

PRINT **IT** RESELLER

www.printitreseller.uk

NOV/DEC 2015



Celebrating 140 years of Toshiba

PREDICTIONS

What's on the cards
for 2016?
We ask the experts

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DISTRIBUTION

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its first 10 years as a
Develop distributor

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RECRUITMENT

Ricoh launches recruitment
service to help partners
find skilled staff

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guarantees the level of quality
your business deserves

Original KYOCERA toner advantages at a glance:

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- Increased productivity due to higher printer reliability
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Mark Ash, General Manager, Print at Samsung Electronics UK



Comment

Recent results from printer vendors make sobering reading. In Q4, HP experienced a 14% year-on-year decline in total printing revenue, with hardware unit sales down 17% (including a 23% decline in commercial hardware units) and supplies revenue down 10%. Xerox results for Q3 were also bad. Revenues for its Document Technology business, which now accounts for just over 40% of total revenue, compared to almost 60% for services, were down 12% or 9% on constant currency. Lexmark fared no better, with Imaging Solutions and Services revenue down 16% or 11% at constant currency in Q3. This included an 18%/14% decline in non-MPS revenue. It will be interesting to see what vendors do to reverse or compensate for falling print revenues. On page 18, Louella Fernandes outlines some of their options.

Whatever course printer manufacturers choose, innovative thinking is essential. Innovation is a much over-used word, but it is what the printing industry is built upon. For me, the process of transferring words from a computer screen to the printed page, with such precision and at such high speed, is still a source of wonder, and on page 12 we celebrate a key milestone in the modern printing industry, the launch of the Xerox DocuTech. Xerox UK graphic communications marketing manager Kevin O'Donnell remembers the feeling of being part of something that would change things forever, comparing it to "the first Netscape searched web page I clicked and the first mobile phone I owned". I wonder if there are Epson marketing people who feel the same about the company's EcoTank and WorkForce Pro printers (see page 14). While nothing like the DocuTech in terms of technical innovation, these high capacity inkjets are turning the traditional printer model on its head. If they encourage people to print more by removing 'bill shock', they could even influence the future of print.

No matter what the future holds for the printing industry, there will continue to be opportunities for enterprising resellers who can spot an opening or opportunity to make their mark. On page 42, Jonathan Whitworth talks us through the first 10 years of Develop distributor DSales (UK) and on page 46 we profile Office Evolution, which has successfully flown the Develop flag for almost as long. Whatever your plans for the future, whether you plan to climb the corporate ladder or strike out on your own, *PITR* wishes you a Happy Christmas and a successful and prosperous 2016.

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KingswoodMedia

PRINT.IT Reseller is published by Kingswood Media Ltd., Amherst House, 22 London Road, Sevenoaks TN13 2BT • Tel: 01732 759725 Email: neil@printitreseller.uk www.printitreseller.uk

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Design: Sandtiger Media www.sandtiger.co.uk



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CUTTING THE TOTAL COST OF PRINTING

The majority of what makes up the total cost of print are often under-estimated. Topics such as document management and publishing, IT support and infrastructure, administration and purchasing, are often overlooked and it is only the cost of the device and its supplies, which actually only equates to 10%* of the total cost of print, that are taken into account.

*Adapted from research from ALL associates Group, Inc 2012

Addressing these hidden costs

Canon's renowned portfolio plays an important part in addressing the total cost of print. From an administration and IT point of view the portfolio offers automated toner management, remote diagnostics, single universal driver and supports industry standards. All of these points help to ease administration burden. With regards to document publishing and management, the portfolio supports printing from Mobile and internet connected devices, allows quality in-house publishing** and supports information search (OCR) and reuse, merging paper with digital easier than ever before**.

Highly sophisticated multifunctional devices that work seamlessly within an office infrastructure

**On selected models only



Canon have partnered with PrintSense, Ingram Micro's managed print solution, to bring to light the 'hidden costs' associated with print and the management of print. These are costs that are not immediately visible and can often plague organisations. With 60% of the print market by 2018 being sold contractually and with SMB customers typically spending up to 7% of their revenue on print, there is a great opportunity to be the reseller of choice, and highlight the overall cost of their printing infrastructure. Especially when a staggering 90% of them do not know how much their printing is costing them. The PrintSense service looks to address this expenditure by allowing automation, visibility and control of their printing infrastructure.

The Canon PrintSense solution embraces technology which can offer a huge range of services to your customers from automated toner delivery through to full printer fleet management. The managed print market is a huge opportunity for partners, and will continue to grow into the foreseeable future. According to industry analyst firm IDC, the worldwide SMB market for MPS services is currently worth about \$13 billion and will continue to grow at about 16% CAGR through 2016.

Embracing Canon technology integrated with PrintSense will provide benefits for not only your customers but also for your business. It will act as an ongoing form of revenue as it will move your customers from transactional purchases to a contractual model which can secure longer term contracts. In addition you will ensure ongoing profit as a constant line of communication will grant the opportunity to market hardware refresh opportunities (typically 15-20% margin), the continual sale of consumables (typically 15-20% margin) and any additional services you may offer.



PRINTSENSE.
COMPLETE



PRINTSENSE.
ACTIVE



PRINTSENSE.
FOUNDATIONS



PRINTSENSE.
SERVICES





Award winning imageRUNNER ADVANCE performance

Canon has a wide portfolio of office technology that can help to reduce the costs associated to print, but the imageRUNNER ADVANCE portfolio addresses these best with total consistency across the range, from both a management and user perspective. Combine this consistency with its high performance, superb quality, compliance with latest security trends and flexible cost control capabilities and you have a portfolio of products that not only addresses the visible cost of print, but it also looks at the hidden costs as well.

PrintSense is provided with reliable support from Ingram Micro PrintSense consultants and the promise of the dependable products Canon are known to produce.



INGRAM MICRO[®]

Canon

To find out more about becoming a PrintSense Partner and the PrintSense Accreditation Programme, please contact our Canon and PrintSense specialist Lisa Read on **07967 206538** or email **Lisa.Read@ingrammicro.com**. www.printsense.com

BULLETIN

Green to the core

Canon's free cartridge recycling programme, 25 years old in 2015, has been honored with a Gold award at the International Green Apple Awards for Environmental Best Practice 2015. In accepting the award, Yuichi Kondo, Laser Consumables Product Manager at Canon Europe, said: "We are thrilled to be recognised for the contribution our customers have made towards improving the resource efficiency and carbon footprint of our laser toner cartridge manufacturing process through our recycling programme. In 1990, we became the first company in the world to establish a global recycling programme for toner cartridges and since its launch, we've collected and recycled more than 344,000 tonnes of cartridges globally, saving over 502,000 tonnes of CO2."

Wincanton wins gold

A 31.4% reduction in carbon emissions since 2010 earned Wincanton Records Management (WRM) a Gold award at The Mayor of London's Business Energy Challenge (BEC). WRM also received a Courageous Climber award for a 5% reduction in emissions between 2014 and 2015.

Earlier this year, Wincanton, also part of the Wincanton Group, was presented with the Freight Transport Association's 'Leader in logistics carbon reduction' accolade at the annual Logistics Carbon Reduction Scheme Awards, in recognition of a 14% reduction in its carbon footprint in the last five years.

www.wincantonrm.co.uk



DCI at Paperworld

Printer cartridge remanufacturer DCI/Jet Tec will once again be exhibiting at Paperworld, which takes place in Frankfurt, Germany on January 30-February 2, 2016. The event provides DCI and its wholly owned subsidiary, Jet Tec GmbH, with the opportunity to meet with German and international clients in one place. To facilitate one-on-one time with clients, this year DCI's stand (E28) is taking the form of a business lounge.

www.jettec.com • www.dci.co.uk



Xerox eases mobile printing – again

Xerox has developed five new tools that make it easier for remote workers to print from a mobile device or send documents securely to colleagues or the cloud. They include:

- n Xerox Mobile Print Cloud v3.0**, featuring @PrintByXerox, which enables secure mobile printing to any Xerox ConnectKey-enabled MFP – just email the document to a dedicated email address (i.e. companyname@printbyxerox.com) and securely release the job at the MFP nearest to where you're working;
- n Xerox Mobile Print Solution v3.6**, with Apple AirPrint integration;
- n Xerox Wireless Print Solutions Adapter**, which adds a wireless connection to any printer or MFP, effectively retro-fitting mobile printing capabilities such as Google Cloud Print and Apple AirPrint;
- n Mobile Link App**, which now supports Android, as well as iOS devices, and comes with even more cloud capabilities. For example, a sales professional can scan or take a photo of an invoice from a mobile device, email it to their manager and simultaneously send it to their DropBox account and the accounts receivable department's SharePoint site; and
- n Xerox PrintSafe Software**, an authentication and pull printing security solution for most printers and MFPs, including non-Xerox devices.

www.xerox.com



Jet Tec recently added HP toners (HPCE264X, CF031A, CF032A and CF033A) to its expanding range of remanufactured products.

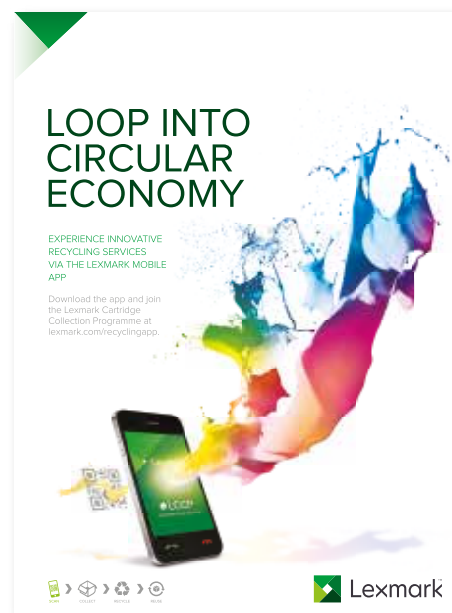
Lexmark launches recycling app

Lexmark is bringing out an iOS/Android mobile app for its zero landfill/no incineration cartridge recycling programme, 25 years old next year (2016).

The mobile app can be used to register for the Lexmark Cartridge Collection Programme (LCCP); order a recycling container, including a smaller, postage paid recycling container (the Ecobox); and request the collection of a larger container by scanning its QR code.

Customers who sign up to the LCCP and agree to return their printer cartridges directly to Lexmark enjoy discounts on replacement toner cartridges including Lexmark Corporate Cartridges, which contain up to 90% reused components.

www.lexmark.com



Kyocera on G-Cloud 7

KYOCERA Document Solutions UK has been awarded a place on two lots within the Government's Digital Marketplace G-Cloud 7 procurement framework – Platform as a Service (PaaS) and Specialist Cloud Services.

Inclusion on the framework follows significant investment by KYOCERA in its Cloud Print Service (CPS), which outsources the processing, routing and management of print traffic, taking away the headache from the IT management team. Unlike a traditional MPS, CPS includes the hosting of dedicated virtual print servers, print applications and document management software on a bespoke cloud infrastructure.

The G-Cloud framework provides public sector organisations with a catalogue of certified suppliers, enabling them to find the right supplier for their cloud-based IT services without a lengthy tender process.

Only 30% of HR managers have used a digital document solution to speed up processes



Paper forms a major frustration for HR

Time spent tracking and chasing printed forms is a major frustration for three out of four (78%) HR departments, according to a survey of 250 HR decision-makers carried out by Bilendi for Adobe.

The greatest annoyances are having to chase people to sign and return forms (42%); managers and employees holding on to documents (31%); and forms being lost (24%).

HR teams believe employees stall signing because they can't be bothered (40%); it's not a priority (35%); they forget about it (31%); and to avoid being legally bound by terms and conditions (25%).

Nearly half (46%) of HR managers say they need to chase more than once for a form to be returned. One in three complains that they do not have complete visibility of where HR forms are in the whole signing process.

Despite these challenges, only 30% of HR managers say they have used a digital document solution to simplify or speed up HR processes.

www.adobe.com/uk



Green Ambassador

Toshiba TEC has been named an International Green World Ambassador at the Green Apple Environment Awards for its the paper-saving e-STUDIO306LP/RD30 Eco MFP. In making the award, the judges said: "Toshiba's new eco-friendly printing system has the potential to reduce paper use for printed documents by up to 80%. The system is another of those simple genius concepts that seem obvious once invented. These devices include an erasing system that clears paper of toner, giving at least five chances to re-use the same sheet of paper."

www.toshibatec.co.uk

New collaboration features for Asset DB

NewField IT has added new project collaboration features to the latest release of its MPS discovery and design toolset, Asset DB v4.6.

These include the ability to collaborate on solution designs by uploading them to the Asset DB server where multiple designers can access them simultaneously.

To maintain data integrity, a user can lock design elements such as sites, buildings, floors and even product catalogue and product cost tabs. Locking a floor, for example, will prevent any other user from being able to move volume or assets on or from that floor.

To keep track of who is working on which part of a Solution, elements can be marked with assignment information in free text boxes. It is also possible to track progress by marking a site, building or floor in the Project or Solution as 'Complete'. www.assetdb.com



Print now to avoid regret

Almost half (44%) of British adults have lost a digital photo they wish they had printed, with 'losing/ breaking hardware' and 'accidentally deleting photos' being the most common ways to lose images. According to a YouGov survey commissioned by Jessops to mark the launch of its new online photo printing service, 21% of British adults have never printed a photo. Nearly one in ten (8%) print a photo at least once a month. Jessops' new mobile-friendly website makes printing photos easy, with the option to have prints delivered to a home address or to the nearest Jessops store for collection within 25 minutes.

www.jessops.com/photo



Print Audit announces five-year Xerox partnership

Helping Xerox customers to control and recover printing, copying, faxing and scanning costs, Print Audit has launched an embedded version of its print management solution for Xerox EIP (Extensible Interface Platform) MFPs.

Print Audit Embedded installs directly onto Xerox EIP-enabled MFPs, allowing users to control and recover printing, copying, faxing and scanning costs. Integrating seamlessly with desktop versions of Print Audit 6 and Print Audit Secure, Embedded is a complete document tracking, charge-back, secure release and pull printing solution that eliminates the need for external hardware.

One of the most significant features of Xerox Embedded is multi-layer, linked authentication for account charge-back and recovery, an important option in verticals such as legal where the common accounting format is two or three levels deep. It also fully supports swipe and proximity card registration.

www.printauditeurope.com

in brief...

Sharp MFP

Sharp Europe has added a new A3 MFP to its MX range of mono MFDs for small businesses and workgroups. With a print speed of 35 pages per minute and a colour scan speed of 56 images per minute, the MX-M356N is the fastest machine in the range. Operation is via a seven-inch colour LCD screen that also displays thumbnails and previews of copy and scan jobs. An optional wireless LAN adapter provides a connection to Sharpdesk Mobile Print for printing from tablets and smartphones. The standard paper capacity of 1,100 sheets can be expanded to 2,100. www.sharp.eu

Made for SMEs

New from Samsung, the MultiXpress X3280 (colour, 28ppm) and K3300 (mono, 30ppm) A3 MFPs bring high-quality (9,600 x 600 dpi) graphics, cloud print options and enterprise-level security to small and medium-sized businesses. Both machines have scan speeds of 45 pages per minute and a maximum monthly duty cycle of 80,000 pages. The series supports a variety of driverless mobile and cloud printing solutions, including secure authentication and wireless print release via NFC. www.samsung.com

Kyocera joins Google Cloud

KYOCERA Document Solutions has announced that 20 of its printers and colour MFPs are now able to support Google Cloud Print. The Google service enables users to print from a smartphone, tablet, computer or any other web-connected device to any cloud-connected printer without the need to install specific printer drivers.

www.google.com/cloudprint/learn/

ABS at Expo West Yorkshire



Elland-based print solutions firm ABS UK gave Bradford businesses the chance to assess the latest colour printing technology at Expo West Yorkshire held on November 25 at Bradford FC's Coral Windows Stadium. A DSales partner for seven years, ABS UK was showing the new Develop ineo+ 308 colour MFD featuring mobile and cloud printing capabilities and smart software solutions that replace time-consuming manual operations with automated processes.

<http://abs-print.co.uk/>



From left to right: Glenn Tupman (Commercial Sales Manager), Brett Abson (Sales Director), Ben Tighe (Managed Print Specialist) and Dan Whalley (Managed Print Specialist), all from ABS UK Ltd.

Danwood invests to improve customer service

Danwood, the UK's largest independent provider of managed print and document-centric services, has signed a £1.5 million, five-year contract with Netcall for a hosted multichannel communications solution.

The end-to-end solution replaces a number of legacy on-premise systems and provides a virtual contact centre for the company's six UK sites that will enable it to deliver a more consistent, personalised customer experience.

The 1,200-seat Liberty multichannel contact centre and unified communication solution – the largest SaaS contract for the

platform to date – will deliver a range of inbound and outbound enterprise voice, video and instant messaging features, including workflow automation and data integration with legacy systems.

Rod McCarthy, Danwood Group Operations Director, said: "Last year, we announced a £5 million investment programme focusing on transforming our customer engagement approach and this contact centre deal is an important part of this strategy. This new technology will help to improve key areas of customer satisfaction, making it easier to contact and resolve customers' issues quickly."

Service is 'new cash cow'

Field service management solution provider ServiceMax describes service as the new cash cow in an era when manufacturers are struggling to increase new equipment sales.

Dave Hart, Vice President Global Customer Transformation at ServiceMax, claims that servitisation, the integration of services with products to create bundles that are of greater value than products alone, is causing companies to look at their service departments in a whole new light.

He said: "Service is actually the product. Over time, we'll begin to see a much more widespread understanding and appreciation of this fact. But it will take time. There's been a prevailing business model based on putting a lot of effort into just optimising profits from sales. Everything after that, including service, has been about minimising costs. As the business landscape has changed, so too have customer requirements. The shift now is towards an outcomes-based business model, with service providers committing to providing predetermined service levels and prices aligned with customer requirements."

ServiceMax asserts that servitisation delivers 5-10% more revenue annually and reduces costs by 25-30%.

The Internet of Things is expected to take things a step further, with sensors and devices connected to the internet supporting pro-active maintenance before something breaks.

Gartner forecasts that in 2016 the number of connected 'things' in use will increase by 30% to 6.4 billion, supporting total services spending of \$235 billion. www.servicemax.com



The pink pound

Cartridge People has raised £6,715 for Breast Cancer Care by encouraging people to print in pink and send pink-coloured emails during breast cancer awareness month in October. The online cartridge retailer made a £1 donation to the charity every time 'Print Pink' items were purchased on its website. Cartridge People's Andrew Davies presented the cheque to ex-British Army platoon commander Rick Martin-Bacon who was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2014.

www.cartridgepeople.com/info/print-pink

Printegral to offer print outsourcing

Management solutions and digital services group KnowledgePoint has launched a print management service that it is marketing to organisations outside its traditional customer base in the training and education community.

Leveraging the expertise and economies of scale KnowledgePoint has achieved in providing bespoke learning and development material to customers across the globe, Printegral is an end-to-end outsourced print management service encompassing printing, distribution and logistics, with proven reporting tools for planning and budgeting.

www.knowledgepoint.co.uk

ASL acquires DOS

Independent document reseller Automated Systems Ltd (ASL) Group has completed its seventh take-over in five years with the acquisition of Essex-based MPS provider DOS.

Established 21 years ago, DOS provides document management solutions to over 300 businesses in London & the South East. Its owner and 10 staff will join ASL but continue to work from their existing Thurrock office.

The acquisition of DOS takes ASL's turnover to over £17m and its headcount to more than 110 employees.

Founded in 1991, ASL services 5,000 customers in East Anglia, the Midlands, London and the South East of England and has offices in Cambridge, Great Yarmouth, Milton Keynes, Solihull, Central London & Essex.

SCC named MSP of the year

SCC has been named Managed Services Provider of the Year at the CRN Channel Awards 2015, underlining its success in making the transition from IT reseller to Europe's leading independent IT services business and a Top 3 UK Data Centre Services provider.

As part of this strategy, SCC has invested heavily in its own data centres and cloud services, including expenditure of more than £60m on the expansion of its COL1 data centre in Birmingham and the acquisition of FAR, SSE Telecoms' flagship, Tier 3+ data centre in Fareham.

Since 2012, SCC has also acquired Managed Print Services provider M2, data telecoms provider Fluidata and global Cloud Services Provider SIPCOM.

Last year, SCC's revenue from Data Centre and Cloud services hit £26m, following a succession of key customer wins.

SCC Chief Executive James Rigby said: "To win Managed Services Provider of the Year is particularly special as a reward for our hard work in the strategic transition of SCC. We're firmly on track to achieve our 2017 target of £50m EBITDA, through organic and acquisitive growth and delivery of a market-leading, end-to-end Cloud Delivered Managed Services proposition."



IT channel optimistic about future

New technologies like the cloud and growing demand for managed services are giving the IT channel cause for optimism, according to the CompTIA State of the UK Channel 2015 report.

Over half of the 202 UK channel organisations surveyed by IT industry association CompTIA are optimistic about the future of the channel, with just 12% describing themselves as pessimistic.

The cloud was identified as the main growth area, cited by 55% of respondents, followed by security (49%) and custom software development (45%).

More than half of channel companies surveyed (52%) are making money from consulting services.

www.comptia.org

Supplier consolidation threat to single-service resellers

Managed services provider Annodata warns that efforts by businesses to consolidate the number of suppliers they are working with will drive significant changes in the channel over the next five years, as single-service resellers struggle to compete with competitors that can deliver a wide range of services.

Rod Tonna-Barthet, CEO of Annodata, said: "Many clients we serve are now actively looking to cut down on the number of suppliers they work with. It is a nonsense, not to mention inefficient, to use one supplier to provide your print, another to supply your communications and someone else to provide your IT and desktop. All of these services are connected to the same network and are increasingly becoming unified in their application, not to mention the fact that it's just impractical today to rely on half a dozen suppliers to provide these services. Ease of vendor management is increasingly becoming key to many organisations as they look to improve efficiencies and reduce costs.

"Businesses don't want to deal with multiple points of contact if they can just deal with one trusted and strategic partner who can support and resolve a range of services for them. We are experiencing this across both private and public sector organisations. Currently many single service support businesses are making it extremely difficult for themselves to succeed. If you can only supply one item on your clients' shopping lists, you've either got to be extraordinarily good at that one thing or extraordinarily cheap. Otherwise, your business will become extinct."

He added: "Over the past decade, with the advancement in mobility and the Internet of Things, this convergence has become more evident. The challenge many single-service providers now have is that you've got to invest in the infrastructure behind the scenes to be able to deliver and employ a multi-service strategy. That's a big investment that I suspect a lot of resellers aren't in a position to make, so I think the drive to consolidate suppliers will see many struggle over the next year."

Mobile apps on the up

Nine out of 10 IT decision-makers in the US and Western Europe expect to increase their investment in mobile application development within the next 12 months, according to a study by Vanson Bourne for open source solutions provider Red Hat.

One third of those polled say mobile apps are changing the way they do business by reinventing business processes, compared to 37% who say they are primarily used to automate existing processes. www.redhat.com

People News

CMI Companion



Phil Jones, managing director of Brother UK, has been named a Companion of the Chartered Management Institute (CMI). The appointment recognises Phil's business achievements and his

contribution to management and leadership. John Morgan, Chairman of the CMI in the North West, said: "Our goal is to raise the standards and practices of management up to those of other professions, and companions play a crucial role in this. We're pleased to be welcoming Phil into the fold so he can share his leadership expertise developed through the forward thinking approach he has brought to Brother."

Sharp Head of Marketing

Sharp Business Systems UK has appointed a new Head of Marketing to drive growth across its indirect and direct sales arms. Elia Giovanni joined Sharp in October 2015, following 18 months at Toshiba TEC UK as Marketing Manager for the Indirect Channel. Elia has over 14 years of experience in customer-centric B2B sales and marketing roles.



Leasing move

Societe General Equipment Finance has created a new Office Equipment division headed up by Simon Rodway. As Head of the Office Equipment Division, Simon will help Societe General Equipment Finance grow and expand into the small ticket flow market. Simon has more than 20 years' experience working in the finance and leasing industry.



New UK MD

Epson has appointed Rob Clark as managing director of its UK business. Rob, who has been with Epson for over 20 years, will take on this position while continuing to drive the company's European business strategy as senior vice president for Epson Europe. Tony Petford, his predecessor as UK MD, has been made vice president for CISMEA (Russia & associated territories, Middle East and Africa), with responsibility for establishing a new management team for the region.

Vision strengthens team



Mark Moore,
head of Strategic
Corporate Clients Team



Andrew Woollard,
head of Unified
Communications

Vision, a provider of managed print and document solutions, office supplies and telecommunications, has strengthened its operations with the appointments of Mark Moore as head of its Strategic Corporate Clients team and Andrew Woollard as head of Unified Communications.

Moore brings a wealth of print industry experience to his new role, having previously been Head of Strategic Accounts at Balreed and Sales Director at Danwood. Woollard was previously in charge at Network Europe Group, which was sold to Daisy Group in December 2010.

www.visionplc.co.uk

Leasing accounts for an ever increasing proportion of UK IT investment



by Andy Milsom,
Head of Partner
Training and
Development,
BNP Paribas
Leasing Solutions

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) recently released their estimation of the rate of economic growth during Q3 2015. As has been the case for the last eighteen months, a continued increase

in business investment was a major factor to the economy growing by 0.5% more than the same period in 2014. At the end of September, GDP was estimated to be 2.3% higher than at the same time last year, despite signs that the rate of growth has slowed compared to earlier in the year.

IT resellers need to focus particularly on the service sector, which remains the main engine of growth in the UK economy. Service industries grew by 0.7% in the same period, continuing a trend of increasing growth during every quarter of this year, whereas manufacturing actually fell by 0.3%.

Whilst, overall, the economy is performing reasonably strongly, there has been disproportionately strong growth in the amount of leasing reported by members of The Finance and Leasing Association (FLA).

In the twelve months ended September 2015, FLA members financed over £4bn worth of IT and business equipment investment, a 21% increase on the previous twelve months and well in excess of the still impressive 10% growth members reported in each of their other main markets (cars, commercial vehicles, plant and machinery).

Finance is now more freely available than at any time since the banking crisis of 2009/2010 and the above statistics show that increasingly businesses are using leasing to fund a full range of capital expenditure. This is particularly so in the case of investment in IT. www.bnpparibas.co.uk

Ingram Micro and Acronis extend relationship

Ingram Micro has extended its US distribution agreement with data protection specialist Acronis to cover nine European countries, including the UK. Acronis offers a tightly integrated set of solutions to safeguard critical workloads and ensure business continuity across any cloud or hybrid cloud environment, including back-up, disaster recovery and secure file sync and share solutions.

www.ingrammicro.com

Tech Data a distributor of the year

Tech Data Europe has been named Distributor of the Year – Best Newcomer 2015 at the seventh EMEA Dell Solutions Conference 2015 in Vienna. Ralf Jordan, Dell executive director, EMEA Broadline Distribution, said: "Tech Data has recently launched distribution of Dell products in 11 European countries and is our fastest-growing distributor in Europe, reaching more than 10,000 resellers and with sales growth of more than 300% during the last 12 months."

www.techdata.com

Synaxon to launch TrustATec UK network

Dealer services group Synaxon showcased its new UK-wide IT repairs and service network, TrustATec, at PCR Boot Camp North in Leeds on November 18.

The new service, which is in the final stages of preparation for launch, aims to provide a steady stream of professional technical services and repairs business to participating members through a rolling lead generation campaign driven through Google AdWords.

The programme has been successfully run by Synaxon in Germany for the past four years and is currently generating around 60 leads per partner, per month for each participating reseller.

The fundamental difference between

TrustATec and other electronic trade directories or portals is that TrustATec publishes the fixed cost of each service offered. This means that customers already know how much they will be paying before they make contact with the Synaxon member through TrustATec.

Around 30 UK resellers and retailers have already signed up for the programme. Each will be given exclusivity in their own geographic region.

Find out more at <http://synaxon.co.uk/reseller-services/trust-a-tec/> or call TrustATec Project Manager Jon Fortune on 0844 481 5844.

www.synaxon.co.uk

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Paper, envelope and postal packaging supplier Blake has announced a new distribution partnership with wholesaler Spicers. Twenty-one Blake premium business papers and envelopes, all digital printable, will be available from stock for next day delivery.

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**This promotion is available on selected European Products purchased between 1st September 2015 and 31st January 2016. The date of purchase must be confirmed by a valid proof of purchase. To receive the promotional warranty, eligible products must be registered within 30 days of purchase. To be eligible for cashback, you must submit a cashback claim by 1st March 2016. For full Terms and Conditions visit: www.canon.co.uk/officepromotion

The birth of print-on-demand

The Xerox DocuTech is 25 years old



A few times in your life you become part of something that changes everything



Kevin O'Donnell, graphic communications marketing manager, Xerox UK

The ground-breaking Xerox DocuTech 135 Production Publisher is 25 years old. When it was introduced on October 2 1990, it revolutionised the way businesses produced common office items, such as advertising brochures, newsletters and sales reports, by joining the dots between documents and electronic office equipment.

For the first time, it made it possible to receive electronic images of documents from remote computers, store them, edit and share them over computer networks, and produce documents of print-shop quality at high speed.

DocuTech's innovation lay in joining together different stages of the printing process – job preparation (prepress), printing and finishing – in electronic workflows that led to faster, nearly immediate turnarounds and low-cost short runs.

In this way, the Xerox DocuTech spawned digital print-on-demand and revolutionised the business of printing by enabling an 'order-then-distribute-then-print' business model. It also played a big role in the transition from analogue office copiers to multifunction digital devices and the development of variable data printing.

In recognition of its legacy, Xerox received a 2005 National Medal of Technology and Innovation award, the highest technology honour the United

States confers upon its citizens, for having 'created the modern reprographics, digital printing, and print-on-demand industries'.

The original DocuTech featured a number of technical highlights including a print speed of 135ppm – the fastest at the time; a print resolution of 600 dpi, twice the industry standard; advanced electronics; and an operator interface comprising a computer with a graphical user interface and mouse – a descendant of the first personal computer created at PARC.

After launching the Xerox DocuTech 135 Production Publisher, Xerox continued to refine the product, bringing out a further two dozen models. More than 1,500 DocuTech systems are still in use worldwide.

Sam Hirji, president of Samco Printers in Vancouver, Canada, which uses an original DocuTech 135 Production Publisher in its daily production cycle, said: "It's hard to imagine a day when there was no viable means for a commercial printer to print directly from a computer to a high-speed production printer. The DocuTech forever changed that."

The view from over here

Kevin O'Donnell, graphic communications marketing manager, Xerox UK, looks back on the launch of the DocuTech in the UK.

PITR: What was so revolutionary about the DocuTech system?

O'Donnell: There are a few times in your life when you become part of something that changes everything. I can remember the first Netscape searched web page I clicked and the first mobile phone I owned. When the Xerox DocuTech was launched, I was working in Xerox's Woking office as a customer support analyst and experienced, many times, that penny-dropping moment during a demonstration that said 'Wow, now I get it'.

The launch of the Xerox DocuTech 135 Production Publisher was a seminal moment in printing technology; there

had been nothing like it before, and it forever changed printing. It used Xerox digital processing know-how and intuitive operation that allowed an operator to multi-task – composing one job, whilst scanning in another, printing a third and finishing a fourth.

In doing so, it also brought together, in one device, the worlds of analogue (you could copy) and digital (you could scan or upload digital print pages). But what was really cool was that you could combine both together and produce just the quantities you needed, when you needed them; the world of print-on-demand was truly born.

PITR: How did the market react to it?

O'Donnell: It didn't just meet the demands of the market, it made a new market and those who 'got it' created new profitable revenue streams fast. Those who didn't, soon did. And, as they say, the rest is history.

PITR: What objections did people have and how were they overcome?

O'Donnell: The only objections I can remember were fleeting – it's big and expensive for a copier and why do I have to pay a click charge? Xerox invested heavily in sales, technical and service support and, together with DocuTech users, a pioneering community was created. Those who invested really did never look back.

PITR: What impact has the DocuTech system had on printing today?

O'Donnell: It certainly sounded the death knell for the mono offset market. This may sound like a negative, but actually many forward-thinking businesses invested in Xerox DocuTech and moved into a significantly more profitable and sustainable market. The Xerox DocuTech still impacts today's print market – print-on-demand, multi-tasking, integrated and automated workflows are all relevant today. Strange to think that 25 years ago the Xerox DocuTech had them all covered.

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Epson innovating to drive growth

Business inkjets underpin Epson growth plans as it makes big investment in Europe

Epson has announced that it is investing €50 million in its European operations over the next two years to drive further growth in the region.

The investment is being made in the company's infrastructure, including new offices in Berlin, Munich, Lisbon and Madrid; in its workforce, with a 10% increase in European headcount; and in marketing activities, starting with a Go Green reseller programme to promote sales of Epson business inkjet products (see below).

For its future growth, Epson is focusing on four key product areas – printing, visual communications, quality of life and manufacturing.

Rob Clark, newly appointed managing director of Epson Europe, says that its activities in these sectors will be supported by continued innovation in new technologies, including robotics and wearables like the Epson Moverio Pro BT-2000 smart headset.

He said: "Epson invests 6% of its annual turnover in R&D. That's \$1.3 million every single day. In Japan we hold more patents than anyone else in printers, inkjet technology and projectors. In fact, Epson currently holds over 50,000 live patents, and those patents are the lifeblood of our



Rob Clark,
managing director,
Epson Europe

Business inkjet technology is set to gain a greater share of the overall office printing market

future product development."

However, Clark adds that in the short to medium-term, Epson is relying on printers for its planned growth.

"Our biggest and fastest opportunity lies in office printing," he said. "With advantages in speed, total cost of ownership and significant ecological benefits, business inkjet is increasingly seen as the replacement for laser in the office. It's clear that business inkjet technology is set to gain a greater share of the overall office printing market, which is estimated to represent a €38 billion opportunity in EMEA," he said.

IDC states that inkjet adoption in the business market is increasing by 13% per annum and that by 2019, inkjet printers will account for 34% of the total business market.

Testing conducted by Buyers Laboratory LLC (BLI) highlights the advantages of business inkjets. BLI found that Epson WorkForce Pro devices required 100 fewer minutes of user intervention than competing laser products; offered three and a half times faster first page out times; delivered energy savings of up to 82%; generated 95%, or 77 kilograms, less waste when printing up to 80,000 pages; and were 18% quieter.

Clark points out that Epson is a disruptive force in the consumer market, too, where its EcoTank product range launched last September has turned the business printer model on its head.

He said: "Instead of selling a printer at €59 and then selling ink cartridges, we have done away with cartridges completely. We now supply enough ink within an EcoTank printer for around two years. And, after two years, the additional ink costs less than €10 for another two years. On average, this provides our customers with a 70% saving on print costs. This range has already proved extremely successful and there are now over 10 million of these printers installed globally."

To help resellers profit from its business inkjet devices, Epson has launched a new 'Go Green' programme. Participating resellers will receive dedicated support in the form of a marketing toolkit, promotional copy and collateral, and exclusive reseller and end user incentives. Qualifying products include the WorkForce Pro WF-5620DWF and WF-8510DWF.

For more information on Go Green, please visit www.epson.co.uk/gb/en/viewcon/corporatesite/cms/index/11883/.
www.epson.eu

Be kind to the environment and make your own paper

Epson has become the latest printer company to develop a solution designed to reduce the environmental impact of printing.

While companies like Xerox and Toshiba have focused on reducing paper consumption through the development of erasable toner and re-usable paper, Epson is going down the route of on-site recycling and remanufacturing.

It has developed what it describes as the world's first office recycling and paper-making system capable of producing new paper from securely shredded waste paper, without the use of water.

The PaperLab was exhibited at Eco-Products 2015 in Tokyo on December 10-12, and is planned to go into commercial production next year, initially for the Japanese market.

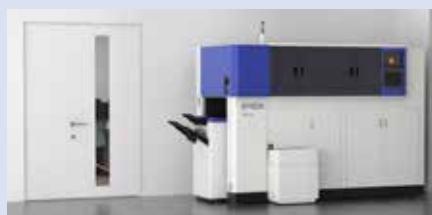
PaperLab performs three essential functions:

① **On-site recycling.** Instead of having to transport waste to a central recycling facility,

PaperLab enables paper recycling to be carried out in the office;

② **Secure shredding.** PaperLab breaks documents down into paper fibres, removing the need for the shredding or off-site disposal of confidential documents; and

③ **Paper-making.** PaperLab is able to produce paper of various types, sizes and thickness, from A4 and A3 printer paper to business cards. Paper



The compact Epson PaperLab measures 2.6 x 1.2 x 1.8 metres.

can even be coloured and scented. The system can produce about 14 A4 sheets per minute or 6,720 sheets in an eight-hour day.

PaperLab uses Epson's Dry Fiber Technology, which enables paper to be recycled and remanufactured without water. Because, the system doesn't need plumbed-in water, it can be placed wherever is most convenient.

Dry Fiber Technology performs three functions: fiberising, which turns waste paper into long, thin cotton-like fibres; binding, the addition of binders to strengthen, whiten, colour or perfume the fibre; and forming to produce sheets of paper and card with full control over the density, thickness and size of paper.

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The DP-MB310 has received BLI awards.



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The story so far...

Toshiba has consistently pushed the boundaries of what's possible with technology and how it is used. We continue to create innovative industry leading products and services that enhance human lifestyles and ensure a thriving and healthy society.

The company's origins go back to 1873, when Japan's Ministry of Engineering commissioned Hisashige Tanaka to develop telegraphic equipment. He built a factory in Tokyo in 1875 to accommodate the growing government orders, which subsequently became Toshiba and production was diversified to include electrical equipment.

Since then, Toshiba has continued to develop innovation after innovation, such as; the world's first 'double coil'

incandescent light bulb Japan's first electric washing machine and electric refrigerator, the first colour TV, the world's first laptop PC and the world's first DVD player - to name just a few.

Since entering the new millennium, the technological innovations have come thick and fast, and not only has Toshiba commercialised 3D TVs that don't require glasses, we have successfully transferred our 3D innovations into the medical and healthcare sectors.

Toshiba's solutions have acquired global acceptance as the benchmark for high-integrity, long-term reliability and lowest cost of ownership. This is a result of an ongoing dedication to R&D and manufacturing innovation, all of which ensures complete customer satisfaction. Today we operate a global network of

more than 740 companies, with over 204,000 employees across the world and annual sales surpassing \$68bn.

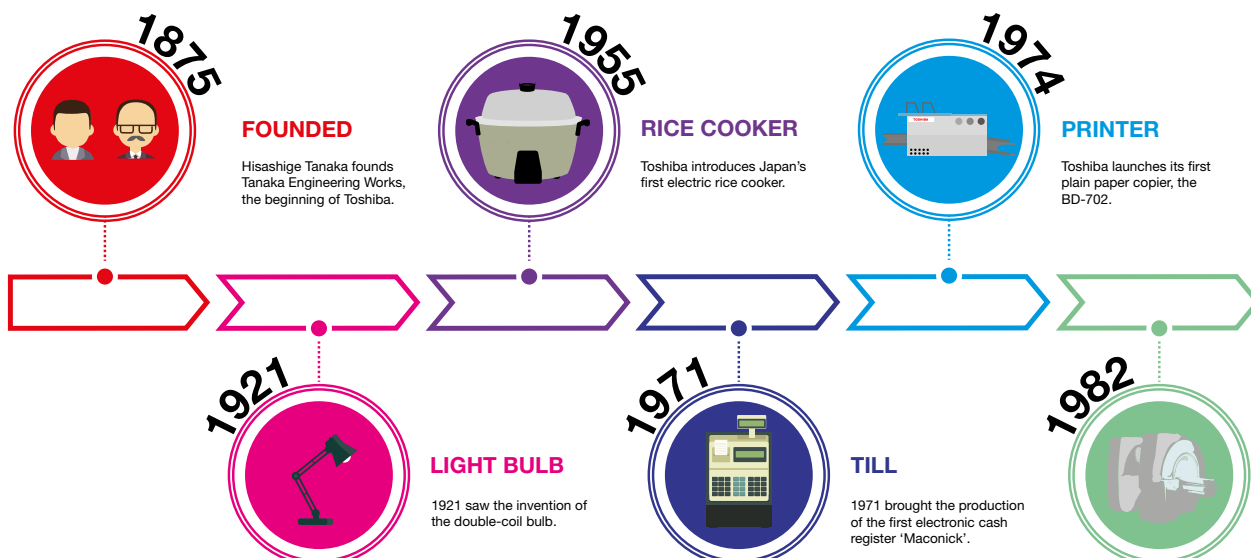
Back to the future

With a heritage to be proud of, Toshiba recognises that innovation is not just about technology – it's about people. As the leading imaging solutions provider, Toshiba TEC seeks to build close and trusting business relationships with its dealer partners, which enable the very best outcomes to be achieved.

It's what makes our approach to dealer recruitment and retention so refreshingly different. With a dedicated account manager, they'll take the time to understand a dealer's value proposition to its market, appreciate its short-term as well as long-term ambitions, share best practice

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Leading Innovation >>>



tips and suggestions, and recognise its sales enablement infrastructure. It is only by doing this that we are able to gain a complete understanding of a dealer's situation, where they want to be and how we can help them get there.

Helping a dealer improve its operation is not about offering a 'one size fits all' solution. Our individual support packages are tailored to ensure they provide help where it's needed most. We are driven to deliver added value beyond reliable and competitive products and invest time, people and money in a way that maximises resources across the board.

Better by degrees

At Toshiba TEC, we know that the skills, knowledge, and experience possessed by an individual can bring real benefits to an

organisation.

It's this desire to increase human capital that led us to introduce a unique educational programme, designed specifically for our dealer channel, in the form of a master's degree. The MSc in Professional Practice in Leading Sales Transformation offers an innovative professional development opportunity that helps students improve their sales strategies, better connect with their customers, build strong brands, shape their offerings and create long-term growth.

This is now proven to be effective and while all of our dealer partners have increased their levels of business in the last 12 months, those with an individual who is taking part in the master's degree have achieved twice as much growth as those that don't. We want to

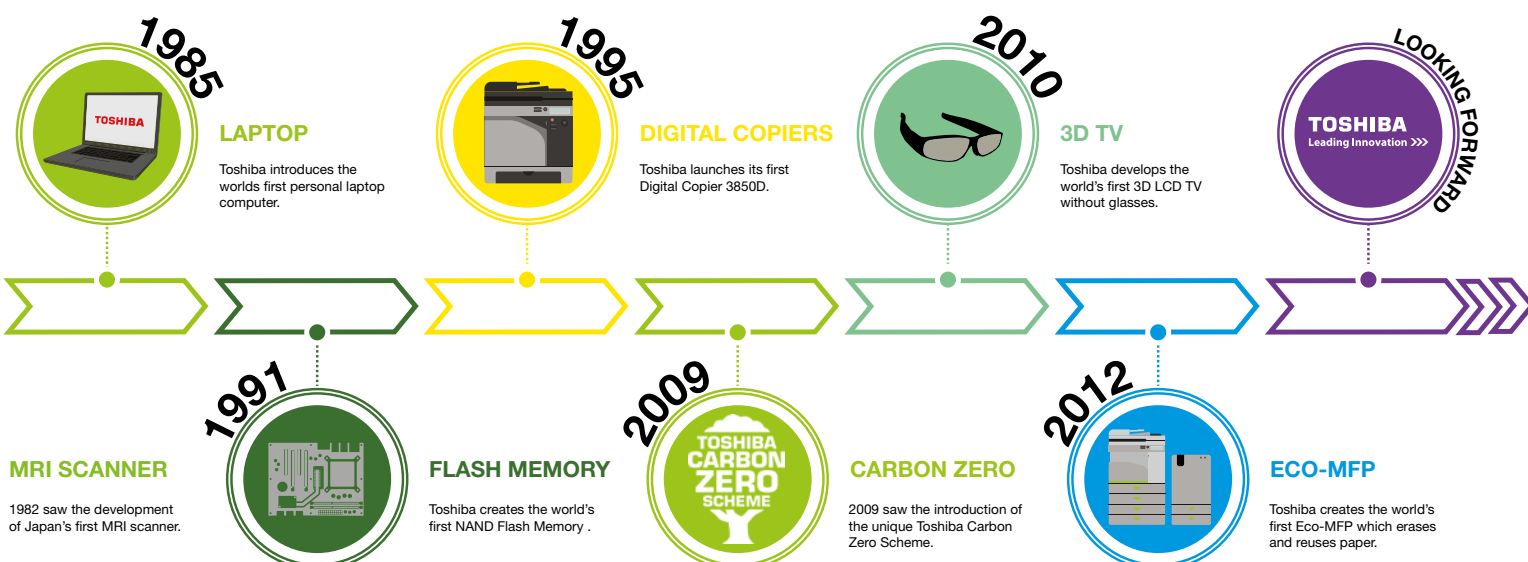
Our individual support packages are tailored to ensure they provide help where it's needed most.

replicate this success in other areas of our partners' businesses, which is why we are developing a sales development programme that will be aimed at both experienced and new sales people to provide a similar transformative approach.

This is a clear demonstration that we are not just paying lip-service to the notion of closer working relationships with our valued dealers. It is a fundamental part of our recruit, educate and optimise strategy – a commitment that is 100 per cent focused on helping them achieve their goals.

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Digital Disruption: Future Opportunities for the Print Industry

Louella Fernandes looks at what printer vendors are doing to ensure their long-term survival in a period of disruption.

The print industry, like many industries, is on the brink of significant change. Market disruption, characterised by intense competition, more demanding customers and a constantly shifting technological landscape, is threatening the legacy hardware-driven business. As the print industry struggles with declining print volumes, hardware commoditisation, lower margins and sustaining growth, vendors are increasingly re-examining the structure of their businesses and looking for ways to deliver better financial performance.

Consequently, the industry is poised for a wave of acquisitions and restructuring as vendors look to adapt to new market demands and shed assets that no longer meet strategic needs. Lexmark and Xerox are the latest to declare that they are exploring strategic options. While, typically, hardware companies have relied on earnings growth to deliver shareholder value, shrinking legacy hardware markets have impacted revenue, leading to acquisitions in the software and services space.

Lexmark's bid to expand its enterprise software presence began with its acquisition of Perceptive Software in 2010. It has since made 13 software-related acquisitions, the most recent being Kofax for \$1Bn. Meanwhile Xerox acquired ACS in 2010 to build its business process outsourcing service capabilities. This has paid off for Xerox, with services now accounting for 57% of its revenue.

Speculation is rife as to whether Lexmark's hardware business will be acquired and if and when Xerox will split



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

into two separate technology and services businesses – in a similar way to HP's split into HP Inc. and Hewlett Packard Enterprise.

Whatever the outcome, the market is undoubtedly set for consolidation. All vendors are navigating the same path and trying to understand where the new markets lie – the cloud, mobile, big data and the Internet of Things. Some vendors, such as HP and Ricoh, are working to commercialise their 3D printing technology – but this is still a relatively nascent market.

The shifting business landscape may be daunting, but there are some key opportunities for print manufacturers to maintain or even enhance their competitive positions:

■ Adapting to the 'as-a-service economy'. The consumer preference for services over products and subscriptions over purchases is permeating into the business market. This is driven by increasing customer demand for flexibility that will allow them to take advantage of new technologies. With an as-a-service model, customers are not burdened by significant upgrade costs and can more accurately estimate the on-going cost

of access to technology. Managed Print Services (MPS) is already an established service model in the market, offering a lucrative recurring services revenue model, along with increased customer retention long after the printer hardware sale. While the MPS market is relatively mature in the enterprise space, there are further opportunities to tap into the largely under-penetrated SMB market. For the channel, digital services around printer device diagnostics and predictive/preventative maintenance have significant untapped potential. MPS vendors should drive further innovation in their engagements around cloud delivery, security and mobility. These are key enablers, not only for the as-a-service economy but also for digital transformation.

■ Driving the digital transformation journey. Despite talk of its demise, paper remains a key element of the connected and collaborative office workplace and still plays a critical role in the business processes of many organisations. However, paper bottlenecks can hinder business productivity and efficiency. Print vendors are uniquely positioned to connect the paper and digital worlds and are developing stronger expertise in workflow solutions and services. In many cases, leveraging investments in Smart MFPs, which have evolved to become sophisticated document processing platforms, gives vendors an opportunity to maximise the value of their hardware offerings. Vendors need to change legacy perceptions of their brand and be accepted as 'a trusted partner' in the enterprise digitisation journey. Business process optimisation and workflow capabilities will become a key point of differentiation for vendors in the industry, requiring a balanced hardware, software and service portfolio.

■ Exploiting the Internet of Things (IoT). All printers are things and the connected Smart MFP is part of the IoT landscape. Vendors can exploit the

Disruption may not come from traditional competitors, but from those outside the print industry.

Continued...

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enormous generation of data to monitor actual customer product and service usage. This data enables manufacturers to deliver better service performance through predictive data analytics (think proactive service and supplies replenishment) and, by collecting information about customer usage of products or services, vendors can improve product design and accelerate innovation. Developing strategic partnerships with open technology vendors can pave the way for seamless integration of printers/MFPs with mobile devices and drive the development of a broader mobile solutions and services ecosystem.

n Expanding high value print services.

This year, online brands such as Net-a-Porter and Airbnb have expanded their brands into print, and print launches amongst independent publishers are at a 10-year high. Print's tangibility and durability, its credibility and the feelings of trust it produces can set it apart from the noisy, cluttered online landscape. Research has shown that readers are more likely to retain information on printed material, leading to higher engagement levels. Many of the traditional print vendors can leverage their own or third party hardware (including print, visual and display signage technology), services and tools to develop cross media channel communications. Partnerships and alliances with technology vendors in this space will enable print vendors to participate in both the online and offline customer communications space.

The print industry cannot afford to rest on its laurels and must be mindful of the speed and dramatic transformation experienced in other industries. Consider how Salesforce, Amazon Web Services and even Uber have rewritten the rules of their markets. Is there potential for a similar disruptive force in the largely closed and proprietary print industry? Disruption may not come from traditional competitors, but from those outside the industry. To adapt and thrive, the industry must become more open, expand partnerships outside the industry and continuously innovate. This means creating new products and/or channels and engaging customers, partners and employees in new ways. Ultimately the question remains, is the print industry ready to disrupt itself?

With over 20 years' experience in the print industry, Louella Fernandes is a respected and globally recognised analyst focusing on the evolution of business printing. Louella is currently Associate Director for Print Services and Solutions at Quocirca.

www.quocirca.com

Good planning key to printer company profitability

Printer companies that carry out detailed planning, integrate new applications effectively and market new services well typically spend more on their investment, but enjoy increased profitability as a result, drupa claims in its second Global Insights Report, *Touch the Future – Applications that can create growth*.

The report by Printfuture (UK) and Wissler & Partner (Switzerland) states: "On average, across all three parameters (planning, integration and marketing), those adopting good management practices invested an additional \$70,235, but gained an additional \$175,623 of annual turnover and enjoyed an additional \$63,330 of annual profit."

The authors add: "Suppliers and printers must make clear investment decisions on print applications that they intend to offer/purchase, and then implement them with effective planning, operational integration and marketing, if they are to be rewarded with good growth and profitability."

The new report, which follows the publication of *The Impact of the Internet on Print – The Digital Flood* in October 2014, gives an insight into how digital technology is impacting the print market and giving rise to fresh print applications, including a shift to 1-1 relationship marketing and multi-channel communications.

Survey responses from 741 members of the

drupa expert panel show that the vast majority of printer companies are still at the early stages of service diversification. Of the 26 applications identified in the report, survey respondents had implemented an average of just 2.8.

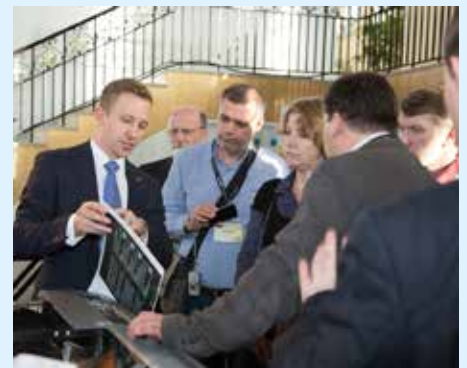
The report states that many of these were unsuccessful due to "the casual manner in which many applications were implemented, with little advance planning, modest integration and only basic conventional marketing applied". Survey respondents also highlight poor pricing and ineffective sales people as contributory factors.

Even so, the report suggests that some applications are inherently more profitable than others: "What is striking is regardless of how efficiently printers implemented new applications, some applications offered a quicker payback on average than others and the differences were not explained by the size of the original investment. For example, short-run batch book production had on average over double the payback period of on-demand book production (2.2 years compared to 1 year). Similarly, business stationery applications had over double the payback period of multichannel marketing applications (2.1 years compared to 1 year), and digitally printed corrugated applications had a payback period four times longer than digitally printed flexibles (5 years compared to 1.1 years)." www.drupa.com

Duplo celebrates London Calling success

Duplo is hailing November's London Calling show a success after deals worth almost £750,000 were signed at the two-day event, with a pipeline of new sales prospects created for the print finishing leader and its partners Antalis, Apogee, BPIF, Fujifilm, Grafitec, Infigo, Neopost, Proskills, Renz and Vivid.

The first deal signed by Duplo was with Rapidity, which has ordered a Duplo iSaddle Booklet System



for its central London HQ. Duplo also signed deals with Manor Printing Services of Wootton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire, for a Duplo iSaddle Booklet System; and with The Print Centre in Berkhamsted for a Duplo 600i Booklet System. One of Duplo's newly launched booklet systems was also ordered by Enfield-based MPC Printing Solutions.

Hundreds of visitors attended the two-day exhibition at Sunbeam Studios, in Ladbroke Hall, North Kensington, which this year had a 007 theme.

Highlights included seven product launches, the inaugural London meeting of the Duplo Owners Club, a meeting of the HP Young Entrepreneurs Network, a BPIF Apprentices Forum and a PrintIT! School visit.

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OKI diversifies for growth

"By offering one-stop printing solutions targeting the printing, distribution and retail industry sectors, we will strengthen our printer business in the professional printer market."

LED specialist acquires Seiko's wide format inkjet business, launches new label printer and drives push into graphics market with new sub-brand

Like other printer companies, OKI Systems UK is relying on innovation and diversification for future growth.

At a dealer event held in late summer, managing director Takaaki Hagiwara said: "OKI's future vision is based on growth through diversification. This is only possible through innovation. What makes OKI stand out in the printer market is this commitment to innovation. Our development of LED technology is one of the great successes of this approach. Our vision is to meet our goals through a strategy designed to stimulate and sustain sales performance."

To this end, as well as continuing to expand its office print offering with high definition colour LED devices, printer-based solutions and managed print services (MPS), OKI will be exploring and developing new markets, including graphic arts and professional printing.

The first fruits of this approach were revealed in October, both at a corporate level, when OKI announced that it had acquired the wide format division of Japan's Seiko Group, and locally with the unveiling of a new narrow format label printer and a new sub-brand for graphics arts (GA) devices.

Wide format division

On October 1, OKI Data Corporation completed the acquisition of the wide format printer business of Seiko I Infotech Inc. (SIIT), a subsidiary of Seiko Instruments Inc. (SII), and set up OKI Data Infotech Corporation. As part of the agreement, OKI subsidiaries in Europe and US acquired the wide format printer business and assets of SII's European and US group companies.

Takao Hiramoto, President of OKI Data Corporation, claims the acquisition will help OKI expand into the professional print market with ColorPainter inkjet-based wide format graphics devices and the Teriostar range of LED-based engineering printers.

He said: "Through this acquisition, we have not only acquired a portfolio of wide format inkjet printers for signs and LED

graphic plotters, but also the corresponding technologies, development resources and sales channels. By offering one-stop printing solutions targeting the printing, distribution and retail industry sectors, we will strengthen our printer business in the professional printer market."

Narrow format printing

At the same time, OKI announced a new application of its core colour LED technology that will enable it to pursue new opportunities in the short-run label printing market.

Providing reel-to-reel and cut sheet label printing, OKI's modular label printer, to be launched in January 2016, opens new opportunities and revenue streams for high street print shops and small print houses, whilst also enabling end user organisations to bring label printing in-house.

OKI Systems UK Marketing Director Graham Lowes said: "OKI toner technology gives us a lot more flexibility with the type of substrates we can print on. The white toner product especially opens up new applications where you can start printing on clear labels and get good imagery on gold and silver labels as well. It really does open up new market opportunities for this type of product."

"This is going to be key for short-run markets where variable data is important and for industries that have short, customised runs where using traditional print technologies involves huge amounts of time and cost in setting up the device and doing a relatively short print run."

He added: "You can look at this as a new added offering to your product portfolio. We really do believe that there is a good margin opportunity in selling this product."



Graphics expansion

The graphics arts (GA) market is another opportunity for OKI resellers. Two years ago, OKI re-invigorated its presence in this market with the introduction of its four- and five-station A3 colour engine. It now plans to build on this and generate further growth with the launch of the Pro Series sub-brand for the GA market.

Lowes says that OKI is introducing the Pro Series sub-brand to differentiate its GA products from its C series of IT devices and to strengthen its offering for proofing and light production and on-demand printing by commercial printers and advertising, design and creative agencies.

"What we want to do with this product range is to move into the short-run, lower production space and offer a higher contract volume click on the engine so we can start bringing in even more competitive click pricing at the high volume stages," he said.

The Pro Series includes the Pro9541 (previously the ES9541), which can print a fifth spot colour (white or clear gloss) in addition to the four process colours; the five-colour Pro9542 (previously the ES9542), which can print full colour plus white toner in a single pass onto substrates for use on glass, leather, fabrics and plastics; and the Pro9431 50ppm High Definition A3 colour printer.

The latter is also available in a version for medium-to-large office workgroups. The newly launched C911 dn is up to 40% faster than its nearest rivals and can print High Definition, 1200 x 1200 dpi output onto media up to 360gsm (320gsm duplex).

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More of the same – but bigger

At the beginning of this year, Capita Document & Information Services (DIS) announced that it planned to triple the size of its business within the next four years. **PITR** caught up with Alpesh Unalkat, Managing Director of the company's managed print business, to find out how it was progressing.

PITR: When we last spoke, you said expansion would come through a combination of strong organic growth and a series of strategic acquisitions. Where have you seen the biggest success?

Unalkat: Capita has continued to show strong growth and profitability across its Document & Information Services division in 2015. We've seen about a 50:50 split between organic growth and increased revenues resulting from the acquisition of Complete Imaging last year.

This year, we have secured a series of large Managed Print wins across a range of sectors including a multi-site aerospace company, several leading law firms, a very large NHS Trust and a global media business, to name but a few. We're strong across all vertical markets, but the legal sector is one area where we are making huge inroads.

PITR: You hinted that the company was in discussions with similar businesses with a view to making further acquisitions in the near future. Have you completed any acquisitions this year?

Unalkat: This year our primary focus has been on integrating Complete Imaging, which we have done successfully.

PITR: What's the plan now? Are you still looking to purchase businesses with the right fit or is the focus more on organic growth?

Unalkat: We are always looking to grow the business organically and through carefully considered acquisitions.



PITR: Complete Imaging joined the managed print services arm last year, and at the time you said you were actively recruiting to strengthen that team. How successful have you been in this and how has Complete evolved since it became part of Capita DIS?

Unalkat: Complete Imaging has integrated extremely well into Capita's core business. It's been a very good fit for us and we've successfully joined up all operations. The business overall is developing well and exceeding our expectations. The structure is solid, with all customer contracts and services, including professional services, sales, customer support etc., managed by the respective Capita department heads.

We have continued to trade as Complete Imaging, but as of January 1 we will move to a single brand, Capita Document & Information Services. Steve Ward has moved into a consultant director's role, focusing on sales and customer relationships to support growth.

We have expanded the existing team, recruiting in a number of areas, including sales, service, professional services and finance.

Alpesh Unalkat, managing director, Capita Document & Information Services

The new London base will act as a model office for clients to visit, where we will showcase exactly what Capita Document & Information Services does.

PITR: What other changes have you made internally to support the business growth strategy?

Unalkat: We've increased headcount across the entire business and made a number of key hires. These include appointing a new Head of Professional Services, as well as a new Regional Sales Director and a sales team in the South West. We've also expanded the IT and project management teams.

Our property estate has been refreshed. We've opened a new warehousing and office facility in Birmingham that's almost four times bigger than Complete Imaging's old premises, and we will shortly relocate our London HQ to significantly larger premises in the heart of the City. These moves complement the £17 million investment made last year in a 99,990 square foot, state-of-the-art print and distribution facility in Mansfield and a purpose-built MPS Service Centre of Excellence in Canning Town.

What's more, the new London base will work in much the same way as Mansfield, in that it will act as a model office for clients to visit, where we will showcase in a live working environment exactly what Capita Document & Information Services does.

PITR: What progress have you made in providing managed print in conjunction with the wider services provided by Capital DIS? Do you still see this strategy as the biggest opportunity for growth?

Unalkat: We have won more new business as a result of our ability to provide a joined up suite of services that includes scanning, storage, archiving and MPS, and that's absolutely our strategy going forward. One insurance sector client, for example, is leveraging the benefit of all of these services and the next step is to provide them with mailroom and security services.

In the future, offering wider capabilities will be key and this provides us with the biggest opportunity for growth. 2016 is about continuing growth; we're going to build on the firm foundations in place and see next year as more of the same – but in a bigger way!

www.capita-dis.co.uk



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* Purchase must be made between 1st September 2015 and 31st January 2016.
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Bigger and better: Green Light 2016

Green Light, VOW's annual multi-category expo for the business supplies and services industry, is taking place on January 22 at the Hilton Birmingham Metropole, NEC.

Wholesaler VOW is confident that Green Light 2016 will be even bigger than the 2015 event. With the theme of 'Stepping up a Gear', the multi-category expo brings together more than 500 delegates, including VOW customers, suppliers and high profile brands.

Over 90 exhibitors have booked to showcase their ranges in the main hall, alongside a central VOW stand where delegates can meet up with key VOW personnel, including group category heads Debbie Nice (Facilities Supplies), Simon McLoughlin (Traditional) and Gilly Blackburn (Technology). Steve Forde, Group Merchandising Director, is also due to attend, along with other members of the EVO Group board.

Masterclasses

The day's agenda includes thought-provoking discussions from keynote speakers; business updates from key VOW directors; and masterclasses on topical subjects, such as Managed Print Services.

VOW says that its carefully chosen masterclass programme is designed to give resellers and their teams that all-important edge when doing business, plus the information they need to prepare for fast-paced industry changes.

Attendees will also have the opportunity to hear from Headroom, EVO Group's specialist business and marketing services agency, about how to achieve business growth by optimising critical business resources.

VOW Head of Marketing Emma Nourry said: "Green Light presents a prime

networking opportunity with one of the largest customer bases in the industry. Resellers can share ideas and expertise and hear from like-minded peers, key industry suppliers and service providers.

"With so many industry exhibitions and conferences, it can be a challenge to decide which one you should invest valuable time in. We're proud to say that Green Light is an all-encompassing event where the feedback received speaks for itself. From initial concepts to reality, it has always been our aim to give the business supplies industry a worthwhile and valuable event."

The one-day event kicks off at 9am and ends with a black tie gala dinner and awards ceremony in the evening.

The VOW+ Partner Awards are split into three groups, with first, second and third places given to partners that have grown significantly over the last 12 months. There are also Awards for VOW's focus areas of Facilities Supplies, Tech, Managed Print Services (MPS) and Furniture and, for the first time, there will be a 'Newcomer' category.

The evening's entertainment will be provided by a mystery celebrity, who will also host the awards ceremony.

Green Light app

The event will be supported by a bespoke Green Light 2016 app, giving delegates access to the latest information and the ability to create their own personalised experience through an interactive floorplan and in-app features designed to help them make the most of their visit.

These include a 'My Exhibitors'



The Green Light app can be used to reply to live polls and interact with the VOW team.

function, which enables delegates to create a personalised list of the exhibitors they would like to visit, and a 'My Notes' function, which lets them take notes during a session and then export them to an email client for sharing with others. The app can also be used to reply to live polls and interact with key members of the VOW team.

Other highlights of the exhibition include a roving reporter, presenting sound bites on the key highlights of the expo; a live social media wall; and a dedicated press area.

At the time of going to press, confirmed sponsors for Green Light 2016 include 3M (Headline sponsor); BIC (Headline sponsor); Newell Rubbermaid (Headline sponsor); Nestlé (Gold sponsor); Fellowes (Gold sponsor); Canon (Gold sponsor); Avery (Gold sponsor); AF International (Gold sponsor); and Durable (Gold sponsor).

Delegates can view the event programme and register for the event by visiting www.greenlightevent.com.





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Paper is here to stay

83% of Europeans state "paperless office is unrealistic"

Paperless office fails to materialise despite increasing workplace digitalisation, new research reports

More than 35 years have passed since British-American information scientist, Frederick Wilfrid, first envisioned a 'paperless office' in 1978. Today, the reality is that printers continue to be used daily and, according to an independent survey of over 3,600 European employees commissioned by Epson Europe, 77% of respondents stated that printers were vital in terms of helping them work more productively with an overwhelming majority (83%) felt a "paperless office is unrealistic". In fact, of the

4% that said they didn't have a printer in their office, half of them were intending to get one.

"It is clear from our research that – despite digital advances – people still like to work with paper, preferring print rather than working on-screen for certain tasks," said Rob Clark, Senior Vice President of Epson Europe. The research found that 88% of respondents said they printed an average of 21 items per day with the most popular printed items being reports closely followed by email attachments and emails themselves.

"The reality is organisations need printing to not only help employees work more effectively but reap wider productivity and environmental benefits too," highlights Clark. "With inkjet printing for example, organisations can achieve up to twice as many prints while producing 95% less waste and with much lower energy consumption compared to similar sized laser printers and copiers."

Renowned global futurist, Jack Uldrich, adds: "the paperless office hasn't materialized for the same reason that microwave ovens didn't replace all traditional ovens. Every technology has unique and tangible benefits, and paper is no different. Arguably, paper is the greatest instrument ever invented for conveying, sharing and disseminating information. In fact, recent scientific studies have demonstrated that people understand and retain information presented on paper at a far higher level than information presented electronically." This may explain why 61% of survey respondents said that they believe "there is more chance of making errors when editing an electronic document than editing a print-out."

"New technologies are of course

changing the way people work. At Epson, for example, we see this with our wearable and projector based technologies. But when it comes to reading, editing and sharing documents like reports, emails, and attachments, office workers, from baby boomers to millennials, still prefer the tangible printed version," Clark concludes.

As part of its plans for growth within the business printing market, Epson has developed the WorkForce Pro RIPS (Replaceable Ink Pack System) range. These printers offer businesses a series of inkjet products that deliver uninterrupted printing for up to 75,000 pages without the need for a consumables change. The new products are expected to help Epson further accelerate the shift from laser to inkjet within the business printing market.

The Replaceable Ink Pack System has been developed to help businesses take advantage of the convenience benefits of a localised printer fleet, but with the predictable costs of a centralised model. The products are also designed to address the impact of printer downtime and maintenance issues within the workplace – a productivity loss estimated to currently stand within the region of €7 billion per annum across EU5 businesses.

The RIPS range includes an A3 model that addresses a gap in the market for A3 business inkjet printers. The full product range is the result of a €125 million investment into production facilities in Japan, enabling Epson to move high-end industrial print head technology into the volume market.

For further information please contact Epson on **0844 409 8010** or see www.epson.co.uk



EPSON STATE OF PRINTING IN THE WORKPLACE STUDY

Even in today's digitally powered world, the printer still remains vital for business success and productivity by helping employees to work effectively. In a major research project, Epson Europe questioned 3,639 IT decision makers and employees across France, Germany, Spain, Italy and the UK to assess how they use printers in today's workplace.

PRINTING IS VITAL TO EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY:

27% of productivity or a full day would be lost each week if printers were banned, according to employee estimates. Not being able to print 'reports or brochures' would have the most impact.

EUROPEANS SAID...

77% of employees claim that printers are vital in terms of helping them to work effectively

86% of employees claim a ban on printing would impact their productivity, with 49% claiming it would do so 'significantly.'

PRINTERS WILL BE A KEY TECHNOLOGY IN TOMORROW'S WORKPLACE:

83% of employees agree that 'a paperless office concept is not realistic.'

EUROPEANS SAID...

86% of employees agree 'printers should be regularly upgraded in order to leverage innovation on connectivity, cost efficiencies and quality.'

85% of employees agree that their organisation 'should continue to invest in printing technology.'



PRINTER USAGE IN THE WORKPLACE REMAINS HIGH:

88% of employees use printers at least daily and 'those who use printers print on average 21 items.'

EUROPEANS SAID...

93% of employees state that the ability to print documents is important in relation to their role within the organisation.

61% of employees believe 'there is more chance of making errors editing an electronic document than editing a print out.'

The top 3 most printed items:



Reports and brochures
16%



Email attachments
15%



Emails
14%

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1. As tested by BLI, over two months to April 2015, against a selection of competing machines, as commissioned by Epson. For more information visit www.epson.eu/inkjetsaving

Going, going, but not yet gone

Westcoast is offering resellers 50% off selected Lexmark printer/toner bundles, and is donating £5 to Meningitis Now for every one sold.

UK distributor Westcoast, a strategic Lexmark partner, has launched a series of 'buy better, buy bundles' that give resellers the opportunity to buy selected Lexmark printers and MFPs bundled with high capacity toners for half price.

For every colour or mono printer/MFP bundle sold, Westcoast is donating £5 to Meningitis Now. By the end of the year, it hopes to have raised £5,000 for the UK's largest meningitis charity to support the work it does in offering support, funding research and raising awareness of the disease.

At the time of writing, Westcoast had already donated £1,135 for sales in October, with a further donation of £810 on its way to the charity. Donations are made on the reseller's behalf.

Westcoast's Lexmark Product Manager Mike Newson said: "We've selected five SKUs and pledged to donate £5 for every device we ship throughout Q4. In addition to supporting a really worthwhile charity, these bundle offers provide our dealers with a unique opportunity to proactively win new business. We're giving them the ability to compete in a market where purchasers are searching online for the cheapest prices."

Martin Fairman, Lexmark Channel Sales Director, UK & Ireland, said: "Meningitis Now provides much needed support for families and children affected by meningitis. We are proud to support Westcoast in raising funds for this worthy charity."

In addition to its fund-raising initiatives for Meningitis Now, Westcoast supports Macmillan Cancer Research, other Cancer Trusts, local charities and children's football teams.



A competitive edge

Westcoast is shipping the Lexmark devices with a full set of high yield toners, and how the reseller chooses to pass the savings on to their customer base is up to them. "This is a trade-only deal and, as such, it places the channel in a unique position where they can choose how they sell on to their customers," said Newson.

"Discounting the hardware is a great deal in its own right, but by bundling the hardware with the consumables and offering both at half price, we're providing channel partners with a real competitive edge. Resellers could resell the toners at full price, for example, and use the lower headline cost of the printer as an opportunity to encourage customers to refresh their printer fleets."

He added: "Vendors who currently only sell hardware will be able to secure additional revenue from toner sales and make a decent margin, and for EOS-only vendors, we're providing the opportunity to seed new business by selling printers to their customer base."

Another compelling sales proposition is Lexmark's end-user reward programme.

Each new printer purchase earns the purchaser two points and each cartridge returned to the OEM for recycling is worth one point (a full set of CMYK earns four points). In addition, programme members get free imaging units for life.

"The bundles we're offering, comprising a printer, a starter set of toners and a full set of high yield cartridges, is worth ten points in the rewards programme – and ten points equates to one free toner for the end user," explained Newson.

One-stop-shop

As a Lexmark partner, Westcoast is in a strong position to support its customer base. The firm is unique in the distribution channel in that it offers Lexmark hardware, supplies and spare parts, and can ship all direct to the end customer in packaging that features the reseller's branding so that it looks as though it's come from them direct. It also offers timed delivery options.

"As a business we have a narrow and deep philosophy, which allows us to specialise in a vendor's full range of products and services. The fact that we offer all three categories is unmatched in the disti channel," said Newson. "Because we work with fewer vendors, we have knowledgeable sales specialists across all areas of the business, ensuring our channel partners get the expertise they need to offer their customers the most appropriate products and services. This makes Westcoast a true one-stop-shop."

For the channel, the purchasing process is seamless. All products can be purchased online and Westcoast boasts 99.9% pick rate accuracy.

Another value-added service Westcoast provides is consignment warehousing. It holds all inventory for resellers, which they can draw down as required. "This works especially well for smaller operations who don't have the space to carry large amounts of stock in their own premises," said Newson.

www.westcoast.co.uk

**Mike Newson,
Lexmark product
manager,
Westcoast**

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Print predictions 2016

What will be the major developments and trends in printing in 2016?

PITR asks industry experts for their thoughts .

Phil Jones, *Managing Director,*
Brother UK

"The march by vendors to secure recurring revenues under contract continues with pace, and channel partners are recognising the importance of this in terms of protection of their own customers from competitor cannibalisation and large direct vendors moving down the stack in search of new pages.

"The concept of one big machine in the corner is being really challenged by the distributed print environment and page prices are becoming more competitive as print-centric vendors take on the battle for the mid-market against copier-centric-only propositions.

"Smart resellers are continuing to invest in skills, IT platforms and services to maximise and protect their print revenues for the mid-term, but also to address the growing requirements in digitisation, workflow, collaboration and mobility."

www.brother.co.uk

Nigel Morris, *Marketing Director,*
Beta Distribution

"Continuing pressure on OEM-branded consumables' margin seems inevitable, both at the dealer and distributor level. Compatibles and remanufactured products do represent an opportunity for the dealer to make more margin and the end user to enjoy lower buy prices, but there are a couple of factors that will impact this market in 2016.

"The ongoing presence of clone products (copies of OEM products) will keep a downward pressure on the prices of legitimate remanufactured products.



Phil Jones,
Managing Director,
Brother UK

Smart resellers are continuing to invest in skills, IT platforms and services

The requirements of the WEEE regulations, which come into force in January 2016 and include most types of toner cartridge, will need to be considered by remanufactured toner brand owners. They also serve to threaten the clone toners, which can't be recycled.

"In general terms, dealers have had to look outside traditional office products as demand has declined and they will need to take the same approach with OEM-branded consumables. MPS has been talked about for many years as one answer, but it is still a challenge for many dealers whose business is transaction-based rather than 'cost per click'. However, 2016 may be the year when MPS finally makes a breakthrough in many more dealers' businesses."

www.betadistribution.com

Bob Davies, *Commercial Director,*
Integra Office Solutions

"Thirty-three per cent of OP dealers' business is EOS, of which the lion's share is toner and ink. Remanufactured and compatible cartridge share of the market has not materially changed in the last 10 years, at just under 25% overall. Consequently, compatible cartridge

manufacturers are all fighting for the same sector of the market. In the last five years or so we have seen a significant reduction in market prices, a key driver behind the recent price reductions in Initiative brand toners (which are now very competitively priced).

"On the upside, whilst market share of compatibles has plateaued, the market is still growing and predicted to continue growing at 6.2% through to 2019. This is driven largely by positive growth in the hardware sector, particularly multifunction and colour devices, so the aftermarket should still deliver positive revenue growth. Mobile printing is also predicted to help drive future growth.

"MPS remains both a threat and an opportunity for OP dealers. Solution selling is trumping product selling and MPS is continuing to gain traction, with significant growth coming from the IT and VAR channels. IT specialists are in the main perceived as more trusted to install monitoring software on users' systems, but many OP dealers are not really embracing MPS and the changes required in their own businesses to make a success of it. The biggest challenge is finding out who the printer contract decision-makers are and understanding how to address the market.

"OEMs and their channel partners are embracing the 'walk in and takeover' (WiTo) mentality rather than the old 'rip and replace', thus increasing opportunities for OEM alternative cartridge solutions. All OEMs now offer 'brand agnostic' MPS programs and all are partnered with cartridge remanufacturers. HP's MPS program, for example, manages both HP and third-party printers and copiers. HP acquired a remanufacturer, Printelligent, a few years back and Xerox (the world leader in MPS for the last four years) acquired Laser Networks. Whilst these OEMs have grown their MPS business in the large enterprise sector, they are now well placed to scale down to address the SME space with brand-agnostic products.

"The 3D print market is also a growth area. It's anticipated that twice as many 3D printers will be sold in 2016 as in 2015.

continued...

...continued

Whilst still in relative infancy, the shift to 3D printing production is not only likely, it's inevitable. Integra has launched entry level 3D printers starting from as low as £599 retail for the Magic 3D Cube aimed at the education market.

www.integra-office.co.uk



Nigel Allen, Marketing Director,
KYOCERA Document Solutions UK

**Nigel Allen, Marketing Director,
KYOCERA Document Solutions UK**

"Print will continue to be both relevant and critical to businesses in 2016, although we see significant growth potential in three areas in particular – 3D print, Cloud and managed print.

"Although the technologies behind it have been around for over 20 years, we've started to see 3D printing hit the mainstream this year as prices have come down and it has become more commoditised. We expect that trend to continue in 2016, and anticipate the demand for 3D to be bigger and better than ever, as many customers are now more aware of its potential and practical applications.

"More and more services continue to move to the Cloud, and print is no exception. Given the potential cost savings and the increased security now offered, we would predict further growth within Cloud printing as businesses become ever more mobile.

"Managed print is still quite new to many businesses – Quocirca estimates that around 50% of UK enterprises use managed print services, which means that 50% don't. We think this balance will tip in 2016, as organisations realise the benefit of having greater visibility and control over their print environment and the potential to increase efficiency whilst cutting costs."

kyoceradocumentsolutions.co.uk

**Alpesh Unalkat, Managing Director,
Capita Document & Information
Services**

"The market is moving towards fewer, larger and more capable players, and we are now seeing new entrants from other sectors, who are able to provide MPS as part of a wider range of services. 2016



Alpesh Unalkat,
Managing Director,
Capita Document
& Information
Services

will see further market consolidation, with strategic mergers and acquisitions continuing within the MPS space.

"Key players will provide 'services beyond MPS'. The 'version one' of MPS which included simple printer rationalisation and migration of usage to MFDs is definitely yesteryear. Organisations are now looking for integrated services related to MPS, such as scanning, storage, hybrid mail and workflow solutions. We see this trend continuing and growing, with clients demanding joined up solutions from a single provider.

"The workplace and workforce are changing, with the advance of mobility, flexible working and workspace solutions. This trend is set to continue and will impact ever more on the requirement for Managed Print; the changing face of the client will alter and shape MPS solutions in the future.

"New technologies, such as Cloud, 3D, mobility etc., will continue to gather momentum. Their place in the market will in many ways contribute to the changing shape of MPS solutions."

www.capita-dis.co.uk



Carl Day,
Sales Director
Indirect Division,
Toshiba TEC UK

**The workplace and workforce are changing,
with the advance of mobility, flexible working
and workspace solutions.**

**Carl Day, Sales Director Indirect Division,
Toshiba TEC UK**

"I believe we will continue to see unit sales stabilise in office print with more users turning to faster devices to deliver shared printing. The line between traditional desktop printers and MFPs is blurring further as more providers offer a balanced deployment based on true client requirements.

"We have seen more dealers diversifying their product portfolio to include thermal and barcode printers in order to demonstrate value to their customers and new ways of working, and this is an area that Toshiba will continue to focus on and expand.

"I think the biggest change to the market will be in how we engage with our clients. Organisations are now addressing their operational strategy with much more of a focus on brand, reputation, CSR and ethical decision-making. Professional bodies such as the Association of Professional Sales (APS) are already demonstrating how companies can grow their business by ensuring their values and ethics are conveyed through their staff to their clients.

"Toshiba will continue to deliver growth in partnership with its dealers by offering insight and education for the development of people. This, together with an exciting new range of products and services due for launch in 2016, means that I am predicting another growth year for Toshiba TEC UK."

www.toshibatec.co.uk

**Francis Thornhill, Product Marketing
Manager, Canon Europe**

"At Canon, we are seeing working practices evolve rapidly as customers seek to do more for less and quicker, through greater operational efficiencies in their business. This is driving the adoption of new technologies and services. The focus of conversations is therefore shifting away from the traditional realm of 'product' and 'hardware' to complete services and solutions that can deliver operational efficiencies and allow customers to focus on their business priorities.

"The fastest growing area for managed print and document services is the SME market, as technologies such as mobile and Cloud bring new possibilities for smaller businesses to be quicker, smarter and bolder with innovative processes that were previously available only to larger companies because of the in-house IT complexity. This trend will be creating great opportunities for suppliers to secure recurring services revenues next year.

continued...

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"In the face of such change, print and scanning technology is evolving to help suppliers meet the needs of customers. At a basic level, there is seamless integration with IT and Cloud systems, as well as mobile technologies. New remote service capabilities help provide a range of services and assistance quickly. With the rise of smarter and more connected devices, customers will also expect security features as standard.

"Demanding clarity on how vendors protect customer information and documents will become commonplace. Next year, we may see businesses rationalise the number of suppliers that are helping them manage their information and documents to minimise potential information leaks.

"In 2016, modern multifunction devices, document solutions and service providers will prove to be the critical links in helping businesses bridge the worlds of paper and digital efficiently and securely. Canon's technology, solutions and expertise will continue to centre on helping businesses run document and business processes that have the capacity to integrate seamlessly with digital services such as mobile and Cloud technologies.

www.canon.co.uk



Phil Madders, Managing Director,
Print Audit Europe

"We all know the feeling that we should take the advent of the New Year as a prompt to improve something and our customers are no exception in the quest to improve their businesses.

"During 2015, we were involved in more integration projects than ever before. Our partners were taking all the individual silos of data they use in their back office to manage their businesses, looking to integrate them and wherever possible automate and streamline processes. Their objectives clearly being to reduce cost and



Phil Madders,
Managing Director,
Print Audit Europe

increase efficiency.

"In a well-established market, I would expect this trend to accelerate in 2016 as businesses look to improve their back office processes, identify and remove inefficiencies and hidden costs and accelerate their digital transformation.

"The buzzword we hear most is 'leakage' – the phenomenon of revenue draining away due to lack of visibility or gaps in processes, ranging from double-handling meter readings to managing just-in-time delivery on toner fulfilment.

"We find ourselves delivering data integrated directly into the billing process, service management and shipping functions of the business, achieved by partnering with other software developers or through our own solution offerings. The focus clearly being on eradicating leakage.

"A game-changing prediction for 2016 is the way MPS will be billed. At present, everything seems to be wrapped up into a cost per page contract to supply any MPS Solution. We all know the pressure of the competitive market we work in – falling print volumes, lower click charge, lower hardware cost and free professional services. It is hard to maintain a reasonable margin.

"There is also a contradiction at the heart of MPS offerings that stands out like the proverbial sore thumb – MPS broadly offers customers the benefit of cost reduction. The headline-grabbing, deal-closing Killer App is usually involved in reducing things – the number of devices, the number of emails printed in colour, 30% of costs ... and so it goes on. Whilst this might please the customer, it is completely the opposite of what the supplier's objectives are regarding their overall business. This contradiction needs to be re-aligned, so both customers and suppliers are moving together with shared objectives – reducing volumes and costs, and improving processes.

"My prediction for 2016 is that there will be a rethink on the current billing

model. Ideas like seat-based billing adapted from the corporate IT market and familiar through models like Office 365 and Salesforce will start to be developed for MPS provision. It has clear advantages by aligning customers and suppliers in a model where any savings and improvements in efficiency reward both parties. It provides a clear pricing structure to the end user and protects the margin for the supplier.

"Of course, as software developers, we also have to develop product offerings to support the demand for flexibility and low-cost subscriptions matching these new developments. In a market exposed to concepts like the circular economy on the manufacturing side and the collaborative economy on the consumer side, it is hard to see the status quo lasting indefinitely.

"Without a doubt, we are in the middle of a transformation of the MPS market as we know it. It remains to be seen at what pace change progresses and who can keep up with it and how."

www.printauditeurope.com

Shaun Wilkinson, Managing Director,
UTAX (UK) Ltd

"As the way we all work changes, so too does the way we print and manage documents, which makes it an exciting time for those dealers who are able to think outside the box.

"The need for maximum connectivity, the ability to print and access documents from a raft of different devices and integration of digital workflows with Cloud-based storage will only grow. Dealers that really embrace this culture change and shift their mindset away from selling boxes towards delivering solutions will thrive.

"Buzz words in business at the moment include digitalisation, productivity and collaboration, all of which can be delivered by dealers delivering the full gamut of managed print and document workflow solutions available to them. Fully customisable app-based software such as the UTAX HyPAS platform will become the bedrock of everything an MFP can do, thanks to the likes of time-saving one-touch rules-based printing, collaboration on documents from anywhere at any time and touchscreen-controlled scanning of documents into cost-effective digital workflows.

"Dealers have a greater opportunity to add value to print and document management than they have ever had before, especially through the integration of user-specific software, which enables solutions to be introduced into an end-

Francis Thornhill,
Product Marketing
Manager, Canon
Europe

The buzzword we hear most is 'leakage' – the phenomenon of revenue draining away due to lack of visibility or gaps in processes

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user's business while also addressing other areas of concern amongst end-users, with security being a hot topic.

"The art of selling will become much more collaborative as dealers work closely with vendors to bring together packaged solutions that deliver real results to business and solve problems. No longer should we pigeon-hole multifunction printers according to how fast they can print or whether they're A3 or A4. Instead we need to look at devices as the enabler; what can they do for the end-user and how can they enhance productivity, develop collaboration or allow truly mobile working?

"Sales and solutions need to keep pace with customer demands. Only those dealers who change their perception of what they're selling will be successful, especially those who take advantage of new opportunities by highlighting the power of today's print and document management solutions. The benefits of using the latest technology are wide-ranging so dealers need to ensure they provide relevant solutions that tie hardware and software together.

"As dealers are now providing solutions, market insight will become ever more important. When it comes to education, for example, effective school management is all about juggling financial and human resources. Dealers can therefore focus on the cost reduction and efficiency benefits of managed print solutions and talk about automatic replenishment of toner, hassle-free scheduled servicing and monitoring of print output that means devices can be interchanged if one's being used less than another. And that's before they start to discuss intelligent three-tier pricing, management of mono and colour output and the cost-saving benefits of follow-me printing.

"It's this sort of specific information and solutions that dealers need to be sharing with their customers and then delivering with the support of their vendor partners in order to be successful in today's super-competitive environment."

www.utax.co.uk

Shaun Wilkinson,
Managing Director,
UTAX (UK) Ltd

We expect to see consolidation as traditional print vendors find it increasingly hard to exist without a converged offering.

Mark Ash, Head of Print, Samsung

"2015 really brought to life the possibilities of smart technology and I expect this theme to continue in 2016 as we see the rise of the Connected Workplace. From your car predicting at what point you'll arrive in the office, ensuring that your desktop is up and ready to go upon your arrival, to your phone communicating with your computer and organising your agenda for the day, all technology in the workplace will be connected. In short, the Connected Workplace will enable efficient and effective working and is key to business transformation.

"Print will play a huge part in making the Connected Workplace achievable. End users won't be restricted to printing just from their desktop; they'll be fully mobile, printing directly from the device, remotely from their phones, tablets and smart watches, accessing data that's stored in the Cloud. The same will apply to scanning – documents will be scanned into editable documents that can be stored in the Cloud and accessed remotely.

"Whilst print won't define business transformation, it will enable the Connected Workplace, which will in turn have a huge impact on the way businesses operate for years to come.

"We also expect to see consolidation in the market, as traditional print vendors find it increasingly hard to exist without a converged offering. This plays to Samsung's strength and we expect our position to grow and to take market share."

www.samsung.com

Simon Hill, Sales Director UK & Ireland, Nuance Communications

"High profile security breaches, both in the UK and overseas, will be a big influence in 2016. I anticipate that more organisations will take a new look at their security policy, procedures and deterrents and will work to ensure that web-enabled devices connected to their network, like multifunction printers, have their security reinforced, so that they are protected from hackers and no longer present a weak link in the security chain.



Mark Ash,
Head of Print,
Samsung



**Simon Hill, Sales
Director UK &
Ireland, Nuance
Communications**

"From a document security perspective, we'll see pull printing build on the customer base it has established so far, as more companies work to prevent sensitive information contained in documents from being left unsecured and unattended on devices.

"But while security will be front-of-mind for many companies, they won't lose sight of that business perennial – the need to lower costs. With office printing the single most unaudited business expense, I believe more companies will look to deploy a managed print service which can help reduce print costs by up to 30%. However, there is still work to be done in educating end-users that an MPS isn't simply about the automated replenishment of consumables; too often companies have fallen into that trap and have not seen the promised return on their MPS investment. In 2016, vendors, the channel and providers of a truly effective MPS will have to do more to push the message that for an MPS to be effective and deliver on the projected cost savings, it must take a comprehensive view of print fleet management, encompassing proactive device monitoring, qualified and experienced helpdesk support, managed document services and, of course, device and document security.

"In the drive to further reduce print costs, I anticipate a healthy demand for intelligent print management solutions like Nuance Equitrac, AutoStore and SafeCom, which enable companies to track print costs, by detailing who is printing and when, and see which devices are under- or over-used. This information is useful for establishing whether a print fleet can, or should be, rationalised. Detailed reporting of information also ensures that departments, individuals or clients can be billed for their print more accurately.

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"But my real hope for 2016 is that how print is perceived will shift; too often procurement views the cost of new devices in isolation of a fleet's running costs. It's time to look more closely at the total cost of ownership if companies are going to get a grip on their print costs, lower print volumes and understand where tangible cost savings can be made."

www.nuance.com



Andrew Hall,
Marketing
Manager, OKI

The best apps and widgets could become an important consideration on the buyer's must-have list, and that will directly affect who wins business.

Andrew Hall, Marketing Manager, OKI

"We have seen general printer sales in decline in 2015. However, certain trends continued and, in particular, increased demand for multifunction devices and larger format professional print products created a steady rise in sales.

"Demand for Smart MFP devices is fuelled by the need for end customers to address the requirement for some form of document management and space savings. Off the back of this, managed print services is still increasing at a steady pace. Resellers should look to vendors who can support them in delivering a managed service to their customers, and who also have the portfolio of products and solutions to back it up.

"In addition, when it comes to professional print, more and more businesses are looking to bring this in-house. So being able to offer an A3 or even larger wide format device will be a major benefit for the channel. OKI will again be introducing some innovative products for the professional market in 2016, so the future of print does look brilliant."

www.oki.co.uk

Gary Downey,

Group Marketing Director, Apogee

"Irrespective of the size of organisation, from more progressive clients we have seen an increasing appetite to talk about

integration of business processes across a managed infrastructure this year, and I think this will gather pace in 2016.

"Mobile and Cloud computing are becoming the norm and as businesses migrate away from the traditional server model to centrally coordinated applications provided to any device, there will be greater demand for providers of the document infrastructure to have the technical ability to support all these devices, and seamlessly integrate digital processes and communications to flow across all platforms. Professional services and project management expertise will be key to winning and executing these contracts successfully.

"After many years of hardware manufacturers hyping apps and widgets with limited effect, I think 2016 could see the best of these and independently developed versions becoming an important consideration on the buyers' must-have list, and that will directly affect who wins business.

"Process-savvy buyers will look at the benefits of rationalising fleets and improving process efficiency in a single step, rather than the traditional 1-2 approach. Providers who can communicate the benefits of their solutions in terms of security, efficiency, productivity etc. will have the advantage over the commodity MPS competition."

www.apogeeecorp.com



Gary Downey,
Group Marketing
Director, Apogee

Alison Locke, Marketing Manager, Olivetti UK

"Independent research (*Global Mobile Printing Market 2015-2019*, TechNavio, February 2015) forecasts the global mobile printing market to grow at a CAGR of 32.5% over the period 2014-2019, with the key drivers for this growth being the increased implementation of BYOD in business and the education market.

"This trend is also driving the volume of printed documents being stored in the Cloud. This has created a growing need for people, in business and education, to be able to print from their device simply and

Alison Locke, Marketing Manager, Olivetti UK



easily while away from their usual printer, and there are now new and innovative ways to do this.

"As far as desktop printing goes, Olivetti's market share grew in 2014 by around +6.7%, at the same time as the Western European market increased its share by around +9.4%, according to Gartner.

"Olivetti's plan is to combine the continued launch of fast, highly featured colour laser printers with reduced energy consumption of 20%, and support for Airprint, Cloud Printing, Wireless printing and Mobile Apps, with direct access at the front for USB sticks, to enable the growing area of mobile printing from iOS or Android devices to flourish.

"New printer launches for 2016 have been designed to ensure greater data security and to fit neatly into managed print environments, another growing area for print. The printers will enable administrators to manage which users can print in colour, or just mono, and set the default to duplex all multi-page documents. These new models will feature new Data Security kits, interface block function and access control via IC Card or keyboard-based passwords to ensure that any increase in their use by guests can be managed and controlled.

"The demand for printing on different media types is an increasingly important factor for workgroups and our printers include options to feed media from five different sources. In addition, preview features enable documents to be checked before a long print run and electronic collation takes the strain out of sorting large jobs.

"In Olivetti's opinion, the desktop printer market will run alongside the MFP market in environments where there are small but highly productive workgroups, in small businesses and where there are branches and satellite offices to consider."

www.olivettiuk.com

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Sarah Crumpler,
Marketing
Manager,
Duplo UK

Sarah Crumpler, Marketing Manager, Duplo UK

"The reseller market for Duplo is potentially our biggest growth opportunity for the foreseeable future, not just in 2016. We will continue to work closely to support our reseller partners to ensure that relevant information, marketing and product demonstrations are in place. They are critical to our success.

"While our heritage was traditionally in commercial printing, one-third of our business now goes through dealers, with printing trends meaning that this area is set for continued growth.

"The world of print finishing continues to move forward extremely quickly, particularly in a digital world where personalisation and fully automated precision are crucial. Looking ahead to 2016, it's going to be even more important for resellers to continue to have discussions on a complete solution – embracing the full journey from print to documents – and not just talking about what comes off a printer.

"Going forward, we'll be encouraging our resellers to make sure their customers get the most from their print production by providing and sharing new services whilst growing awareness in the marketplace."

www.duplouk.com

Nikki Todd, Channel Director, VOW

"At VOW, we pride ourselves on staying ahead of the curve and being mindful of industry vibrations and requirements. As IT resellers continue to look at expanding the range of products they can offer their customers, customer service excellence will continue to dominate service expectations and industry trends.

"Resellers will require an even higher level of care, attention and service from their wholesale partner to help them deliver a complete service to their customers via a 'nurture' path.

"It is of no surprise that in 2016, we

are likely to see IT resellers adopt an even more discerning and selective approach when choosing who their wholesale partner is."

www.voweurope.com



Jason Cort,
Director Product
Planning and
Marketing, Sharp

Jason Cort, Director Product Planning and Marketing, Sharp

"We will continue to see a reshaping of the office printing industry, with some manufacturers moving away from office printing to focus on developing their business process services for large enterprises. This will create market share opportunity for other manufacturers.

"While print will surely continue to decline, albeit slowly, the shift to colour will also continue with its higher value for external communications in particular.

"Cloud adoption by SMBs will continue to accelerate, but with a greater swing from freemium services to premium. This swing being due to the growing awareness and importance of data security which continues to become a priority. The business value of Cloud sourcing will become increasingly compelling – its low cost to deploy, low cost to service and flexibility provide affordable access to solutions and services, which many SMBs would otherwise not find viable.

"Workflow solutions and devices which simply and seamlessly connect to share content, predominantly through Cloud provisioning, will be the winners. As will be the resellers who are able to consult and configure these and deliver the expected business value."

www.sharp.co.uk



Nikki Todd,
Channel Director,
VOW

Jonathan Whitworth, Managing Director, DSales

"The old saying 'a rising tide lifts all boats' will certainly apply to 2016 as the economic recovery continues, boosting sales in many business sectors including reprographics. The biggest driver for change and growth in digital imaging will be the increasing trend towards mobile working patterns.

"In August 2015 Ofcom reported that for the first time more UK workers accessed the internet via their smartphones (33%), ahead of 30% who preferred laptops. This step-change is driven by the BYOD phenomenon, where workers have opted to use their own smartphones as their device of choice to connect to the internet.

"To stay relevant and meet the need of these workers to print and scan, MFPs must allow direct input from mobile phones using technologies such as NFC, and this will be an accelerating trend in 2016. It gives dealerships an excellent sales opportunity to re-engage with established customers about upgrading their existing MFP fleet to support mobile working and also to excite the interest of new prospects.

"In addition to the mobile working trend, the requirement to offer document management software as part of a total hardware and software solution for document processing and imaging will continue. Almost all sales of MFPs will include software and, once again, this is an excellent opportunity for dealers to offer value-added services that win customers and keep them loyal.

"It promises to be a very good year!"

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The old saying 'a rising tide lifts all boats' will certainly apply to 2016 as the economic recovery continues, boosting sales in many business sectors including reprographics.



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A landmark year for DSales (UK)

2016 is the tenth anniversary of DSales (UK), the UK distributor for the Develop range of multifunctional document imaging systems, making it a landmark year for the Ripponden-based firm.



Prior to setting up DSales (UK), Managing Director Jonathan Whitworth had already racked up over 20 years' experience in the office products sector, working for brands including Panasonic and Muratec. In his former role, he initiated talks around securing a distribution agreement for Develop products in the UK, but in the end the decision was made not to proceed. However, Whitworth had spotted an opportunity to go out on his own and approached Develop about taking on the distributorship personally.

"Develop was established in Germany as a reprographics manufacturer in 1948, but subsequently became part of Minolta. When Minolta merged with Konica, the Develop name in the UK wasn't quite so prominent, but I had lots of confidence in the brand and viewed the opportunity to become the UK distributor as one too good to miss," explained Whitworth.

"Ten years ago, Konica machines were specialist and expensive, but Develop was about to launch a range of mass market devices. I could see massive potential here – colour was definitely a future growth area. And I was proved right: 97% of our sales in the first five years were colour devices and

colour is still our mainstay today, equating to around 90% of unit sales."

Fast growth

The company was self-financed by Whitworth and his former business partner, whom he bought out after a couple of years.

In the beginning, Whitworth worked out of a shed in his back garden. "I didn't have access to external borrowing and we grew very quickly," he said. "I did everything from sales, to invoicing, to deliveries. I closed over £2 million of business from that shed! The hardest thing to deal with was cashflow. I can remember waiting for the postman to deliver the cheques so I could quickly cash them in order to buy more stock."



Jonathan Whitworth, managing director, DSales (UK)



DSales admin team

Whitworth's industry experience meant he knew a lot of dealers personally and he grew his partner network through personal contact and trust.

"We were competitive. We were offering devices at sub £3k at a time when most OEMs started at £3.5k, and I made an early decision that we would always hold stock of the most popular models and not risk 'just-in-time' shipments, which are never on time," he said.

"Our ability to offer competitive pricing, fast decision-making and excellent service is what won us our reseller partners initially. Consistently delivering on our promise over the years has ensured we both retain customers and continue to sign up new accounts."

In its first year of trading, DSales achieved a six-figure profit. Since then, turnover has risen consistently year-on-year, reaching £13.2 million in the last financial year. "It was tough at the beginning. We had to run a tight ship so that we could continue to trade," Whitworth explained. "We couldn't give credit, but luckily all of our customers were really supportive; they knew when we said we needed paying within seven days, we meant it."

When eventually DSales was able to extend credit terms, it was hit with bad debt from a handful of companies that went bust. "We had one account where we lost a six-figure sum, and I had to make up that shortfall. Going back to Germany to say I couldn't pay wasn't an option," explained Whitworth.

Riding the storm

In 2008, the worst financial recession in 80 years ushered in a period of hardship for all businesses, but particularly for a relatively young operation. "But we still managed to grow every year through the economic storm, thanks to the dedication of the DSales UK team and the hard work of our dealer partners," said Whitworth.

"The most difficult element of the downturn was the credit crunch, which made it very difficult for our dealer partners to secure financing for customers. Making a sale and then having to tell the customer

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no credit was available for the deal was tough for dealers. Fortunately, we were able to secure credit from a couple of finance firms so our partners could close deals. That earned us a lot of positive goodwill in the channel and word spread quickly that we could make deals happen."

New premises

Continued growth meant that by 2010 DSales needed to move from its small business unit into larger premises. "We'd got to the point where we had to up our game and become more professional in the range of services we offered. We needed more space and so we bought our current headquarters at a business park in Ripponden, West Yorkshire," said Whitworth.

The new building accommodated workshops, offices, a showroom and a training centre, which DSales was able to extend six months later when it purchased an additional 1,600 square feet of space in the building next door.

In 2013, the firm announced the opening of a new Heathrow base to serve channel partners and their customers in London and the south-east of England. The showroom, conveniently located close to the M25 and M4 motorways and adjacent to Heathrow airport, provides southern-based DSales (UK) dealerships with a facility where they can demonstrate the latest models in the Develop multifunctional range, without the need to acquire their own demonstration stock.

Moving with the times

Whitworth says the biggest changes over the last ten years have been the growth in colour; the increasing trend for A4-only MFPs; rising demand for document management software as part of a total hardware and software solution for document imaging; and, most recently, the huge growth in mobile working practices and the need to support direct input from



mobile devices like smartphones and tablets.

"The Develop ineo+ range of colour MFPs is very strong, particularly in the crucial mid-range 30-49 ppm category. As nine out of ten MFP orders from our dealers are for colour devices, this excellent product line-up places us in a great position for 2016 and beyond," said Whitworth.

"Also strengthening our sales position for 2016 is support for mobile working, which features in the latest Develop ineo MFPs. More office workers now access the internet via their mobile phones than use laptop computers. This fast growing trend for mobile working means that mobile workers don't want to have to log onto a desktop computer to print and scan. They want to be able to action this straight from their mobile device to save time and limit inconvenience."

The latest Develop ineo MFPs use NFC (Near Field Communication) to allow direct pairing with a mobile device, authentication, touch to print and touch to scan. According to Whitworth, there are more NFC-enabled products due for launch in 2016. "This will give our dealerships a competitive edge when it comes to talking to existing and prospective customers about upgrading their fleets, because support for flexible mobile working patterns is now a critical MFP application," he said.

DSales technical team

There are more NFC-enabled products due for launch in 2016. This will give our dealerships a competitive edge when it comes to talking to existing and prospective customers.

Established brand

Today, ten years on, DSales is an established brand with a significant market share. "We are an established player in the marketplace. We're by no means the biggest, but we are a recognised competitive option for many accounts," said Whitworth.

It employs 13 people – three sales people, four engineers, four administrators, a marketing manager and a product manager – and has a significant number of dealerships across the UK, including many who are single-line. "In the main, we're usually taken on as a strong second brand that complements a dealer's existing product offering," explained Whitworth.

He added: "As the economic recovery is now well under way, we believe that the combination of Develop hardware and software innovation, coupled with DSales' outstanding service delivery, will win us new dealer partners and many more customers in 2016."



As to what the next 10 years hold, Whitworth said: "I wish I knew! People have been predicting the paperless office for as long as I have been in the industry and that's quite a while now. Yet paper refuses to die. I think MFPs will become document servers with print and scan functionality, plus the ability to store and route documents. With the economy now in great shape, we look forward to a golden era for the industry."

To celebrate its tenth anniversary, DSales is planning a series of business events over the next twelve months with staff, dealer partners and customers. Whitworth said: "We have exciting plans in place and fully intend to keep on growing and expanding our business, despite operating in a fiercely competitive market. We look forward to sharing our vision for future success with our partners during the course of the next year."

www.dsales.co.uk



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One night over dinner, two neighbours came up with a plan to set up a copier dealership. Ten years on, the business and the friendship are both thriving.

Office Evolution, a Develop single-line dealership based in Semington, Trowbridge, was the brainchild of Matt Goodall, who at the time was an Account Manager for Olivetti, and Steve Davis, formerly Managing Director of a sales and marketing agency.

"It was the right time and we were in the right place," explains Davis. "There wasn't much competition in our area and we both agreed that colour was going to be big, so we came up with a plan and decided to go for it. Matt would head up the service side of the business and I would assume responsibility for sales."

The duo set-up shop using Goodall's double garage as an office and converting Davis' garage into a storeroom. Fourteen months in, they bought a unit in Semington, where they are still based, shortly afterwards leasing additional space to store equipment, consumables and spare parts.

In his former role Goodall had had dealings with DSales and was familiar with the Develop brand. "We were impressed with the range and the brand's strength in colour and so we arranged to meet them at a service station in Birmingham. On the journey there, all we could think about was convincing them to sign us up as a reseller," he remembers. "It was only some time later that we discovered they had pinned all their hopes on us signing with them!"

"We didn't buy a base; we started from scratch," explains Davis. "It was tough at the beginning; we were out all of the time at appointments and winning new business. It wasn't practical a lot of the time to get back to the office and email over orders."

"What was great about working with DSales," adds Goodall, "was that we could phone them between appointments, place an order and know the devices would be with us the next day. That really worked for us; we could confidently make promises

to new customers knowing that we could deliver on those promises."

Office Evolution predominantly serves customers within a 50 to 60 mile radius of its base, but it also has a number of national accounts, including some in Ireland. "As part of the wider DSales community, we're able to utilise other partners who are geographically closer to support us in servicing those devices," adds Goodall.

Top Ten

Office Evolution is DSales' longest serving dealer. It has retained the Develop Dealer of the Year South-West title every year since DSales launched its annual awards and remains one of the distributor's top ten dealerships. Last year, it won the Wiltshire Business of the Year Award.

Office Evolution is wholly focused on customer service. Perhaps uniquely in the industry, sales staff aren't paid commission. "We do account management," explains Davis. "We work for our customers, providing them with the solution they need, as opposed to the one that's going to pay the most commission."

Customer retention levels are really high. According to Davis, Office Evolution typically gains 50 to 60 new accounts each year and loses no more than one or two. "We'd rather invest more money in

Matt Goodall and Steve Davis



The duo set-up shop using Goodall's double garage as an office and converting Davis' garage into a storeroom.

retaining our existing clients," he says.

Around 97% of all sales are colour-led, with mono devices constituting a small part of the total business. Solutions sales continue to gain traction. "We've enjoyed success with Papercut and follow-me print, as well as Develop's own convert+share and store+find software, which we use ourselves," says Davis.

He adds that turnover has increased steadily by 10-15% year-on-year, even during the recession. "We were lucky that we weren't badly affected. I think we continued to thrive as we're not selling a luxury item; if your printer or copier breaks, then you need to replace it – it's as simple as that. What we did do, however, was to focus even more on retaining the customers we had, and in some cases we even did the financing ourselves."

Davis expects Office Evolution's annual turnover to reach £1.6 million this year, rising to £2 million within the next couple. "We are in a strong position to reach this target very quickly. We have a complete range of hardware and software and we put around 90% of leased deals through Grenke, our preferred finance partner."

Over the next 10 years, Davis and Goodall plan to expand the existing team, which includes a three-strong sales team, five service engineers, as well as back office and admin support staff, and are exploring Apprenticeships in a bid to attract new, fresh talent.

"Service is an important part of our business and having the right people in a customer-facing role is key for us," explains Goodall. "Our engineers have an IT background and we train them up to maintain and service the hardware. The two worlds are becoming increasingly inter-connected and expertise in IT is becoming ever more important."

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Business is ON

Ricoh to support partners with recruitment service

Ricoh has launched a dedicated channel recruitment service for its UK partners. The brand new service has been introduced in direct response to demand from the company's resellers for help in recruiting highly skilled sales staff at all levels.



Samantha Bradbury, Business Generation Manager within Ricoh UK's Partner Channel, told *PITR* that the service, which Ricoh has been working on since last year, is new and unique. "We've never done it before, and I don't believe any other OEM offers this either," she said.

It is being offered by Ricoh's Business Generation team as part of its remit to support the channel. "It's our job to help partners grow and succeed," explained Bradbury. "This new channel recruitment service is something else that differentiates us. We're helping our partners to find and train talented staff and, by doing so, are supporting them in their growth strategies."

Skills crisis

The UK is facing a skills gap, and as a result good candidates are increasingly able to pick and choose where they would like to work. A report published by venture capital investor Albion Ventures states that over a third of smaller UK companies are struggling to recruit employees with the necessary skills to help their business grow. It claims that key skills in the areas of IT,

sales and financial management are either absent or lacking in some SMEs.

Bradbury says that in the past a number of partners have approached Ricoh for support when looking to recruit new personnel. "Partners looking to hire would ask us if we knew anyone. We helped out informally on a few occasions and realised there was a real need, so we decided to build a business plan around that and shape it into something more structured," she said.

Ricoh's channel recruitment service is available to all partners within its indirect channel and aims to provide candidates at all levels, from starter right through to director. Ricoh is currently trialling the service with a number of partners, including large and established accounts, as well as some new partners.

Initially, it will focus on sales recruitment, but there are plans to expand into IT services roles in the future. "The need is primarily to find good candidates with sales backgrounds, so we will stick with that for now," explained Bradbury. "Already, the vacancies are coming in thick and fast and we need to make sure that what we do is perfect before we change. We want to ensure that we don't over-



promise and under-deliver."

She added: "Ricoh is a company that prides itself on training and retaining the best talent, which is essential for responsible business growth. We are therefore delighted to share our expertise and offer this new recruitment service, to help our partners attract the best talent for future growth."

Training included

Recognising that the ability to retain good sales people is just as important as the recruitment process itself, every placement Ricoh makes with a channel partner will be backed by a one-year intensive induction and training programme, covering everything from appraisals to solution sales and comprehensive product training.

"It's difficult to recruit good sales people and even the strongest candidates need training. Many companies don't have the in-house resource to invest in this area, so we're providing comprehensive product training and personal development for our partners in the UK," explained Bradbury. "We're providing them with the tools they will need to be a success in their new role."

Ricoh will work with partner companies to ensure all new employees start their career with clear performance targets. Once placed within a partner organisation, Ricoh's dedicated Partner Sales Recruitment Manager will account manage any new recruits, ensuring that they settle effortlessly and deliver results for their team. The support programme also offers regular one-to-one sessions, performance appraisals and development opportunities.

The service attracts an admin fee, which Bradbury describes as 'next to nothing'. "We are helping our partners to secure the best employees. If we find them the right people, who are fully trained and able to hit the ground running and start selling, that's where we will see an ROI," she said.

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It's difficult to recruit good sales people and even the strongest candidates need training.

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What would make your day job easier?

Self-driving cars. I'm looking forward to the day when my car can become my office and allow me to spend more time with our customers and my family.

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

'A positive attitude is a powerful force' and 'If it's to be, it's up to me'. Our philosophy within our business is that you always ask yourself what you could do differently and not look to others to fix problems.

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

I would have believed in myself earlier and seen Opportunity, as opposed to Risk.

Describe your most embarrassing moment.

Getting stage fright and not being able to present early in my career. I left the venue and drove home, with a red face for days. All good character building stuff.



What was your first job?

I've worked since the age of 9 without a break. However, my first job was working as a Support Specialist for Xerox at Virgin Atlantic. I had the pleasure of meeting my first ever manager recently and talked about how our lives had changed over the last two years. Who knows where I would be if he hadn't said 'Yes'?

What would be your dream job?

I love my current job. If I could move the entire office to Suffolk it would be perfect (and definitely a dream!).



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

I'm a real petrol head and have a passion for speed. It would have to be the Koenigsegg One:1, which redefines the art of the possible. I'd love to drive it through Italy, taking in the Stelvio Pass – one of the great driving roads.

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

I'm fortunate enough to experience fine dining most weeks with the job that I do. The weekend is a chance for me to kick back and relax with a takeaway; a Chinese and bottle of wine would be my preference.

Favourite holiday destination.

Italy. I love the culture, the language, the food/drink and the people.

How do you like to spend your spare time?

I don't get much spare time, as I live away all week. However, I love spending it with my two boys, cycling and being outside.



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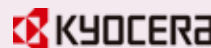
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