

Document Imaging Report

Business Trends on Converting Paper Processes to Electronic Format

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October 7, 2005

THIS JUST IN!

CDIA+ EXAM UPDATED

CompTIA's CDIA+ (Certified Document Imaging Architech) program continues to thrive. The organization recently announced an updated version of the CDIA+ test. So far, more than 6,400 individuals have earned their certification, and the annual numbers have increased by a CAGR of close to 25% over the past five years.

The updated test will go into effect this month. It will not affect professionals who have already passed a CDIA exam. This represents the first revision since a major overhaul was completed in 2002 [see *DIR* 8/17/01]. There were no major changes this time, but both the mechanics and the material have been updated.

"We measure the metrics of our tests to ensure that the right people—those with a basic understanding of the subject matter—continue to pass," said Miles Jobgen, the program administrator for CompTIA. "One of the things we like to update, for example, are the incorrect multiple choice answers. We check to ensure they are doing their job."

Pam Doyle, director of the imaging products group at **FCPA** and the chairperson of the CDIA+ cornerstone committee, added that the core objectives have remained the same. "In 2002, we shifted the emphasis away from technology and more toward analysis of business requirements," she said. "That trend continues; we believe it is key to successful implementations."

Doyle sees an increasing number of end users taking the CDIA+ test. "The number of people that have passed is fairly substantial for an industry as small as ours," she said. "The continued annual increase reflects end users looking to earn credentials and knowledge that will ensure the success of their projects."

For more information: <http://www.comptia.org>

Advanced Compression Making Its Mark

There is going to come a day when Group 4 compression is not good enough. For years, this fax-based standard, encased in a TIFF wrapper, has been the format of choice for document imaging applications. Recently, as document scanning has moved into the front office, PDF has been gaining traction as the wrapper. But, typically, inside the PDF we have seen either Group 4 [for bi-tonal] or JPEG [for color] compression. There are signs, however, that things may be a changin'.

As document imaging moves from dedicated back-office applications with controlled sets of documents, to more ad hoc, distributed applications that cover a wider array of document types, traditional compression formats will no longer fit the bill. They often create files too large or unwieldy to be effective in many distributed, browser-based viewing applications. This is especially true when dealing with graphically rich and/or color documents. And, as color document output increases, due to the falling price of color printing technology, the problems associated with color input will only exacerbate.

Yes, some day, the document imaging world will be forced to move en masse to advanced compression technology based on concepts such as MRC (mixed raster content). MRC involves the separation and segmentation of document images into pieces and/or layers. Each part is compressed separately using optimum methods, depending on the content of the part. Color graphics, for instance, can be compressed with a photographic-centric compression method such as JPEG. Bi-tonal textual areas, meanwhile, can be compressed with Group 4. This not only results in smaller file sizes, but if done effectively, better viewing characteristics.

Over the past several years, we've done many articles in *DIR* on MRC, the adoption of which we felt would grow hand-in-hand with the adoption of color document scanning hardware. This has not

necessarily proven to be the case, although many would argue that neither has been embraced with open arms by the end-user community, so maybe they are growing at similar rates. In recent weeks, however, we have seen an unusually large amount of news surrounding MRC, and we think the tide may finally be turning in its favor. Let's take a brief look at what's been happening.

LuraTech Partners With Kodak

We'll start with **LuraTech**, the German compression specialist that recently announced a bundling agreement with **Kodak**. The newest version of *Kodak Capture* will include a demo version of LuraTech's export module for creating MRC-based PDF or JPM files. JPM is the file format created by using JPEG 2000, Part 6 compression [see *DIR* 10/19/01].

"The price and performance issues associated with hardware have gone away. However, the lack of a suitable presentation format for color images has kept the transition from being complete."

— James Rile, JRA

According to Robert Bijster, worldwide portfolio business manager for Kodak Document Imaging software products, Kodak's German offices initiated the relationship with LuraTech. "In Germany, we have started to see increased demand for compressed output in PDF format," said Bijster. "Kodak and LuraTech have been able to jointly promote the use of color to customers and the channel. We also have a cooperative agreement with **LizardTech** for DjVu software. Customers using our *Capture Software* now have an even wider choice of output formats."

The LizardTech agreement involves a free two-month trial. The LuraTech demo will be included in *Kodak Capture 6.8*, scheduled to begin shipping this month.

JBIG2 Catching On For Bi-Tonal Files

On our recent trip to New York for the **HSA Capture Conference 2005**, we stopped in Queens and spent an hour with Ari Gross, CTO and founder of **CVision**. CVision is a JBIG2 compression specialist that has compiled an impressive customer list for its *PdfCompressor* product line. This includes **FedEx, BankOne, Merck, Boeing, and JPMorganChase**, as well as several local governments and federal government agencies, and numerous law firms and corporate legal departments.

JBIG2 is a bi-tonal compression methodology designed to be more effective than Group 4. CVision's Web site has sample files that are six to 10 times smaller using JBIG2 than Group 4. To date, over 95% of CVision's business has come from customers that want to create smaller bi-tonal PDFs, for

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3. Forms Processing/OCR/ICR
4. Enterprise Content Management
5. Records Management
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both storage and portability. Boeing, for instance, has used *PdfCompressor* for the technical manuals it distributes on CDs.

JBIG2 is included as a compression option in the specs for both PDF and JPM and can be leveraged as a component in MRC applications. Toward this end, CVision has spent three years developing a segmenter for color document image files. This segmenter was introduced last year in version 3.0 of *PdfCompressor*.

"When doing MRC and JBIG2 compression with competitive products, you are running a risk of text-degradation," Gross told *DIR*. "We have a test that proves our JBIG2 compression can actually improve text recognition by an OCR engine, which virtually guarantees there is no degradation. We first run OCR on a standard, 200 dpi JPEG file. We then compare those results to OCR results from a file we have segmented, compressed, decompressed, and then converted back to a 200 dpi JPEG. We find the results from the second file are often more accurate."

Gross credits this improved accuracy to his company's having "the world's best matcher for font-learning." "Sure, there's cheaper technology available," said Gross. "But no one else can guarantee the accuracy we achieve."

To date, more than 90% of CVision's sales have been direct, mainly through Web hits. Recently, however, the company has beefed up its OEM efforts. Captiva is already a reseller of *PdfCompressor*. CVision is also negotiating partnerships with several other capture software players. "Over the next couple years, I think you'll see advanced compression move from a separate process to something that is done as an ordinary post-scanning process," said Gross. "In the next four years, I expect it to start showing up on chips."

Gross initially expects JBIG2 compression to replace Group 4 in many embedded applications. "JBIG2 is still evolving," he said. "We get significantly smaller file sizes now, but we are continuing to improve on that. Before we make the commitment to go to hardware, which is expensive, we want to be sure the technology is very mature."

As for color compression, Gross acknowledged that segmentation is still a

very inexact science. "Segmenting might not be perfected for another 20 years," he said.

LizardTech Lands The New Yorker Deal

Some of CVision's initial success in the world of color image compression has come in the publishing industry. News distribution services are utilizing the company's technology to scan articles from business magazines, which they then make available to subscribers. A couple of months ago, *DIR* did an article touting the publishing industry as a potential killer app for MRC.

The article featured LizardTech, the developer of the MRC-based DjVu file format. LizardTech CEO Carlos Domingo hinted that his company was working on something really big. That turned out to be the digitization of 80 years worth of back issues of

Which Format's The Best?

So, which MRC format will win out in the end? Well, PDF would have to be the odds on favorite. Even though DjVu has some clear display performance advantages, PDF has weight. As **CVision's** Ari Gross put it, "**Adobe** is the gorilla in this space and they have to be reckoned with."

Adobe has definitely given us indications it plans to address some of the shortcomings associated with its segmenting and display capabilities. How successful Adobe will be with this remains to be seen. However, the fact that PDF is a published specification means that third-party developers like **JRA** and CVision will continue to build applications that improve on whatever Adobe does.

DjVu's advantage is that it currently does a better job now with complex documents than PDF. DjVu's developers have been focusing on the color document imaging space longer than anyone else in this market, which has given them a head start. However, the sheer size of Adobe compared to LizardTech would make you think that gap will be closing over the next few years.

JPM Still Evolving

JPM, or JPEG 2000, Part 6 is kind of the wildcard in the equation. As far as we know, **LuraTech** has the only commercial application available for JPM, and it has not had much success with it to date. Of course, the standard is still evolving and recently there's been work on adding a hidden-text layer that will make it more competitive with PDF.

LuraTech's Mark McKinney, VP of sales and marketing in North America, compared the performance of JPM with DjVu. "The rendering can be a little bit faster than PDF files with advanced compression," he told *DIR*. "If users have control of their client and want a really good rendering piece, while sticking to an ISO standard, JPM might be the right solution."

For more information: <http://www.luratech.com>

The New Yorker magazine. The project came to light last month when an eight-DVD set began shipping, which contains more than 4,000 digitized back issues of *The New Yorker*.

"We have been working on this for more than a year," Domingo told *DIR*. "It involved scanning more than a million pages, and quality was very important. Initially, the publisher was planning on using JPEG compression, which would have reduced 24 MB

uncompressed color files—the average size of an issue scanned at 300 dpi—to 8 MB. This would have created a total of three to four terabytes of data for all 4,000 issues. Using DjVu, they were able to compress all the issues down to 30 GBs, which can be easily distributed on a DVD set.

"Initially, with the JPEG files, the publisher was considering releasing the back issues in sets of five or 10 years. They were also going to have a couple of lower resolution versions for Web display and electronic distribution. By using DjVu technology, they've been able to take care of all their needs with the same files."

We haven't seen a sample copy yet, but early reviews on **Amazon.com** are generally favorable (although one customer claims the discs badly damaged his computer). LizardTech worked closely with *The New Yorker* publisher **Conde Nast** and a Kansas City service bureau to produce the scans. LizardTech also appears to have developed a custom viewer for the files.

"The service bureau would send us the images, we'd look at them and make any adjustments we thought necessary, and then run it by Conde Nast, who would give us their feedback," said Domingo. "Depending on the quality of paper and ink used during a certain time period, our settings varied. Also, the way the magazines were stored, in boxes, created variances between those in the middle of the box and those on the ends."

The eight DVD set contains an index file with article summaries that can be searched; no OCR or full-text indexing was used with the DjVu files. For

more recent editions of the publication, Conde Nast is going straight from their pre-press PDF files to DjVu—a process used by other publishers for digital distribution of current issues [see *DIR* 12/17/04].

Domingo indicated the application could potentially lead to other business for LizardTech with Conde Nast, which publishes magazines such as *Glamour*, *GQ*, and *Vanity Fair*. "The publishing industry is big, but most people involved in it know each other—especially in hubs such as New York," said Domingo. "You will definitely be hearing more from us in this market."

PlanetDjVu Founder Embraces PDF

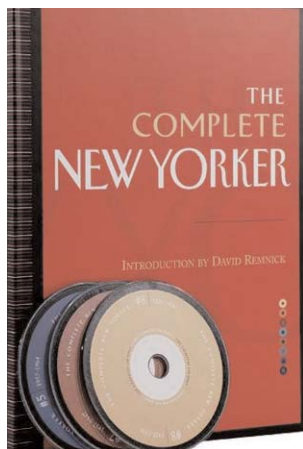
Jim Rile of **Jim Rile Associates** (JRA) is also putting together some interesting MRC-based efforts targeting publishers. He has included options in PDF files like linking from selected photos to high-res versions stored on a Web server and linking and bookmarking options for article threads. "The cumulative effect is that a PDF, starting from scanned images, is now a bona fide e-book," said Rile. "There is clearly a distinction between a collection of e-books and a mere collection of scanned images organized into issues."

Rile is the founder of the PlanetDjVu Web site, but with the latest version of his *JRAPublish* application, which was released last month, he has embraced PDF. "I am still carrying DjVu capabilities," he told *DIR*, "but as far as I'm concerned, DjVu is pretty much dead as a commercial application. Even though DjVu files display a lot faster than PDF, everyone has heard of PDF, not DjVu—or even MRC."

With *JRAPublish* 3.0, Rile has introduced the ability to create four layers, rather than the three traditionally used for MRC. "In addition to a foreground, background, and mask layer, I've added a specific picture or graphics layer," he said. "By separating pictures from the background, you can save them at a higher resolution while reducing the resolution of the rest of the background, which reduces the overall file size."

Rile has leveraged tools from LizardTech, LuraTech, and **ABBY** to create his new application. He sent us some imaged pages from a school yearbook as sample file. The file was either 2 MB or 400K, depending on the level of compression used. Display was faster with the larger file. "It's not always about size," Rile said. "When employing MRC, there is a balance between quality and size that you need to maintain."

Rile concluded that when the market comes to a better understanding of the potential of MRC, then



*LizardTech's DjVu software has been used to digitally capture more than 4,000 back issues of *The New Yorker* on an eight DVD-set.*

color document imaging will truly have arrived. "The price and performance issues associated with hardware have gone away," he said. "However, the lack of a suitable presentation format for color images has kept the transition from being complete. The challenge is creating an MRC format both fast enough and small enough to use in everyday applications."

For more information:

<http://www.kodak.com/go/capturesoftware>,
<http://www.cvisiontech.com>, <http://www.lizardtech.com>,
<http://www.planetdjuv.com>

New Functionality Sparks Debate

Kodak recently announced some upgrades to the i30 and i40 workgroup models it introduced last year. The first involves the introduction of a new feeder to accommodate card scanning on the i40. The feeder is attached to the bottom of the scanner; it appears unique, because it takes in and returns cards in the front of the scanner. The feeder is being targeted at applications involving "thick cards, identification cards, insurance cards, credit cards, driver's licenses, and other documents of this type."



Kodak has introduced a new straight-path card feeder to its i40 duplex workgroup model.

"The Kodak i40 scanner with the special document feeder is designed to handle card stock up to 1mm thick, including laminated and embossed cards," Paul Whittard, Kodak's desktop capture director, told *DIR*. "The flat front feed and return easily accommodates embossed cards, unlike most scanners in this class, which feed through a curved path."

The new feeder is now shipping with the i40. The scanner carries the same list price of \$1,195. Unfortunately, there is no upgrade path for legacy i40s.

Does "Button Manager" Violate Patent?

In addition to the feeder, Kodak has introduced something it is calling "Button Manager." Button Manager takes advantage of the "start" button appearing on the console of the i30 and i40. This feature enables users to configure up to nine different applications that can be launched using the start button. Kodak provides the example of

launching *Kodak Capture* or a *ReadIRIS* application for PDF creation.

This Button Manager functionality appears similar to the OneTouch capability that **Visioneer** advertises, and for which Visioneer has a patent licensing agreement with **ScanSoft**. "I haven't seen the Kodak unit with the new functionality yet, but from the way I read the press release, it looks like it would be in violation of the patent we have licensed—at least the way I understand it," said John Capurso, VP of enterprise marketing at Visioneer.

The patent in question is U.S. patent number 6,480,304, which is entitled "Scanning system and method." The patent's abstract includes the following statement: "The software analyzes a host computer and automatically maps user interface buttons of a scanner with application programs installed on the host computer. The software also establishes appropriate pre-defined scan configurations for each application program mapped to the user-interface buttons....The scanned image is automatically delivered to the application program mapped to the pressed button and is generated with an image type and resolution according to the pre-defined scan configuration established for the application program mapped to the pressed button."

Fujitsu employs a similar method of capture on its popular ScanSnap desktop model [see *DIR* 5/6/05].

According to Whittard, Kodak does not feel it is infringing on any patent rights. "Kodak has developed a leading IP portfolio, and we are committed to growing and protecting that asset," he said. "In the same vein, it is our policy to not infringe on the patents of others, and we don't believe we've done so in this case."

Added Whittard, "We have working relationships with a variety of companies, including ScanSoft. However, we do not discuss the specifics of those relationships."

ScanSoft was more open to discussing specifics. "We haven't seen the Kodak device, and we don't know if they are in violation," said Robert Weideman, senior VP, marketing and product strategy, productivity applications for ScanSoft. "However, we do not have a licensing relationship with Kodak regarding that patent."

ScanSoft has no current plans to sue anyone for patent infringement. "However, some recent product announcements touting one-touch and one-button functionality, especially from companies that

are not current partners of ours, has motivated us to go back and take a closer look at our patent portfolio," said Weideman. "We are performing due diligence to determine whether or not we need to work with some of these companies to ensure they are in compliance with our patents. In the meantime, we are always available to talk with vendors that may conclude on their own that they are in violation of our patents."

Weideman stressed that ScanSoft does not view its patent portfolio as an offensive tool. "We have a number of patents we feel may be of use to our partners, including those for functionality like a hover thumbnail [U.S. No. 6,496,206] and document stacking [U.S. No. 6,262,732]," he told *DIR*. "We have a business model that involves licensing our technology to our partners, and we will continue to follow it. We've made investments in our intellectual property, and we want to leverage it."

"Historically we have not been a litigious company. However, we are not going to sit around and allow people to infringe on our patents, especially if they are not partners of ours."

For more information: robert@scansoft.com

HISTORY LINKS SCANSOFT TO VISIONEER

ScanSoft's relationship with **Visioneer** dates back to a 1999 deal in which ScanSoft acquired Visioneer's software business and its listing on the **Nasdaq**. This provided ScanSoft, which was being spun off by **Xerox**, with a vehicle for going public and also its *PaperPort* document and image management software line. Visioneer, meanwhile, took its hardware business private by selling it to Japan-based **Primax Electronics** [see *DIR* 12/18/98]. Visioneer's management has since orchestrated a buyout from Primax.

Visioneer actually owns the OneTouch trademark and the company's Web site lists it as the "innovator" of OneTouch technology. Curiously, the U.S. patent behind the OneTouch functionality, No. 6,480,304, was filed for on Dec. 9, 1998. This is interesting because the deal between ScanSoft and Visioneer was announced on Dec. 3 of that year but was not completed until March, 1999.

"The '304 patent was developed at Visioneer and was sold to ScanSoft along with the software business," explained Murray Dennis, president and CEO of Visioneer. "However, we retain certain rights to that patent under our licensing agreement, and we have since developed products under our licensing agreement, such as our latest OneTouch/v4, that no one has the rights to."

eCopy Entering Uncharted Waters

2005 results reflect last year of business as usual

While 2005 has marked a big year of change for **eCopy**, most of those changes did not make an impact on the company's 2005 fiscal year, the results of which were announced last month. eCopy's fiscal year ends on June 30, and for the trailing 12 months, the company reported revenue of \$41.8 million, or growth of 39%. This was pretty much in line with expectations and only slightly below last year's growth rate of 43%.

eCopy's biggest change during 2005 has been the opening up of its capture application to work with multiple vendors' hardware devices, which in turn has attracted a slew of software partners eager to take advantage of this "universal" on-ramp for digital copiers. Because this open platform approach was only announced this spring, it really didn't have time to affect eCopy's 2005 numbers. "More than 95% of our revenue in 2005 still came from sales through **Canon**," said Ed Schmid, eCopy president and CEO. Canon has historically been eCopy's exclusive hardware partner, with a few exceptions.

2006 will definitely be different, as both **Toshiba** and **Sharp** have announced distribution agreements with eCopy which should impact next year's numbers. eCopy has also initiated a program to sell directly to **Ricoh** dealers. Further, eCopy is expanding its VAR channel, which consists of software resellers that want to leverage digital copiers as on-ramps to their applications. "The VAR channel includes resellers of software from vendors like **Captaris** and **Documentum**—the AIX line," said Schmid. "We are in the midst of our best quarter ever for VARs."

Schmid would not provide any growth projections for 2006. "We expect our Canon business to remain strong and continue to grow," he said. "It's tough to tell how fast our new channels will grow."

Schmid noted that one of the reasons the company announces its annual revenue is to let potential customers and partners know they are dealing with a company of significant size. "The downside is that it lets people know how big this market is," he said. "This has attracted some competitors." Schmid noted that because eCopy is private, it is not their policy to discuss profitability.

Lower Prices Increase Unit Sales

There was one significant change in the make-up of eCopy's 2005 revenue compared to 2004, and

that involved the number of seats the company sold. "It wasn't until late in our fiscal 2004 that our tiered pricing model took effect," said Schmid. "When we implemented that, we found there was quite a bit of elasticity at the lower end of the market. When we dropped our price from \$6,995 to \$3,995 in the lower-volume segment, we found there was a three-fold increase in the percentage of Canon ImageRunners on which *ShareScan* was included."

eCopy has since dropped its price across the board to \$3,995—\$2,995 for embedded applications, such as the version of *ShareScan* that runs on Canon's MEAP platform. "When selling through multiple channels, we decided that multiple price points would be too hard to manage," said Schmid.

The effort to sell more seats at lower costs jives with the company's efforts to sell more solutions, rather than standalone applications. This solutions-oriented approach can be seen in the steadily increasing number of ISV partners signing on with eCopy. "When the year started, we had 16 ISV partners; at PaperConnection [in April], we had 23; now we have 45," said Schmid. "We will continue to try and support all the applications our customers want us to—either through writing connections or by making our SDK available to ISVs to write their own integrations.

"We also want to support every digital copier/MFP device available. We have made announcements with a lot of vendors, but there are still more we want to cover."

Schmid concluded that 2005 likely represented the most radical business changes his company will see for some time. "Over the next couple years, it is all about execution," he said.

For more information: <http://www.ecopy.com>

Microsoft Strengthens ECM Position

Last issue, we wrote about **Oracle's** attack on the ECM market and the release of its 10g collaboration platform. While we were putting that issue together, it seems **Microsoft** was busy plotting its own ECM course at its Professional Developers Conference being held in Los Angeles. In addition to its well-publicized plans for *Office 12*, Microsoft announced a significant upgrade for the next release of its *Content Management Server* (CMS) product. Both new versions are tightly tied to the release of the new Windows Vista operating systems, which is scheduled to hit the streets in about 12 months.

Specifically, Microsoft will integrate CMS, which to date has focused on Web-content management, more tightly with its *SharePoint* file server application. Microsoft also announced it would be increasing CMS' search, collaboration, and business intelligence capabilities—the final part through tighter integration with Microsoft's SQL server database. In addition, Microsoft has revealed plans to introduce improved document, records, and information lifecycle capabilities—which we assume will come with *SharePoint* and/or CMS. Finally, Microsoft has introduced a new Windows Workflow Foundation (WWF)—a platform that will ship with Vista, and a WWF application that will be built into *Office 12*.

Microsoft Provides Workflow Basics

When the announcement for WWF was made, **Captaris**, which has had some success integrating its workflow application with *SharePoint*, immediately announced support for the new platform. "Like most of Microsoft's technology, WWF represents a foundation that Microsoft partners can build their applications on top of," Eric Bean, senior director, products group at Captaris, told *DIR*. "Microsoft's workflow technology will basically enable users to automate the routing of documents around the enterprise. However, when users run into more complex situations where they require functionality like task management, or routing based on the context of a document, or when data needs to be moved between tasks, or when they are dealing with a lot of authentication and exceptions, there will be plenty of room for Microsoft partners to step in."

An article in *IT Week* suggested that Microsoft's workflow capabilities would facilitate, "e-mail approval of a *Word* document through the *Outlook* interface." Bean added that Microsoft is really targeting "information users." "If you are doing a market analysis, your final product is a *PowerPoint* presentation, and you are working entirely with *Office 12* documents, then you could rely solely on Microsoft workflow. However, in situations where a document is just an artifact of a critical business transaction, such as approving a purchase order, you are going to need something more robust."

Bean compared WWF to the underlying database on which a CRM application runs. "It's like a file system, or a messaging system, or even the GUI Windows interface that Microsoft builds," he said. "We leverage all these elements to build applications to solve specific business problems."

Bean expects Captaris' success with *SharePoint* to continue. "We have some customers that focus on very base level workflow that may now overlap with Microsoft's capabilities, but that is not where our focus is," he said. "Just like our document

management and fax server technology is complementary to what *SharePoint* provides as a file system, we view our workflow technology as complementary to Microsoft's workflow functionality.

"Also, now that Microsoft is introducing the concept of workflow to millions of users, it will give us more opportunity to upsell them more complex solutions. I think *SharePoint* has had that sort of positive effect on the ECM market."

For more information: <http://www.captaris.com>

Some Views From ARMA

by Mike Cohn, contributor

CHICAGO – With records management technology now a fully integrated piece of the ECM pie, the annual **ARMA Conference and Expo** is taking on growing importance to vendors in the document imaging market. Last month, ARMA held its 50th annual event at the **Navy Pier** in Chicago, and we saw many traditional **AIIM** vendors on the show floor. Part of the attraction is that ARMA professionals apparently now have serious budgets to dole out in pursuit of compliance solutions.

Historically ARMA members were, at best, strong recommenders and could possibly influence in some minor way the document imaging/ECM solutions being managed by IT and the CIO arm of the enterprise. Now, due to the serious penalties that CEOs and CFOs face in signing their names to corporate financial statements, it has become clear that ARMA professionals enjoy decision-making authority and hence AIIM vendor scrutiny.

Despite lighter traffic than you'd see at an AIIM show, and comments that ARMA attendees did not have the same "look" as typical AIIM attendees, the feedback we received was that the traffic was quality.

Price is Right

One of the attractions for AIIM vendors is they can participate in ARMA at significantly lower expenses, as the size of one's booth does not provide any bragging rights or sense of success, as it typically has at AIIM. This results in a lower headcount and resources to manage the booth—making lead generation a more reasonable expense to accept. Furthermore, with ARMA coming in early fall, it buoys up the marketing/sales cycles with meaningful leads to pursue to (hopefully) allow for a successful finish to the year.

It seems that ARMA has become what AIIM used to be before its coupling with On Demand and the race to have the biggest booth. While not all the usual AIIM players were present, it is clear that there are significantly more crossing over to the ARMA market based on the reasons stated earlier: less booth size, less staff, less "golden hours" time since the exhibits started at noon on Sunday, and attendees motivated to spend money.

I expect to see more AIIM vendors in San Antonio next year for the 2006 show, and more cooperation between the ARMA and the AIIM organizations. *[Mike has held several marketing and channel development positions, as well as working as a freelance consultant, in the industry over the past 13 years. He can be contacted at marketconsultant@sbcglobal.net.]*

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