide us with a recurrent revenue stream," explained Naphtali. "And net profit is much healthier than we could achieve by simply selling the individual components."

With the prospect of further growth in MPS, Anglo is aiming to increase turnover to £15 million organically. According to Naphtali, it is also actively seeking acquisitions. "We are predominantly interested in OP companies in the London area where we can add on a range of our expanded services to increase turnover and profitability, as we have done at Anglo and Almo," he said. www.anglo-ltd.com

The biggest business transformation was identifying a new opportunity in managed services that was worth millions

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PRICE
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BUNDLE
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PRICE
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PRICE
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BUNDLE
£1128.⁸⁰

MX810dfe



PRICE
£1292.⁴⁰

BUNDLE
£1301.³⁵

MX811dfe



PRICE
£1513.⁸⁰

BUNDLE
£1473.⁵⁵

MX911de



PRICE
£3808.³⁵

BUNDLE
£3072.³³

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£1563.⁷⁵

BUNDLE
£2063.⁴⁵

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BUNDLE
£1508.¹⁴

X950de



PRICE
£3113.⁷³

BUNDLE
£3574.⁹³

X952de



PRICE
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WESTCOAST

Two-factor secure authentication: a growing opportunity

Tim Shaw, VASCO Channel Sales Manager for the UK and Ireland, explains to PITER why two-factor authentication helps dealers differentiate their business and add value to their offering

PITER: Why does two-factor authentication present a strong opportunity for the channel?

Tim Shaw (TS): Despite many high profile global security breaches, the truth is that in many medium-sized businesses, remote access to the corporate network is not adequately secured. Nor are critical data assets protected against unauthorised access.

Talking about securing printers and MFPs opens the door to a much broader discussion about network security as a whole and the role that two-factor authentication solutions can play in keeping a business' entire network (not just the peripheral devices connected to it) secure.

For dealers to demonstrate how they can help customers plug a still sizeable security gap is a conversation well worth having. If we look at the IT security systems of SMEs, a typical picture emerges: firewalls and anti-virus software are installed to prevent unauthorised access to the corporate network and to prevent data theft; but little or no thought is given to securing remote access to the network by staff, partners or customers in order to protect data on the network. How can they know for sure that someone accessing the network is who they claim to be? It's because they can't always validate who is trying to get onto the network that we see, almost on a daily basis, reports of successful attacks on companies' databases. And these are increasing, rather than decreasing.

PITER: Surely companies are already doing all they can to protect themselves?

TS: They think they are. But there is an imbalance in the level of protection afforded to physical assets and to confidential data. Take access control to a building. Verification can take many forms, from surveillance cameras to ID cards, to ensure that only people with the right permissions can enter the grounds or specific areas of a site. Yet, for critical information systems, more often than not, a simple and easily guessable password

is all that's needed to gain access to the company's lifeblood, its business critical data and confidential information.

What makes this scenario even more exasperating is that it has been known for decades that passwords are not resilient and offer ineffective protection against a determined hacker. And the more valuable the data, the more determined the hacker.

PITER: Is two-factor authentication complex to deploy and use?

TS: That assumption is what makes the above scenario even more frustrating. Incorporating two-factor authentication to protect data is not difficult, and the technology has proven to offer an exceptionally robust defence against potential security threats for many years now. The technology's roots lie in the banking industry, one of the most heavily regulated and protected in the world, where security is absolutely fundamental.

Two-factor authentication successfully marries end user convenience with security. Anyone who conducts their banking online is already familiar with two-factor secure authentication from using a device provided by their bank. This provides them with a One-Time Password (OTP). There's no real learning curve in rolling out a similar OTP solution for a workforce to use when accessing the network remotely.

PITER: The market is awash with competing security products, so are margins tight?

TS: It is not the additional sales potential alone that makes two-factor authentication a compelling opportunity for dealers. The margins are still significantly more rewarding than in many other areas, precisely because two-factor authentication is not yet a commodity business, especially for companies that already offer network peripheral devices. Offering strong authentication is an excellent addition to a dealer's existing device portfolio and an opportunity to provide expertise and differentiate themselves from the competition.

Tim Shaw,
Channel Sales
Manager,
VASCO



PITER: Does the technology require dealers to learn a whole new skill set?

TS: From a technical perspective, strong two-factor authentication is now much easier to implement than many resellers and end users assume. There are relatively easy to implement solutions on the market that can be integrated with little effort into any existing application, no matter what data model or architecture it is based on. Solutions can be delivered with all the necessary hardware (e.g. servers) and software included and preconfigured.

An even easier sell is cloud-based authentication, which further simplifies the sale and management of two-factor authentication. Here, the effort is limited to integration into existing applications, with a dealer using either existing cloud offerings or a server to provide its own service to several customers. In both cases, the customer saves on investment and the hassle of internal maintenance and the dealer benefits from regular, stable and predictable revenues.

Secure two-factor authentication is an absolute business must-have. Yet, despite the ever-rising incidence of cyber-crime, its sales potential remains untapped. Introducing customers to two-factor authentication, when talking about device security, provides dealers with a differentiator that adds value and new revenue opportunities to their business.

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How can they know for sure that someone accessing the network is who they claim to be?



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Cloud and managed services

We ask leading print vendors and resellers for their thoughts on the wider adoption of cloud managed services, the case for outsourcing to third parties and whether there are any associated risks

PART 1: THE VENDORS' PERSPECTIVE

Do you see the wider adoption of cloud managed services by businesses as an opportunity for channel partners to secure a new recurring revenue stream and increase their stickiness with customers?

Pete Munday, *Global Experiential Solutions Marketing Manager, Xerox*:

"Yes. And to help, Xerox ConnectKey-enabled MFPS can be cloud-connected and have the ability to create customised cloud connectors through software platforms such as Xerox App Studio.

"We also offer a range of solutions that partners can sell to help their customers utilise the cloud platform even further, such as Xerox Mobile Print Cloud, Cloud Fax solutions and more."

Paul Gaiser, *Director MPS, Channel Partner Operations, Xerox*: "Managed print services is another offering that can be delivered from the cloud, decreasing the need for specific MPS developments or tool integrations by channel partners delivering a professional MPS service to their customers, enabled by a large MPS provider, such as Xerox."

Paul Young, *Head of Technical Services, UTAX*: "The opportunity for resellers who think beyond simply shifting boxes is huge and continues to grow. Organisations are looking for cloud-based solutions that streamline operations, control costs, improve employee productivity, secure data and improve efficiencies while protecting intellectual property.

"We're constantly working with our channel partners to deliver solutions that drive positive change within a business. This does have the benefit of generating recurring revenue, but it also positions those partners as trusted advisors to whom decision-makers will return when they have additional needs.

"Stickiness also comes from ensuring the relationship between reseller and end-user, as well as that between reseller and managed service provider, is on-going.

It's not good enough to roll-out a solution and then walk away until it's time to renew the contract. Nurture that business and continue to deliver enhancements to the organisation and the relationship can last for as long as you want it to."

Chris Hale, *Solutions Product Marketing Manager, Sharp UK*: "Very much so. Sharp is keen to see our partners improving customers' business processes through use of our umbrella of service and product offerings, all of which optimise collaborative requirements and provide more instant access to data.

"This is important when thinking of new revenue streams, as it's expected by the growing number of millennials in the workplace. We recently introduced the Sharp Integrated Technology Programme, focused especially on cloud collaboration to meet the appetite among Sharp partners for more meaningful, solutions-orientated approaches when engaging with their customers."

Jeremy Spencer, *Marketing Director, Toshiba*: "We see cloud services and solutions becoming a key part of MPS development in 2016. Companies are looking to outsourcing and supplier rationalisation as they seek to become more efficient. So, yes, you could argue that MPS demand will grow, but whether it will look and feel like the managed print services we have been delivering across the last five years remains to be seen.



Jeremy Spencer,
Marketing Director,
Toshiba

"I suspect channel partners will encourage a stronger degree of integration with other solutions, software and platforms, with companies that can cope with this demand growing their MPS share sustainably."

Have you seen many partners upskill so they have the necessary in-house expertise to support clients' cloud migration plans and manage their IT infrastructure, or are they outsourcing to a specialist IT support partner?

Companies are looking to outsourcing and supplier rationalisation as they seek to become more efficient.

Pete Munday: "Yes. Many partners are re-skilling to use basic tools such as Xerox App Studio to create cloud connectors or to better understand and utilise the Xerox App Gallery 'ready to use' apps (such as document translation, digital fax, document repurposing and storage) that connect into cloud services from our alliance partners.

"In 2015 we launched a programme call 'Personalised Application Builder' (PAB) where partners have the opportunity to download and use the Xerox Software Development Kit (SDK), enabling them to create new and unique applications for their customers. We are finding they are using existing resources in-house but re-training them to be able to use the SDK."

Paul Gaiser: "In relation to underlying managed print services, many channel partners have upskilled to be able to offer these cloud-based services to

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their customers. These partners have adopted a less product-focused culture by offering MPS and even in a multi-brand fleet environment. A professional MPS provider behind the channel partner, in our view, must offer an accreditation and certification programme that ensures partners are upskilled to the required level."

Paul Young: "While some resellers have taken the decision to acquire skills and infrastructure through acquisition, UTAX has witnessed many more tapping into the support provided by partners. Smart resellers are taking the no-risk option of working closely with vendor partners who can assist at every step of the sales and implementation process. This is growing in importance as cloud-based services become highly tailored, supremely technical and, crucially, increasingly fast-paced. Two and even three heads can definitely be better than one!

"The lines between sales and customer service continue to blur and we're enjoying phenomenal success via our solutions team which assists partners deliver managed solutions from the start of the sales process and right through the ongoing relationship. In addition to providing specialist installation service and assistance, we support our partners with market insight, in-depth product knowledge and an understanding of the needs of specific verticals. Selling is therefore much more collaborative and all parties work closely to bring together solutions that deliver real results to the end user... on an ongoing basis.

"As first and even second generation MPS contracts mature, organisations are looking to build on what they've got and take it further. Cloud print and storage, the ability to access, edit and share documents on multiple devices anywhere at any time and security-controlled access bring huge benefits across just about every vertical market you can think of."

Chris Hale: "We see a mixture of approaches but I cannot say any one is particularly dominating. Certainly, some of our business partners are skilling-up to better support customers from within their own operations. Bringing these skills in-house will benefit the channel in the longer term as their offering will be more meaningful and relevant, allowing them to maintain a competitive edge.

"This 'one-stop-shop' approach provides customers with the operational benefits of a more complete service and the channel with the ability to reap rewards from the revenues generated."



Jeremy Spencer: "We have seen both up-skilling and outsourcing within our partner channel. Those who have adopted cloud solutions early on and those with an IT integration background have been taking steps to provide support for integration to the cloud."

Outsourcing to a third-party potentially has associated risks. What advice would you give to partners?

Pete Munday: "We find customers are already deciding to move essential business systems or services to the cloud. Our partners need to be aware that the transition is happening and have a great opportunity to better understand their customers' business requirements and offer ways to connect their MFPs to these services. At the same time, they could look for, or introduce, new service opportunities that customers may not be aware of that make MFPs even more valuable to their business.

"Our advice would be to reach out to each customer and ask the question about the cloud. We have a number of unique offerings that already help to differentiate partners from the competition by offering true value-add, with customised solutions that meet their customers' needs better than off-the-shelf solutions. Xerox ConnectKey-enabled devices also come with a host of security features, including built-in McAfee 'White-listing' technology, that help to protect customers' data when connecting to systems beyond their business firewall. All of these offerings should give our partners the confidence to work with their customers and help them with their transition to the cloud."

Paul Gaiser: "For Xerox's cloud managed print services, the key to our partners' success has been our extensive training programme that trains partners' MPS specialists in a consultative approach,

Chris Hale,
Solutions Product
Marketing
Manager,
Sharp UK

Partners need to be aware that the transition is happening and have a great opportunity to better understand their customers' business requirements

Paul Young,
Head of Technical
Services,
UTAX

starting with an assessment of a customer's business requirements and the extent to which the current fleet and services meet those objectives, before coming to a redesign and implementation of the outsourced situation. In this way the cloud offering has enabled the channel partner to be more customer-focused rather than less!"

Paul Young: "Resellers need to think very carefully before they outsource anything and consider the long-term benefits ahead of any short-term gain. In our opinion, there's a real issue surrounding resellers losing their customers to service providers and all too often we see resellers leading a customer to a service provider, receiving a finder's fee, but then losing that customer and the future revenue that goes with them. There's also a problem with certain providers subsequently targeting reseller customers via their direct sales teams.

"That wouldn't be the case with UTAX as we would never let that happen. We're a partner in the truest sense and let dealers do what they're good at, which is talking and selling to their customers, while we take care of the technical support behind the scenes. The solutions team works for our partners, adding strings to their bow. By satisfying the needs of our partners' customers, our partners achieve customer retention from which we all benefit. It's a perfect circle. There's no need for resellers to outsource as such, and certainly no need for resellers to lose control of their customers."

Jeremy Spencer: "Working with providers to migrate to the cloud requires open discussion and clear communication of targets and intended use to ensure that any solution meets the requirements of your business. You should never forget that you are the customer."

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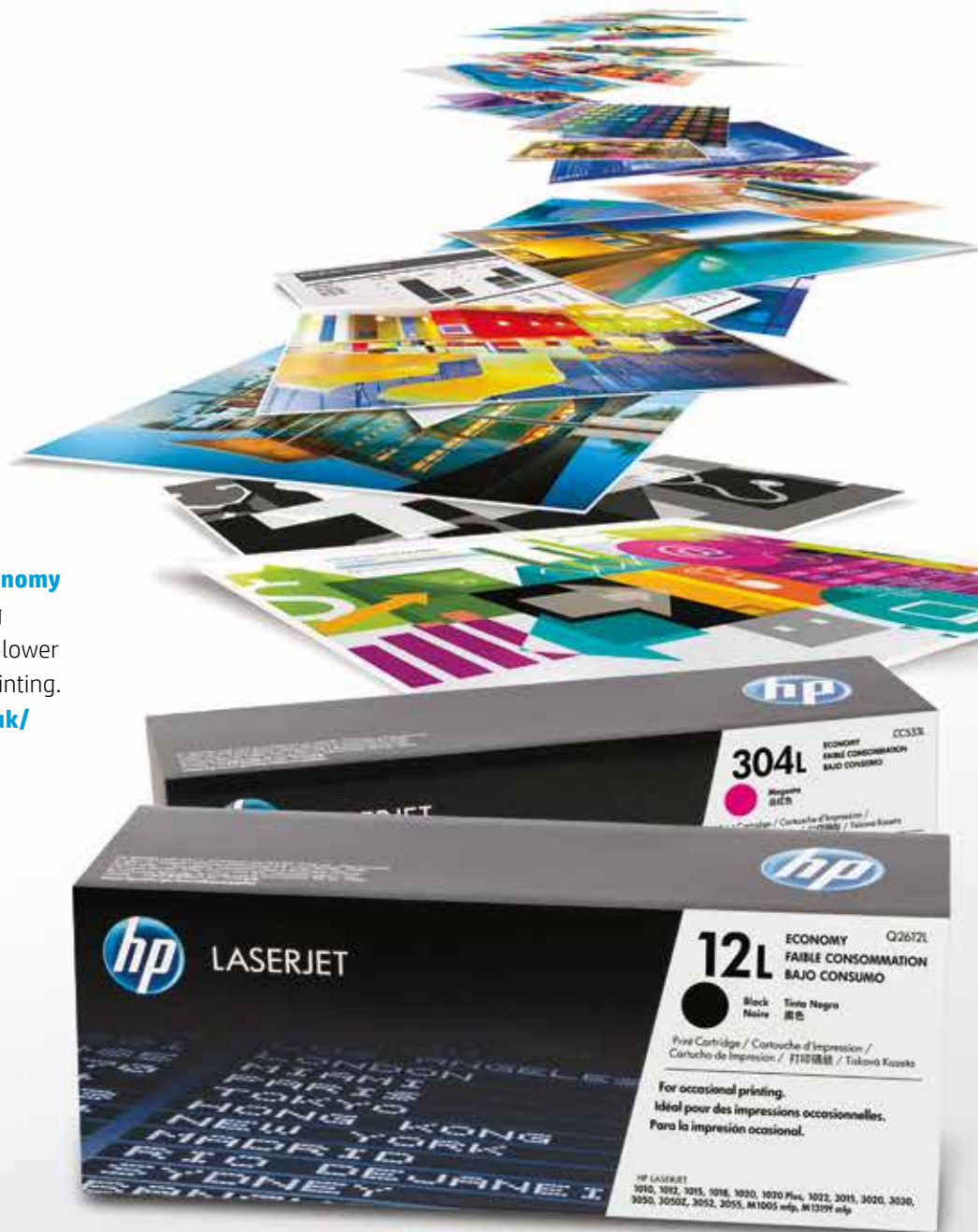
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PART 2: THE RESELLERS' PERSPECTIVE

Do you see cloud managed services as an opportunity to secure a new recurring revenue stream and increase your stickiness with customers?

Terry Storrar, IT Services Director,

Annodata: "Cloud is a big focus for Annodata and is a core part of our corporate strategy. While cloud does increase stickiness with customers, for us it's more about enabling our customers to consume IT in the ways they want. "Across our whole industry we are seeing demand for IT-as-a-Service increasing rapidly, and that will only continue. At the same time, many customers are still looking for more traditional options. It's critical that we can offer both."

"Today's world is about providing customers with the best fit for their business and offering solutions that allow them to maximise their potential. Technology is an enabler and the potential benefits for customers are endless with the best-fit solutions."

Mark Smyth, Operations Director,

Vision: "Vision is driving solutions sales as part of its managed printing and document solutions, combining additional services and platforms that are strong value adds. These are typically workflow and capture solutions and mobile printing. It is a significant shift and change to start to capture recurring revenues from cloud applications. We are starting to see cloud hosting become more readily accepted and the whole SaaS model and adoption levels increase."

Colin Griffin, Managing Director,

Blackbox Solutions: "We see the adoption of cloud managed services as critical to the continued growth and success of our business. Our IT division is a recent initiative and the new capabilities have significantly improved the range of services we can offer to customers, opening up many new business opportunities."

"Nearly 40% of Blackbox Solutions' existing document solutions client base has gone on to purchase IT support services, which has strengthened our relationship with these customers, while providing an additional source of revenue. Thanks to our new data centre we're well placed to provide clients with cloud storage and disaster recovery support."

"Alongside our existing document solutions services, the opportunity to offer



Colin Griffin,
Managing Director,
Blackbox Solutions

cloud managed services means we can provide customers with a comprehensive one-stop-shop for all their print, copy, IT and telecoms, which means they can get all the support they need from one trusted supplier."

We are starting to see cloud hosting become more readily accepted and the whole SaaS model and adoption levels increase

Mark Smyth,
Operations Director,
Vision

Have you upskilled your team so you have the necessary in-house expertise to support your clients' cloud migration plans and manage their IT infrastructure? If not, do you intend to do so in the future?

Terry Storrar: "We inherited a great deal of cloud knowledge and expertise when we acquired Keltec back in 2014 and since that time have invested heavily in our staff to ensure they have the skills to sell cloud services and support them. Cloud has been around for a long time now and the principles of what we are providing haven't changed, but the diverse ways in which we now provide them have."

Mark Smyth: "In June 2015, Vision formed its enterprise services team, which combines a number of services including audit discovery and design and pre- and post-sales support of Vision's solutions offering."

"That is now helping to shape client solutions and provides consultancy, implementation and support. This has

resulted in a number of new additions to the team and the requirement to continuously train and develop new skills and increase product knowledge."

"What's essential is having a training plan and then driving the team to embark on and play an active part in training. It's a big commitment for everyone!"

Colin Griffin: "Our new IT division has required a considerable investment in additional staff. So far we've taken on five staff, including a specialist IT Manager who heads up the new division. Given the high demand for cloud services, we expect to create at least four further jobs in the IT division over the coming months."

Have you considered, or would you consider, outsourcing to a specialist IT support partner?

Terry Storrar: "We recognise that as a company we don't always have all the answers to our clients' problems and from time to time need to bring in specialist third parties. Fortunately, as a vendor-agnostic reseller, we are free to work with whomever we like. During our 28-year history we have built up a wide network of trusted partners we can turn to so that we can better support our clients. Choosing the right partners that fit, not just from a technical standpoint but also from a cultural standpoint, is very important to us."

Mark Smyth: "Outsourcing always remains a consideration. Many of our vendor partners provide support that is very helpful in the early stages, especially when launching a new solution. However, there are major benefits in being self-sufficient and that's our constant aim and objective. Yet it comes at a cost and requires significant investment."

Colin Griffin: "A key driver influencing our decision to establish an in-house IT division was that we were regularly working with third-party companies when it came to providing IT hardware and support for our clients. The whole purpose of setting up the new department was to bring the provision of these services in-house and secure a piece of the 'IT pie'."

"We generally work for SMEs across London and the South East. At present we try to deliver IT services using our own team, but it's possible we'd consider using specialist partners for large-scale projects. This would be judged on a case by case basis."



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...continued

How have you/would you negate any risks associated with outsourcing service provision? For example, a partner may not fully understand your clients' business and requirements or the service delivery may not be up to standard.

Terry Storrar: "Annodata has built its reputation on customer service and the highest standards of service delivery and, as part of that, we maintain a continuous feedback loop with our customers. As and when we outsource to third parties, we keep a very close eye on activity to ensure the work carried out is up to standard."

"Although we use third-party providers for certain aspects of a project, we always maintain management and ownership of the entire process. If anything does go awry, we are in a position to act quickly to rectify things. The risks are minimal."

Mark Smyth: "If you do outsource support then it's vital and absolutely essential you choose carefully and evaluate a provider's capabilities to ensure they are suitable to become one of your preferred partners. Then, each and every opportunity must be comprehensively scoped so the partner knows precisely what's required – what the aims and objectives are, as well as the deliverables. Once scoped, you have a blueprint to work to and some measurement. It's really back to basics with 'what you can measure, you can manage'."

Colin Griffin: "In many cases, we're providing managed cloud services and IT support to customers we've worked with for years. We've taken the time to build and maintain these relationships, which are extremely important to us, and if we couldn't guarantee that a third-party provider would offer clients the same high standards, then we'd almost certainly forgo the IT project rather than jeopardise our relationship with a loyal customer."

Is there a risk you could lose a client to a third-party MSP? And have you ever lost a client this way?

Terry Storrar: "We face fierce competition in our industry, so there's always a risk that a client will go elsewhere, and while it might happen, I can't think of an example."

"Over the past few years, we've taken steps to branch out from our heritage as a pure-play print provider and moved into



Terry Storrar, IT Services Director, Annodata

delivering a broader range of IT, cloud and communications services. That means we are able to take on more of our clients' IT estates, allowing them to streamline the number of suppliers they work with and enabling us to develop deeper engagements with them."

"You can never guarantee that you will not lose a client, but you can mitigate the chance of this happening by providing a quality service, added value and transparent communications at all times."

Mark Smyth: "Setting up the right partner and engagement with clear, concise rules will help avoid potential risks and client vulnerability. However, you must always fully understand who is responsible and accountable for delivering the services and support, even if the partner has a reseller-only route to market and does not engage with end users."

Colin Griffin: "As we're a relatively small operator, we're able to provide a personalised service to our customers. It's extremely rare that we lose custom; we've probably lost fewer than five accounts over the past three years. However, our clients are all businesses and ultimately if another supplier can provide the same services at a reduced cost then they're liable to switch. Our job is to keep clients happy with our customer service levels and costs so they don't feel the need to look elsewhere."

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Extreme printing 'snow problem' for Willow Graphics

Print onto ice? Yes, we can do that.

Willow Graphics honoured for creative application of printing technology

Willow Graphics, the large format printing arm of the CityDocs group, has won the 'Creative Use of a Substrate' award at The Print, Design and Marketing Awards for printing onto a block of ice.

ICEBAR London, located in the Heddon Street food quarter just off Regent Street in the heart of London, asked Willow Graphics to create menus capable of withstanding extreme cold and, in a world first, to print artwork and advertisements promoting its ICEBAR & Dine packages directly onto ice.

Willow Graphics accepted the challenge and, using its Jetrix KX7 UV printer – one of only six in the UK – reverse-printed menus in fine detail onto 3mm cast acrylic. Multiple layers of white ink and varnish were used to 'seal' in the design and protect it against temperatures of -5°C all year round.

In addition, Willow Graphics printed advertisements promoting the new ICEBAR & Dine packages (see photo), and artwork for the bar directly onto the surface of specially oxygenated ice. A video showing the printing and installation of The Ice Queen by designer, artist and photographer Simon Fowler can be viewed at <https://vimeo.com/125557802>.

By making numerous machine modifications and using specifically manufactured ice, Willow Graphics can now provide ice imagery in any size and thickness up to 100mm.

A member of the CityDocs Group, which has production facilities in London, Manchester and Leeds, Willow Graphics is a London-based large format digital printing company. It can print onto any substrate up to 100mm in depth; work to any scale in incredible detail; and uses inks formulated to adhere to a wide range of surfaces, including glass, acrylics, woods, metals, fabrics and, now, ice.

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Choice, not compromise

Resellers have a lot to learn from Netflix, says Chris Cowell,
Office Equipment Sales Director at BNP Paribas Leasing Solutions UK.

The way we purchase things has changed radically in the last twenty years – for businesses and consumers alike.

These changes have come about in response to shifts in technology, markets and customer demand. People want to lease, rent or pay monthly because the value of their big purchases tends to deteriorate rapidly and new billing structures offer a more consistent experience.

Where office equipment is concerned, this payment structure is hardly a new phenomenon; anyone working in this industry is likely to be well ahead of the 'pay monthly' curve.

Even so, the tech titans of today can teach printer resellers a thing or two, especially in the following areas.

1 Product choice

There can be a tendency for resellers to treat all customers as if they have the same interests and expectations. The problem is that where offices are concerned, one size rarely fits all.

The same can be said of the average Netflix customer, which is why the Netflix platform accommodates eclectic viewing tastes: action films, period dramas, stand up-comedy and more. Over time, it develops a clear idea of each user's preferences and is able to make an informed guess as to which film or programme from Netflix's library they might like to watch next. These recommendations are good. Crucially, they're also very easy for the customer to act upon.

Printer resellers would do well to adopt a similar approach: provide a wide variety of products; offer them à la carte; and support and guide the customer throughout the buying process. If there is an opportunity to draw up a contract that discounts related items on a pay monthly basis (e.g. toner and paper), you should let the customer know.

If a customer feels that you're always trying to accommodate their needs and

provide the best deals, you'll have an advantage when they sign up – and when it's time to renew.

2 Choice products

Music taste is rarely consistent. Even if you've always preferred a specific genre, you're liable to get sick of a particular song or artist. When you buy an album for £10, you get, on average, 10 to 13 songs. After just a few commutes or car journeys, the chances are you'll be itching for something new – whereupon you can buy another album.

Just because you can doesn't mean you should. Streaming music services like Spotify and Tidal give you unlimited access to the entire discographies of thousands of artists, popular and obscure, for a nominal monthly fee. For the price of one album, you can get access to millions.

Resellers might not be able to offer the same value ratio, but the basic idea holds. The money a customer has budgeted for new office equipment will get them new kit – but they'll eventually grow out of it. And when they do, there's no assurance that they'll come back to you for an upgrade. If they can lease monitors, PCs, printers, phones and everything else, at a fraction of the original cost and with the promise that they can upgrade the minute new versions of this equipment are released, it'll be much easier for them to justify the initial outlay and any future renewals.

You'll forge a relationship, not process a transaction.

3 Both on demand

For better or worse, the shape of a business changes over time – and not always in ways the owner can anticipate. A printer might serve a team of 5-10 employees reasonably well, but buckle under the strain of supporting 25 or more. If a company needs to scale up urgently, but didn't anticipate the cost of the new item in their budget, it will have to find the money elsewhere – or simply go



Chris Cowell,
Office Equipment
Sales Director,
BNP Paribas Leasing
Solutions UK

If a customer feels that you're always trying to accommodate their needs and provide the best deals, you'll have an advantage when they sign up – and when it's time to renew.

without.

Equipment leasing providers already offer a viable alternative, but they'd be well advised to seek further inspiration from Netflix and make it even more convenient for customers to bolster their office setup.

If you're signed up to Netflix's single-screen plan, for example, you pay a certain amount per month for a single screen with standard definition viewing. If you're one person watching it on a tablet or phone that might be all you need. But what if you get into a relationship and want to share your subscription with your new partner? Opt for an upgraded plan and you get one additional screen. Let's say your relationship goes well, and you rear a growing brood of TV-mad children. In this case, you can pay a little more for a premium plan of four screens and Ultra HD.

The genius of these price plans is that they scale with the customer's life trajectory. If you can do the same with your customers' requirements and allow them to upscale at their pleasure, you'll profit from it.

In fact, this model may well be the most effective, reliable way for printer resellers to turn a profit at all, as customers are increasingly disinclined to pay for items that have built-in obsolescence. You'll always get a good selection of movies and TV programmes from Netflix; your Spotify subscription will always give you access to a vast archive of old and new music; Adobe CS6 will always give you industry-leading design tools at a manageable price point.

Buying vital equipment outright forces the customer to compromise. The trouble is that customers no longer feel they should have to compromise. For the most part, this is a good thing. When printer resellers and their customers are in it for the long haul, both parties will benefit.



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Make the Switch:

Epson's President affirms company's commitment to a more sustainable future

Epson, a global innovation leader in printing, wearable devices, robotics and visual communications, has announced its commitment to a sustainable business future, supported by new independent sustainability research on eco-innovation in the workplace. Epson's President, Mr. Minoru Usui, stressed the company's commitment to leveraging its unique technologies to contribute to a sustainable society.

Reinforcing the company's ongoing expansion into business markets the findings from research conducted by industry analyst firm Quocirca found that most European companies are not capitalising on eco sustainable technology. The research, which took place over April and May 2016 and covers the opinions of IT purchasers across 500 European organisations on sustainability, comes at a time when these organisations are facing increasing pressure to report on the triple bottom line and drive more eco-innovation internally.

Mr. Minoru Usui comments: "As a company, our sustainability ambitions go beyond the technology that reduces the environmental impact of our products. As can be seen from the research, a sustainable future can only be achieved when backed up by business action. Epson wants to fundamentally change the behaviour and businesses of our customers by providing products, services, and functions to enable a more efficient office and a better, more sustainable future".

Despite cost and sustainability pressures, the research found that just 23% of European companies are realising the full potential of energy efficient technology. Stark differences in attitudes were revealed between large enterprises and SMEs, with 74% of large enterprises viewing sustainability as a high priority compared to only 33% for SMEs. Larger enterprises (39%) were more likely to be using energy-efficient IT compared to smaller enterprises (8%), with SMEs perceiving cost as the main barrier.

Rob Clark, Senior Vice President, Epson Europe, highlights that: "Making the switch from laser to inkjet printers, for example, can

help companies achieve energy savings of up to 96%, CO2 emission reductions of 92% and waste reductions of 95%. Therefore, offering not only cost efficiencies but energy efficiencies too." Over half of respondents (56%) state they plan to make the switch to inkjet over the next 12 months.

"The best is yet to come," adds Mr. Usui, "we will continue to refine our technologies across our four innovation areas (inkjet, visual communications, wearables and robotics) to increase the value provided to our customers and to enhance our contribution to environmental improvements. Our targets are ambitious but the scale of the environmental challenges our world faces requires strong responses and we want to continue to be leaders in making a difference. It is our duty as a manufacturer."

Global Strategy and Corporate Vision for 2025

Epson is poised for its next phase of growth and consequently, has established a new corporate vision outlining the path the company will follow over the next

As a company, our sustainability ambitions go beyond the technology that reduces the environmental impact of our products

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decade, a mid-range business plan for the first phase towards achieving the vision. The Epson 25 Corporate Vision takes into consideration changes in the business environment and global mega trends, and describes where Epson wants to be in 2025. Innovation will be driven across four areas, namely: inkjet innovation; visual innovation; wearables innovation; and, robotics innovation.

Reinforcing the company's commitment to the European market, Rob Clark, Senior Vice President Epson Europe, talked to the company's €50 Million investment in Europe (principally focussed on infrastructure, IT, marketing and workforce expansion), part of its overall €2 billion European growth plan, which looked to strengthen European sales capabilities and increase workforce by 10%. Moving forward, global investments in key regions such as Europe, the Middle East and Africa will be paramount to sustaining growth in business markets over the medium to long-term.

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Samsung launches new channel MPS programme

As Samsung aims to recruit 200 new partners and significantly increase its B2B market share, Paul Birkett, Sales and Marketing Director for Samsung European Printing Division, tells *Print IT Reseller* about the company's brand new channel MPS programme, Samsung Print+ MPS.



Samsung claims that the new Samsung Print+ MPS provides the channel with a comprehensive, easy access, low risk opportunity to deliver managed print services to small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs). Being web-based, the platform is easy to use and removes the cost, resource and capability barriers traditionally associated with selling and implementing MPS solutions.

Designed to provide resellers with the tools, knowledge and support to sell and implement managed print services without committing capital investment in operations or a service infrastructure, Samsung Print+ MPS will enable accredited partners to protect their MIF, capture more print-related spend and create a new revenue stream by adding print-related services and solutions under a managed print service.

Samsung sees a huge growth opportunity for channel partners in providing services beyond print – and not just within the traditional print channel. Birkett told *Print IT Reseller* that as well as expanding its printer channel base, the company is looking to develop new



partnerships with IT resellers, systems integrators and VARs.

He hopes that Samsung Print+ MPS will also encourage more printer dealers to take on Samsung. "Within the traditional print channel, switching vendors has a high cost and the ROI cycle can be long. In the past that's put many single-line dealers off. We want to make it easier for dealerships interested in taking on Samsung as a second brand to do so," he said.

Risk-free, simple and secure

Designed for the SMB market, Samsung Print+ MPS is optimised for up to 50 devices per contract. "But there's no reason why we can't go larger," Birkett said.

It has no-cost entry and provides a risk-free, simple, secure way for accredited partners to design, price, propose, contract and manage MPS solutions. "Through a fully integrated cloud platform we have made contract set-up faster and maintenance and customer support smarter, all of which makes it easier for dealers to manage a profitable business," explained Birkett.

The Print+ MPS Portal streamlines every aspect of the reseller's printing business, from sales prospecting through to contract management and renewal, including deal configuration, pricing, proposal creation, contract generation, equipment order,

contract activation, supplies automation, maintenance management, billing and contract management.

With or without service

Partners can sign up to Samsung Print+ With Service, under which Samsung manages the maintenance provision on the dealers' behalf, or Samsung Print+ Without Service if a dealer prefers to use its own engineers to fulfil customer service requirements.

"It's an excellent business proposition as it allows dealers to migrate over time," Birkett said. "They can initially take devices with service included, meaning they don't have to have engineers fully trained from day one, and then, as time goes on, add in further machines with no service. This removes the requirement for up-front investment in training and resource."

"The other upside of this flexible offer," explained Birkett, "is that it enables dealerships to service national accounts from day one. They can mix and match the 'with' and 'without' service packages as they need to, with the reassurance that they can access service from Samsung in areas outside of their geographical reach."

There is also the potential for dealers to win multi-national accounts, as Samsung Print+ MPS will be a global offering. Following a two-month pilot with selected partners, starting in June, Samsung will begin partner recruitment in the UK and Belgium. The programme will then be rolled out across most other European countries later in the year. In 2017, Samsung plans to extend it to the USA and Asia Pacific regions.

June trials

"The pilot will be key in shaping the service," explained Birkett. "We will start to train our first partners in June and have already engaged with a number of our resellers and have two national partners in place. The pilot will involve a total of about ten partners and, once that's complete, we

Paul Birkett,
Sales and
Marketing Director,
Samsung European
Printing Division

Samsung sees a huge growth opportunity for channel partners in providing services beyond print – and not just within the traditional print channel





will proactively begin to work with other resellers."

Samsung is also targeting growth within the IT channel and has shaped its MPS offer to appeal to IT resellers, systems integrators and VARs. "SIs will typically only transact print hardware as part of a larger solution. We're confident that by offering them push button contract set-up and management, we will gain traction in this sector too," Birkett said.

Samsung is aiming to sign up 200 partners to the programme in Europe this year and to double that number next year. "Our expectations are that 60% of those that sign up will be new customers or dealerships that have previously transacted with us in small quantities," said Birkett.

"We're expecting to have 400 new partners by 2018. It's a conservative target, and if we only hit those numbers I will be disappointed. I'm very much of the mindset that we underestimate and over-deliver. Samsung Print+ MPS is simple to sell and manage; it delivers strong service reporting and data; is no-risk, no-cost; and offers strong revenue and profit potential," he said.

This software will enable the reseller to monitor all devices on the client network and track consumables status, service status, meter reads and device settings remotely

Customised portal

Samsung Print+ MPS builds on Samsung's existing MPS offer, which uses a software-based tool to provide partners with visibility over their customers' printing devices, whether standalone or as part of a fleet, and a simple way to remotely monitor and manage multiple machines, via a single, user-friendly web-based interface.

"What we've done is to create a heavily customised portal that's integrated with our pan-European supply chain for hardware, consumables and maintenance provision, in real-time," Birkett said. "We wanted it to be incredibly simple, with partners simply having to push a button to get an MPS contract up and running."

"One of the most exciting things about it is how it links to our technology. We have embedded a Data Collection Agent (DCA) into our hardware so dealers don't have to install any software on the client's network to get an MPS contract up and running. If a dealer installs one printer with XOA-E capability, the DCA will detect other devices [mid-range and A3 only]. This software will enable the reseller to monitor all devices on the client network and track consumables status, service status, meter reads and device settings remotely."

Birkett added: "We're very excited

about the embedded DCA, as after the pilot we expect that this will enable mixed fleet monitoring. We've already had interest in this from some of our bigger dealerships."

Complete visibility

The Samsung Print+ MPS programme's proprietary in-built remote monitoring tool delivers complete visibility of customers' printing devices, providing resellers with the ability to remotely monitor and manage multiple machines even in complex network environments, via a single, secure and user-friendly web portal.

Reports are automatically generated to provide relevant information regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of a fleet of devices. Data on toner levels, service status, meter readings and device settings can be collected by customer, location, building or floor. In addition, time-intensive, error-prone processes, such as meter readings, invoicing, supplies replenishment and service fulfilment, can be automated, simplifying and streamlining the after-sales service delivery process.

Resellers' customers can also access the portal to request support, track service status or view reports and review fleet performance.

All data from the Print+MPS Portal is securely stored and processed in the Print+MPS Cloud, with resellers' customer account information, pricing, service data and billing remaining confidential.

"It's a really simple premise, but incredibly clever," said Birkett. "There's nothing to do except buy the hardware and add the MPS contract – with or without service – to enable automated supplies replenishment and service. There's no manual intervention and a dealer can take an MPS contract live in about twenty minutes."

Accredited partner

Samsung partners wishing to provide Samsung Print+ MPS must attend a one-day training programme in order to receive certification as an accredited partner. The programme is available to dealers who wish to leverage the benefits of the OEM-supported nationwide service support, as well as those with an established in-house service operation.

www.samsung.com



Vision and Danwood join the elite

Samsung Printing Solutions has announced a 'Global Samsung Partners' initiative to recognize the company's elite print partners from across the globe. From the UK, this exclusive group of partners includes Danwood and Vision.

Samsung Head of Print Mark Ash said: "Danwood and Vision are fully deserving of their new status as Global Samsung Partners, as both businesses have hard working and forward thinking teams that share our vision and ethos. Over several years, both partners have worked closely with us to innovate and develop new ways in which enterprises can incorporate the Internet of Things (IoT) into their print strategies."

Douglas Greenwell, Strategy and Marketing Director at Danwood, said: "At Danwood we passionately support Samsung's vision to help businesses incorporate new IoT developments into their print strategies, so receiving this latest award is fantastic for us all. Becoming a Global Samsung Partner is real recognition of this shared belief and a great reward for the dedication of the team."

Vision Operations Director Mark Smyth said: "My team and I are delighted with our new, global status. It's great to have our hard work and our commitment recognised by this prestigious award."

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It's all about the timing

Twenty-three years ago, Tim Hines and Paul Murrall were encouraged by Panasonic to set up an independent dealership. The rest, as they say, is history



Hines and Murrall had been colleagues for a number of years when the printer reseller they both worked for was bought by an American organisation. Worrying that the sale might reduce its presence in the Midlands, Panasonic approached the duo to see if they would be interested in setting up on their own.

This was too good an opportunity to pass up, and in the summer of 1993 Office Options began to trade as an authorised Panasonic dealer from newly acquired offices in Redditch. The young company rapidly established itself as one of the leading Panasonic resellers in the Midlands and the following year relocated to central Birmingham.

According to Director and Co-founder Tim Hines, the company went from strength to strength by focusing on service. "We were very successful at selling in to companies and we grew our customer base and revenue consistently year-on-year. The first eight years saw us double in size every two years," he said.

"From day one we have focused on service delivery and we strategically over-manned our service function, investing heavily in engineers, whilst tactically keeping sales and support staff to a minimum."

Ten years ago, the firm was one of the first to sign up with DSales when Managing Director Jonathan Whitworth set up the Develop distributor. "We knew Jonathan back when he worked for

Panasonic and we were, I believe, his first dealership when he joined Muratec some years later. The Develop range is really strong and we've got a superb relationship with the DSales team, so much so that although we also carry HP printers and are a UTAX reseller, the bulk of our deals are won using Develop kit," explained Hines.

In recognition of its outstanding sales and service, Develop named Office Options as its 'Dealer of the Year'.

Acquisition trail

The new millennium saw the company embark on a series of acquisitions that have significantly boosted both its MIF and customer base in line with its ambition to become a national business.

Its first buy in 2000 was the Wolverhampton-based Ricoh reseller Atlanta (UK) Ltd. The combined business traded from Wolverhampton for a number of years until it was merged into the company's purpose-built head office in Dudley, which Office Options secured in 2005.

The acquisition of network printer



solutions specialist Colour Business Solutions Ltd followed in 2002, and in 2005 Office Options extended its geographical reach into Gloucestershire and the surrounding areas with the acquisition of Butec Business Machines Ltd, a Panasonic and Konica Minolta dealer located in Cheltenham.

Early in 2009, Office Options made its largest acquisition to date, Photofax Systems, a Northampton-based business with a long history and reputation for quality and service.

Office Options has successfully integrated its acquisitions and now offers customers a nationwide service from two established bases – its head office in Dudley, housing administrative offices, a customer showroom and the service division, and its Northampton office, which accommodates sales and service. The firm also has warehouse capacity close to its Dudley HQ.

"Each of the businesses we acquired were carefully selected for their reputation and quality of service," said Hines. "They were all strong businesses and the acquisitions have without a doubt played a key part in our growth."

Today, the company has a turnover of more than £4 million, achieved through a combination of acquisitions and organic growth. "We have always been consistent in winning new business and securing additional revenue from existing customers through the provision of MPS and software solutions," explained Hines. "I'd say that it's a fairly even split to date."

He added: "We're absolutely in the market to complete further acquisitions and are always interested to hear from dealer principals who are perhaps looking to sell up and retire."

Whatever future acquisitions Office Options makes, one thing's for certain; the company's priorities will always be to deliver excellent service – all eight Office Options engineers are fully trained by Develop and spread out geographically to ensure service call-out response times are kept to a minimum – and to build enduring relationships with customers and employees.

"Turnover is vanity, profit is sanity," explained Hines. "We strive for longevity in customer relationships, and that same mantra applies to the people who work with us. Most of our team have been with us since day one; I think the newest member of the team joined us fifteen years ago!"

www.officeoptions.co.uk

We were very successful at selling in to companies and we grew our customer base and revenue consistently year-on-year. The first eight years saw us double in size every two years.

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Vision's vision

PrintIT Reseller caught up with Mark Smyth, Operations Director at Vision, to learn more about the company's growth plans

Established in 1985 as a managed print services provider, Vision has continually reshaped and expanded its business so that it now encompasses managed print, document management, IT services, office supplies and unified communications.

In 2013, Vision overhauled its business and repositioned its go-to-market strategy to target larger corporates and public sector organisations in a number of key vertical markets including the higher education, healthcare, legal, financial, retail, manufacturing and transportation sectors.

This strategy has been hugely successful, resulting in double-digit growth for three straight years. Revenue increased by 42% in 2013, 21% in 2014 and 10% last year.

Smyth told Pitr that this growth has largely been organic. "It's the result of a lot of hard work and a number of major new national wins within both the public and private sectors in line with our fresh approach," he said.

As an example, Smyth cites Vision's recent appointment as sole MPS provider for a University in the north of England. In this capacity, it deployed a fleet of 400 devices across 13 sites in just 63 days, with professional project management by Prince2 practitioners.

Vision has also secured contracts with several large NHS Trusts involving the installation of devices and software solutions at multiple sites and locations.

Investing for growth

In a tough economic climate, Smyth remains positive about further expansion and believes Vision is in a strong position to take advantage of future opportunities. The company is two years into a five-year plan to double in size by 2020. In FY2016 alone, the firm is targeting growth of 26%.

"We have invested heavily in people over the past twelve months, strengthening the business by creating a new senior management team to drive and support our continued growth," explained Smyth.

Last year, Vision strengthened the group with a wave of senior appointments including a new Head of Strategic Corporate Clients with over 20 years' industry experience to support its push into the corporate sector; a Head of Service

The company is two years into a five-year plan to double in size by 2020. In FY2016 alone, the firm is targeting growth of 26%.

Receiving another award from Mark Ash, Head of Print for Samsung UK



Delivery; a Head of Enterprises; and, more recently, a Head of Billing and Contract Set-up.

"We also hired a Head of Telecommunications, with a brief to strengthen and drive growth within our unified comms and telecoms division," added Smyth.

The recruitment drive is set to continue this year. Already, Vision has appointed a Talent Acquisition Manager to manage a project to source high calibre sales and business development professionals to join its Academy Training Program.

"Headcount is fast approaching 200 and we're looking to significantly increase that," said Smyth. "We intend to really boost our sales teams nationwide and are looking for strong professionals with a proven track record in the corporate and commercial sectors to support the business moving forward."

He added: "Our customer mantra is to drive business efficiency and simplify operations, improve their working environment and boost productivity. As a business, we are wholly focused on customer service delivery and service excellence. Every member of our team has

a key role to play in ensuring we meet and exceed customers' needs and expectations."

This includes Vision's nationwide team of field-based technicians and network specialists whose processes are fully accredited to the ISO 9001:2008 quality management standard.

One of Vision's strengths is that it can also support clients with European offices. "We have partnered with a number of vendors in Europe and call on that resource and expertise to enable us to service and support UK-based clients who also have a European presence," explained Smyth.

Wider remit

Vision's core business remains the provision of managed print and document solutions. It has partnerships with Canon, Samsung and Ricoh and offers a complete suite of market leading open architecture software solutions including eCopy, Equitrac and Papercut, as well as Canon's own uniFLOW print management and scan solution. The company recently added Autostore and DocuWare to its portfolio.

In addition, with support from Canon and Ricoh, it has ramped up its production print business, which Smyth has identified as an important growth area. "We have enjoyed substantial successes in this space in the last two years and we are targeting a significant increase again this year as part of our business plan," he said.

The environment in mind

Smyth says that Vision is passionate about the environment and actively promotes initiatives that support its own green agenda as well as those of its clients.

In line with the group's Environmental Management System ISO14001:2004, it has integrated GPS route planning for all





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mobile technicians, resulting in reduced travel time, lower fuel consumption and improved response and service delivery to customers. To help customers reduce the environmental impact of their paper use, it has introduced PrintReleaf, which monitors paper consumption and mitigates its impact by planting trees through a global network of reforestation projects.

Acquisitions

The firm's Hertfordshire headquarters houses its sales, finance and administration functions, as well as a client services centre and conference facilities. A logistics centre is located nearby. Vision also has regional offices in London and Rotherham and a number of smaller regional hubs.

Smyth told *PITR* that there are plans to increase Vision's presence nationwide and that a new base in the south-west is on the cards.

"We also have a number of potential



target acquisitions in sight and see part of our future growth coming from this route," he said. "Other important impacts of acquiring businesses with a good fit and in the right location are the people and the ability to expand our regional footprint."

He added: "We are very receptive to engaging with dealerships and opening a conversation to explore the potential in joining forces."

Recognised for excellence

Vision's success has brought accolades from organisations both within and outside the industry. In March, it was named as one of London Stock Exchange's 1000 Companies to Inspire Britain. To be included on the list of the UK's fastest growing and most dynamic companies, a business must show consistent revenue growth over a minimum of three years and significantly outperform its industry peers.

Our success has largely been determined by our strong commitment to service excellence and customer service

Vision has also been a finalist in the Public Sector GO awards for two years running; a finalist and former winner of the IT Europa Managed Service Excellence Awards; and, as Samsung's leading partner, has won awards for Partner of the Year, Innovation Partner of the Year and Capital Partner of the Year.

"Our success has largely been determined by our strong commitment to service excellence and customer service," said Smyth. "We are proud to claim we are a customer-centric business and part of that involves us engaging with existing and potential customers face-to-face at exclusive events we organise."

Over the years, Vision has hosted a number of customer events, often with the support of vendor partners Canon and Ricoh. In addition to solutions-themed events on partners' premises, Vision has held production print events at specialist production facilities where customers from the production print market have been able to learn more about the companies' digital presses and print solutions.

"The feedback we receive from these events is very encouraging," said Smyth. "Customer feedback suggests they really enjoy them and are a great forum to learn something new and network within our sector."

www.visionplc.co.uk

Education, education, education



PrintIT Reseller talks to Carl Day about Toshiba's new approach to customer engagement

Since he joined Toshiba as Head of Channel six years ago, Carl Day has used education and personal development for competitive advantage, as a means of differentiating Toshiba from larger, better resourced competitors – at least as far as the channel is concerned.

"When I came to Toshiba I thought I can't take on the Canons, Ricohs and Xeroxs by trying to beat them at their own game. Those brands had greater recognition in the industry; were much more established; and had a much bigger marketplace. I didn't have the financial resources to take any of that away, so we adopted a very different approach and focused on education programmes to help our dealers grow," he explained.

One of Day's first actions was to introduce a management training programme for the channel, which involved three days of training with the Royal Marines where participants learnt the value of contingency planning and other military skills that could be applied in the world of business.

The success of that initiative strengthened Day's conviction that sales engagement in the print industry could be enhanced by education – a belief that four years later led to the establishment of the Toshiba Masters programme implemented in conjunction with training company Consolia and Middlesex University.

The first cohort of Toshiba dealers to go through that programme, Day among them, has just completed the course and submitted their final dissertations. Their experience supports Day's belief in the value of education and the benefits of exploring new ways of thinking.

"From a business perspective the results have been spectacular," he said. "We have been measuring the sales performance of dealers on the Masters

and over the last 12 months they have outperformed our other dealers, with a 75% increase in dealer unit sales compared to a 35% increase among non-Masters dealers.

"The Masters degree has created an energy and a desire to change. That was always the intention – if nothing else, we wanted people to change the way they approach their business, change the way they think. That was the primary objective of the programme."

B2B engagement

Day is already using what he has learnt to transform the way Toshiba engages with the channel and, hopefully, the way Toshiba dealers engage with their customers, via a new B2B engagement model, the Joint Goals Actions and Objectives (JGOA) plan, which he introduced to Toshiba channel partners at the company's dealer conference in November.

"JGOA is a B2B engagement model with a different approach. I don't walk in and say 'I can save you money'; I don't walk in and say 'I work for Toshiba and we are the best'. Instead, I say 'What are your 1, 3 and 5 year goals?' That's all I want to know. The JGOA process I've designed will show whether I can help you achieve those

Carl Day

When I came to Toshiba I thought I can't take on the Canons, Ricohs and Xeroxs by trying to beat them at their own game

goals, whether through being a partner with Toshiba, you can achieve your goals via a set of objectives and actions that are measurable, relevant and transparent."

Day says that the advantage of the JGOA approach is that it is cyclical rather than linear and that by constantly reinventing itself and generating new ideas it overcomes people's resistance to familiar sales techniques. For this reason, he believes the methodology will also be very effective at helping Toshiba dealers win new business.

"More than 95% of the companies that make up the channel are started by successful sales people," explained Day. "By their nature, they are very sales-focused. They approach business generation and client engagement in a very similar way, using a linear methodology based on identifying a problem and handholding a customer to a solution."

Because most sales training is passed down from an experienced sales person to a junior sales person, Day says that dealers are being taught techniques that might have been successful 20 or 30 years ago, but are no longer effective today.

"One of the metrics that always shocks me is the number of phone calls in our industry that have to be made to get one appointment. Depending on who you listen to, you are looking at several 100 phone calls to get just one appointment. Yet, everyone has a requirement for print. This must mean that sales people are not engaging the client in the right way," he said.

Building trust

To find out where sales people were going wrong, Day commissioned a Professor at Loughborough University to analyse sales calls and identify which words and behaviours generated a positive or negative response. From a tranche of 200 calls – none of which resulted in a sale



– she concluded that a) sales people are very bad at reading the signs (or choose to ignore them) and waste time on calls that will never result in a sale; and b) that the language they use is ineffective.

"If a sales person picks up the phone and say my company is X, Y or Z and I can save you money – how can you know? How can you possibly know that you can save me money? The person on the other end of the line loses trust in the sales person, because they think 'How do you know? You don't know me or my business'," explained Day.

Day says that this type of sales approach creates a lack of trust between buyers and sellers that tarnishes the reputation of the sales profession and doesn't reflect the reality of most customer engagements.

"For my dissertation I asked people to rate a number of professions by trust – teacher, accountant, lawyer, nurse and sales person. Every person I interviewed put sales person last. I then asked, of all the sales people you deal with, where would you rate a copier sales person in terms of trust? Everyone put them at the bottom. What was interesting was that when I asked the

same question about their existing supplier, the score was much higher," he said.

Day then analysed what it was about the behaviour of sales people that caused such mistrust.

"One thing that came up a few times is that the buyer would say 'I hate it when I can't work out what I am paying, when all the costs are hidden; that makes me mistrust a salesman even more'. But when you ask a sales person why they hide the costs, they say 'Because I don't want them to drive the price down'. One behaviour drives the other. One side has to take the lead and change the way we behave," he said.

Ripple effect

JGOA is Day's answer to this conundrum – a methodology that allows both parties to build a trusted relationship from the outset. For Day, it is also validation of the Masters programme.

"This is what the university calls the ripple effect of learning. What I have learnt will have rippled out to my team and will have had a positive effect on my peers and on stakeholders that deal with us. That

I asked, of all the sales people you deal with, where would you rate a copier sales person in terms of trust?

was my desire, my hope for it – that the learning would change the thinking of our channel."

Day describes the Masters programme as Toshiba's 'crown jewels' – its Tier One partner programme – adding that its success has created an appetite for further channel education programmes.

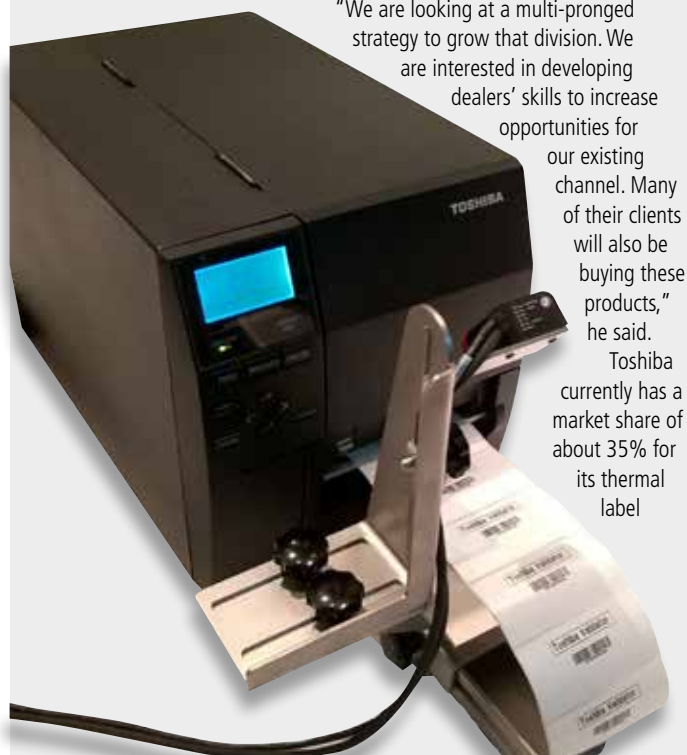
"We are looking at a single-year sales person development programme, which covers the sales part of the education. We have done courses on digital marketing and online marketing, and are now looking at running PR workshops for our dealers addressing how they promote themselves and their brands," he said.

In the meantime, a new cohort of Toshiba dealers has just started the Masters programme, which for the first time will include participants from other industries to provide a different perspective. At a cost of about £28,000 per student, the course represents a significant investment for dealers, even if subsidised by Toshiba. But for Day the investment in time, money and effort is well worth it – "Everyone is seeing a return on that investment," he said.

www.toshiba.co.uk

All in one

The recent unification of Toshiba's thermal label and copier divisions gives office dealers the opportunity for additional sales, says Day.



"We are looking at a multi-pronged strategy to grow that division. We are interested in developing dealers' skills to increase opportunities for our existing channel. Many of their clients will also be buying these products," he said.

Toshiba currently has a market share of about 35% for its thermal label

printers. It is particularly strong in food packaging, but also logistics and deliveries where Toshiba's range offers real advantages.

"Traditionally, if you are shipping something you would print an address label with one bit of software, a docket on the laser printer and then a return label on a separate piece of paper. But with our printers, you can print all of that in one go," said Day.

Because Toshiba can print on both sides they can be used to print the delivery label, a returns label and also the docket in one pass.

Day says this is an example of the innovative thinking that already exists in the labeller division and he is expecting existing copier dealers to bring even more ideas particularly around solutions integration. "We are trying to drive the barcode dealers to be less transactional and more solutions-focused," he said.

One way of encouraging this is to hold joint events for the copier and label printer channels.

"We are going to have mixed educational events and conferences with both divisions' customers so we can share ideas. We are educating the two sets of account managers together so they can share ideas, look at the ways they each go to market and take best practice from both," he said.

As an example of the synergy that could exist between the two parts of the business, Day cites label printing.

"Think how many copier companies have problems caused by labels jamming up a machine. It erodes their margin, because they have to send engineers out to fix the problem. One of the things our dealers on the copier side have started to do is supply customers that have a requirement to print labels with a thermal label printer. Instead of spending a fortune on cleaning drums and taking gum off the rollers, they supply a label printer as part of their solution," he said.

60 seconds with...

Stephen Armistead,
Managing Director, Trade Copiers



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

Trade Copiers is all about change, for the moment. Being exports led, we've seen strong growth which has driven us to relocate to a new, bigger site a half mile up the road. As we open up new markets, we've been busy recruiting too.

Where do you see the next big opportunity?

Exports for sure. We've always made international sales our priority, particularly China and Asia, but the weaker pound is making UK-sourced product

more competitive and demand is growing.

What would make your day job easier?

Worldwide application of GMT ... I spend too much time changing my watch and working out where I am and what time it is!

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

God gave you two eyes, two ears and just one mouth ... use them in proportion! We try hard to listen to our suppliers and customers and that way understand their needs better.

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

Learnt languages! At school, all I wanted to do was get out to work ... I never dreamt then that I would be spending so much time working in other countries, with other cultures.

Describe your most embarrassing moment.

As a keen, young photocopier salesman, I called on a funeral directors with a shiny new model to demo ... tripped as I entered the office and dropped the lot. Fortunately the funeral director had a sense of humour – suggested I was a bit young to be one of his customers!

What was your first job?

Butcher ... loved the customer contact, though it ruled out vegetarian girlfriends!

What would be your dream job?

Reggae bar in the Caribbean.

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

I love my cars ... but I'd probably go for a top Scania and an HGV Class 1 so I could deliver some of my own consignments. Would have to be the USA or Australia though; not too keen on taking corners in one of those units!

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

With so much international travel, I would enjoy either and a whole range of cuisines in between. I drew the line in China, though, when offered sparrow and asked if I preferred it with or without the beak!

Favourite holiday destination.

Maldives. Absolute paradise AND good Wi-Fi!

How do you like to spend your spare time?

Will let you know when I get some! Hopefully, I'll be sat on my lawn mower, enjoying our Lake District location; the grass always grows here!!



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