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UNDERRATED SOLUTIONS:
DEALERS SHARE SUCCESS STORIES OF NON-MFP GEMS

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FROM DIGITAL TO THE INTEGRATED OFFICE, LDI CONNECT MARCHES TO CONTINUED SUCCESS

Go Cloud, Young Man: Intermedia is Banking on Conversion Opportunities, Growth

MFPs on Holiday: Manufacturers Tout Lesser-Known Gems Within their Catalogs

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THE OFFICE TECHNOLOGY TOOLBOX

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In This Issue

14

DEALER SPOTLIGHT

From Digital to the Integrated Office, LDI Connect Marches to Continued Success

By Erik Cagle

Staff



Susan Neimes
Publisher & Managing Editor



Erik Cagle
Editorial Director



20



30

8 STATE OF THE INDUSTRY

Underrated Solutions: Dealers Share Success Stories of Non-MFP Gems
By Erik Cagle

20 GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Go Cloud, Young Man: Intermedia is Banking on Conversion Opportunities, Growth
By Erik Cagle

24 PRODUCT ROUNDUP

MFPs on Holiday: Manufacturers Tout Lesser-Known Gems Within their Catalogs
By Erik Cagle

30 TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

Do Print Dealers Need to Worry About New MFA Requirements? Yes—Here's Why.
By Mike Harris

32 DISPLAY ADVERTISERS INDEX

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Underrated Solutions: Dealers Share Success Stories of Non-MFP Gems

We generally view ancillary products as those being outside the main technology core, likely supplemental and less expensive, and possibly having a direct correlation to a cornerstone offering. Quite often they're used as an enticement to convince clients to sign off on a much larger deal. In the office technology space, this can take the form of print or document management software.

Still, not every ancillary product needs to ride the long, flowing train of the MFP queen. Dealers have at their disposal a menu of products and services wholly distinctive and separate from the garden variety A3 unit. They often provide wonderful opportunities to yield monthly recurring revenue as part of a technology bundled contract (which may or may not include MFPs) or stand-alone agreement.

It would be a grave disservice to term many of these products as ancillary. We prefer the term hidden gem; "hidden" for the notion that it's not a cornerstone offering and "gem" as a tip of the cap to the potentially lucrative boost it can give to top- and bottom-line revenue. In the end, the hidden gems provide another reason for customers to want to conduct business with you. After all, clients don't care about dealer sales strategies and product hierarchies—they just want to know how you can save them money, improve an operational process, perhaps eliminate or reduce redundant or low-value functions and, most of all, enable them to focus on their core business.

This month's State of the Industry report on hidden gems examines the motivations behind dealers entering a given product or service discipline. They'll offer examples of a real-world installation, the challenges a client previously faced and how the offering has provided a tangible improvement.

Trust the Process

The best account representatives all share one thing in common: they understand that if they talk less and listen intently enough, clients and prospects alike will directly or indirectly tell them exactly what they need. We say indirectly because a customer may just be discussing a

challenge they've been facing, which triggers a bell in the minds of account reps. It's a cry for help—your help.



IMAGINE TRANSFORMING YOUR DAILY OPERATIONS, ELIMINATING BOTTLENECKS AND CREATING A SEAMLESS WORKFLOW THAT EMPOWERS YOUR TEAM TO EXCEL. IT'S ABOUT UNLOCKING POTENTIAL, FOSTERING INNOVATION AND DRIVING OUR CUSTOMERS' BUSINESSES TOWARD UNPRECEDENTED SUCCESS.

— Kyle Elliott,
Spectrum Technologies

And so it began roughly three years ago that many SMB and enterprise clients of Spectrum Technologies were telegraphing a common issue: they were grappling with inefficient processes stemming from broken workflows. Kyle Elliott, president of the El Paso, Texas-based dealer, knew a significant market opportunity for business process optimization (BPO) was presenting itself.

One of the core missions for Spectrum Technologies is its quest to ensure end-user clients and their employees thrive. The dealer's benchmark is to free up a client's time by 20%, time that can be better spent on professional and skill development.

Three-plus years later, Spectrum Technologies has automated its seek-and-address strategy for BPO. A specialized team meticulously analyzes and documents existing processes within a client's operations. That enables them to identify which aspects of the workflow are crying out for help. The inefficiencies take many forms, from outdated practices to a lack of modern technology to disconnected systems that fail to communicate effectively.

"Imagine transforming your daily operations, eliminating bottlenecks and creating a seamless workflow that empowers your team to excel," Elliott noted. "It's about unlocking potential, fostering innovation and driving our customers' businesses toward unprecedented success."

A prime example of this is a non-profit client that takes in donations and resells them to help fund community programs. This regional branch was still processing donations via paper forms, which made generating reports for oversight departments a process nightmare. When these spreadsheet reports were sent to corporate, it required manually pulling numbers from the reports and inputting them into their accounting system. This method was as cumbersome as it was error-prone.

Spectrum Technologies delivered with an end-to-end workflow using Microsoft 365 PowerApps, which was seamlessly integrated into the nonprofit's existing systems. Front-line workers could now receive donations on digital tablets, which provided a drastic operational boost.

"Errors were significantly reduced, and while reducing headcount is never our goal, the new efficiencies enabled regional managers to oversee three times as many stores," Elliott said. "This transformation not only streamlined their workflow but also enhanced overall productivity and effectiveness."

Spectrum's BPO growth strategy is leveraged through its existing account base, with most opportunities yielded through quarterly business reviews. While addressing business goals, the client's objective is generally spurring growth, reducing operational expenses or both. When Spectrum offers a viable path toward achieving those ends, the excitement is palpable for the client.

"Unlike a copier or a managed IT agreement, streamlining processes and leveraging technology for a competitive advantage actually can move the needle," Elliott remarked. "By streamlining workflows and integrating modern technology, we help clients unlock new efficiencies and capabilities, driving their growth and reducing costs. Interestingly, we have active engagements in varied groups—from small nonprofits to 2,000-employee companies. The vertical doesn't matter—all organizations have issues, and what we've found is sometimes the bigger the organization, the more broken their processes and compounded the issues are."

Wild Card

Manufacturers have long been partnering or piggybacking off software solutions provided by Microsoft. It's a no-brainer proposition, considering the wide range of MS365 users nationwide. In 2023, when Microsoft added increased security, management and collaboration features to its 365 Business Premium bundle, St. Cloud, Minnesota-based Marco saw an

opportunity to help clients secure and enhance new and evolving services.

The new offering, ACE365, is designed to increase security and support for MS365 services and can help SMBs with some of the MS365 features they already employ.

According to Adam Ramberg, director of IT consulting for Marco, ACE365 offers a more focused version of managed IT for the tools that many clients use daily. "For us, it lets us work with more clients at a reasonable price while still providing something valuable and different," Ramberg noted. "It's a tailored fit for many SMB customers that cannot justify fully outsourced managed IT but can still benefit from augmenting their existing IT staff and some technology-related areas."

As with many new Marco solutions, the original inspiration for ACE365 came from a client. In this case, a client that used Microsoft 365 Business Premium was in the initial stages of testing Microsoft Defender as an EDR (endpoint detection and response) solution that could replace its current endpoint protection product. The client was also exploring Intune to yield more IT policy and management functions for its remote workforce, as the local group policy was no longer meeting its needs.

The main issue confronting the client was the inability of the IT team to dedicate the necessary time toward becoming proficient with the advanced Microsoft solutions. It would've also been burdensome to effectively manage and fine-tune these tools over time.



[ACE365 IS] A TAILORED FIT FOR MANY SMB CUSTOMERS THAT CANNOT JUSTIFY FULLY OUTSOURCED MANAGED IT BUT CAN STILL BENEFIT FROM AUGMENTING THEIR EXISTING IT STAFF AND SOME TECHNOLOGY-RELATED AREAS.

— Adam Ramberg,
Marco

"We stepped in to provide strategic recommendations and guidance for that client to successfully pivot away from 'the way things have always been' to the way the industry is moving," Ramberg said. "With ACE365, the client had confidence in the initial migrations, along with a continued support team to help them manage their Microsoft 365 technologies moving forward."

Ultimately, ACE365's objective is to meet clients where they are in their Microsoft 365 journey. In its simplest form, ACE365 can protect a client's data in Exchange Online, SharePoint Online, Teams, or OneDrive. From a

continued on page 10

Underrated Solutions: Dealers Share Success Stories of Non-MFP Gems

macro standpoint, the dealer can advise and help migrate clients to take full advantage of their advanced security and compliance licensing.

“Our goal is to protect every single customer who comes to Marco to purchase their Microsoft 365 subscriptions,” Ramberg said. “So now, every Microsoft 365 quote has information about ACE365 basic protection services attached to it. By showing our value in protecting our customers’ data in Microsoft 365, we earn their trust to offer more fully managed and strategic ACE365 services.”

Sticky Business

“Can you handle [fill in the blank]?” It’s a question often heard by account representatives, product specialists and the heads of managed service departments, delivered by existing clients who are constantly seeking one vendor to handle all their needs. In the case of Stargel Office Solutions, the item in question is the thermal printer, and it seemed that every time the dealer’s managed print services division was calling on a client, the demand for the label printers became louder and louder.



WE GOT MORE REQUESTS, AND WE STARTED ASKING MORE ABOUT HOW THEY SOURCE THEIR THERMAL LABELS. THAT YIELDED THE LOW-HANGING FRUIT.

— T.J. DeBello,
Stargel Office Solutions

A relatively newer offering, label printers are quickly garnering momentum for the Houston-based dealer, noted T.J. DeBello, vice president of sales. Initially, the company took the same approach as it would with an MFP by offering a warranty on the machines, but it soon became clear that the thermal printers were a somewhat disposable commodity. It was the labels that were the true profit generators, and Stargel was able to devise a cost-per-label (CPL) program that has proven lucrative.

The dealer initially offered only Toshiba label printers but saw an opportunity to augment those placements with the Zebra line. Growth has already exceeded the previous year by a 4X factor, and the CPL formula has resonated with clients. If the client exceeds the agreed-upon threshold early, the volume parameters and CPL are revisited.

In addition to Zebra and the existing Toshiba line, Stargel has partnered with Ward-Kraft and Distribution Management for label procurement. The dealer enjoys a 40%-50% margin on the labels.

“Every time we were out in the field, we noted that one client may have 10 Zebra printers and another would have 30,” DeBello said. “Also, we capture a lot of that information through FMAudit, anyway. We got more requests, and we started asking more about how they source their thermal labels. That yielded the low-hanging fruit.”

Oftentimes, an opportunity can create itself when one or more customers merge together in a given line of business. A family medical practice with four facilities, which had a need for printing prescription labels and other health care-related materials, sought to centralize its efforts. The facilities had merged, then were acquired by two of the primary care physicians. Previously, oversight fell to multiple people, and the offices used different sources for label supplies—there was no uniformity.

Stargel was able to sew the facilities together with 12 new Zebra printers and devise a monthly payment that didn’t break the bank. The deal was completed two months ago, thus there isn’t any meaningful trailing data/performance to evaluate. Regardless, the customer was pleased with centralizing its processes.

“We had copiers placed with both sets of offices that came together,” DeBello noted. “This was the first time we had installed [label printers] in multiple locations, all within Houston. We feel like we’re getting better with the label program and have a firm grasp on it so we don’t lose money in the process.”

The deal that really set Stargel on its success path with labels involved a client that transports chemicals. Federal and state regulations mandate the type of labels that can be used and the methods of transportation. Again, it was a matter of centralizing the purchasing and putting the client on a single plan for its four locations.

The client has 20 Zebra printers, and the output results in \$50,000 a year in labels, with the aforementioned 40%-50% margin. This included specialized labels that can withstand the sun and elements for at least a year. Stargel is working with Toshiba on certification-related labeling that could employ larger, 8½x11” labels.

DeBello feels Stargel is just scratching the surface of the label opportunity among its base, which includes 7,000 customers in the Houston area. According to reports

continued on page 12



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Underrated Solutions: Dealers Share Success Stories of Non-MFP Gems

he's run, DeBello estimates the opportunity for labels is roughly \$1.3 million—strong from an ancillary standpoint. Its MPS group is now Zebra-certified for RFID labels, which should open the door to further growth.

Advanced Security

To hear Dave Moorman talk, one would assume he's incredibly fluent in the world of IT, especially cybersecurity. He's that rare breed of part executive, part tech nerd in his dual role of president and CISO for Nashville, Tennessee-based Novatech.

For 35 of his 55 years, he's been immersed in the world of tech; a network engineer by trade who's fluent in cybersecurity, the cloud and, of course, all things network. He formerly owned DynaSis, which was later acquired by Novatech. In the interim, he's become well-versed in marketing, sales finance and operations. Thus, from the 30,000-foot perspective to knee-deep in the tech weeds, Moorman can pivot the conversation as needed.



WHAT WE'VE SEEN FROM A CYBERSECURITY PERSPECTIVE IN THE INDUSTRY IS A LOT OF THE CYBER TERRORISTS ARE HIDING IN THE MFP DEVICES BECAUSE THEY'RE NOT BEING SECURED PROPERLY. THERE'S BEEN NEGLECT IN SECURING PRINT DEVICES, EVEN AMONG THE MANUFACTURERS, WHO ARE BEHIND THE TIMES.

— Dave Moorman,
Novatech

Advanced security in the IT realm—not to mention print security—is a topic Moorman feels will dominate dealer-client conversations about A3 and A4 devices for the next 10 years. He notes that it will be driven by the fact that many mature devices aren't built for modern cybersecurity technologies.

It's not enough to assess a fleet on the print side or the IT and all the devices that are attached to the network. It also requires advanced breach detection. Novatech's offering, for example, includes 65 built-in alerts that are on the lookout for "nefarious behavior," according to Moorman.

"What we've seen from a cybersecurity perspective in the industry is a lot of the cyber terrorists are hiding in the MFP devices because they're not being secured properly," he noted. "There's been neglect in securing

print devices, even among the manufacturers, who are behind the times."

One exception is Sharp, which worked with Moorman and his team the previous 10 months to assist in developing a cloud-based product that enables end-users to cover the five key security phases: assess, protect, detect, respond and recover. The product, Synappx Manage, adds more functionality to Sharp's offering. That Novatech took such an active role in its development underscores its commitment to protecting end-users from bad actors, and it's a significant point of differentiation.

Timing was everything in the case of a large auto dealership with about 40 locations. Novatech deployed its security solution approximately 18 months ago, and it's already withstood a major hack. In June, CDK Global—which provides software to about 15,000 North American car dealers—suffered a pair of cyberattacks that pushed its system offline for days. BlackSuit, a hacking group, claimed responsibility for the attacks that paralyzed auto sales and service for users of CDK, which is one of only a few dealership management platforms on the market.

The Novatech client, however, was wholly protected. The full managed security offering, which took about 30 days to completely implement, included end-point security through managed detection and response (MDR) software. Moorman noted the software is a modernized MDR solution that employs next-generation AI and machine learning. Also included was ProofPoint advanced threat protection, and privileged access management, which removes admin rights from users on the network.

There's a host of other solutions incorporated into the full managed security offering, but the proof positive was its ability to absorb the hack attempt. "When the breach came out a week ago, they were fully protected," he noted. "It didn't even affect them, but it hurt a lot of other dealerships."

Best of all, the solution is managed by Novatech's security operations center 24/7/365. The dealer also has à la carte offerings for those clients with varying levels of IT departments.

The security conversation—which includes a complimentary level-one penetration testing on the IT side—stands apart from MFPs and other offerings and is the go-to lead topic. "I think most providers know that, sooner or later, they're going to need to offer print security," Moorman said. "The offering truly elevates us." ♦

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From Digital to the Integrated Office, LDI Connect Marches to Continued Success

The Broadway hit “Suffs,” a six-time Tony Award-nominated musical about the women’s suffrage movement, culminates with a song titled, “Keep Marching.” It’s a call to action for the next generation and includes the admonishment, “Your ancestors are all the proof you need that progress is possible, not guaranteed.”

If there was ever a rallying cry for the office technology ecosystem, it’s that disclaimer. It also stands as a stark reminder for any business that believes the roots of its laurels can withstand any headwinds of change. Brian Gertler knows this simply isn’t true. The senior vice president and partner at LDI Connect—a multi-faceted, comprehensive technology provider based in Jericho, New York—takes nothing for granted, including the significant success the company has achieved in its 25 years of operation. To progress is to evolve, and the

recognition of this is step one toward actualization.

“We have a number of individuals in leadership here who recognize that there are no guarantees going forward,” Gertler observed. “The opportunities to make progress are so enormous, it’s enough to propel us out of bed every morning to make a difference.”

These difference-makers at the highest branch of the LDI Connect tree are Jerry Blaine and Paul Schwartz. Blaine, the president, CEO and co-founder, has been in the business for 50 years with a trail that winds through Saxon Business and Leslie Copiers, a buyout via DANKA and a rebirth as Leslie Digital Imaging (LDI) and Color ToolBox. Schwartz, the COO, executive vice president and co-founder—not to mention Blaine’s partner in crime for decades—cut his teeth in Canon U.S.A.’s marketing department in the early ’80s before hopping aboard the Leslie train.

The duo, joined by Gertler roughly a year later, tapped the reset button on Leslie in 1999 with zero sales. However, it fostered mounds of connections with manufacturers and industry stalwarts who came aboard and quickly helped provide the scale that, today, sees the company supported by a cast of 300-plus team members.

Indefinable Quality

“There’s a certain *je ne sais quoi* that comes with starting a



company from scratch,” Blaine said. “It’s like having a child in a way. It really becomes a very integral part of your entire life.”

Weaving and bobbing their way through 9/11, the Great Recession and the pandemic, LDI’s owner partners recognized that value in embracing a forward-looking approach. In early 2022, the company rechristened from LDI Color ToolBox to LDI Connect in a nod to its six-spoke value proposition hub of print, document management, managed IT, cloud services, Pro AV and security solutions. The dealer currently enjoys the best-of-breed offerings from Canon, Sharp, Xerox, HP, Toshiba and a host of other product and service partners.

“Being an independent dealer with some level of stature enables us to do things that are probably not as easily accomplished by other dealers,” Gertler noted. “We get to pick and choose, so when our clients need a very specific solution, we can harvest the best parts of the more than 80 logos we currently represent to come up with a really good solution for them.”

In addition to its Long Island headquarters, LDI Connect has an office in Times Square Plaza in the Big Apple; Cranbury and Parsippany, New Jersey;



LDI Connect founders Paul Schwartz (left) and Jerry Blaine

Shelton, Connecticut and Burbank, California. Counting interterritorial relationships, only about 25% of the population is outside the dealer's direct service region. From a client standpoint, LDI covers a lion's share of verticals including AEC, health care, government, finance and education, with a strong concentration of legal and entertainment clients.

The Relaunch

A brief historical primer adds perspective on the dealer's journey. When the founders were establishing that initial identity, it was suggested by Schwartz that LDI embrace a digital-only philosophy, eschewing analog completely (something of a risk, as analog was cheaper). A second pillar was to provide clients with education on the applications LDI offered with an eye toward creating long-term relationships. The third focal point was to cultivate business with enterprise-type clients—those already on board with the digital approach—that could allow LDI to build and add to a service distribution network.

The other half of the LDI house (Color ToolBox) was fashioned to leverage the rich opportunities in the color market, namely in the NYC (at first) with the advertising and graphic arts agencies. That brought additional focus to production print and finishing options for the most robust graphical output. It proved to be a lucrative

approach, and Blaine notes the company was successful from the outset.

"Perhaps the most important thing was we were able to attract the best and brightest of the industry, veterans and experts who really bought into what we were doing," Blaine said. "We were able to put together a team of all-stars on all sides of the company, and that was really the key to our beginning."

The familiarity both men had with the dealer sector and the manufacturing community truly opened the door to world-class talent, according to Schwartz. "One of the most successful things we did was to go to the companies that we've competed with for years and asked if they wanted to join us," he said. "We went after people we thought would gel together. It was a big investment in support staff, administrative and technical service, even though we had no clients at the time. We essentially built the organization the way we wanted it to look two years out, only we did it on day one."

Post-Pandemic

The New York metropolitan area was perhaps the region most impacted by COVID-19. Blaine termed it "a pin in a balloon" from a business standpoint. The recovery period was much longer than anticipated/hoped, and LDI emerged with its share of battle scars. But as Blaine observed, "We didn't fly out of the abyss; we earned our way out."



LDI Connect Senior Vice President Brian Gertler (center) enjoys the company of Canon sales execs during the 2023 Canon Dealer Summit in Nashville

Growth expectations are now back on track, and while print business—both in volumes and MIF—have markedly dipped, the dealer has been gaining increased traction with its managed services.

"The complexion of the company is somewhat different, but I'd say we're ahead of where we were before the pandemic," Blaine added.

It's not just LDI's complexion that has morphed, according to Schwartz. "The competition has decreased further, as have competitive sales forces," he said.

As Gertler observed, LDI's evolution to being less reliant on the boxes will fuel growth. "We still have a tremendous opportunity, with a very loyal clientele, where we've got credibility to sell these other core disciplines going forward," he said. "So as we approach our 25th year, there's a lot of upside to what we're going to be able to do."

Fabric of Business

In a sense, LDI has repositioned itself as an interior decorator to the modern office (note: access control and security solutions might constitute "exterior," but you get the picture). Gertler believes LDI has re-authored its approach to clients, leveraging the credibility it's accumulated with them to provide "connected solutions to a connected world."

The key, he stresses, is that all the core disciplines are interdependent. "You can't have a great Pro AV experience or a great cloud communication experience if

continued on page 16



It's a team effort as Michael Schloss, director of production print (far left) and Jay Feldman, senior vice president of sales (middle) join two Canon technical sales reps (red shirts) in demonstrating equipment

From Digital to the Integrated Office, LDI Connect Marches to Continued Success



Dan Thibault, LDI Connect director of infrastructure technology (left), joins senior account executives Christina Goerler and John Connolly

you don't have the right infrastructure," Gertler said. "We have a system engineering team that speaks to what's necessary on the infrastructure side.

"Our conversations with clients are important and delicate because they evolve around how they intend on orchestrating and protecting their business. We have experts who can speak to each of these individual areas to ensure they've got great business performance, consistency and continuity."

The integrated digital office technology platform and communicating that holistic angle from a sales approach are still works in progress, according to Blaine, as they are for many total office solution providers. While a secret sauce has yet to be brewed, both Blaine and Schwartz have benefitted tremendously from their interactions with the Copier Dealers Association. Sharing challenges, strategies and best practices has enabled the dealer to leave no stone unturned. One business networking partner from 20 years ago helped guide LDI's approach to cloud communications and is now a member of the dealer's team.

The guidance and insight provided by manufacturers is at an all-time high. "I've been in this business for five decades, and I don't think there's ever been a better time in terms of the relationships we enjoy with our

manufacturers," Blaine said. "They really understand the importance of a successful partnership, and they do everything they can to help us. I'm really grateful for it. Once upon a time, dealers were fighting with their OEMs about one thing or another. I think both sides have learned how to get along, and the mutual benefit is the real prize."

Acquisitional Growth

While most of the dealers acquired have been on the smaller side, Blaine is always on the hunt for the optimal fit that checks off the right boxes. Competition

is keen, he said, although not all suitors (including OEMs) prioritize the same variables as LDI. Moving into California in the mid-2000s was less about westward expansion and more of an attempt to extend its technical service discipline. Growth for the sake of growth doesn't mesh with LDI's values.

While the execs don't envision taking on more diversification options ("Try to put an EV charger on the streets of New York," Blaine joked), they're bullish on the potential that artificial intelligence (AI) has for automating workflows and reducing mundane tasks. They believe some of the best enhancements are yet to come.

"It's going to permeate a lot of what we do," Gertler offered. "The security surveillance cameras we're placing now are built with technologies that will allow you to detect the difference between a truck backfiring and a gunshot. It will also help in doing discreet searches for individuals or license plates. The system can scan automatically and produce facts much quicker than ever before.

"In the office, the document automation side will benefit by the way it processes information, the way it codes and indexes. The display technology that we're representing now incorporates webcams so that the displays will capture



The dealer also relies on vendor partners to add greater variety to the customer technology events

continued on page 18

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a person’s image and—based on gender, age or even the expression on someone’s face—provide content that’s compelling to them. So I see it permeating every aspect of the core disciplines we’re representing.”

Business Drivers

As LDI continues to evolve in the throes of the connected office universe, Blaine notes that any growth must be strategic and fit the company’s financial model. It’s OK to look at the bleeding edge of technology while sticking to the cutting edge, as one employee put it. But the greater thrust is maintaining an open dialogue with clients as to their future trajectory, market outlook and line of business. It’s definitely not a one-size-fits-all proposition.

“As we focus on growing the company, we know there’s going to be change,” Blaine said. “This isn’t a stable, staid industry. We’re in an information technology industry.”

Much of the growth, Schwartz added, will be dictated by LDI’s internal growth with its employees. It will require next-generation additions who not only understand technology but also embrace the dealer’s core values. To that end, LDI has onboarded an in-house



LDI Connect director of sales Errol Nicholson (second from left) joins (from left) account executives Isiah Mitchell, Nicholas Lamonica and Michael Groovenhoff

recruiter to keep pace with generational turnover. The dealer is also creating a mentorship program for developing sales representatives, in which veteran reps can help new salespeople meld traditional sales skills with modern techniques.

“I think we’ll see a strong growth path with reps looking for new business within the same products and services that are driving our portfolio,” Schwartz said.

Technology Flows

The new business push was given a gentle shove last October when the company played host to TECHtoberfest, a showcase of the latest technologies and innovations offered by LDI manufacturing partners. Open to clients and prospects, the event included group and individual demonstrations across managed print, production print, managed IT, cloud communications, security solutions and AV solutions/videoconferencing. Among the participating partners were Canon, Sharp, HP, Brother, Samsung, Xerox, AXIS Communications and Intermedia.

Backed by improvements in automation, teamwork and a little help from the aforementioned vendor friends, LDI can continue to foster the strong relationships it enjoys with clients. So while progress may not be guaranteed, the executive team is doing its part to position the company for the long haul.

“We’re very fortunate to have great relationships with our clients,” Schwartz noted. “They truly like us. I think we’ve earned that. If we can continue to bring more products and services that they need for the connected office, I think we’ll continue to enjoy much success.” ♦



LDI Connect director's club honorees absorb the beauty of Jamaica earlier this year

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Go Cloud, Young Man: Intermedia is Banking on Conversion Opportunities, Growth

There are those who would tell you that phone systems, as a business offering, is a pond that's already been overfished. Maybe that's true, or maybe not. But one thing is certain: unified communications as a service (UCaaS) via the cloud is an opportunity not to be missed. In short, every business has phones and voice providers. But the current percentage of cloud migrators is ridiculously low.

This is what has Noel O'Dwyer so energized. The manager of strategic alliances for Intermedia has seen the math, which doesn't require Sheldon Cooper to formulate. There are more than 400 million business phone users across the country, yet only 100 million have converted to the cloud. Even doing a rough estimate, the tally is somewhere south of 25%. That, O'Dwyer notes, screams opportunity for both Intermedia and its growing cadre of dealers and resellers.

In this month's Getting to Know You profile, O'Dwyer discusses his company's value proposition, its points of differentiation and a host of system and service upgrades that embrace artificial intelligence (AI). They all combine to help Intermedia offer tools that office technology dealers can leverage to increase customer share. And while the company doesn't require a contract, it enjoys an extremely low churn rate, allowing dealers to bundle them with other office needs in a single monthly invoice. It all adds up to a busy signal flush with dollar signs.

Talk a little about the evolution of Intermedia and the channels it serves.

O'DWYER: Intermedia has seen a significant evolution, especially in its engagement with the office technology dealer channel. A number of years ago, Intermedia strategically entered this market by partnering with some high-profile dealers—a move that has proven

to be highly successful. More than 200 office technology dealers actively serve Intermedia solutions, highlighting the strength and growth of this channel.

The success of Intermedia in this channel is driven by two major market trends: the rise of hybrid workspaces and the widespread transition to cloud-based services. The migration of phone systems to the cloud represents a massive market opportunity. Currently, the overall market opportunity for UCaaS is estimated at \$79 billion, with the market growing at an impressive rate of approximately 30% per year.

We secured our first channel dealer roughly seven years ago, and since then we've added a lot of big-name dealers across the country. Our partners cover everything from the small, two-person dealer to large companies with hundreds of millions in revenue. It's going really well.

Outside of the office technology dealer channel, what are some of the other markets in which you thrive?

O'DWYER: Health care, education and manufacturing are probably our top three. We're seeing a lot of growth in school districts, with the need to have a more hybrid way of communicating plus integration with their email systems. Intermedia started as a Microsoft distributor for hosted exchange, and we still do that today. And with some of the dealers, they've been using our product without knowing it's Intermedia.

Do you sell directly as well or exclusively through dealers?

O'DWYER: While 90% of our business is through resellers, we also have some direct business. We've had a certain retail home improvement franchise almost from the very start as a direct client, but most of our new business comes from the dealer channel.



Noel O'Dwyer, Intermedia

What are the core strengths of Intermedia, and what makes it unique to the cloud communications space?

O'DWYER: Intermedia stands out due to several core strengths and unique attributes. A key strength lies in its product offerings, particularly Intermedia Unite and Intermedia Contact Center, which are enhanced with Intermedia SPARK AI. This advanced AI technology is integrated throughout the solutions, providing intelligent features that enhance user experience, streamline operations and improve overall efficiency.

Additionally, Intermedia's partner program is another significant strength. This program is designed to be highly scalable and flexible, enabling dealers to enter the cloud communications marketplace with ease and achieve success. Intermedia offers comprehensive support across technical, marketing and sales aspects, ensuring partners have the resources they need to thrive. Importantly, the program allows for top-line monthly recurring revenue (MRR) and customer ownership, empowering dealers to maintain lifelong

customer relationships while also attracting new business opportunities.

Intermedia's partner program also provides a competitive edge. By offering a distinct solution through Intermedia's robust product suite, dealers can secure their position in a competitive market, gaining a "seat at the table" and the ability to win new business. This unique combination of intelligent products and strong partner support makes Intermedia a leader in the cloud communications industry.

What were some of the highlights for Intermedia during 2023?

O'DWYER: Intermedia had a remarkable 2023, during which we launched over 75 new features, including advanced AI functionalities that enhance productivity and customer service. These highlights include:

- **AI Innovation:** Continued evolution of Intermedia SPARK AI, which enhanced automation and insights, positioning us as a leader in cloud communications.
- **Product Enhancements:** Major upgrades to Intermedia Unite and

Intermedia Contact Center, powered by Intermedia SPARK AI, improved performance and user experience.

- **Partner Program Growth:** Significant expansion of our partner program with more dealers, supported by extensive technical, marketing and sales resources.
- **Industry Recognition:** Multiple prestigious awards recognizing our innovation, product quality and customer service excellence.

As Intermedia doesn't require users to sign contracts, what kind of impact does it have on end-user retention?

O'DWYER: Intermedia's policy of not requiring users to sign contracts hasn't really impacted end-user retention in any negative way. In fact, this approach underscores our confidence in the quality and reliability of our services, encouraging customers to stay with us based on their satisfaction rather than contractual obligations.

Our commitment to excellence is recognized industrywide. We have a vibrant community of 200-plus office

technology dealer partnerships, which reflects our dedication to building strong, trusted relationships. Our award-winning products and exceptional technical support are key to maintaining this trust.

Notably, Intermedia has been certified by J.D. Power for excellence in technical support seven times, a first among SaaS companies. This certification highlights our unwavering dedication to customer service. Additionally, our Net Promoter Score (NPS) consistently exceeds 80, far surpassing the SaaS industry average of 35. These metrics are a testament to our commitment to quality and customer satisfaction.

Our focus on providing top-notch products and support results in a churn rate of less than 1%, with the average customer staying with us for approximately eight years. We believe that by prioritizing the quality of our

continued on page 22



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products and customer service, we naturally foster customer loyalty, which is why we don't require signed contracts. This philosophy ensures that our customers choose to stay with us because they genuinely value the services we provide.

That certainly gives the dealer more flexibility in terms of pricing and bundling.

O'DWYER: We have a lot of dealers who are signing customers up for three- to five-year contracts. Dealers can determine their own pricing; we just give them MSRP guidance. Some of our partners include service fees that effectively allow them to realize more margin. They can also bundle it with other products and services. Most importantly, they have the ability to offer one invoice that covers everything, including the UCaaS solution. Because of the reliability and support we have for our solutions, we feel quite confident standing behind monthly contracts.

Which technologies do you see Intermedia's investments targeting in the next two to three years?

O'DWYER: Intermedia is committed to investing in several key technologies to enhance our offerings and support our partners and customers. We'll

continue advancing our AI capabilities across our product suite, with further enhancements to Intermedia SPARK AI that provide deeper insights, more automation and smarter features aimed at improving productivity and efficiency for businesses.

As cyber threats evolve, our investments in advanced security technologies will ensure our solutions remain robust and secure. This includes enhancing data protection, implementing cutting-edge threat detection and ensuring compliance with the latest industry standards.

Recognizing the ongoing trend toward hybrid and remote work, we'll focus on developing features that help businesses operate seamlessly from anywhere. This includes improving collaboration tools, enhancing communication platforms and ensuring our services are accessible and reliable regardless of location.

Additionally, as a partner-first company, our investments will target the development of tools and resources our partners need to succeed in the cloud communications space. By continuously improving upon our already comprehensive technical, marketing and sales support, as well as creating scalable solutions, we aim to help our partners grow their businesses effectively.

By focusing on these areas, Intermedia aims to not only stay at the forefront of technological advancements, but also to provide our partners and customers with the best possible tools and resources to thrive in an increasingly digital and interconnected world.

Tell us a little about your marketing strategy within the office dealer space.

O'DWYER: It's designed to ensure the success of our partners through a collaborative and resource-rich approach. As part of our comprehensive onboarding process, we work closely with our partners to develop tailored marketing plans that align with their unique business goals and target audiences.

A key component of this strategy is Intermedia's All Access program, which provides our partners with a wide array of marketing assets. This includes professionally crafted customer testimonials, detailed vertical case studies and a variety of social media support materials. Additionally, we equip our partners with effective email campaign templates and strategies to help them engage their prospects and existing customers more effectively.

By offering these resources and working collaboratively, we empower our office dealer partners to leverage our tools and expertise to grow their businesses, reach new customers and achieve sustained success in the competitive cloud communications market.

I spend a lot of time attending association events—the BTA, American Co-op, CDA BPCA and SDG, plus we're a part of Mike Stramaglio's Consortium. We're getting ourselves out there. And within that, we have a lot of really good spokespeople and references. I do a lot of promotions through webinars, and I say, "Don't listen to me, listen to what our dealers are saying." There are some loud supporters of Intermedia throughout the channel.

Given all of the players you compete against, it seems the UCaaS market is highly contested.

O'DWYER: There's a lot of competition, but when you look at it from a pure cloud point of view, there aren't a lot of providers ready to really make that transition to the cloud, or if they have, they're trying to do it from a legacy system. Whereas with Intermedia, we have a native cloud solution that's fully integrated. It's allowed us to gain an advantage. Our target audience is customers who already have a phone solution and they're working with another vendor, because the value we bring is the transition to the cloud. There are 435 million business phone users out there; only about 100 million of them have moved to the cloud. That's a massive opportunity for us to go in and show our solution. As people are moving the phone system to the cloud, it's not just the phone system anymore. They want to be able to take advantage of all the other elements of communications that can be supported in the cloud, such as video conferencing, file sharing and chat.

What do you feel is the path to growth for your company?

O'DWYER: It lies in continuing to drive the transition to the cloud. Although we currently have more than 200 office equipment dealers, there are thousands more in the channel we've yet to tap into. This potential presents a significant opportunity for expansion. The cloud communications industry is still in its early stages of growth, and the

market remains vast and largely untapped.

By expanding our reach within the dealer community and continuing to innovate our product offerings, we can capitalize on this growth potential. Additionally, we'll focus on enhancing our partner programs and providing exceptional support to ensure that our dealers can successfully transition their customers to the cloud. As more businesses recognize the benefits of cloud communications, Intermedia is well-positioned to lead this transformation and achieve sustained growth.

What are your company's goals for the next 12 months?

O'DWYER: Intermedia is always focused on continued innovation to drive our growth and enhance our offerings. First, we aim to continue improving our products, ensuring they meet the evolving needs of our customers and partners. This includes exploring new technologies, particularly in the field of AI, to enhance efficiencies and provide smarter solutions.

We're also committed to continuously enhancing our partner program. By focusing on providing comprehensive support, including technical, marketing and sales resources, we aim to empower our partners to succeed and grow their businesses. Our goal is to ensure that our partners have everything they need to thrive in the competitive cloud communications market.

Through these initiatives, we're dedicated to delivering exceptional value to our customers and partners, reinforcing our position as a leader in the cloud communications industry. ♦



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MFPs on Holiday: Manufacturers Tout Lesser-Known Gems Within their Catalogs

This month's State of the Industry report is going off-MFP script to dig deeper into manufacturer playbooks. Our goal: to find and celebrate some of the lesser-known products dealers can offer clients and prospects alike.

Some are vertically driven, and others are attractive to a much wider customer base. What they have in common is providing another tool for dealer account representatives to ensure they're serving the wide-ranging needs of the evolved office.

From scanners to label printers and software to capture, our panel of the leading industry manufacturers provides the why-to behind solutions that can add to the dealer's bottom line and solidify their valued relationships.

Avison Labs

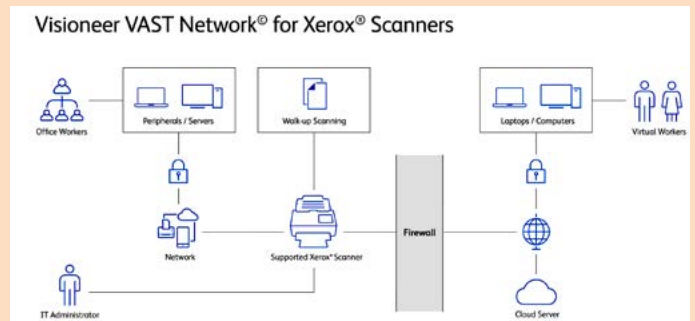
Document capture on Xerox scanners is now accessible wherever it's needed, thanks to Visioneer VAST Network technology. An extended implementation of TWAIN Direct, Visioneer VAST Network consists of several software components and an open-source, zero-footprint image acquisition protocol. It drives secure network scanning devices via web-based or local network client applications, removing the requirement for a PC-based local driver.

Xerox Scanners' Thin Scanning ecosystem is designed for fast, easy document capture. With the VAST-enabled technology built into all Xerox network scanners, devices can be used within the Visioneer VAST Network infrastructure or with many third-party applications that support the TWAIN

Direct standard. Network-enabled Xerox scanners include the Xerox D35wn, Xerox D70n, Xerox N60w Pro, Xerox W130 and Xerox W150. These

devices can connect directly to highly secure, web-based "thin" applications, eliminating the need to download drivers or "thick" applications to a local PC or client. It provides true zero-software installation digital capture for both distributed and centralized document capture environments.

Now available on iOS and Android, the Visioneer Mobile Capture app uses Visioneer VAST Network scanner protocol to capture documents on a mobile device



directly from a LAN- or Internet-connected Xerox standalone document scanner.

USB-connected Xerox scanners can now be shared with co-workers and colleagues across a LAN or wireless network with Visioneer Network Scan Service. By up-converting existing scanner technology, all supported Xerox scanners can be used as network devices capable of supporting multiple users in office and remote locations.

Brother International

Efficient back-office management is crucial for businesses, and ensuring seamless manufacturing or warehouse operations is no small feat. The Brother QL series label printers and TD 2 series allow businesses of all sizes to print labels on demand, providing cost savings, personalization and the durability and versatility needed for various requirements.

The Brother QL Label Printers, including QL-820NWBC and QL-

810WC, offer various sizes and connectivity options so businesses can print two-color labels tailored to their needs, including preset or customized and branded templates. Both models feature ultra-fast printing of up to 110 standard address labels per minute with black text at 300 dpi. The QL line provides flexible connectivity, including Ethernet interfaces and Bluetooth wireless technology, enabling printing. Customers can also create and print labels from mobile devices via AirPrint and the free Brother iPrint&Label app.



Additionally, Brother genuine DK drop-in labeling supplies eliminate the need for ink or toner.

The Brother TD 2 Desktop Thermal printers offer a feature-packed and highly

versatile solution for creating labels, tags, receipts and wristbands up to two inches wide. With a compact footprint and options to add Wi-Fi and Bluetooth, these

powerful desktop models can double as mobile print stations. They boast a print resolution of up to 300 dpi up, speeds of up to six inches per second and support

for media rolls up to five inches in diameter. Adjustable edge-to-edge media sensors make them a powerful, adaptable choice for various printing needs.

Canon U.S.A.

For Canon channel partners, the company's plotWAVE T-Series large-format printer represents a significant opportunity due to its blend of advanced technology and user-friendly features. This series includes five models—T30, T35, T50, T55, and T75—with impressive print speeds of up to 10 ARCH D-sized prints per minute and media capacities ranging from two to six rolls up to 36 inches wide.

Equipped with the new POWERsync+ controller, dual 500GB hard drives and dual 8GB RAM, these printers boast increased memory with powerful processing power. The inte-

gration of Microsoft Windows 10 IoT Enterprise 2021 enhances system security provides peace of mind for clients concerned about data protection.

The inclusion of the PRISMA Tech Suite software further enhances the potential appeal of the plotWAVE T-Series. This suite offers tools for efficient print management and workflow optimization, allowing users to manage print operations seamlessly from various devices. The optional integrated scanner can transform any model into a multifunction printer, adding versatility and value.

Environmental sustainability is also a key selling point via ENERGY STAR V3.0 compliance and

EPEAT Silver certification. The printers are designed for longevity, with many components made from recyclable materials to meet eco-friendly standards.

With its advanced features, security enhancements and commitment to sustainability, the plotWAVE T-Series is designed to meet the needs of professionals in architecture, engineering, construction and manufacturing sectors.



Epson America

Most businesses create or use labels. After all, without a label, a product doesn't ship. Beyond product applications, labels are used in daily operations in segments from logistics, warehousing and distribution to health care, trade shows and events. So it's natural that label printers can offer dealers additional avenues for growth and profitability while helping customers solve a range of challenges.

The Epson ColorWorks CW-C4000 color inkjet label printer is an on-demand color label printer designed to add single-step simplicity and full-color customization capabilities for demanding applications. It features comprehensive connectivity in a compact design for businesses that require high-resolution print quality

and durable barcode and product labels. The printer delivers full-color labels on demand at up to 1,200 dpi resolution and speeds up to four inches per second.¹ It's engineered with advanced PrecisionCore Heat-Free technology to produce complex designs with efficient ink usage and low power consumption.

The C4000 is compatible with ZPL II, SAP and major middleware, among others, and offers seamless integration into existing workflows with minimal user interventions, waste and downtime. Regardless of the industry or application—product, packaging, bar code or shipping—the C4000 delivers high-quality, durable color labels on demand, plus connectivity and remote management tools, at a comparable price point to thermal label printers.²



¹ Printing in Max Speed Mode, 300×600 dpi resolution, 4" (101.6 mm) print width. Print speeds are based on the print engine speed only. Total throughput time for any label depends on factors including label size, file size, print resolution, speed of data transmission, etc.

² Printers and consumable costs are similar when comparing similarly featured leading brand thermal transfer printers and supplies for similar high-durability images on similar media.

Konica Minolta Business Solutions U.S.A.

Konica Minolta's Dispatcher Stratus cloud service aims to provide powerful, fast and simple people-based workflows and document processing that helps small- to large-

size businesses further their digital transformation. Its newest Dispatcher solution, Dispatcher Stratus, marries automation capabilities with intelligent collaboration features. New and advanced people-based processing workflows let users work together to remove redundant manual touchpoints



continued on page 26

MFPs on Holiday: Manufacturers Tout Lesser-Known Gems Within their Catalogs

while increasing interactivity and allowing for projects to evolve naturally. In addition to its new functionality, Dispatcher Stratus carries scan capture and automated document processing functionality forward to assist with automated workflows. Coupled with new people-to-people features and e-forms, the device provides more flexibility and control over daily operations while

digitizing and streamlining those processes.

Dispatcher Stratus combines the use of robotic process automation (RPA) and artificial intelligence (AI) for flexibility in implementing total process automation where necessary. Enabling task-based workflows that require manual touchpoints frees up the team to focus on other business-related tasks.

This new solution is fully cloud-based and easy to use, and doesn't require a background in coding or programming. New features and functions will continually be added to meet market and customer needs and to streamline businesses' daily operations such as overhauling outdated processes, optimizing workforces and continuing on a path to digital transformation.

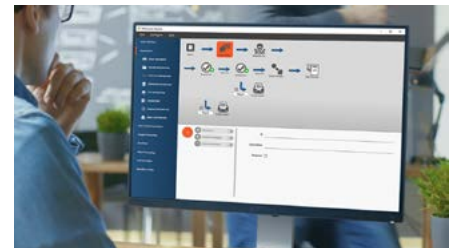
Kyocera Document Solutions America

In the fast-paced world of document-driven business workflows, efficiency and cost-effectiveness are paramount. Kyocera's designed its DMConnect to revolutionize document capture, distribution, processing and workflow management. It's not only user-friendly, but it can also help with streamlining business processes. With its latest update, DMConnect extends its capabilities beyond the MFP, enabling comprehensive document management and workflow integration from various digital sources.

Users can scan and index documents at the Kyocera MFP or gather information from the DMConnect Portal, email (including Microsoft Outlook add-in),

hot folders, Windows Explorer, POP3 and secure FTP. It also offers the ability to enhance document quality through blank-page removal, job separation, barcode detection and routing, stamping, Bates stamping and document splitting by size or page count. Additionally, users can convert files to searchable PDFs, Word, Excel, Text, HTML and more with advanced OCR. DMConnect can recognize forms and 2D barcodes for streamlined data extraction, and it can also distribute digital information effortlessly to the cloud, document management systems or custom workflows. Authorized users are provided with the ability to view and access documents, monitor pending tasks and upload documents for processing via the DMConnect Portal.

The device's automated processes leverage 1D or 2D barcodes for



automatic job separation and intelligent routing, reducing manual data entry and saving time. There's also a forms recognition feature that allows for the extraction of large amounts of data with minimal human input, speeding up document processing. And for companies looking to enhance both accuracy and efficiency, there's the ability to utilize existing databases and Excel spreadsheets for data validation and look-up.

Lexmark International

Diversity is growing in the education, health care and government fields. As such, there's increased focus on the need to better communicate with parents, patients and constituents through translation services. For example:

- Schools could provide translation of critical communications into parents' native languages to eliminate any language barrier.
- Government agencies may translate informative and instructional documents into a targeted language to better serve diverse communities.

- Health care professionals can communicate nonclinical notices and marketing materials to patients who speak another language (this became apparent during the pandemic).

Providing the same level of technology accessibility to everyone is key to overcoming these challenges. Recognizing that, Lexmark released Translation Assistant (LTX), a solution that translates scanned documents from 20-plus native languages into one of 20-plus selectable languages. New languages are set to be added



frequently, allowing users to communicate across the globe in dozens of languages. Users only need to choose the "LTX icon" on their MFP and select their desired target language. Any document will either then be printed or emailed in the user's local language.

Ricoh

Ricoh is looking to add further value to dealers' portfolios through interactive flat-panel displays (IFPDs), which can provide another method for businesses and educational institutions to collaborate and learn.

IFPDs are ideal for corporate environments that foster greater engagement and creativity by enabling teams to connect across multiple locations. These teams can then visualize ideas and share information in real time for more productive meetings. In education, the displays create dynamic, engaging learning experiences that enhance understanding and retention of material, as teachers can present lessons in innovative ways that encourage participation and collaboration among students.

Through these IFPDs, Ricoh is aiming to offer several compelling advantages:

1. Customer retention during MFP off-cycles: With IFPDs, dealers can

maintain engagement with existing customers, even when they're not in the market for new MFPs.

2. Increased wallet share: IFPDs allow dealers to capture a larger share of customers' office technology budgets with comprehensive solutions.

3. Enhanced proposal success: Bundling IFPDs with MFPs can enhance the appeal of proposals, increasing dealers' chances of winning deals by presenting a more complete solution.

4. Competitive differentiation: IFPDs can set dealers apart from resellers that offer partial solutions, positioning them as comprehensive digital workplace solutions providers and leading to more meaningful engagements with customers.

5. New business: IFPDs can be a door opener for zero-based accounts, showcasing dealers' ability to meet diverse office technology needs from the outset.



6. Single source: Becoming the go-to source for all office technology needs strengthens relationships with customers and streamlines the procurement process.

As customers continue to demand collaboration, Ricoh is committing to collaborative technologies (such as IFPDs) and investing in partners (such as Cenero) to give dealers more access to meeting and collaboration opportunities in the future.

continued on page 28



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Sharp Imaging and Information Company of America

Enabling a secure framework to provide services for office technology devices is more important than at any previous time. However, as service costs rise and skilled technicians become harder to find, maintaining profitability while ensuring high service standards can be challenging. Synappx Manage, a cloud-based monitoring and management platform for Sharp MFPs and displays, provides a solution for both end customers and imaging resellers' service departments.

Synappx Manage gives IT administrators overseeing distributed environments the ability to manage devices remotely, at any time and from anywhere. Its compatibility with existing

Microsoft 365 or Google Workspace accounts simplifies integration, further reducing IT burdens. Features such as automated security management, email alerts for critical events and scheduled power management all contribute to a safe, productive work environment. Automated security profile monitoring also allows Synappx Manage to provide increased fleet security and align with specific organizational compliance requirements. This proactive approach to security management minimizes risks without hindering customer operations.

Synappx Manage also helps ensure devices are equipped with the latest firmware and critical security updates through informed and automated firmware management capability to maintain security integrity. Additionally, the need for on-site support visits is reduced and



service efficiency is increased through remote access capabilities. To further enhance remote access, tools to service reports, settings and cloning operations are provided, integrating with platforms such as CEO Juice and ConnectWise PSA for automated meter reporting and unified IT services. These capabilities enable service providers to optimize device performance, reduce technician visits and ultimately enhance customer satisfaction.

Toshiba America Business Solutions

Toshiba is looking to simplify print management with the introduction of its Elevate Sky Print Management platform, the latest addition to its industry-recognized Elevate Sky cloud-based application and services platform. Elevate Sky Print Management enables enterprises to create and enforce print policies while providing control and insight into print costs and user behavior.

As a cloud-based service, Elevate Sky eliminates costly print servers and greatly reduces IT print support requirements. Elevate Sky's universal

print driver supports printing from Windows, Mac or Chrome clients to over 5,000 makes and models of networked printers and MFPs covering virtually every brand and model.

Elevate Sky Print Management provides IT professionals visibility to print activity and real-time device status through a customizable dashboard. The application allows administrators to manage device access and to establish, track and manage costs, budgets, quotas and other KPIs on a user, department, device or location basis.

Toshiba's Elevate Sky Print Management can integrate with leading cloud service providers such as Microsoft 365



and Google Workspace, allowing IT to manage users and their credentials securely at a single directory. Organizations can securely and sustainably track and manage organizational print policies while minimizing related IT costs. The software as a service is currently available from Toshiba dealers and direct sales locations nationally.

Xerox Corp.

Xerox Robotic Process Automation Services automates repetitive day-to-day tasks so employees can work more efficiently and focus on higher value tasks. As a single service, Xerox can streamline workflows and automate repetitive tasks with simplified, customized process



automation while always keeping client needs front and center.

Its automation team does all the heavy lifting—assessing, building, deploying and supporting the bots—so




that clients can cut costs, save time and add value for customers and employees. Partners and clients can choose from a

catalog of pre-built bots for processes across a variety of business functions including finance, HR, operations and customer service. The bot catalog is a live production use-case library containing preconfigured bots, which allows rapid deployment and adoption. If a bot doesn't already exist for a specific process, Xerox will work to develop a custom bot to address the client's unique needs. ♦

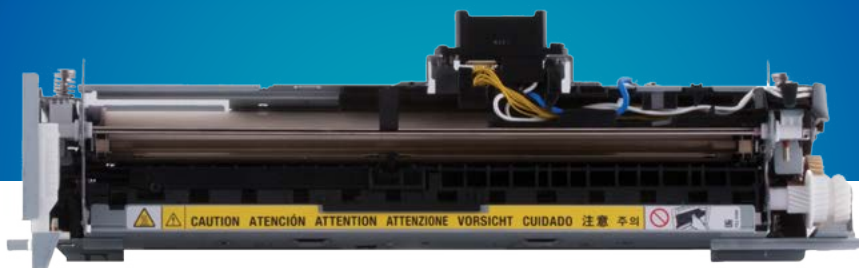
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Do Print Dealers Need to Worry About New MFA Requirements? Yes—Here’s Why.

Many organizations are moving beyond passwords to secure, phishing-resistant forms of multi-factor authentication (MFA) for both computer and network login. Because of this shift, print dealers need to understand the new requirements and prepare to help clients implement phishing-resistant MFA for print, computer and network security. Solutions that use existing employee ID badges or access credentials as a simple yet highly secure method of logical access for PCs and networks are a natural way for print dealers to expand their Radio-Frequency Identification (RFID) reader business beyond secure print management.

The Move to Phishing-Resistant MFA for Computers and How Print Dealers Can Help

The Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) recommends phishing-resistant forms of MFA for maximum security. Phishing-resistant MFA is increasingly required by cyber insurance companies to reduce risk. For organizations that handle sensitive data, it can also help maintain compliance with regulatory requirements for information security, such as ISO/IEC 27001, the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) for government agencies, HIPAA for health care providers, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) for educational institutions and the American Bar Association (ABA) Model Rule 1.6(c) for lawyers.

Print dealers are in a great position to help clients navigate this emerging cybersecurity landscape and protect not only printed information but also computers, networks and data. Most dealers already offer software solutions for print management and security along with multifunction networked printers designed to work with employees’ existing physical access credentials (badges, smartcards or mobile) for secure print release. They can now add a new solution that meets modern cybersecurity requirements for computers and network or application login: passwordless login via RFID or near-field communication (NFC) credentials with optional true MFA. In addition to creating a new sales opportunity, offering RFID and mobile credential readers for computer and network login positions print dealers as leaders in total office equipment security.

What Is Phishing-Resistant MFA?

Phishing-resistant forms of MFA are those that reduce the risk of login credentials being acquired by bad actors either through phishing (tricking users into divulging the information



or entering it into a fraudulent website) or other means of data interception. Phishing-resistant MFA eliminates the most vulnerable elements of the login process: the username and password.

Currently, the most common forms of MFA include push notifications to a trusted device (e.g., the user’s smartphone) or one-time codes, which may be sent by email or SMS text, or they can be generated by an authentication app on the user’s phone. After entering their login credentials, users must hit “accept” on the push notification on their phone or enter their one-time code into a separate screen. These methods can significantly reduce the risks presented by stolen or compromised passwords, but they aren’t perfect.

- Users can still be tricked into entering one-time codes and user credentials into a fraudulent login screen, giving threat actors access long enough to take control of the account, steal data or disrupt business systems.
- Sophisticated social engineering attacks, such as phone calls from cybercriminals pretending to be part of corporate IT, can manipulate users into revealing their one-time codes or accepting a suspicious login via push notification.
- One-time codes sent via text can be intercepted using attacks such as SIM swapping or exploiting vulnerabilities in communication architecture.
- One-time codes are also highly cumbersome for users, slowing the login process and resulting in many more failed login attempts. As users typically must log in to various systems and devices many times over a workday, this adds up to significant losses in overall productivity for organizations. The adoption of phishing-resistant MFA for computers

significantly reduces user-related vulnerabilities. By eliminating the need for users to input cumbersome passwords during the authentication process, these methods prevent the possibility of users inadvertently divulging critical information. Forms of MFA that don't require direct user input of sensitive information can include:

- **FIDO2 security keys with PIN:** These keys support passwordless authentication, allowing users to access services securely via a known device (e.g., phone or computer) using local authentication to prevent interception. A PIN or password can be added for multifactor authentication.
- **RFID cards or smartphone credentials with PIN:** This method combines a physical RFID card (such as an employee ID badge) or NFC mobile credential (on a smartphone) with a PIN. Authentication requires the physical presence of the card or smartphone, rendering any intercepted PIN ineffective without the corresponding physical token.

How Print Dealers Can Help Clients Prepare

Many organizations using print management software already have their printers secured with RFID readers, enabling users to unlock the printers with an RFID card or smartphone. Others opt to use a PIN or password at the MFP. Given that upcoming regulations or cyber insurance requirements may require MFA at the printer in many industries, dealers should be recommending the RFID option to customers to future-proof their systems. Organizations of all sizes should plan to implement MFA soon as part of a broader zero-trust cybersecurity framework. It's one of the three essential components recommended by CISA for all companies to lower the risk of ransomware and cyberattacks.

By educating customers on this issue and offering MFA solutions for computer and network login using the very same RFID readers as the MFPs, print dealers can establish themselves as valued partners in helping companies meet emerging cybersecurity requirements. Print dealers can help customers implement a passwordless, phishing-resistant MFA solution for computers using the same RFID readers already in use for print security. When applied as part of an MFA solution for computer login, RFID offers similar advantages—namely efficiency and security—plus the additional benefits of compliance (insurance, regulations, etc.) and real cost savings. These benefits are achieved through:

- **Simplify device login:** Using a physical card, token or smartphone to unlock device access instead of a username and password significantly speeds up the process for users. Instead of typing a long password and checking their phone for a push notification or short-lived login code, they simply present their card or phone and enter a simple PIN.
- **Improve device security:** MFA solutions using RFID/NFC make it impossible for attackers to trick users into revealing their passwords. These solutions can meet NIST, HIPAA and defense contractor requirements for MFA security.
- **Cost savings:** Help desk calls and productivity downtime for forgotten passwords or lockouts have significant costs. Even

the time required to type (and often retype) complicated passwords multiple times per day can add up over the course of a year—enough that the efficiency savings with tap-to-login are enough to pay for the solution itself.

- **Unify information security:** The same combination of card/smartphone and PIN can be used for both logical access (to business systems and networks) and physical device access (to computers and, potentially, printers). This creates a unified information security architecture that's simpler for both users and IT to manage.

For most organizations, the simplest way to implement phishing-resistant MFA for information security is by leveraging the RFID card employees already use for building access and identification. Passwordless login to computers, printers and business networks using an ID card and PIN is highly secure, simple for employees, and risk free related to phishing or interception of user credentials. A universal RFID reader can support both traditional cards and newer mobile credentials for maximum flexibility.

Print dealers are well positioned to help their clients make the switch to phishing-resistant MFA for all their office devices. Expanding their focus beyond printers to computers and other types of office equipment represents a new sales opportunity for RFID readers. At the same time, print dealers will be helping their clients modernize information security systems and meet emerging insurance and regulatory standards for cybersecurity. ♦



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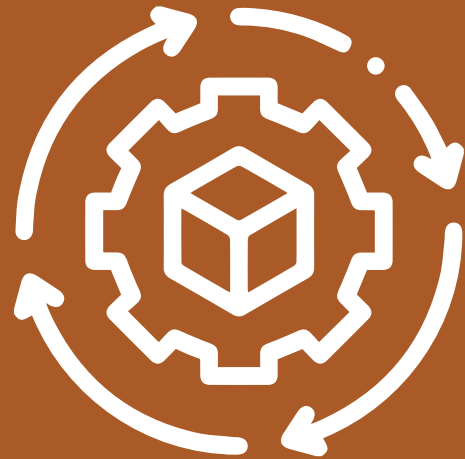


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Dealer Panel: Leveraging AI for Enhanced Business Efficiency & Growth

Moderated by Mark Spears, Amplified Solutions

Panelists:



Anthony DelGrosso
Milner Inc.



Bob Doucette
Smart Technologies
of Florida



Keven Ellison
Advanced Imaging
Solutions



Preparing for Economic Shifts: Insights for Upcoming Months

John Beriau, Morgan Stanley

Dealer Panel: Strategic Insights & Steps for Successful Acquisitions

Moderated by Andy Slawetsky, Industry Analysts Inc.

Panelists:



Thomas Fimian
Levifi



Bill Patsouras
Function4



Rich Simons
Edge Business
Systems

Dealer Panel: Strategies for Selling Cybersecurity Services

Moderated by Deborah Hawkins, Keypoint Intelligence

Panelists:



Pamela Feld
Triumph Technology
Group



Keith Johnson
Obviam



Davis Tran
C3 Technology
Services



What's Happenin' in the Imaging Industry

Andy Slawetsky, Industry Analysts Inc.

Breakout Sessions



Two-Part Sales Management Track — A Step-by-Step Guide: Building a Sales Culture Where Activities Drive Results

Derek Shebby, Modern Sales Training



Two-Part Service Management Track — Setting the Pace in Service Automation & Setting The Pace in Managing the Technical Workforce

Deborah Hawkins, Keypoint Intelligence,
& Ken Edmonds, 22nd Century
Management



Profiting From the AI Revolution as a Dealer

Steve Cunningham, Simple AI



Practical AI & ChatGPT Applications for Quick SOP Documentation

Mark Spears, Amplified Solutions

Round-Table Discussions



On Sept. 24, dealership sales and service management can choose to attend round-table discussions facilitated by Shebby and Edmonds.

Networking Reception



On the evening of Sept. 24, attendees will enjoy a reception, allowing them time to network with their dealer peers.

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