

# Document Imaging Report

Business Trends on Converting Paper Processes to Electronic Format

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## THIS JUST IN!

### INVOICE CAPTURE ATTRACTS VAR

**AnyDoc** recently signed up a new reseller, **Integrated Document Technologies**, which is based out of Chicago. IDT has been in the document management/ECM business since 1992, and in 2001 added ERP and CRM solutions to its offerings. Its ECM partners include the **Marex Group**, **Hyland**, **Oracle**, and **KnowledgeLake**. IDT also offers several capture options.

IDT's main attraction to AnyDoc seems to be invoice capture technology. "What attracted us to partner with AnyDoc was its rich history of successful implementations, especially in the accounts payable market," said Paul Winiacki, national sales manager of IDT, in a press release announcing the partnership. "AnyDoc's advanced document processing and data capture functionally will dovetail nicely with our own in-house procure-to-pay expertise."

<http://www.idt-inc.com>; <http://www.AnyDocSoftware.com>

### ZyLab reports strong growth

**ZyLab**, the Netherlands-based ISV, which recently reported 30% growth for the first quarter of 2009 over Q1 2008 (including 65% in North America) has opened an office in San Francisco. It will complement the company's Beltway-area U.S. headquarters in McLean, VA, and its New York sales office. Stephen Decelle has been named west coast sales manager.

"The most prominent segments in our sales pipeline are for e-discovery and compliance solutions, and the market for both still has tremendous momentum," noted Dr. Johannes Scholtes, CEO of ZyLab. "The consistent strength of orders from government clients is notable as well."

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

## Capture Vendors Target Mid-Market Invoices

Last month, we ran a story on a couple vendors focused on document imaging for invoice processing in the mid-market. How you define the mid-market is open to debate, but we basically defined it as businesses using accounting packages by vendors like **Sage**, **Epicor**, and **Microsoft**. That article seemed to resonate particularly well at the recent AIIM 2009 event in Philadelphia. There, we ran into several vendors promoting mid-market automated data capture solutions for invoices.

As we said in our previous story, to date, most of the attention for invoice processing has been focused on the high-end, where six- and even seven-figure deals have been reported by ISVs automating data entry and workflow in high-volume environments—often integrated with ERP systems. In the mid-market, most success involving imaging of invoices has been focused on improving workflow rather than eliminating the keystrokes related to data entry. In other words, to date, OCR has not been applied on a widespread basis for capturing invoice data at anything other than the Global 2000- or high-end service bureau-level.

From our discussions at AIIM, that may be about to change. We talked to at least five vendors working on OCR-based invoice applications targeted at the mid-market. These included OCR tools specialist **ABBYY**, high-end data capture ISV **Datacap**, systems integration expert **Artsy1**, SOHO-focused **The Neat Company**, and compression specialist **LuraTech**. Here's a brief look at each of their solutions:

### ABBYY launches pilot for mid-market capture

ABBYY probably has the most ambitious marketing plan. At AIIM, the Russian-based software developer, which recently moved its U.S. offices to a new site in Milpitas, CA, announced a pilot program for its **ABBYY FlexiCapture for Invoices** product, which it has built on top of its *FlexiCapture Studio* SDK. This is the first time ABBYY has released its own *FlexiCapture* application. Its justification for going after invoices in the mid-market is that its partners (with the notable exception of **Version One** in the U.K.) aren't currently addressing that niche

with ABBYY's tools.

The pilot program is aimed at businesses with up to 1,500 different vendors in their database. *FlexiCapture for Invoices* is designed to automatically capture five fields of information: the invoice date, vendor name, invoice number, PO number, and amount. ABBYY currently has a connector to the **Microsoft Dynamics Great Plains** ERP application, and *FlexiCapture for Invoices* can be set up to check names and PO numbers against ERP data.

According to Julia Levites, product marketing manager for ABBYY USA, ABBYY will integrate with other ERP/accounting systems as participants in the pilot demand. **Sage MAS 20, 90, and 500** and **Intuit QuickBooks Enterprise** have been identified as possibilities. The initial version of *FlexiCapture for Invoices* can also export images and meta data into both **DocuWare** and *SharePoint* repositories.

ABBYY followed up AIIM by recruiting more pilot customers at a recent **IAPP** (International Accounts Payable Professionals) conference. "The IAPP event had a lot more representatives from our targeted market, so the number of leads generated was greater," said Levites. "We are going through the names right now to see which ones meet our criteria."

The pilot program is scheduled to last five months, with the general availability release of *FlexiCapture for Invoices* planned for October. Users will receive free software and services for the length of the pilot. If they choose to purchase the application, they will receive a 50% discount on the software.

Final pricing has not been determined. Initially, *FlexiCapture for Invoices* will be released as a desktop application. A server-based version is also planned.

For more information: <http://www.abbyy.com/flexicapture>

### **Datacap comes downstream**

Datacap's new *FastDoc Capture* offers an entry-level invoice capture solution that can be upgraded to the Tarrytown, N.Y.-based ISV's flagship *Taskmaster* platform. "With *FastDoc*, we focused on creating an easy to use product that can offer some automated indexing and data entry," said Scott Blau, CEO of Datacap. "For example, *FastDoc* has a single user interface that sets up both the scanning and data capture."

*FastDoc Capture* is based on the technology used in *Taskmaster*, such as the rules-based engine for locating specific data fields from OCR results, but *FastDoc's* capabilities are limited. For example, the rules can't be customized and there are no database lookups.

Basically, it works like this: users define the fields they want to capture, then scan their documents. When the images come up, the user highlights the characters that correspond to the fields, and data from the highlighted area is transferred

## **Document Imaging Report**

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*DIR* is the leading executive report on managing documents for e-business.

Areas we cover include:

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2. Image Processing
3. Forms Processing/OCR/ICR
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to the corresponding field. Users do this for each field they have created. [This part of the application works similar to **Open Text Document Technologies'** *Single-Click Entry* technology, see *DIR 7/7/06*].

When users complete this fairly manual process, they can choose to save a "digital fingerprint" of the document, so the next time a similar document is scanned, the data capture process will be more automated. For example, in an invoice application, the second time an invoice from a particular vendor is captured, as long as the invoice looks similar to the first one, *FastDoc* should automatically populate data fields like the name, date, PO number, total, etc.

*FastDoc Capture* offers output to *SharePoint*, as well as a "universal output format" designed for integration with most ECM applications. Datacap is currently launching a beta program targeted at its resellers and current customers. A general availability release is planned for the third quarter.

How the product will be configured and priced is still being finalized, but Blau indicated it should list for "under \$10,000."

<http://www.datacap.com/news/headlines/archives/fastdoc/>

### **Artsyl building channel**

Artsyl Technologies has been marketing its *SimpleCapture* application, which leverages *Single-Click Entry*, for more than a year. It starts at \$7,995, for a license to capture an unlimited number of documents. For \$2,495, users can add a module that will remember the location of data for invoices from a particular vendor. Artsyl also offers a server-based product, called *docAlpha* that can be used to add production capture capabilities to a *Single-Click Entry* environment.

According to Artur Vassilyev, Artsyl's founder and director of engineering, the company has enjoyed some success in the invoice capture, transportation, and service bureau markets. "Just through deploying *SimpleCapture*, we have seen customers reduce their data entry labor by 50-80%," he said. "People like that there is no set up time. You can install the software and start using it right away."

Vassilyev also noted that through an exclusive U.S. distribution agreement with **NewWave Technologies**, Artsyl has signed up 50 VARs.

<http://www.artsyltech.com/SimpleCapturePlatform.htm>

### **Neat Company diversifying**

The renamed Neat Company continues to evolve

from its roots as a developer of technology to help SOHO professionals file their expense reports. You've probably seen Neat's flagship product, the NeatReceipts mobile scanner, which is sold in airport kiosks. The Philadelphia-based ISV markets technology for capturing data from business receipts and storing it in a proprietary expense management application. Last year at AIIM, Neat introduced an API for exporting this data into corporate accounting systems [see *DIR 3/21/08*]. It also offers some business card scanning, image processing, OCR, and desktop document management technology.

Historically, Neat's technology has been closely coupled with the scanning hardware included with its retail product, but that is about to change. According to Jeff Thomas, Neat's VP of sales, the company is working on decoupling the software from the hardware. "Ease-of-use has always been very important to us," he told *DIR*. "Because of this, we haven't wanted our customers to have to deal with scanner drivers. We've done this by connecting our application directly with proprietary hardware.

"We are currently working on a method for connecting our software to scanners through TWAIN drivers, but still suppressing the driver in the user-interface. Even though we sell a lot of hardware, and plan to continue to do so, we think of ourselves more as a software developer. Having a product that can run with any TWAIN scanner should help us make more headway in the traditional document management space."

Thomas expects the TWAIN-driven software product to be available in September. Also, about that time, Neat plans to release an SDK that enables users to create applications leveraging its technology. "Basically, there are three buckets of information our technology can be used to capture," said Thomas. "One is full-text OCR, the second is parsed data, and the third is an enhanced image."

Along with the SDK, Neat will make available an API for exporting images and data into third-party applications. "We are looking at connecting with applications like **Jigsaw**, for example, which is basically a database of contacts collected through uploaded business card information," said Thomas. "We are looking at connecting with ECM systems too, but even moreso with line-of-business applications, like ERP."

Initially, Neat's SDK will include technology for extracting data from business cards and receipts. However, the company is developing neural networking technology that will enable it to capture data from invoices and other types of documents in the near future. The SDK will also give ISVs the

option of suppressing TWAIN drivers in the UI.

The preliminary list price for Neat's SDK is \$2,995 for a developer's seat license. "We haven't finalized our run-time licensing model yet," said Thomas. "But, we're looking at users being able to deploy our software on 100 desktops for less than \$100 per seat. We hope to offer 80-90% of the functionality of other vendors for 40-50% of the cost."

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

### **LuraTech introduces free-form capture**

German ISV LuraTech continues to expand its document imaging offerings. Founded several years ago as a compression specialist, at AIIM 2009, LuraTech introduced a new *Form Recognition Module* into its *PDF Compressor* server. The new module offers classification and data extraction from both structured and semi-structured forms.

According to Mark McKinney, president of LuraTech, Inc., the company's San Jose-based American subsidiary, ease-of-use and a competitive price differentiate LuraTech's technology from other IDR (intelligent document recognition) software on the market. "Most IDR products that we've seen require a large investment by the end user," he said. "Professional services are needed each time users want to add a new form to their capture workflow.

"We've introduced a *Form Designer*, which enables line of business managers to set up their own capture processes. There is some ramp-up time, but we will work with our customers to train them on how to use it. Once they learn, they should be able to manage it from there. The *Form Designer* is set up so you don't have to be an engineer to work with it, you just have to understand your documents."

The *Form Recognition Module* leverages ABBYY's full-text OCR, but the classification and extraction were developed by LuraTech. Last year, the company introduced structured forms recognition, and the new module builds on that. *PDF Compressor* also comes with the ability to output optimized PDF images and a digital signature module is offered. At AIIM, LuraTech also introduced a module for creating PDA/A (archiving) files from electronic or "born digital" files.

"*PDF Compressor* has evolved into a capture workflow server," said McKinney. "We can accept input from any source and offer standard XML output that can be configured with any back-end system.

LuraTech, which has primarily sold directly to date, is also establishing a VAR reseller channel.

"Particularly, with the free forms recognition module, we really think there is opportunity," said McKinney. "This is the type of product resellers can go in with, provide some professional services to help their customers get up to speed, and then move on to the next installation."

For more information:

<http://www.luratech.com/products/document-conversion-solutions.html>

## **Successful SDK Program Key To eCopy's Growth**

Despite ever increasing competition, MFP capture specialist **eCopy** continues to enjoy success. The Nashua, NH-based ISV recently announced there are now 100 commercially available *Connectors* to third-party applications from its *ShareScan* application. Over half these *Connectors* are to ECM applications, with *Connectors* also available to fax server, cost recovery, financial applications, and other types of software as well. eCopy touts *ShareScan's* ability to effectively and easily capture images from almost any vendor's hardware device as a driving force behind its partners' desire to leverage it as middleware.

"The eCopy Open Platform (eOP) provides a development environment that insulates the developer from the need to develop integration to each of the MFP embedded platforms, saving time and money," said Ed Schmid, eCopy's CEO, in a press release announcing the 100 *Connector* milestone. "Developers need only write one *Connector* to eOP and it is available on all major MFP brands."

Indeed, through a combination of its participation in MFP vendor programs for embedding applications, its ScanStation hardware for deploying *ShareScan* in a non-embedded fashion, and *ShareScan's* ability to connect to ISIS scanner drivers, eCopy can handle image acquisition and processing from almost any device that can scan documents. According to Rick Phillips, group product manager for eCopy, his company potentially saves its ISV partners 100s of hours of development and testing time.

"There are many challenges involved in working with MFP vendors' embedded platforms," Phillips said. "First of all, there are fees associated with each program, and you have to learn each SDK. Just because two vendors have Java platforms doesn't mean you can develop an application for one and use it for the other one. Web services-based platforms have similar compatibility issues. When

ISVs write a *Connector* to *ShareScan*, they don't have to worry about any of this. They write one *Connector*, and we map *ShareScan* to each individual hardware platform.

"On top of that, we act as a buffer between the hardware manufacturers and the ISVs. For example, when connecting through *ShareScan*, ISVs don't have to worry about managing image acquisition from various hardware devices. Processes like image processing, compression, creating searchable PDFs, and adding security, are handled differently in Ricoh devices vs. Canon devices. *ShareScan* manages all that and makes it available to ISVs through our connection wizard. This way, the ISV only has to worry about creating an interface that effectively implements its business logic."

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**—Rick Phillips, eCopy**

eCopy has also made creating interfaces easier for its partners. "With the latest version of the SDK, we introduced a form designer that enables an ISV to create a common interface that can run across dissimilar hardware platforms," said Phillips. "Our GUI enables them to drag-and-drop components onto a design page. We also offer a style guide, so partners can write *Connectors* that look and feel like other *Connectors* their customers might be using."

According to Phillips, this adds up to tremendous savings for eCopy partners. "The economies of scale that we offer are pretty significant," he said. "When you add up the time it takes to develop, test, launch, and then maintain and update, an application for a hardware platform, and then multiply that by each platform you have to support.... Working with *ShareScan* means an ISV only has to develop for one platform."

### **EMC is on board**

You don't have to sell **EMC's** Sean Baird on the advantages of working with a single interface for multiple hardware devices. As a senior product marketing manager for EMC Captiva, Baird has experience working with the Pixel Translations ISIS scanner driver business. "At Pixel, we have worked very hard to make ISIS the standard for connecting to all document scanners," he said. "We certainly looked long and hard at what sort of effort it would take to develop this type of connectivity for MFPs. However, we determined that working with eCopy offers a lot of advantages—in terms of quickly and cost effectively being able to get a *Connector* to

market that can address the broad requirements and demands of our customer base."

EMC has actually developed two *Connectors* for *ShareScan*—one for its *ApplicationXtender* mid-market/departmental ECM system and one for its Captiva *InputAccel* enterprise capture application. eCopy has also developed a *Connector* to EMC's high-end *Documentum* ECM application. According to Baird, there has been a lot of recent demand for the *InputAccel Connector*.

"We have reached the point where we don't see distributed capture from the MFP as being disconnected from centralized capture," said Baird. "Customers are asking how they can augment their back-office, high-volume scanning [*InputAccel's* traditional sweet spot]

with different types of scanning in different departments and lines of business. And they want it all to be integrated with *IA*.

"Our *ShareScan Connector* is a great way to accomplish this. It enables users to log-in and get their credentials through *IA*. This means if they are only cleared to execute a certain scanning workflow, such as invoice capture in an A/P department, that's all that will come up on the *ShareScan* interface. By being able to access *IA* through *ShareScan*, users have access to the same capabilities, like auto-classification and extraction, that they would in a centralized environment.

"Also, organizations we work with don't have control over the hardware devices they are using, so *ShareScan's* ability to work with multiple MFP brands is important to our customer base."

### **The road to TCM**

*ShareScan* currently runs embedded in **Ricoh** and **Canon** devices (meaning its interface can be accessed through the MFP touchscreen) and through the Scan Station on other vendors' products. However, eCopy continues to perform due diligence on the potential of embedding *ShareScan* in other hardware. "We've entered into development agreements with 8-10 vendors to assess the viability of their embedded environments," said Bill Brikiatis, eCopy's director of corporate marketing. "As these environments mature, and we enter into business agreements with the vendors, we will expand our portfolio of

embedded devices.”

This ability to work with multiple MFP brands is attractive to eCopy’s burgeoning VAR channel. “VARs that focus on software sales really don’t want to worry about what vendors’ MFPs their customers are using,” said Brikiatis.

And the VAR channel should continue to grow as the number of *Connector* partners grows. eCopy currently has 230 developers enrolled in its development program, which is divided into two tiers. There is no charge for the basic tier, in which a developer is provided the SDK and some on-line support. For \$2,400 a year, developers receive full support and some joint marketing opportunities. According to Brikiatis, eCopy expects two to three new *Connectors* to come on board each month.

For us, the growing *Connector* program is evidence of how eCopy is moving deeper into the higher-margin transactional content management (TCM) market, after beginning life primarily in the ad hoc, or scan-to-email/desktop space. Through *ShareScan*’s integration with products like *InputAccel*, it offers the best of both worlds—a proven, easy-to-use interface for ad hoc capture and an emerging distributed capture platform for TCM.

eCopy has also helped itself by making *ShareScan* more affordable over the past couple years. The increasing variety of low-priced, ad hoc capture products being offered by MFP vendors may have influenced this move, but it also makes *ShareScan* a more compelling option in TCM environments. As eCopy continues to build its VAR channel, it will be interesting to see how often VARs start offering *ShareScan* running on an already installed MFP as a less expensive alternative to a new distributed scanner—plus the software to run it. Yes, eCopy has always been ahead of the curve in the capture space, and its growing *Connector* program, in conjunction with its emerging VAR channel, is designed to keep it there.

For more information:

<http://www.ecopy.com/Products-Software-Development-Kit—SDK-.asp>

## New *DocuShare* Package Aimed at Mid-Market Imaging

With *DocuShare* 6.5, **Xerox** has introduced an out-of-the-box document image management option starting at \$50,000. Xerox’s new Virtual File System includes scanning hardware, software, a file system, and five days worth of consulting. “Our focus is to, first and foremost, replicate what our customers are already doing with their file cabinets,” said John Gonzalez, Xerox’s director of product management for *DocuShare*.

Scheduled for availability next month, the basic configuration of VFS offers 100 read-only seats of the Web-based *DocuShare* platform, as well as 10-workflow-enabled seats. A **Visioneer** Xerox DocuMate 632 departmental scanner is included, as well as *ILINX Capture*, a thin-client application developed by Olympia, WA-based ISV **ImageSource**. The consulting, provided by Xerox Global Services, is designed to help users replicate within *DocuShare*, the taxonomy of their file folder systems, as well as leverage imaging and workflow to improve their business processes.

At AIIM, Xerox introduced a free EIP connector for its digital copiers, making it easier to capture documents directly into *DocuShare* using controls accessed through an MFP touchscreen.

“One of the key improvements in *DocuShare* 6.5 is its scalability,” said Gonzalez. “We’ve tested it up through 50 million images, and it can ingest up to one million images with meta data per day. We’ve also added support for **VMWare** and **IBM’s** DB2. We already had support for **Oracle** and **Microsoft** SQL database technology.

### DOCSOLID FOCUSED ON LEGAL MARKET

**DocSolid** is the name of the company that **ImageTag** Founder Steve Irons is spinning off from his former company. DocSolid, which will be headquartered in Phoenix, will leverage ImageTag’s patented *KwikTag* capture application and focus on the legal market. This includes law firms and corporate legal departments. ImageTag will leverage *KwikTag Connect* to integrate with prominent legal-centric back office applications from vendors like **Interwoven** and **Open Text**.

“Law firms are particular customers, and the dynamics of their needs require specialization of both the software and the related professional services,” Irons told *DIR*. “ImageTag is now focused on the **Microsoft Dynamics** market and evolving *KwikTag* to make it even easier to embed capture in business software. We felt that a separate company, DocSolid, with a targeted strategy, could best serve legal customers.

“The current market opportunity in this segment is strong, and we want to own it. PC Docs and iManage succeeded in the legal space because of a similar type of focus.”

DocSolid will hit the ground running with approximately 50 legal customers it brought over from ImageTag.

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

“The overall theme for 6.5 was to make it easier for people to get their scanned and imaged content into *DocuShare*. We believe this addresses an important area for mid-tier companies. It saves them money by helping them get rid of processes that involve a lot of people and floor space.”

*DocuShare*, which was launched in 1999, is used by more than 5,500 businesses worldwide. This ranges from 10-seat users of *DocuShare Express* [introduced last year, see *DIR* 9/26/08] to customers with 10s of thousands of seats. Gonzalez indicated that major improvements are also in the works for *DocuShare* 7.0.

For more information: <http://docushare.xerox.com/>

## **PERSONNEL** **SOME MOVERS AND SHAKE-UPS AROUND** **THE INDUSTRY**

Mike Morper has become the latest ex-**Kofax** employee to land at Rockville, MD-based capture vendor **Notable Solutions, Inc.** As NSi works primarily with digital copier vendors, it doesn't necessarily compete directly with Kofax. Morper, who has been named VP of marketing, said the attraction for ex-Kofax people is the opportunity to work in an emerging market with high-growth opportunities—similar to the market for hardware boards and software for dedicated document scanners, which was just starting to take off when Morper started with Kofax.

For more info: <http://www.nsius.com/>

Kofax, which has undergone significant personnel changes over the past year, especially in its sales department, recently hired a pair of experienced document imaging channel executives. Dan Lucarini, a former IMR and Captaris executive, has been hired as Kofax's senior director of business development. Barbara Lanci has been named senior director of partner strategy and development. She was a director of channel development at Kofax in the late 1990s. Both will report to former Captiva marketing and OEM specialist Jim Vickers, who was hired late last year as senior VP of OEM and partner strategy.

Kofax has announced several six-figure deals over the past couple months, but we haven't seen any value-added reseller (VAR) names attached to the sales. While increasing average deal sizes through direct sales is definitely a goal of CEO Reynolds Bish, he hopes to accomplish this without diminishing the company's VAR sales, which have traditionally

accounted for the overwhelming majority of Kofax revenue. Adding two channel savvy professionals like Lucarini and Lanci is a good sign that Kofax remains dedicated to supporting its channel.

<http://tinyurl.com/KofaxVARhires>

## **EMC releases AX 6**

Just to show you how loyal a channel can be, **EMC** recently released *ApplicationXtender* 6, the first new version of its mid-market ECM software product in several years. Originally created by OTG, which was bought by Legato, which was bought by EMC, *ApplicationXtender* apparently still has a strong enough reseller base to warrant a new release. New features include a .NET-based *Workflow Manager* module designed to make workflows easier to deploy and use across multiple departments. This will enable AX to spread into departments where the professional services required to build workflows in the legacy version of AX could not be cost-justified.

EMC has also introduced software-based retention management into AX. Through its *DiskXtender* sister product, AX has always had strong hardware-centric retention management capabilities. In fact, OTG's HSM (hierarchical storage management) capabilities were one of its major attractions for Legato. AX now offers users more file-centric records management through the ability to set and execute retention policies for individual documents or classes of documents.

Chris Preston, EMC's senior director, product marketing, ECM products and solutions, estimated that a 10-user AX system can be installed for less than \$10,000.

For more information:  
<http://www.emc.com/applicationxtender>

At AIIM 2009, *DIR* also caught up with Kara Cleaver, the founder and former-CEO of **Documentum** integration specialist and distributed capture ISV **Daybreak ICS**. Cleaver has been appointed the VP of business development at **Armedia, LLC**. Armedia is an Atlanta-based systems integrator and ISV that also focuses on Documentum environments.

Cleaver left Daybreak after it was taken over by Nashua, NH-based **Universal Software**, which shared an investment partner with Daybreak [see *DIR* 2/20/09]. Universal continues to develop and market the *e4x cCapture* suite that was created to act as a universal front-end for scanning into multiple repositories at distributed locations. Big-name customers include **Raytheon** and **Honeywell**.

e4x is licensed on a per seat basis, and it is now available on a subscription basis for \$420 per year. Former eCopy and Cranel sales executive Jerry Creteau is Daybreak's director of channel sales and attended AIIM. He was excited about applying Universal's considerable software development resources to Daybreak's business. "Historically, because it was a small business with multiple foci, including a training business, Daybreak wasn't able to put all the development resources into e4x that it needed to really make the product successful," he said. "That should no longer be an issue."

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

## Kodak Expands Care Kit Coverage

Over the past year, we've talked a lot about **Kodak** Document Imaging's multi-pronged attack to woo channel partners. The Rochester, NY-based vendor boasts that its combination of hardware, software, and service offerings gives it an unparalleled standing in the market. And while we've given plenty of coverage to Kodak's hardware and software products, perhaps we haven't spilled enough ink discussing its world-class product service group. However, in the past month, we saw a couple Kodak Service announcements we felt were worth writing about.

The first was Kodak's announcement that it is now offering Care Kits through resellers for **Canon**, **Fujitsu**, and **Panasonic** scanners. Previously available only for Kodak and **Böwe Bell + Howell**

scanners, Care Kits act like extended warranties and cover service-related travel, labor, parts, and calls. An additional option for Fujitsu scanners offers training and consumables. The Care Kits are administered by Kodak's worldwide staff of more than 3,000 service and support professionals.

We thought the multi-vendor Care Kits represented an interesting follow-up to Kodak's announcement earlier this year that the latest version of its *Capture Pro* software has been expanded to run with non-Kodak scanners. These moves show that Kodak is clearly focused on growing beyond its legacy as a hardware vendor.

### **New service portal**

Kodak Service and Support has also introduced a Web portal. Known as eService, the portal is designed to help resellers and their customers maintain accurate information on service entitlements, product counts, and contact information. According to a press release, "It facilitates a constant communication channel between Kodak's customers and their service reps., offering users an easier, faster method for submitting, viewing, and managing their service requests."

"With the launch of eService, we have matched our best of breed onsite support with a trackable method of recording and monitoring service performance," said Pat Welch, Kodak Service sales manager for the U.S. and Canada. "The eService platform takes our partners' support to a new level of detail and availability."

<http://tinyurl.com/Kodak-Service-US>

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