December 3, 2010

RICOH ANNOUNCES SCAN APP FOR MICROSOFT SERVER

I guess if scanning from MFPs is truly to become a mainstream technology, then **Microsoft** certainly has to have an app in this area. Turns out it does, which I first learned about when **Ricoh** announced an "MFP scan-management solution," based on Microsoft's Distributed Scan Management (DSM) tool, which is included in Windows Server 2008 R2. According to a Ricoh press release, the new Ricoh solution, "provides basic scanning functions from Ricoh MFPs and is managed by an administrator through the [Windows] server. Users enter the 'Scanner' function key on their Ricoh device and select 'Distributed Scan' to access it."

"DSM can be used to administer domain scan resources from a central location," said Ron Albeck, manager, capture and distribution marketing, for Ricoh Americas Corporation. "With DSM, users can automate document workflows by creating 'scan processes.' These are sets of rules that specify image processing and document delivery on a network. These processes specify user permissions and document scan settings. You can specify scanning to SharePoint, Exchange, home folders, and file servers.

"In addition, DSM can be used to monitor scanners on a network and log all scan-related events. You can also use DSM to specify scan settings and monitor Web services on each Ricoh Aficio (WSD)–enabled MFP."

DSM does not currently support meta data capture or OCR processes. "Those functions will be supported in DSM in the future," said Albeck. "In addition, Microsoft has other ISVs that are developing their solutions to support

ShareScan Improvements a Nod Toward Enterprise Capture

The emerging market for enterprise capture is all about bringing together, in a single platform, multiple types of document capture. **Nuance's** new eCopy ShareScan 5 certainly takes a step in that direction. The latest release from the New England-based MFP capture specialist introduces features like forms processing and improved centralized administration. These capabilities enable ShareScan, traditionally deployed as an ad hoc capture application, to be used in processes historically handled by batch capture software.

"With ShareScan 5, we close the gap between the productivity improvements offered in batch capture and what can be done with ad hoc capture software," said Bill DeStefanis, Nuance's senior manager, MFP products. "Lately, we've been pulled more and more often toward production capture, as our customers' level of sophistication increases. They have become familiar with the capabilities of software from vendors like Kofax, ReadSoft, and Autonomy. As a result, we are being asked for capabilities like forms recognition and data extraction, that include features like database lookups.

"Up until now, MFP capture has been primarily focused on converting paper to digital images and putting them into a system so they can be shared or archived. Now, everybody offers that, including MFP vendors. To differentiate ourselves, we're trying to add more value and build document workflows.

"We don't just want to hand-off images to third-party systems anymore. We want to hand-off meta data as well, for indexing, and be able to direct images to specific workflows, based on information we've extracted."

Nuance has introduced forms processing into ShareScan 5 through the Extender feature it first introduced at the AIIM show this year [*see DIR 5/7/10*]. Extenders basically enable the insertion of functionality like conversion of images to Office documents, auto-document classification, and data extraction, into the ShareScan capture process—prior to a document being

released to a back-end system. These functions can be executed from the touchscreen of an MFP device [*see screenshot on page 3*].

"It was about a year ago that eCopy was acquired by Nuance, and this is the first major release of eCopy's flagship product since the acquisition was completed," said DeStefanis. "A lot has changed in the last year, and ShareScan 5 is the first commercial application that shows some of the improvements we've been able to make. Because we now own our PDF and OCR technology, instead of having to license it, we've been able to do a lot more with it."

In addition to the Forms Processing Extender, Nuance has leveraged its legacy technology to create a Redact & Highlight Extender, as well as introduce conversion of images to Word and Excel formats within the ShareScan capture app. Nuance has also improved the image enhancement within ShareScan, through features like advanced compression.

All these features are included in the ShareScan Suite, which lists for $2,995 per MFP. There are also ShareScan Elements and Office versions, which list for $795 and $1,495, respectively. For the latter two versions, the Forms Processing Extender lists for $995. "We recommend that our channel partners provide professional services to help with the configuration the Forms Processing Extender," added DeStefanis.

There is also an advanced version of the Forms Processing Extender, which is based on **EMC Captiva's** Dispatcher technology. It is only available through a professional services agreement.

MPS Integration Key for Growth

ShareScan 5 also features improved administration in several areas. "We've introduced a new framework for centralized administration of ShareScan running on multiple MFPs," said DeStefanis. "Users can now manage all ShareScan-enabled devices from one console and logically group devices. Also, ShareScan servers can now communicate with one another and share profiles that are managed in a shared SQL database. This makes it much easier for network administrators to deploy and maintain large fleets of MFPs."

There are also new reporting tools that can be integrated with managed print services (MPS) platforms. "This includes the ability to monitor the health and scanning throughput of MFP devices," said DeStefanis. "It's important for us to integrate with MPS tools, because, more and more often, MFPs are being obtained through MPS contracts.

"And once businesses optimize printing through these contracts, we see an opportunity for MFP vendors and dealers to introduce additional value by improving paper processes through electronic workflows. We can help them do that with ShareScan 5.

"Document management offers MFP vendors and dealers a way to extend their services offerings, which has helped change the conversions we've been having with our partners. We are confident we can help them grow their MPS businesses, because we help the vendors and dealers establish longer-term engagements with their customers."

Also, on the MFP front, DeStefanis said eCopy is developing technology that will help Nuance adjust to the increasing deployment of lower-cost, A4-size devices in the market. "Historically, eCopy's business has been based on selling ShareScan with larger A3 devices," he said. "We are working on an A4 client that can support devices that don't have the large touchscreens that A3 devices do."

Expanding distribution channels

ShareScan 5 is the first version that has a client that will run embedded in **Xerox** devices, leveraging Xerox's EIP (extensible interface platform) technology. In addition, for the first time, the Xerox direct sales team will be able to resell ShareScan. Formerly, only Xerox Global Imaging Systems sold eCopy products.

Nuance is also helping out its software partners by making their products available directly to its expanding hardware channel. "We have more than 100 active eCap partners that have built Connectors from ShareScan to back-end systems," said DeStefanis. "However, because of the nature of the MFP channel, some of our ISV partners are having trouble moving their products. To help them get around distribution issues, we've introduced an eCap certification program, through which our partners will be able to take advantage of our distribution channel.

"We will certify their Connectors and brand them as Nuance products. They will be listed on our channel price books. Initially, we are targeting Connectors for Xerox DocuShare, **HP** Trim, and **SalesForce.com** for certification."

Nuance has also helped out its eCap partners by re-writing its SDK. "It now has a true .NET architecture," said DeStefanis. "This makes it much more developer friendly. The SDK also includes new simulation tools to shield developers from anything to do with scanning. This means they don't have to have MFPs on-site."

Nuance has also improved the ShareScan interface for the users. "The user interface has always been one of the hallmarks of ShareScan, but we've done some things like embrace the newest Microsoft design," said DeStefanis. "We have no expectations that MFP users will be trained on how to use their devices for scanning, so we continue to make our application as intuitive as possible. On the personalization front, we've introduced the concept that anywhere on a network a user logs onto an MFP, they will see a personalized menu with only their workflow options."

Finally, in conjunction with ShareScan 5, Nuance has introduced PDF Pro Office, a new desktop application that was previewed at the Canon Expo in September [*see DIR 9/24/10*]. Pro Office basically takes advantage of some of Nuance's advanced PDF technology to create a stronger, more versatile desktop application to run in conjunction with ShareScan MFP implementations.

ShareScan 5 is available now from **Canon** and will be available within 90 days from other members of Nuance's channel.

For more information:
http://www.documentimagingreport.com/fileadmin/DIR_Press_Releases/2010/ShareScan5-press_release.pdf;

http://www.nuance.com/for-business/by-product/ecopy/index.htm

Healthcare-Focused Service Bureau Enjoying Upturn

With the 2009 federal stimulus package earmarking some $27 billion over the next 10 years to hospitals and doctors' offices for converting to electronic healthcare records (EHR), the healthcare market has certainly become a higher priority for a lot of people in document imaging. For St. Louis-based conversion specialist **EDCO Group Inc.,** however, healthcare has always been the highest priority. As a result, EDCO, which bills itself as "the largest document management services company in North America specializing in healthcare," has a head start on the competition and has been reaping the benefits.

"EDCO has specialized in document services for more than 50 years, and early on trained its focus on healthcare," said Rose Devadas, VP of sales support and solutions delivery for EDCO. "More than 95% of our current business is in the healthcare market. We have several hundred healthcare organizations under contract, and many have multiple hospitals or practices that we work with."

EDCO recently was awarded a contract with the **Healthcare Coalition of Texas**, which represents 17 community-based hospitals and healthcare systems statewide. "It is a buying organization for a group of hospitals," said Devadas. "They assess solutions that might be of value to their members and negotiate with vendors like us. By being part of a group, the members get more favorable pricing."

According to a press release, the agreement with the Healthcare Coalition is "for document management solutions including: on-site day forward scanning, backfile scanning, storage, shredding, and electronic data back-up services." "At our site, we have the infrastructure to scan about a million images per day," said Devadas. "So, we can do large-volume conversions.

"We can host document management solutions, and we can format document images to be integrated with a multitude of different systems. In the healthcare market, there are so many systems being used, that it's important to be flexible in this regard. We can also install our software on-site for healthcare providers and either do the scanning ourselves or train their staff."

Devadas said that patient records represent the large majority of documents being captured by EDCO and its customers. "EHR and EMR (electronic medical record) systems have been around in a number of forms for years," said Devadas. "They really started to get big press when the federal government (through its stimulus package) introduced financial incentive for healthcare organizations to make their records electronic.

"We do not offer an EHR system, but what we do offer can be very complementary to one. It's important to note that what the government defines as meaningful use of an EHR system (which makes a provider eligible for stimulus money) does not require scanning. 'Meaningful use' covers some specific processes like electronic order entry.

"However, if a healthcare provider is not scanning all the paper notes and faxed lab results related to an order, the physician is going to be less inclined to work with the EHR system and fulfill the meaningful use requirements. That's one of the roles we play. By converting patient charts to an electronic format, we help healthcare organizations meet their EHR requirements."

Devadas noted, however, that EDCO had a healthy business prior to the federal government encouraging EHR adoption. "We've been discussing the medical side of a healthcare provider's operations, which is the side currently getting most of the publicity," she said. "However, there is a business case for converting patient charts as well. The chart contains information that is used for billing. By making this information electronic, you're able to apply electronic workflows to the coding and billing processes and make them more efficient.

"It's the goal of most healthcare organizations to code and bill as fast as humanly possible. In addition, with new ICD-10 coding regulations coming on, it's going to be important to have good coders—many of which work remotely. Having images is also more efficient when it comes to addressing audits."

Electronic records now a priority

Devadas noted that while adoption of imaging in healthcare organizations is growing, they are currently "all over the map," in what their implementations look like. "Very few have what you'd call entirely electronic processes," she said. "You have some organizations scanning just to send the images to home coders and then deleting the images and using paper charts for medical reference. Amazingly, there are some hospitals that still use 100% paper records.

"However, a lot of organizations are ramping up their adoption of imaging. As they implement EHR, they are realizing how inefficient paper records can be. The federal stimulus money has helped move

imaging to the forefront of people's minds. It used to always be a goal to move to electronic records, but it was always something on the back burner.

"In the past, hospitals were always more interested in investing their money in devices that generate revenue, like machines to do more heart tests. And this makes sense. However, if the government is going to offer them money to adopt EHR, they're going to go ahead with it. On top of that, the federal government is threatening to reduce reimbursements in the future for organizations that don't have proper EHR. So, eventually, they are going to lose the luxury of deferring."

Auto-recognition a competitive advantage

Devadas noted that as healthcare organizations look to adopt more imaging, EDCO has technology that makes its services and solutions particularly attractive. "We have built unique capture technology specific for medical records," she said. "We have technology, as well as people and processes, that enable healthcare organizations to meet their capture goals without having to alter their forms, re-design them, or even put bar codes on them.

"We have developed our own recognition, with some OCR underneath, that helps our software recognize enough content on patient records that it can automatically categorize them. This is important to customers like an Oklahoma hospital we talked to recently, that has 15 million images per year it needs captured. Manual indexing, or even applying bar codes to the documents, would literally take an army of workers.

"We are very focused on improving our technology and constantly look at how we can leverage it to refine our processes. We also offer incentives to our employees to deliver high-quality, and a high-volume of, work."

Paper a long-term issue

Devadas concluded that EDCO has seen increasing growth in recent years. "We're excited, because it's taken awhile, but the federal stimulus package has really gotten people going," she said. "Still, most healthcare organizations don't really understand what is needed to get rid of paper quickly and efficiently. We still find it's important to educate potential customers on the technology that is available. Once they learn about it, it's like a light bulb goes on."

Devadas added that as EDCO sees an increase in the area of backfile conversions, it is experiencing a slight decline in the quantity of records it receives from customers on an annual basis. "More

healthcare providers are ready to clean out their file rooms, but, as they move to electronic records, their day-forward volume of paper can decrease.

"That said, hospitals still have a lot of paper. For a hospital that hasn't adopted EHR, we estimate that per 100 beds, there are approximately 1.2 million paper pages per year. For a 500-bed facility, that's six million images per year. Let's say this hospital sets a goal of reducing its paper volume by 50% and achieves it. That's still three million images per year that they have to capture."

For more information: http://www.edcogroupinc.com

IBML Updates ImageTrac Scanners

IBML has announced the latest version of its popular ImageTrac high-speed document scanner line. With maximum rated speeds for 8.5 x 11 documents of 429 ppm, the new ImageTrac Series 5 models are at least 17% faster than the ImageTrac 3 and IV models they replace. The new models also feature some ergonomic improvements, as well as a simplified go-to-market strategy designed to drive more sales worldwide.

"The ImageTrac name has been synonymous with IBML scanners since the company's inception," said Marc Noviello, hardware product manager for the Birmingham, AL-based scanner manufacturer. "Along the way, we have used different numbers, and with the most recent models, the ImageTrac 3, we had multiple variations and used letters to differentiate them. Basically, the new Series 5 scanners look like the 3 series, with enhancements and improvements.

"And, we've simplified the marketing by going with two basic configurations. The 5300 is a three-frame scanner, and the 5400 is a four-frame unit. Basically, this means we can include more intelligence in the 5400 because it's longer, which means there is extra time to make pocketing or sorting decisions."

In addition to the new Series 5 models, IBML will continue to market the ImageTrac-Lite, formerly called the 3eLite. "The Lite is our down-and-dirty batch capture model," said Derrick Murphy, president of IBML. "The 5300 is also primarily targeted at the batch capture world—a world we feel is getting smarter—and the 5300 can bring more intelligence to batch scanning applications. It can also be used for smaller transaction processing applications. But, the 5400 is really the device for enterprise transaction capture.

"We felt it was important to create a product set that was easier for the market to understand. Now, instead of trying to explain the features of our different models, it will be easier to talk about the customer's environment, whether its batch- or transaction –oriented and match a scanner to that environment. This should make selling our scanners easier."

Ergonomic improvements

The Series 5 models feature technical improvements like larger output pockets and upgraded viewing monitors. "We've nearly doubled the size of the output pockets, which means the operators don't have to empty them as often," said Murphy. "We've also improved the ability for operators to visually monitor output trays to see if they are filling up. The larger monitors coincide with the release of version 2.0 of our SoftTrac capture application.

Derrick Murphy, president, IBML

"Additionally, ImageTrac IV users told us they liked having scanner pockets at chest level. This was echoed by ergonomics experts who stated that there were advantages to this design. It's for these reasons that we introduced raised pockets on the ImageTrac 5400 models. All these changes are designed to improve operators' interaction with the devices, which should increase the overall throughput they are getting.

"Finally, we've made little improvements to increase the devices' uptime. A lot of our customers depend on their scanners 24/7, and, in addition to being easy to use for the operators, we want to make them as robust as we can."

Scanners continue to evolve

The 5300 and 5400 each come in two versions, one of which is rated at 257 ppm at 200 dpi and 174 ppm at 300 dpi. The higher-end versions are rated at 429 ppm at 200 dpi and 286 ppm at 300 dpi. These are landscape speeds for 8.5 x 11-inch documents with a 2-inch gap in between. Rated speeds for scanning checks are twice as fast.

Both models feature a number of in-line image enhancement and recognition options. The 5400 model includes features that allow for processing of thicker documents such as envelopes. For transaction-heavy environments, the 5400 offers up to 21 outsort pockets. The 5300 comes standard with one to two outsort pockets, but can be upgraded to 21 pockets, and can also be upgraded to a 5400 model if more intelligence is needed.

IBML has also increased the number of outsort pockets that can be added to a smaller surface area on the Series 5 scanners. "Basically, we've made a configuration improvement that allows us to address more complex transactional-type applications with a smaller footprint," said Murphy. "In some cases, this can help reduce the cost of a scanner."

Murphy concluded that it's important for IBML to continue to invest in its scanners. "Even though this has been a difficult economic time for our entire industry, we still believe our product has a place in the market, and we are happy to continue to evolve it," he said. "There's definitely been an increase in the amount of distributed scanning being done, but we still see demand for high-volume, centralized applications in areas like shared services.

"In addition, some people who have tried distributed scanning are now moving away from it. They have begun asking if it's worth it to have knowledge workers doing mundane tasks like document scanning. And, there is still the issue of control. When you start dealing with regulations like HIPAA and Sarbanes-Oxley, you have to ask if you want documents floating around distributed sites where you don't have a lot of control. The bottom line is that there are opportunities in the market for both distributed and centralized scanning apps."

For more information:
http://www.ibml.com/imagetrac.php

EDITORIAL
Educating the Feds on Document Management

I have to admit to being fascinated by this whole **WikiLeaks** controversy. Yes, there's the whole question of how ethical the site is. I mean publishing government-classified documents is probably not the safest thing to do—for many parties, including the publisher. However, when considered in conjunction with the current American Tea Party movement calling for less spending by government, the popularity of WikiLeaks seems to be part of a growing anti-government sentiment here in the United States. I'm not sure where all of that is going to lead, but, couldn't the U.S. government have prevented at least this latest WikiLeaks scandal with a better document management system?

I mean, here's a summary of the story I read in the newspaper earlier this week: The guy who captured the classified correspondence for WikiLeaks apparently smuggled them out on a CD he brought

from home. He erased the Lady Gaga songs he had recorded on the CD and then replaced them with the classified information—humming Lady Gaga tunes to throw anyone off his scent while he was copying the files.

You mean to tell me this document theft couldn't have been prevented with better document management technology? I think so. In fact, I know so, as I've written about software that provides security against this kind of unauthorized download. How much did the U.S. government spend on technology last year? You mean to tell me that out of the billions of taxpayer dollars they used, they didn't think to better protect their classified "cables?" (Either that or maybe these "cables" really aren't that important. What the heck is a "cable" anyhow? Didn't they go out with telegraphs? Or maybe, like the Iranian president says, the U.S. government wanted the cables leaked.)

How is this related?

What made me think of all this was IBML's Derrick Murphy's comment about document control issues that can arise with the implementation of distributed scanning. Certainly, when I talked with **Toshiba** a few weeks ago, document and device security was mentioned as one of the highest priorities for its customers [*see DIR 11/5/10*]. Did the federal government not get this memo?

I guess the best explanation is probably provided in this week's *DIR* article on EDCO [see page 4]. Rose Devadas of EDCO makes the comment, "We still find it's important to educate potential customers on the technology that is available. Once they learn about it, it's like a light bulb goes on."

I've always suspected there were some dim bulbs in the Federal government. No, seriously, despite our great strides toward taking document imaging mainstream, there is obviously some work that needs to be done making people aware of what's out there.

I guess one final note to make is that this isn't the first time we've discussed a major document management snafu by the federal government in the pages of *DIR*. Remember "RedactGate" [*see DIR 5/20/05*]?

VISIT DOCUMENT IMAGING TALK

Remember to check out our blog for news updates between newsletters, like our recent post on **Panasonic's** new 8-in-1 MFP device-which includes laser printing, copying, scanning, and faxing capabilities, and a unique integrated telephone answering system utilizing the Internet." Visit http://documentimagingreport.blogspot.com

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Doculex Introduces IDR Into MFP Capture

Document capture and management specialist **Doculex** has released a new version of its capture platform. The Winter Haven, FL-based ISV has introduced IDR (intelligent data recognition) features, like the ability to automatically detect document breaks and extract data from variably structured forms. This technology is included in Doculex's MFP and PC-driven capture packages.

"It was actually one of our customers that drove us to make these improvements," said David Bailey, president of Doculex. "Working with our partner **Ricoh**, **Ernst & Young** wanted to use our software to capture 10,000 pages per day from its MFPs. In addition to images, they needed data captured from one of the pages in these multi-page tax documents.

"And they had very stringent security requirements, which basically meant they couldn't utilize dedicated scanners, because they weren't allowed to have PCs dedicated to scanning. All their PCs have to be assigned to specific users. In addition, we aren't allowed to do any database look-ups."

Doculex replaced an application that was utilizing a foreign keying service and a system of shared network folders. "In addition to a more efficient and secure capture application, Ernst & Young wanted a better document management system. We were able to provide them with this through our WebSearch product," said Bailey.

Bailey explained that the documents being captured are created by the government, so Ernst & Young could not redesign them with bar codes. "Each document is approximately 22 pages long, and there are two pages we are looking for within that stack," he said. "One is a cover page that is the first page of each document. This acts as the document separator. The other is a page that contains a few meta data fields we need to capture, and it can be buried anywhere in the stack."

According to Bailey, each form has about four or five variations. "Basically, we apply full-text OCR to every page and then look for specific anchor points on each document," he said. "These could be characteristics like a letterhead or a signature section, or specific words and/or characters that might have a certain amount of separation. There should be at least two, and you hope for four, of these common characteristics. This is how we identify the documents.

"Once the documents are identified, there are rules

set up to help our software zero in on zones containing meta data that needs to be captured. According to Ernst & Young, 99% of documents scanned are free of any meta data indexing errors. The other 1% require someone to make corrections."

According to Bailey, Ernst & Young couldn't be more pleased with the system. "They have eliminated a ton of labor, as well as delays associated with sending the images somewhere else for keying," he said. "They've also improved their security and have a good back-end document management system."

Doculex has now begun implementing the technology it developed for Ernst & Young at other customer sites. "Ernst & Young really helped raise the bar for our capture product line," said Bailey. "Now we have auto page-break detection and some semi-structured forms processing technology. We have other customers using these features in areas like accounting applications, student records capture, and for capturing purchasing records."

MFP scanning fills market niche

Doculex's capture technology is embedded in three products: Goby Capture, for MFPs, and Office Capture and Professional Capture, which are traditional, PC-based scanning applications. Doculex primarily sells through the MFP channel, with Ricoh as its primary partner. WebSearch is typically bundled with the capture products in a package labeled as Archive Studio.

Bailey concluded by telling us that he thinks scanning with MFPs is definitely a trend on the upswing. "MFPs fill a niche as the only network devices capable of scanning higher volumes," said Bailey. "Ernst & Young looked at all the dedicated network scanner devices on the market, but none had a high enough recommended daily duty cycle.

"Also, Ernst & Young likes the quality of images they receive from their MFPs, as well as the feeder and the user interface—all the things everyone used to not like about MFPs. Every two weeks they have the scanner parts of their devices overhauled, but they don't mind, because they like scanning with them."

For more information:
http://www.prweb.com/releases/2010/11/prweb4798334.htm;
http://www.doculex.com/pdf/Ernst_YoungwDoculex.pdf.

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DSM services, which Ricoh will be able to utilize. So companies like **ABBYY** or **Nuance** should be able to gain business from this."

Albeck concluded that in some cases, DSM offers a less expensive alternative to third-party MFP capture applications. "The technology is very robust for customers who only want to live in the Microsoft world," he said. "It gives users complete control of their MFPs from their 2008 R2 servers—to allow or disallow what each user can do and compile a complete audit trail. It is very secure too. This is all some customers want—there is no risk of documents getting outside their organization when scanning, and each document is filed appropriately to meet company security standards."

For more information:
http://www.documentimagingreport.com/index.php?id=1999