Document Imaging Report

Business Trends on Converting Paper Processes to Electronic Format

April 17, 2009

NUANCE, RICOH PARTNER TO OFFER PERSONALIZED SCANNING

The general consensus is that **Nuance** scored quite a coup in landing an OEM deal with **Ricoh** for its *PSP* (*Personalized Scanning Platform*) technology. After all, when coupled with an existing deal Nuance has with **Xerox**, two of the world's top three digital copier vendors are now reselling *PSP*. However, from our perspective, it was tough to tell who was more excited, Nuance or Ricoh.

"We are very confident in the potential of this product," said Frank Elchert, product manager, solutions marketing, for Ricoh Americas Corporation. "I think there is a huge opportunity in the SMB market, and once it catches on, in the enterprise environment as well. We are really excited to have something this powerful to offer to our customer base."

First introduced by Nuance two years ago, *PSP* has been re-branded by Ricoh under the name *Personal Paperless Document Manager* (*PPDM*). It is basically a combination of four Nuance technologies—desktop document management, OCR, and PDF technology, as well as a server-based component that enables users to scan directly to specific folders on their desktops, which can be selected through the interface of an MFP.

"We already offer a number of capture and desktop document management platforms for MFPs," said Elchert. "This includes our *GlobalScan* capture application, **eCopy's** *ShareScan* and *Desktop* applications, and our own *Desktop Binder*. What really attracted us to Nuance was the integration between the MFP interface and the desktop. No one else offers users that type of personalized experience.

Scanner Vendors Introduce Variety of Improvements

With many devices already offering all the speed a user could want, vendors turn their attention to improvements in other areas.

No, there weren't a lot of scanner vendors on the Expo floor at the recent AIIM show in Philadelphia, but we did see enough innovative hardware to reassure us that document scanning technology continues to improve— not only in the area of speed, but in paper handling, image processing, and ease-of-use. These are all important factors as imaging continues its transition into the mainstream IT market.

BBH Scanners shows off Ngenuity

Böwe Bell + Howell (BBH) may have cancelled its booth, but it had a steady flow of traffic into its meeting room, as people were checking out its new Ngenuity production scanner. Based on a phone interview and a Web video, we wrote a full review of the Ngenuity last month [*see DIR* 3/6/09], but seeing is believing. And, the Ngenuity was certainly impressive in person.

We asked about the more "intelligent paper path" mentioned in our previous story, and Lara Muldoon, senior product manager for BBH Scanners, explained that the Ngenuity is a slightly deeper device than the company's Spectrum series, which preceded it. This produces a longer scanning radius. Also, the way the ADF on the Ngenuity is set up, paper is passed through at a more constant angle.

Muldoon explained the significance of the Ngenuity's ability to automatically remember the size of a batch and adjust to that level when a new batch is loaded. "With most ADFs, users can select a batch size based on certain volume increments, like 100, 200, 300 pages, etc.," she told *DIR*. "Because the Ngenuity can automatically remember an average batch-size, the number of manual adjustments is reduced. In a high-volume environment, if you can save 10 to 20 seconds on each batch, by not having to adjust the height of the feeder, it can add up fairly quickly."

The Ngenuity's super-sized 700-page ADF plays well in high-volume shops. Its C-path rotary feeder (which works with the ADF) is recommended for mixed batches of documents measuring up to .89 mm thick. The straight-path feeding option enables users to scan documents, such as plastic cards and stuffed envelopes, up to 1.78 mm thick.

The Ngenuity's LED light source is impressive. It is touted as taking less warm-up time and using less energy than the fluorescent bulbs in other production scanners with CCD cameras. "The image quality on the Ngenuity is at least as good, if not slightly better, than that from the Spectrum," Muldoon said. "The LED lighting also means there will be less degradation over time, and that users will need to calibrate their scanners far less often—maybe twice per year."

As we mentioned in our earlier article, the Ngenuity, which will begin shipping "early in the second quarter" will be available in three models. They are rated at 90, 125, and 150 ppm in a landscape mode at 200 dpi in color, black-and-white, and bi-tonal. The scanners are rated with the onboard VRS Professional turned on. At 300 dpi, the devices slow down by approximately 20%.

The Ngenuity features both SCSI and USB 2.0 connection options. Pricing will start at approximately $18,000 for a bi-tonal-only 90 ppm model. The price range goes up to $45,000—presumably for the color-enabled 150 ppm model.

As we said in our first story on the Ngenuity, even if and when Kodak completes its acquisition of BBH Scanners, the Ngenuity promises to do a fine job of carrying on the BBH legacy.

For more information:
http://www.bbhscanners.com/products/ngenuity/

Epson offers LED on workgroup models

BBH Scanners wasn't the only vendor showing an LED light source with CCD cameras. **Epson**, which entered the document imaging market late last year, has a pair of ADF models that feature this configuration. Epson's WorkForce Pro GT-S50 is rated at 25 ppm/50ipm at 200 dpi in color and black-and-white, while the Pro GT-S80 is rated at 40/80. The GT-S80 also features ultra-sonic double feed detection at the very attractive list price of $900. The G-S50 lists for $500.

The scanners are backed by Epson's service program, which was originally developed to support the company's other peripherals such as dot-matrix printers, point-of-sale systems, and check scanners. Epson's document scanners come with a one-year warranty that covers depot repair. It can be upgraded to include advanced exchange.

The scanners' software bundle features **ABBYY** *FineReader*, **Nuance's** *ScanSoft PaperPort*, **NewSoft** *Presto! BizCard*, and TWAIN and ISIS drivers. The scanners are compatible with **Kofax** VRS. "We tried to keep the software bundle simple, so we could keep the price down," said Mitch Kadish, senior

product manager at Epson. "We are really targeting these devices at the SMB."

The scanners also feature a two-line LCD display that can be used to describe specific workflows launched from a button on the scanner. Epson, which is based in Japan, and designs its own hardware, has several flatbed models that feature ADFs. Later this year, the company plans to introduce single-pass duplex ADF with flatbed models.

Epson is using value-added distribution channels like **Tech Data** and **Ingram Micro**.

For more information:
http://preview.tinyurl.com/dnhckg

HP extends its range

HP showed no less than five new scanners at AIIM. These included three new PC-connected sheetfed-only models and two networked scanners. The scanners ranged from personal desktop models to a new departmental device rated at 60 ppm/120 ipm. "Our exhibit reflects the broad range of solutions that HP offers," said David Haining, HP's product manager for document scanners. "We even have **EDS** [which HP acquired last year] here for the first time to discuss some of our document outsourcing capabilities."

Last issue, we discussed HP's new 7000n network scanner, which is being produced out of the company's Fort Collins, CO-based facility. This is where the company's dedicated document scanners are produced. Historically, production of the Digital Sender (HP's market pioneering network scanning device), was handled out of the company's Boise, Idaho facility, which is responsible for MFP devices.

This change in production sites is reflected in the 7000n's design, which is based on HP's new Scanjet 7000 model, which was announced a couple weeks before AIIM. Rated at 40 ppm/80 ipm, the Scanjet 7000, along with the new Scanjet 5000 desktop workgroup model and the Scanjet 9000 departmental model, feature a brand-new paper feeding design, which HP refers to as "precision-feed technology."

According to a white paper that HP shared with us, the precision feeding is designed to "minimize downtime due to misfeeds and stoppages with precise, variable pick technologies." HP divides precision feeding into several components, including a multi-phase pick process, advanced separation, and intelligent picking.

The multi-phase pick process utilizes multiple sets of rollers and "separates a stack of paper into increasingly smaller stacks for accurate scanning of each page. Separation occurs in stages, minimizing the possibility of feeding multiple pages to the scanner." HP has deployed this technology in both the straight path feeder on the x000 models, as well as C-path on the N9120 flatbed with ADF that was introduced last year.

The advanced separation comes in at the final stage of the pick process. At this point, HP has employed a "retard roller" instead of a "separation pad." This is designed to provide more surface area at the point just before a page is released from the rollers to the camera.

The Scanjet 7000 is one of several new HP scanners that feature "precision feeding technology" as well as an LCD display that can be used to describe button-scanning jobs.

Intelligent picking works like this, "Scanners first apply the minimum amount of force required to pick a page from the stack. If this amount of force is not adequate, the scanner makes a second attempt, adjusting the roller speed and/or pressure."

HP has also introduced ultrasonic double-feed detection, which is included on the 7000 and 9000 models. We asked Lisa Boyd-Oliver, future products manager for HP scanners, if the precision-feed technology will be introduced on HP's MFPs. "Right now, it only applies to Scanjets [dedicated scanners]," she told us. "However, we are investigating how we can apply it across other product lines since paper feeding is so critical to scanning."

The Scanjet 5000 and 7000 are replacements for the N6010 and N7710 models that HP introduced in 2006 and 2007, respectively. The 5000, which is rated at 25/50, does not include **Kofax** VRS and lists for $799. The 7000, which ships with VRS and has a 50-page ADF, lists for $999. Both those models are shipping now. Boyd-Oliver indicated that the 5000 is targeted more toward the SMB market, while the 7000 is positioned more as an enterprise-ready, distributed capture device.

Rated at 60/120, with a list price of $3,399, the 9000 is HP's first serious departmental scanner. It has a 150-page ADF and VRS Professional included in the bundle. It also includes an adjustable black or white background feature. All three x000 devices feature an LCD display to describe jobs that can be launched from buttons on the device—the 5000 and 7000 offer two lines, while the 9000 has four. The

9000 is scheduled to ship in September.

All three models include an updated version of HP's *Smart Document Scanning Software* (*SDSS*), which was built on **EMC's** *PixTools* SDK. *SDSS 2.6*, which is shipping with the 5000 and 7000, can be integrated with any third-party applications that support command line architecture. Version 2.7, which will ship with the 9000, promises improved PDF and image processing capabilities, as well as tighter integration with VRS.

"VRS has always been embedded within *SDSS*, and with the new version we plan to eliminate some duplication, in areas like image processing, that may have occurred in the previous versions," said Haining.

Simplifying SMB network scanning

HP's new Scanjet N6350 is a network scanner that features an ADF and a flatbed. It is being introduced as a replacement for the 7650n which came out in 2007 [*see* DIR 7/20/07]. "The network connection on the 7560n was handled through an **AXIS** Network Document Server, which is an external box," said Boyd-Oliver. "We found that customers in the SMB space, where this product is targeted, do not like having to connect to the network through an external device.

"The N6350 has the network connection inside the device. It's designed to be installed and managed by a business without in-house IT expertise. All a user does is load the installation disk on a PC, plug in the Ethernet cable, and the network should discover the scanner. Users can then perform tasks like scanning to network folders, their desktops, or e-mail addresses.

"One N6350 can be connected to up to 20 PCs, but we see the sweet spot as 5-10. Asset sharing is important in the SMB market. Businesses want multiple users to leverage a singe device. The N6350 is targeted at something like a small real estate office that needs the ADF to scan paperwork, and the flatbed for pictures used in listings."

To accommodate multiple users, HP has put together a fairly unique software bundling plan, in which five seats of the bundled software applications, *PaperPort*, *ReadIRIS*, and *Presto! BizCard Reader*, are included. "The 6350 also features automatic blank-page deletion, deskew, and other basic image processing that we've brought down from the production document management world," said Boyd-Oliver. "We include options for document profiles and shortcuts."

The N6350 is scheduled to begin shipping in May

with a list price of $949. The document scanner is rated at 15 ppm in simplex and does duplex scanning by flipping the pages and re-feeding them.

Both Haining and Boyd-Oliver stressed that with its broadening range of scanning products, HP is attempting to address a wider market spectrum—from the SMB to the enterprise. "The 9000, the 7000, and the 7000n are all targeted at the enterprise space and sold into the SMB, particularly where there is one department capable of managing a more sophisticated document workflow," said Haining. "These products are geared around knowledge workers in distributed workflows.

"The similarity they have with products like the 5000 and N6350, which are targeted at more general use in the SMB environment, is that simplicity and ease-of-use are very important in both arenas."

For more info: http://tinyurl.com/scanjet9000; http://tinyurl.com/scanjet7000; http://tinyurl.com/scanjet5000; http://tinyurl.com/N6350

Panasonic offers innovative flatbeds

Panasonic introduced some new flatbed-related technology. The Secaucus, NJ-based vendor introduced what it is billing as "the world's fastest flatbed scanner" as well as a new attachable flatbed accessory for its KV-S1020C and KV-S1025C workgroup models. Both products feature some innovative auto-cropping techniques.

The new KV-S7075C is rated at 95 ppm/190 ipm and features an A3 (11 x 17-inch) flatbed. It lists for $8,995, so it falls into the low-volume production category. It's a replacement for the company's 7065 model. The 7075 can be connected to a PC through a USB 2.0 interface.

The attachable flatbed is branded as the KV-SS080 and is an A4 (8.5 x 11-inch) size. The suggested list price is $818. "We're starting out connecting it to our workgroup models, but, eventually, we will migrate the flatbed to work with all our ADF-only models," said Robert Curci, product manager for Panasonic Communications Company of America.

Both flatbed devices feature Panasonic's new two-page separation and multi-crop capabilities. This means that when a user scans an open book or magazine with the flatbed, the pages on each side of the center binding can be automatically processed as separate images. Also, if a user places multiple smaller documents, such as business or I.D. cards on the flatbed, they can be automatically captured as separate images.

Panasonic previewed its new KV-S1045C model, which features a 75-page ADF and is rated at 40/80. According to Curci, the list price will be $1,500 to $2,000, which puts it on the cusp of the departmental market. "It offers all the features of the 1025, but is just a little step up in terms of speed and volume," he said.

For more information:
http://www.panasonic.com/Business/office/pro_scn.asp

Canon previews new LVP line

Canon previewed a new low-volume production line. The new imageFORMULA DR-9050C, DR-7550C, and DR-6050C models are due to be released in June and likely to be priced somewhere under $10,000. They feature CIS camera technology and ultrasonic double-feed detection. They are rated at 90, 75, and 60 ppm, respectively, in portrait mode. They all offer color, black-and-white, and grayscale capabilities.

The new models will be replacements for Canon's successful 9080C, which was introduced back in 2003 [*see DIR 10/10/03*], as well as the non-color capable 7580. "One thing we've done with the new devices is add more image processing in the hardware," said Mike Oliva, marketing manager for Canon USA's Image Filing Systems division. "This includes features like despeckle and deskew."

Canon also confirmed that toolkits for its ScanFront network scanner will be released this year. *DIR* previewed these SDKs last fall [*see DIR 10/17/08*]. There will be two options—one for changing just the look and feel of the touchscreen interface, and the other for introducing more capture functionality such as data capture, indexing, and bar code reading.

For more information:
http://tinyurl.com/Canonscannners

Visioneer offers free OneTouch tools

Visioneer made a couple new product announcements at AIIM, as well as introduced upgrades to its OneTouch scanning system. Xerox's new Card Scanner 200 is the latest product introduced by Visioneer under its OEM agreement with the copier giant. The device has several interesting features that separate it from the average business card scanner.

First off, it includes Visioneer's OneTouch with Kofax VRS technology. It is able to run with a single USB cable that plugs into a PC or laptop and provides both the connection and the power to run the scanner. Applications bundled with the device include *PaperPort* and *Presto! BizCard*. The scanner

has both TWAIN and WIA drivers, as well as Visioneer's patented AutoLaunch, which enables scanning to start as soon as a card is inserted.

The Card Scanner 200 measures approximately 7-in x 2.5-in and is 1.5-in high. It takes approximately 8 seconds to capture a color image at 300 dpi. It can handle cards, photos, or documents up to 4 x 6.

Visioneer's new Xerox Card Scanner 200 features VRS and AutoLaunch technology.

http://www.xeroxscanners.com/en/us/products/CS200/default.asp

Like Panasonic, **Visioneer** introduced a flatbed add-on option for its ADF-only scanners. The new Xerox DocuMate 700 is an 11 x 17-inch flatbed that can be attached either directly to a PC and used as a standalone device, or run through a DocuMate ADF scanner. The scanner includes OneTouch, VRS, *PaperPort*, and *OmniPage Pro OCR*. It can capture color images up to 600 dpi, lists for $995, and is available now.

http://www.xeroxscanners.com/en/us/products/DM700/

Visioneer's new OneTouch PowerTools offer added flexibility to the vendor's OneTouch scanning driver. OneTouch is designed to enable users to launch and execute complex pre-configured workflows by depressing a button on a document scanner. Traditionally, OneTouch functionality like image processing, OCR, and releasing a file to a destination, has run behind the scenes with no intervention from the user. PowerTools offer the user the opportunity to intervene in order to accomplish a greater variety of tasks.

OneTouch PowerTools, for example, enable users to select file names and destinations during the scanning process. They also enable users to send files to additional destinations, such as e-mail addresses, printers, or other applications. Visioneer OneTouch PowerTools Plus enables users to manually perform image processing such as blank-page deletion, page rotation, and redaction during the scanning process.

The PowerTools will be packaged with OneTouch on new Visioneer scanners, and for users that already have OneTouch, they can be downloaded from the Visioneer Web site.

www.visioneer.com/powertools

New Products Indicative Of IBML's Solutions Focus

High-speed scanning specialist **IBML's** continued transition from a manufacturing to a solutions-focused vendor was reflected in several new products it was showing at AIIM. That's not to say the Birmingham, AL-based company is slowing down in its production of high-speed scanners. One of its new products was the ImageTrac 3exp model that is rated at 425 ppm at 200 dpi and 275 ppm at 300 dpi.

IBML also showcased a new scaled-back version of its ImageTrac 3e, which is designed to be more competitive against non-open-track high-volume document scanners from vendors like **Kodak** and **Böwe Bell + Howell**. Finally, IBML introduced a completely re-written, more modular version of its *SoftTrac* capture platform.

Just to review, the ImageTrac 3 is the ergonomically improved version of the ImageTrac III, which was introduced last summer [*see DIR 10/24/08*]. Initially, IBML released the ImageTrac 3e and 3ex versions—with the main different being that the 3ex can be configured with up to 24 outsorting pockets. Both the 3e and 3ex are rated at 257 ppm at 200 dpi and 171 ppm at 300 dpi in color, black-and-white, and bi-tonal modes. We listed the starting price at $125,000, but with software, services, and options, the figure quickly rises to close to $200,000.

At the same time IBML first introduced the ImageTrac III, back in 2004, it also introduced the very high-speed ImageTrac IV, which is rated at 366 ppm at 200 dpi and 174 ppm at 300 dpi. The **U.S. Census Bureau** purchased more than 25 of these to capture forms for its upcoming 2010 census [*see DIR 10/6/06*]. The ImageTrac IV will now be phased out in favor of the ImageTrac 3exp, which has the same external configuration as the ImageTrac 3ex, but features new internal cameras and image-processing technology that enables it to run 60% faster than the ImageTrac IV at 300 dpi.

While the 3ex and 3exp models should help IBML maintain its dominance in the segment of the document scanning market with very high-volume and sorting requirements, to date, the company's higher prices have kept it from competing just a little further downstream, where the volume of scanner sales is greater. The new 3eLite is designed to help IBML cross that chasm.

The 3eLite is rated at the same speed as the 3e, but it features only one outsorting pocket and limited document processing features like a bar code reader, a pre-image inkjet printer, and DynamicTIFF thresholding. It also includes *SoftTrac*. One key difference is that it is not field-upgradable. Pricing for the 3eLite starts at $95,000, with an estimated "all-in" price of $110,000-$120,000. There is also a 3eLite RP (remittance processing) version that includes a second outsort pocket, a MICR reader, and more advanced software.

Derrick Murphy, president, IBML

"We think the 3eLite addresses a segment of the document scanning market that might want to take advantage of our open-track feeder and outsorting capabilities, but doesn't have the volume to cost-justify an investment in our traditional scanners," said Derrick Murphy, president of IBML.

SoftTrac has whole new look

While the new Lite devices reduce some of the complexities associated with IBML hardware, the new version of *SoftTrac* is designed to simplify the management of high-volume scanning environments through software. Re-written from the ground up, *SoftTrac* now features a much simplified interface as well as a business object model architecture that more readily enables integration with other applications.

"Historically, we've customized *SoftTrac* on a customer-by-customer basis," said Murphy. "A couple years ago, we decided to re-architect it and incorporate the most common customizations. We've designed the new platform so that we can readily expand its capabilities. *SoftTrac* is intended to act as a platform for managing and controlling the whole front-end capture process."

This is done through a dashboard that offers users the ability to do things like set up, track, and manage scanning jobs, perform real-time QA, and collect statistics on scanner performance. *SoftTrac* runs on a relational database and can be deployed across multiple devices, including ImageTracs and TWAIN driven scanners. IBML plans to introduce additional *SoftTrac* modules later this year.

The HV market landscape

By all reports IBML had a banner year in 2008, although the company is a bit cautious about its 2009 projections—partially due to the well publicized financial difficulties many state governments are facing. "Historically, state government, in areas like tax and other payment processing, has been a very strong market for us," said Murphy. "To compensate for a potential

downturn there, we are looking to increase our business in areas like healthcare, where there is some potential surrounding patient records, and financial services. As consolidation continues in the financial services sector, we see increasing opportunities for high-volume document conversions."

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

ReadSoft Ready To Battle Open Text

From what we've heard, **Open Text** has had some early success selling its *Vendor Invoice Management* (*VIM*) system, along with the *OCR option for SAP Invoice Management* through its OEM agreement with **SAP**. This is the agreement that was announced in the wake of Open Text's acquisition of Captaris, which brought along the OCR-based data capture technology Captaris had acquired with **Ocè** Document Technologies [*see DIR 12/21/08*].

"There was definitely a lot of built up demand within the SAP customer base for invoice management technology," said Lubor Ptacek, VP of product marketing for Open Text. "Ever since we've put the *VIM* solution on the SAP price list, it has really taken off. And OCR capabilities were one of the requests SAP customers had for that type of solution."

At AIIM, *DIR* had a chance to sit down with Bob Fresneda, president of **ReadSoft's** U.S. operations. Over the past 30 months, ReadSoft has landed more than 100 invoice capture and workflow deals in SAP environments in the U.S. This has driven the Swedish ISV's annual U.S. growth rate to well over 50% and its annual U.S. revenue past $15 million. As ReadSoft has emerged as the clear market leader in invoice automation for SAP environments, we asked Fresneda how he thinks SAP's having its own branded invoice automation technology will affect business.

"Historically, Open Text has been one of our biggest competitors, and we've had some success against them," he said. "They've had some success against us too, but I think the market is big enough for both of us.

"I don't think SAP's reselling Open Text's products will change things much. Typically, an invoice processing purchase is a big ticket item, so a user is going to bring in more than one vendor. It's not like the invoice application is going in at the same time as the ERP system. It's usually purchased after the SAP system has been installed; as a result, the user

will consider multiple products. We think if we end up head to head vs. Open Text, we will continue to do pretty well."

Fresneda indicated that ReadSoft is also seeing increased success in automating invoices in *Oracle Financials* environments. "The *Oracle Financials* market is not as mature as the SAP market and the deals are a little smaller," he said. "Still, we have about 35 Oracle deals that have been worth a total of $5 million in revenue, so that's not too bad."

Bob Fresneda, president, U.S. operations, Readsoft

Opportunities still abound

Fresneda said that despite ReadSoft's and others' recent success automating invoices in high-volume environments, the market is far from saturated. "We are the market leader and we have 100 U.S. installations," he said. "Let's say the rest of the vendors combined have 50. We think there are at least 500 good SAP opportunities in the U.S. alone, so the market is not even close to being half penetrated." [Just for the record, according to the Wikipedia, "SAP officials say there are over 100,600 SAP installations serving more than 41,200 companies in more than 120 countries."]

Fresneda concluded by saying that while potential headcount reduction remains a factor in businesses automating their invoice processing, the difficult economic conditions have caused them to look at other benefits as well. "Now, more than ever, businesses want better insight into how much they owe their vendors and when it needs to be paid," he said. "This helps them better manage their cash flows, hold on to money longer, and negotiate better early pay discounts. These benefits are becoming even more important than reducing headcount."

For more information: http://www.readsoft.net/

"On top of that, Nuance are experts in OCR and PDF, which are important technologies in the desktop environment."

Elchert said that Ricoh will continue to sell *GlobalScan* and the eCopy products, but has discontinued *Desktop Binder*. "*GlobalScan* fits well in high-end environments where users are capturing documents to an ECM system or established business process," he said. "You basically create a profile and roll it out to multiple devices and every

user sees the exact same thing.

"With *PPDM*, the focus is on the end user having their own personalized productivity tools available to them when they walk up to the MFP."

Basically, with *PPDM*, a user logs into the MFP and sees the folders they've selected to appear on the touchscreen. These folders represent potential document destinations. The users are also presented a list of options for processing scanned documents such as OCR, color, and resolution options. These options can be included in document profiles. After a destination and a profile have been selected, the document is captured and can be retrieved on the user's desktop. Nuance's desktop tools enable users to do things like combine images with other documents and mark them up and annotate them.

Have we seen the future?

Both Elchert and Nuance's Robert Weideman think the *PPDM* solution represents the future of capture with MFPs. "I see MFPs becoming personal document portals," said Elchert. "When a user walks up to the device, it shows them only the tools they need. In our market, one size does not fit all. I think personalization is where our whole industry is migrating."

"The increasing size of MFP touchscreens, in combination with the ability to customize the interface through SDKs like the Ricoh Java development platform, enable a broader set of elements to be displayed on MFPs," said Weideman, senior VP and general manager for Nuance's Imaging Division. "An application like *PPDM* really makes scanning relevant to the office worker.

There's no confusion about where a document will end up. There are no hot folders to deal with, or need to do things like e-mail files back to your desktop.

"Historically, the personal investment an office worker has had to make to learn how to utilize the scanning on an MFP has been a barrier to adoption. With solutions like *PPDM*, we've lowered that investment—which makes scanning more accessible."

Multiple distribution channels

PPDM is being offered by Ricoh Americas Corporation in packages priced according to the number of desktop licenses. The *PPDM* server and MFP clients are included with the packages. A five-user *PPDM* license lists for $299 per seat. As the seat volume increases, the price per seat goes down.

Ricoh is currently offering training to its channels, with the product expected to begin shipping in early June. It will be sold through multiple channels, including Ricoh's direct team, its dealers, the Lanier and Savin channels, and IKON. According to Elchert, *PPDM* will initially be sold primarily as a traditional software application, although, "we could offer some different pricing models if it is bundled with hardware."

Elchert added that *PPDM* will eventually be distributed worldwide, with Ricoh Americas controlling the distribution.

For more information: http://www.ricoh-usa.com/; http://www.nuance.com/products/paperportpsp/

Subscription Order Form for RMG Enterprises, Inc.

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