

# Document Imaging Report

Business Trends on Converting Paper Processes to Electronic Format

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November 5, 2004

## THIS JUST IN!

### NEW IMAGERUNNERS, MEAP APPS HIGHLIGHT CANON EVENT

LAS VEGAS – As befits the leading vendor in the digital copier market, hardware played a big role at **Canon's** recent Digital Solutions Forum (DSF) held last week at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center. DSF is Canon USA's annual document technologies showcase. This year's event was attended by a select number of dealers, analysts, and press.

At DSF, Canon introduced 14 new ImageRunner digital copier models. But to Canon's credit, its top executives made sure to acknowledge the role that integrated software plays in hardware sales. A number of new software applications were debuted as well. What we didn't see were any new document scanners—but after launching five new models in the last two years, perhaps it was time for a rest.

In addition to the absence of scanners, long-time scanner marketing manager George Morris was missing—having left Canon the week before the event. Dennis Amoroso, director and general manager of Canon's Integrated Solutions Division, said he and Morris had different ideas on the direction Canon's scanner line should take. "We both decided it was time for change," Amoroso told *DIR*.

### **eCopy Introduces Color MEAP App**

What has not changed is Canon's vision for making digital copiers a part of the IT infrastructure. Of the new scanners, all but three were MEAP enabled. Introduced last year, MEAP is an open architecture which enables ISVs to develop applications that can be run directly through the control panel of ImageRunner devices. The applications can either be completely embedded in the copier or deployed

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 5...**

## Acquisition Beefs Up Kofax Forms Play

It was more than five years ago that then **Kofax** VP of marketing Kevin Drum braved the cold and snows of Erie, PA in February. He traveled from Southern California to tell us about the forms processing features being introduced into the company's *Ascent Capture* platform [see *DIR* 3/5/99]. A lot has come to pass since then. Not the least of which is Drum becoming the editor of liberal news blog *The Washington Monthly* (<http://www.washingtonmonthly.com>). Related to forms processing, Kofax has made slow, if not steady progress. Its latest step, however, may be its most significant. Late last month Kofax parent **Dicom Group** agreed to pay up to 8.3 million British Pounds (approximately \$15.3 million) for Cambridge-U.K.-based recognition and forms processing software developer **Neurascript**.

"From a tactical standpoint, we are already using Neurascript's technology in our *Ascent Advanced Forms Module*, and the acquisition has enabled us to secure that technology," said Anthony Macciola, Kofax's VP of marketing and development. "Financially, that will increase our margins from forms sales. From a strategic standpoint, Neurascript will provide us with a skill set and market expertise in high-end forms solutions. We are looking forward to building out the product line and technology."

Neurascript was founded in 1991 as a developer of character recognition technology. "You can only take character recognition to a certain level; then you find you can't go any further," explained Richard Brierton, Neurascript's managing director. "So, we moved into forms. Historically, we have been very strong processing high volumes of structured forms. A key market for us has been the U.K. central government where we have installations handling more than 100,000 forms per day.

"However, over the last 18 months to two years, our main focus has been developing technology to

process semi-structured and unstructured documents. This includes invoice processing. It also includes automating the indexing and classification of general correspondence and documents.”



**“We have a proven track record working with the Neurascript team. This acquisition is a natural extension of a strategy that has already been successful for us.”**

**— Anthony Macciola, Kofax**

### **Different Classes Of Classification**

According to Macciola, Neurascript’s work in this area will fit nicely with the technology Kofax acquired with auto-classification and extraction specialist Mohomine in 2003 [see *DIR* 4/25/03].

“There are several ways to do classification of documents, and Neurascript and Mohomine each bring different technologies to the table,” Macciola told *DIR*. “Yes, they both have text classifiers, but Neurascript’s is not as mature as Mohomine’s. Neurascript does more with rules and validation, as well as image-based classification. There are some great synergies between Mohomine and Neurascript, and we have already combined the product lines in a pilot project processing loan documents.”

Macciola went on to say that Mohomine’s technology might be applicable in an area like e-mail classification where Neurascript’s would not fit. “In the real world, most businesses are dealing with hybrid environments combining a variety of document types,” he said.

### **High-End App Not For Every VAR**

Neurascript and Kofax were partners for more than three years prior to the acquisition. During that time, Macciola estimates Kofax had 25-30 North American installations leveraging Neurascript’s technology. These include systems for processing HCFA forms, unemployment claims, university admissions, and department of transportation forms. Recently, Kofax announced an EOB processing installation, which represents Kofax’s first *Advanced Forms* win involving semi-structured forms. “Neurascript’s technology is much further ahead than we’ve been able to leverage so far,” said Macciola.

Macciola indicated that all the *Advanced Forms* sales have come through Kofax resellers, and that about a dozen VARs are currently certified on the module. “A lot of people may say that [because of its high-end nature] Neurascript’s technology is not a good fit for our channel,” said Macciola. “They don’t realize, because we don’t make that much noise

## **Document Imaging Report**

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about it, that our channel is actually segmented. And we think about 10% of our channel has the skill set to handle this type of product.” (Based on numbers we published in February, that would equate to about 120 VARs worldwide.)

For resellers not up to the Neurascript level, Kofax introduced its lower-end *Xtrata* solution this spring [to Macciola’s credit, he also braved the snows of Erie to give us a demo, see *DIR* 2/20/04]. Kofax also offers an invoice processing application based on technology from **Océ ODT**. Known as *Ascent for Invoices*, it requires a separate certification than the *Advanced Forms Module* and is installed at a number of sites including merchandise rental giant **Rent-A-Center**. Macciola indicated that Kofax plans to maintain its relationship with Océ ODT.

### ***Neurascript To Benefit From Larger Infrastructure***

Apart from its deals with Kofax, Brierton indicated Neurascript has about 100 installations of its own, mostly in Europe. Neurascript’s application is branded *Indicius*. According to a Dicom press release, Neurascript’s revenue for the 12 months ended in March 2004 was 1.3 million British Pounds (approximately \$2.4 million). In light of these numbers, it’s probably worth noting that only 3.1 million British Pounds (\$5.7 million) of Dicom’s payout is guaranteed with the rest “payable in cash, depending on the achievement of certain targets.”

Neurascript has 18 employees, all of which Macciola said would remain. “As a small company, Neurascript was limited in what it could do marketing-wise,” he added. “We are looking forward to using Dicom’s considerable resources to further open up the European market.”

A handful of Neurascript’s European installations involved integration with *InputAccel*, the capture platform of Kofax’s arch-rival **Captiva**. Neurascript, in fact, is listed as a Captiva Certified Technology Partner. “We drove most of that business ourselves,” indicated Brierton. “Most of it involved existing *InputAccel* users that wanted to soup up their applications.”

### ***Kofax Finally Picks A Dance Partner***

Ever since Kofax and Neurascript first announced their partnership, there have been rumors of an impending acquisition. Of course, there have also been rumors about Kofax and almost every other forms processing vendor—including Cardiff, in which Dicom actually was an equity investor until search specialist **Verity** finally bought Cardiff earlier this year [see *DIR* 2/20/04].

Kofax actually did make one previous forms

processing acquisition, paying some \$2.4 million for high-end technology from **RAF** in 1999 [see *DIR* 9/3/99]. However, less than a year later, the project involving that technology was scrapped [see *DIR* 7/7/00].

“Back when we bought the RAF technology, we hadn’t yet established a significant forms play,” Macciola told *DIR*. “We didn’t have the sales and marketing set up to address that market. We took the attitude that, if we built it, maybe they would come. We now recognize the land mines that we ran into, and have sidestepped them this time around.”


“We have actively been selling high-end forms solutions for over two years now. We have several significant customer wins in that area. We have a proven track record working with the Neurascript team. This acquisition is a natural extension of a strategy that has already been successful for us.”

### ***Market Ready For Combined Apps***

We shall see. A few dozen installations and the acquisition of a \$2.4 million software vendor certainly does not immediately catapult Kofax to the level of the leading forms players in the market. However, with Kofax’s resources, experience, and channel, the potential is certainly there. Of course, the potential was there before, and yet, for some reason, Kofax has really struggled to establish itself in the forms space. Conversely, until Captiva merged with ActionPoint, no forms vendor was able to gain a real stronghold in the capture space either.

So, what makes us think Kofax may succeed this time around? Well, for one, in recent months, Captiva has been reporting a lot more combined capture and forms deals than in the days immediately following its merger. In fact, indications are that Captiva’s recently announced \$2 million deal with a Fortune 100 retailer is an example of a combined forms/capture deal.

Yes, as is typical, it seems the market has finally caught up to the vendors who for years have been preaching the convergence of data and document capture. The cause of this is probably a combination of things, including compliance concerns which are driving a desire to image everything, and better technology being made available for managing more complex imaging environments. While Kofax doesn’t control the first part of that combination, the Neurascript acquisition certainly gives it a leg up in providing the second.

For more information: <http://www.Kofax.com>;  
<http://www.neurascript.com> 

# Fax Server Leader Buys IMR

## Captaris ups stake in the ECM market with \$26.5 million acquisition.

A month after **Kofax**-parent **Dicom** announced its plans to jump into the fax server business with the acquisition of **Topcall**—fax server market leader **Captaris** announced its own plans to jump into the document imaging world. In October, Captaris, whose flagship product line is *RightFax*, agreed to pay \$26.5 million for **IMR**, an Englewood, CO-based software vendor. The acquisition accelerates the transition of publicly traded Captaris into the digital marketplace.

“Two years ago, we realized the market we were competing in—the unified communications space focusing on voice and fax—was not going very well,” acknowledged Eric Bean, senior director, products group for Captaris. “We also recognized *RightFax* was the real gem of our product portfolio. As the majority of our success was in deploying *RightFax* to manage unstructured information, we began considering other technology that could fill out an unstructured information capture and delivery portfolio.”

Captaris’ first move in re-inventing itself was to sell off its voice messaging business in September of last year. That announcement was followed a day later by the acquisition of **TeamPlate**, a Canadian developer of .NET-based workflow software. “With *RightFax*, we already had an on- and off-ramp for delivery of business information,” said Bean. “Workflow provides routing from the time the information comes in until the time it gets delivered to somewhere. Continuing with the highway analogy, our CEO likes to say workflow provides directions as to which turns and off-ramps

information should use. Taking it one step further, IMR’s repository provides some parking.”

## A Shared Focus On Unstructured Info

Captaris and IMR officially began working together in June, when IMR agreed to resell the *TeamPlate* application as an OEM module for its *Alchemy* document management suite. Before acquiring IMR, Captaris looked at more than a half dozen other document imaging vendors. “As we began working together, we realized that Captaris and IMR had the same strategic directions,” said Steve Grandchamp, president and CEO of IMR. “Although we use different descriptive terms, we both manage the flow of unstructured information around the enterprise. And we both are focused on the mid-market and have strong reseller channels.”

On a conference call discussing the IMR acquisition, David Anastasi, CEO of Captaris, described the synergies between the companies in this way: “Both companies focus on digitizing documents and information streams. IMR’s technology eliminates file cabinets. *RightFax* eliminates fax lines and fax machines. Both produce visible ROIs related to specific business processes.”

## Compliance Key Business Driver

According to Captaris CFO Peter Papano, IMR’s 2003 revenue was \$12 million, with half coming from software and half from services and maintenance agreements. The acquisition is an all cash transaction funded by approximately 30% of the cash and investments that were listed on Captaris’ balance sheet at the end of the second quarter.

For the second quarter, Captaris reported revenue of \$18.2 million, with 96% of that related to *RightFax* and the rest to *TeamPlate*. Captaris’ *RightFax*

### IMR STRENGTHENS FIXED CONTENT CAPABILITIES

In our last issue, we talked about **IBM** addressing the compliance concerns of the Fortune 2000. In the past, **IMR** VP of Marketing Dan Lucarini has joked that his company addresses the needs of the “not-so-fortunate 100,000.” Compliance with regulations, however, is no laughing matter to small-to-mid-sized businesses. IMR recognizes this and directly addresses this niche with its new *Alchemy 8.0* suite.

IMR first introduced records

management into *Alchemy* with version 7.4 [see *DIR* 7/25/03]. With version 8.0, those capabilities have been beefed up. *Alchemy* was scheduled for DoD 5015.2 certification testing by the **Joint Interoperability Test Command** (<http://jitic.fhu.disa.mil/recmgt/>) late last month. “One of the new things we’ve done is introduce a fixed content management server,” Lucarini told *DIR*. “This enables end users, from a single point of access, to manage the lifecycle of all their fixed content. This can include images, electronic documents, reports, and e-mails.”

Lucarini added that although the *Alchemy* application sits on a single server, it can be used to manage content stored across several servers or even several types of storage media.

One of the most attractive features of *Alchemy 8.0* is its price. A server license starts at \$8,995, which includes the *Alchemy* repository and new EDM functionality. Imaging, records management, e-mail management, high-volume report management, and workflow modules are also priced specifically for the mid-market.

business grew 12% over 2003, a trend Bean said is attributable to compliance concerns. "Compliance has created a resurgence in the fax server market," he told *DIR*. "Many businesses in the healthcare and financial services industries receive hundreds of faxes per day. Without fax server software, they're often leaving it up to poorly paid clerks to retrieve paper faxes from a bank of fax machines and get it to where it's supposed to be. *RightFax* assures that every fax received is tracked and auditable. When you combine *RightFax* with a document management solution like *Alchemy*—you have a complete records management application."

### ***RightFax Hopes To Maintain ECM Partnerships***

*RightFax's* adoption for compliance dovetails nicely with the recent direction of IMR's *Alchemy* line. IMR introduced records management functionality into *Alchemy* last summer and has upgraded it in Version 8.0, due to ship this month [see story on page 4]. "Captaris and IMR share several VARs who have already integrated *RightFax* with *Alchemy*," said Bean. "One partner is currently working on a solution for a healthcare business that receives a stack of disparate faxes from a network of doctors' offices every night. They have to split stacks of faxes into records and then archive them as records to meet with HIPAA regulations."

*Alchemy* is not the only ECM application that has been integrated with *RightFax*. **FileNET** has an OEM agreement with Captaris. **Documentum**, **Hyland**, **Hummingbird**, and **Interwoven** are all listed on Captaris' Web site as strategic partners. "We expect all those relationships to continue," said Bean. "As far as FileNET goes, there is really very little overlap between its business and IMR's. Also, although we plan to hit the market through our channel with a more tightly integrated *Alchemy* and *RightFax* solution, we will continue to make our APIs available for integration with other applications."


"As far as *TeamPlate* goes, we view OEM agreements as one of our channel strategies. We are currently in some very active discussions along those lines and will continue to work with third-party ECM vendors."

### ***IMR Completes Turnaround***

For IMR, the acquisition represents the final step in a turnaround that began three years ago when Grandchamp joined the company. At the time, IMR was recovering from a misguided venture into XML-based image enablement [see *DIR* 12/15/00]. "I helped IMR get back to its core roots," said Grandchamp. "The business has been stabilized, and we have our core strategies laid out in the right places."

"At the same time, the business has been investor owned for a number of years, and at some point the investors were looking for a return. With Captaris' strategy being so closely aligned with ours, and with the fact that Captaris is a public company with a good reputation, our board decided the acquisition was the right move."

In addition to the *Alchemy* line, Captaris picks up the *Mercury* high-volume COLD product that IMR launched last year [see *DIR* 11/7/03], as well as the company's *MailStore* e-mail archiving application. IMR has also been a long-time leader in output-to-CD technology. "IMR has some unique intellectual properties in the areas of file conversion and viewing," said Anastasi. "We will consider integrating those into *TeamPlate* and our other product lines."

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

### ***DIR WEB EXTRA—***

To read our editorial comment on this acquisition, go to the "Have You Seen This?" area of our Web site at <http://www.documentimagingreport.com>

### ***CANON DSF, FROM PAGE 1***

through a network server. Document imaging software developer and long-time Canon partner **eCopy** introduced the first MEAP solution at **AIIM 2004** [see *DIR* 4/9/04]. At DSF, eCopy announced the second version of its MEAP-based *ShareScan OP* application.

The main upgrade to *ShareScan OP 2.0* is its ability to support color ImageRunners. Canon introduced its first MEAP-enabled color device earlier this year, and the second one was announced at DSF. Ed Schmid, president and CEO of eCopy, estimated that about 10% of eCopy's sales of its traditional, non-MEAP product are used with color copiers. Overall, color devices account for 6% of Canon's digital copier units sold.

"The key to *ShareScan's* dealing effectively with color images is our advanced compression PDF technology," Schmid told *DIR*. "By separating text and graphical elements of images and compressing them differently, we create significantly smaller file sizes, which is important because most of our customers are scanning documents to move them around a network."

### ***A Platform On The Rise***

Canon also introduced two of its own MEAP-

enabled applications at DSF. One is a MEAP-enabled version of Canon's *imageWARE* document management application. It is designed to allow users to scan, view, and send files from *imageWARE* through the ImageRunner control panel. The second is Canon's *Virtual Mailbox* application, which is designed to enable users at remote locations to print documents stored in a network mailbox.

Also, legal document capture specialist **Ribstone Systems** (<http://www.rbsys.com>) debuted its first MEAP application—in the area of bates stamping.

Despite the relatively slow introduction of MEAP applications by third-party vendors, perhaps the best sign of the potential of this platform is that last month, Canon rival **Ricoh** introduced its own flavor of MEAP. It's called the Embedded Software Architecture Software Development Kit [yes, *that's a mouthful*] and is being billed as a "development tool that allows systems integrators, ISVs, and in-house developers to deliver customized Java-based solutions hosted on MFPs and laser printers." We hope to have more on that in an upcoming issue.

### **A Brief Copier Rundown**

On the hardware front, Canon introduced what Amorosano termed the company's "third generation black-and-white image platform architecture." Four new MEAP-enabled ImageRunners in the 22-45 ppm range based on this new platform have already begun shipping. Three lower-priced, non-MEAP devices are due out in the first half of next year. Some higher-end devices slated for release next year, were also announced.

The aforementioned color-enabled MEAP device is the ImageRunner C5800. It is rated at 58 ppm in bi-tonal and 16 ppm in color. It is scheduled to ship this month and carries a list price of \$21,000.

### **Scanners To Add More Software**

As far as dedicated document scanners go, Amorosano indicated his marketing vision does not call for any radical changes. "We will continue to focus on the market range where we have had success," he told *DIR*. "You will see more of a focus on software and solutions. In the past, we've pretty much packaged drivers to enable customers and resellers to connect to whatever applications they want.



*Dennis Amorosano,  
director and general  
manager, Canon's  
Integrated Solutions  
Division*

"In the future, you will see us doing more bundling and integration with both our internally developed and third-party applications. Also, while we will continue to aggressively support our traditional imaging distribution partners, as well as our IFS [Canon's traditional microfilm reseller] channel, we will also look to increase the number of scanners being sold through our dealer and digital copier channels."

For more information: <http://www.usa.canon.com>;  
<http://www.ecopy.com> **DIR**

## **IKON Revamps Imaging Strategy—Again**

**IKON** has embarked on yet another effort to consolidate its imaging technology. As part of its latest strategic direction, the \$4-billion digital copier super dealer recently named **EMC Documentum** as its tier-one partner for document management installations in North America.

According to Adam Caromicoli, national director of solution engineering for IKON Enterprise Services, the partnership is part of IKON's strategy to create a single set of vendors whose products IKON can market through its nationwide base of office systems dealers. "IKON's history has involved a lot of growth through acquisition," Caromicoli told *DIR*. "As a result, we have several localized relationships with different software vendors.

"About a year ago, we embarked on a strategy to assemble a fairly comprehensive set of tier-one technologies that cover the full lifecycle of a document—including capture, workflow, storage, archiving, and output. We recognize it is difficult to maintain training and support for a lot of different products. We also wanted to establish an integrated set of technologies that could deliver a specific set of functionality out-of-the-box. Then, instead of focusing on integrating several products, we will be able to really focus on addressing customer needs."

To choose its tier-one products, earlier this year IKON held a series of vendor meetings. "We sat down for a half day with 35-40 different vendors," explained Caromicoli. "In the end, we saw certain capabilities in Documentum's *ApplicationXtender* line that we liked. We also like the way Documentum offered to support us with training, marketing, sales, and in the field. They just have a tremendous amount of resources to bring to the table."

The loser in IKON's choice of Documentum appears to be Branford, CT-based **Westbrook**

**Technologies.** Two years ago, IKON made a similar announcement involving Westbrook. In fact, the first part of our conversation with Caromicoli was eerily similar to one we had with IKON VP of Strategic Services Bill Blake two years ago. At that time, Blake announced that IKON had embarked on a plan to train its nationwide network of dealers on Westbrook's document image management technology [see *DIR* 11/15/02]. From all accounts that we had, the IKON/Westbrook relationship seemed to be going well.

In fact, Caromicoli hedged a bit on the tier-one vision when we asked him where Westbrook fits in IKON's future. "We have implemented a lot of content management systems with Westbrook, and they will continue to be a partner for us," he told *DIR*. [Although Caromicoli didn't come out and say it, we assume some of IKON's larger customers wanted software from a bigger vendor.]

### **IKON's Capture Conundrum**

As we alluded to in our introduction, IKON changing its document imaging strategies is certainly nothing new. There was a time in the late 1990s when it seemed we were writing about an IKON reorg every six months. At that time, IKON was still trying to digest a number of document imaging systems VARs and a large service bureau operation it had acquired. These acquisitions came in the wake of a name change from Alco Standard. All these actions were part of the company's effort to transition into the digital age.

We thought IKON was well past that transition stage. However, one look at its document image capture portfolio should have told us different. After announcing a partnership with **Kofax** last month, IKON is now a reseller of no less than four image capture products. In addition to Kofax's *Ascent Capture*, which in all fairness is aimed at the production capture space that IKON's other three offerings don't address, IKON carries digital copier based capture products from **NSi** and **eCopy**, as well as an OEM product developed by **EFI**.

"Only *DocSend* (the EFI product) and the eCopy product could be considered competitive," said Caromicoli. "They are both focused on creating a friendly user interface, which is important when you're taking scanning out of the backroom and moving it into the hands of office workers. NSi's *AutoStore* product acts more as a middleware to connect images to enterprise applications and processes."

eCopy offers a series of connectors as well, but Caromicoli pointed to *AutoStore*'s longer list of third-party integrations as proof of NSi's superiority in this

area. Ed Schmid, president and CEO of eCopy, takes exception to that view. "*AutoStore* is fine if all a user wants to do is use a release script to enable images to be imported into an application from a watched folder," said Schmid. "This is pretty much the same way that Kofax's *Ascent Capture* works. At eCopy, we take our connection a bit further and enable users to directly interact with the systems we are connecting to.

"For example, we attempt to emulate the interface of the connected application. This gives the digital copier the same look and feel users are accustomed to on their desktops. We actually use the same security and authentication controls as well. The feedback I get is that users really like the robustness of our integration."

According to Schmid, almost 25% of eCopy's installations now include connectors. eCopy develops some of the connectors itself, and also makes a connector toolkit available to ISVs. "Currently, we have about 30 partners developing connectors that we expect to be announced in the next six months," said Schmid.

According to Schmid, cost recovery applications favored by law firms to count copies and scans are the most popular application eCopy customers are connecting to. These are followed by **Interwoven's** document management application—the former iManage product is also popular in the legal space. Ironically, Schmid said sales of the Documentum connector are coming on strong. "And Documentum just announced a MEAP-based connector for *ApplicationXtender*," he added.

### **He Said, He Said...**


So, if it's not a question of connectors, why has IKON, which through its relationship with Canon has a long-standing relationship with eCopy, gone out and signed on with two other digital copier-focused capture vendors? "I think it's more of an emotional issue with someone at IKON that it is a technical one," ventured Schmid.

Caromicoli gave us a more pragmatic answer. "One of the problems with eCopy is that they work almost exclusively with Canon products," he said. "Although Canon is our leading hardware vendor, **Ricoh** and **HP** are also major MFP vendors for us. We really want to be able to offer a single interface across all our product lines."

When we asked Schmid about the potential of eCopy's software being integrated with other copier vendors' products, he gave us his standard answer. As long as eCopy continues to be successful focusing mainly on Canon, he is not particularly motivated to

change the business plan. He added, however, that eCopy plans to expand its current relationship with **Océ** and has never ruled out working with other vendors.

seen.

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

### Talking The Talk...

Yes, IKON clearly has its work cut out for it as it implements its new tier-one strategy. Like many companies that grow through acquisitions, IKON has found it very difficult to get all its disparate parts moving in the same direction. IKON is one of several businesses that did document imaging related rollups in the mid-to-late 1990s and most of them have gone through some consolidation pains. ImageMax and **Lason** both went bankrupt, and now news has surfaced that **SourceCorp** has uncovered some accounting misdeeds.

One thing we can say positive about IKON is that at least they are talking the right talk. They get the fact that an organization's document flow can be most effectively managed from end-to-end with a series of integrated enterprise-wide applications. Whether they can effectively back this up remains to be

### REDUCED SET-UP TIME KEY TO NEW INVOICE SOLUTION

**SER Solutions** has announced a new version of its *SERdistiller* application targeted specifically at invoice processing. It features drag-and-drop technology for creating classes of invoices, and is designed to significantly reduce setup time. "While the previous version was very accurate, the feedback we received was that our customers wanted to get their systems into production faster," said Sandra Wade, VP of marketing and product management for SER. "We achieved this by eliminating the training associated with capturing invoice data."

According to Wade, the previous version of *SERdistiller* required a learn set consisting of 10 to 20 documents to effectively capture data from a class of invoice. "A system administrator would pare down the results and maybe add some scripting to increase the accuracy," she said. "With the new version, we have implemented what we call 'Supervised Learning.' Leveraging this technology, a user only needs to identify a field once, and the system will recognize it on any future documents that have a similar layout."

*SERdistiller 3.0 for Invoice Processing* also features new table extraction capabilities that enable users to more efficiently set up line item capture processes. "One of the main benefits of Supervised Learning is an 80% reduction in the number of classes users need to set up," said Wade. "With the old technology, there was a lot of guess work and trial and error. End users weren't really sure which classes were going to take. With the new technology, the system decides when a new class needs to be created."

Wade estimated SER has 100 *SERdistiller* customers, 50% of which are using it for invoice processing. "Our two largest customers are each processing more than 9,000 invoices per day and are capturing line item details," she said. "Teaming with large systems integrators like **BearingPoint** has given us entrée into the Global 2000 space. We see a huge opportunity now that we have proof points that we can support large invoice capture environments."

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

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