

Document Imaging Report

Business Trends on Converting Paper Processes to Electronic Format

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May 5, 2006

THIS JUST IN!

NSi RELEASES MEAP APP IN EUROPE

Notable Solutions, Inc. (NSi) continues its efforts to have its capture technology embedded in every vendor's digital copiers. The Rockville, MD-based software developer this week announced integration with **Canon** devices being sold in Europe, the Mid-East, and Africa. NSi's *AutoStore* has been approved by Canon Europe to run on the vendor's ImageRunner multi-functional embedded application platform (MEAP).

"Canon Europe operates differently than Canon USA," Ali Tehranchi, president and CEO of NSi, told *DIR*. "Canon USA prefers to have all embedded products on its price list and distribute them itself. We've been working with Canon Europe for about a year. First, we worked out a licensing agreement for the MEAP technology. Then, Canon Europe did extensive testing. We got their signature affirming we are allowed to deploy, and now our pricing and distribution strategies are up to us."

NSi will follow the same sales strategy it has for its other hardware partners in Europe. "We've established several master resellers dating back to the days when we worked exclusively with **HP**," said Tehranchi. "They work with hundreds of locally established resellers. Many are solutions-focused and carry robust document management applications."

One of NSi's top European resellers is **IKON Europe**. At **AIIM 2005**, NSi and IKON announced an OEM relationship [see *DIR* 6/3/05].

NSi, of course, will also have competition from **eCopy**, Canon's premier capture partner for the past several years. "The advantage we have over eCopy is price," said Tehranchi. "At the end of the day, copier dealers are compensated for selling hardware. eCopy charges \$3,000 per device for its

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EFI, Nuance Launch Alliance

Distributed capture is a hot market. So is capture from multi-functional digital copiers. **EFI** and **Nuance** recently announced an alliance that could make things even hotter—especially for their competitors. EFI, which licenses technology to several leading digital copier vendors, has signed an OEM agreement to bundle Nuance's ScanSoft *PaperPort* desktop document management application with two different product lines. These are its Fiery controller for color MFPs and its *SendMe* capture application. EFI will market *PaperPort* under the *EFI Desktop* brand.

For Nuance, the agreement represents the latest step in its march to establish *PaperPort* as the "universal desktop" for capture from digital copiers. For EFI, the partnership is a way to shore up the scanning capabilities of Fiery, as well as a means for better positioning *SendMe* against **eCopy's** market leading *ShareScan* application. *DIR* caught up with representatives from both companies, who shared the details behind their visions.

PaperPort in the middle

"It's our view that there are three parts to capturing documents in the general office environment, in which you find digital copiers," said Robert Weideman, senior VP of Nuance Productivity Solutions. "The first involves enabling the hardware device for network scanning. Historically, **eCopy** has been successful doing this through a separate touch-screen monitor. In the future, it will probably be done effectively through the touch screens on the devices themselves.

"Let's skip ahead to the third part of the equation, which involves delivering scanned images to back-end ECM systems or workflow processes. eCopy is making its mark here through its Connector technology and toolkit. Vendors like **NSi** and **Omtool** also have good connector technology.

"It's the middle part of the process where Nuance sees an opportunity. This involves users scanning

documents back to their desktops for personal workflows. These workflows could involve attaching an image to an e-mail message, combining it with other electronically created documents, or indexing the image before sending it to an ECM system.”

Weideman acknowledged that eCopy, as well as several hardware vendors offer their own desktop applications. He dismissed them as one-dimensional when compared to *PaperPort*. “These products are fine if all you want to do is work with images captured through the vendor’s scanning client,” he said. “*PaperPort* offers technology for working with all your desktop documents. This includes the ability to combine multiple types of documents in one PDF file, to create PDFs directly from any Windows application, and to search across your desktop files, including images.

“We have powerful, robust controllers that drive copiers, but the real story is how this hardware is deployed within workflows.”

– Mark McCuen, EFI

“*PaperPort*’s broad range of functionality makes it more appealing to IT departments. They would rather install and support one product that performs many functions than multiple individual applications. **Adobe Acrobat**, for instance, although it offers some image capture capabilities, is typically only used as a PDF utility. And *eCopy Desktop* gets marginalized as a scanning utility.

“Even **Kofax’ Capio** is only designed to release images into Kofax’ *Ascent Capture*. For *PaperPort*, we’ve already developed direct links to applications from **Documentum**, **Microsoft [SharePoint]**, **Oracle**, **FileNet**, **Captiva**, NSi, and Omtool. We also have a connection that adheres to WebDAV protocols. And, we have an inexpensive toolkit available for ISVs and integrators that want to develop their own connections.”

The PaperPort road map

Of course, everyone knows that eCopy’s success has been, in a large part, driven through its close relationship with **Canon USA**. Canon even has an equity investment in the company [see *DIR* 12/20/02]. Nuance has its own sugar daddy, so to speak.

Xerox actually launched ScanSoft before spinning it off in 1998 [see *DIR* 12/18/98]. In 2004, Xerox sold off its remaining shares but remains a close partner. Xerox OEMs a version of *PaperPort*, which it sells as a desktop client for its line of capture applications. From all indications that arrangement is working out well, and in 2005, Nuance saw a 49% jump in *PaperPort* sales.

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3. Forms Processing/OCR/ICR
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Because of its size and Xerox relationship, Nuance is a wild card in the digital copier capture space that is seemingly dominated by eCopy. Even though the company changed its name last year to Nuance to reflect its growing interest in voice recognition [see *DIR* 6/3/05], it still did \$68 million worth of imaging revenue—representing growth of 54% over 2004. Granted, sales of OCR and recognition technology made up a significant chunk of that, but *PaperPort* hardly seems to be limping along.



Robert Weideman,
senior VP, Productivity
Solutions, Nuance

While Xerox is Nuance's top selling *PaperPort* partner, the company also has OEM arrangements with digital copier vendors **Konica Minolta** and **Kyocera Mita**, as well as bundling agreements with desktop MFP and scanner vendors **Brother**, **Visioneer**, **Dell**, and **HP**. Nuance also markets *PaperPort* as a standalone product and offers upgrades over the Internet.

Flooding the market

Nuance's partnership with EFI can probably be

looked at as analogous to eCopy's announcement last year to open up its application to work with multiple hardware vendors [see *DIR* 2/18/05]. While, *PaperPort* has always been available to run in conjunction with digital copiers from multiple vendors, the EFI relationship should push forward that initiative significantly.

EFI's Fiery, which has an install base of some 1.4 million units, is the market's leading color controller for digital copiers. The company has Fiery partnerships with the likes of Xerox, Canon, **Ricoh**, and Konica Minolta. By our estimates, sales of color units made up approximately 20% of the million or so digital copiers shipped in North America in 2005. The consensus is that percentage is rapidly on the rise.

EFI is now bundling an unlimited license for *EFI Desktop SE* with shipments of Fiery controllers. *EFI Desktop Professional*, which features more robust technology in the areas of PDF, OCR, search, and back-end connections, will be available as an upgrade. "We practically invented the digital color printing business with the introduction of Fiery 10 years ago," said Mark McCuen, the product manager for Fiery. "Fiery also includes scan capabilities, which some OEMs choose to

NUANCE TO STEP UP PATENT ENFORCEMENT

There has been plenty of marketing hype around ease-of-use as document capture has moved out of the back office. Scanning documents, once the domain of specially trained operators, is now being done more often by general office workers. Because these workers don't have the time or document volume necessary to justify learning a complex, non-intuitive capture application, we've seen a lot of vendors incorporating concepts of "one-touch" or "single-button" scanning.

In a development that has been coming to a head for some time, it appears **Nuance** is about to call some of these vendors on potential patent infringement. As we've written in *DIR* before, the specific patent in question is U.S. number 6,480,304, entitled, "Scanning system and method." It was issued to ScanSoft on Nov. 12, 2002, after being filed on Dec. 9, 1998 [see *DIR* 10/7/05]. From

our reading, it basically patents the concept of leveraging buttons on a hardware device to capture a document image in a pre-defined format and deliver it to a specific software application.

Visioneer is the only vendor we are aware of that has a license from Nuance for this patent. "There are vendors that respect our IP and have formed licensing relationships with us," said Robert Weideman of Nuance. "Others have decided not to. We can't allow vendors to leverage our intellectual property for free.

"We've taken the step of an initial outreach to try and cooperate with these vendors. At some juncture, we may have to take legal action. This year, one way or another, we will take action to address our IP issues."

Some hardware vendors we've talked with have dismissed Nuance's claims with comments like, "They can't patent a process like that." We heard similar statements regarding

patent claims from **Millennium L.P.** [see *DIR* 1/9/04]. Although Millennium's claims were never tested in court, it did make [and is continuing to make, we understand] a whole lot of money from settlements by companies that decided it wasn't worth the effort to fight Millennium and its attorneys.

Nuance may even have a stronger case than Millennium because regarding Millennium's patents, we heard several claims of prior art. We have heard few such claims in the case of Nuance. In fact, for years, Visioneer was pretty much the only voice promoting "OneTouch" technology. Only recently have other hardware vendors begun to recognize the value of the concept. So, while Millennium may have been putting to paper tried-and-true methods for data capture, Nuance may actually have a patent based on some innovation.

For more information:
<http://patft1.uspto.gov/netahtml/PTO/srchnum.htm>

incorporate. We will make *EFI Desktop* available to all our Fiery partners, and it will be up to them if they want to bundle it."

According to McCuen, EFI has a long history bundling software to help users better manage their print capabilities. "We have powerful, robust controllers that drive copiers, but the real story is how this hardware is deployed within workflows," he said. "We already offer high-end graphic arts and prepress software for print workflows. Now, as color makes its way further into the general office space, we'd like to add scanning workflow tools. When you mix the scan and print elements together, it creates interesting possibilities like being able to combine scanned pages with electronically generated ones in a single printed booklet."

In addition to the Fiery bundling, EFI plans to offer 10 seats of *Desktop Professional* as an option to customers of its *SendMe* application. *SendMe* is the *ShareScan* competitor originally developed in 2003 for copier super dealer **IKON**. At the time, we understood IKON wanted an alternative to *ShareScan* for several reasons, one of which is that *ShareScan* couldn't run on Ricoh devices.

Like *ShareScan*, *SendMe*, which is sold by IKON under the *DocSend* brand, offers a separate touch screen interface to improve the user's capture experience. Now that eCopy is working with Ricoh, EFI is differentiating *SendMe* in other ways. Offering *PaperPort* is obviously one.

"We position *SendMe* as a document portal," said John Armstrong, director of engineering for the product. "It enables users to do things from the touch screen like combine scanned images with files from their servers and put them together for an outgoing fax. We also offer features like the ability to print securely from a Blackberry. The whole purpose of an MFP is to combine tasks like scanning, printing, faxing, and document assembly in a single device. This facilitates ease of use and maintenance. We will continue to develop *SendMe* with this vision in mind." [Of course, that vision is very much in line with Nuance's vision of *PaperPort* as a single desktop application that can manage documents from a wide variety of applications.]

According to Armstrong, *SendMe* can work with any MFP device that can scan to a network folder. It can be tightly integrated with any device with a TWAIN driver. At AIIM 2005, EFI announced that Xerox and Ricoh would be offering *SendMe* through their direct sales forces. EFI also markets *SendMe* through independent dealers.

EFI executives told us there are more than 1,000

combined installations of *SendMe* and *DocSend*. EFI has also integrated *SendMe* with more than 40 third-party applications and has made an integration toolkit available for developers. When we spoke, the company was considering an adjustment of its list price of \$6,995 per device to be more competitive.

Now comes the hard part...

In conclusion, this partnership has some serious potential. It brings together two top-notch technology providers with complementary products and strategies. How much traction it gains will depend on execution. Selling capture solutions through digital copier dealers has proven to be no easy feat. eCopy has something like a dozen marketing representatives dedicated to its IKON relationship. That's the type of hand-holding you often need to make capture from copiers work.

Fortunately, Nuance has its experience with Xerox to draw upon, while EFI has cut its teeth with print and graphics solutions. Putting all this together may indeed prove to be a formula for success. We're not saying EFI and Nuance are going to necessarily rob market share from eCopy immediately, but this piece of the capture market is in such a nascent stage that there is still room for at least two rapidly growing leaders.

For more information:

<http://www.nuance.com/paperport/>;

<http://www.efi.com/products/corporate/efi-sendme/>

Panasonic Targets Healthcare Market

New workgroup model features unique capabilities for capturing cards.

Panasonic has become the latest vendor to attack the red-hot healthcare provider market with a workgroup scanner. One key to success in this space is being able to capture identification and health insurance cards with a document scanner. With its new KV-S1025C and KV-S1020C models, Panasonic has addressed this requirement. It has gone a couple steps further as well, incorporating features like the ability to capture mixed batches of cards and documents and the ability to combine images from duplex cards in a single file.

"All of our competitors can capture cards," said Gary Bailer, Panasonic Digital Document Company's product manager for scanners. "We're a little bit late to the healthcare game, so we ran some focus groups and had meetings with ISVs who target this space before finalizing plans for the product. This

helped us better address the entire workflow process encountered by healthcare providers.”

Bailer pointed out that 60% of the time, patients have both primary and secondary insurance cards. “This is not to mention drivers’ licenses, as well as HIPAA and treatment forms that are captured when a patient checks in,” said Bailer. “None of our competitors will guarantee the ability to handle multiple cards in a single batch. We guarantee up to three cards and have tested quantities of at least 10 without getting a mis-feed. Obviously, having to load each card separately will slow down your workflow. None of our competitors handles paper and cards in the same batch either.”



Panasonic's new KV-S1025C scans cards and paper in the same batch.

Duplex card capture to a single file may be even more important, according to Bailer. “Some insurance cards have information like the patients’ name and phone number on the front and the group I.D. number on the back,” he said. “If these documents are captured as separate files, it is difficult to apply OCR—especially if you’re doing database look-ups for validation.

“The primary cause for lack, or delay, of payment for a healthcare provider from an insurance company is data-entry error. We’ve been working with several leading healthcare billing software companies that have developed automated capture technology. They have all indicated they would benefit from what we are calling our ‘double-exposure’ technology. We’ve built it to work with both our TWAIN and ISIS drivers.”

The KV-S102xC units utilize CCD cameras and are rated at 26 ppm at 200 dpi in color, grayscale, and binary. The duplex KV-S1025C is rated at 52 ipm and lists for \$1,049. The simplex KV-S1020C lists for \$949. Panasonic will continue to market its legacy KV-S2026C workgroup models, which feature a recommended daily duty cycle (RDDC) of 4,000 pages. The KV-S102xC models have an RDDC of 1,000 pages. “There are applications that require the robustness of the 2026,” said Bailer.

The KV-S102xC models feature Panasonic’s proprietary Dynamic Threshold image processing technology, which is touted as an alternative to

Kofax VRS. For customers that prefer VRS, the scanners are certified on it, although VRS must be purchased separately. Panasonic has also included its Multistream output technology, as well as auto-color detect and multi-color dropout.

Panasonic also advertises something called “Double-Feed Prevention.” “Basically, our focus groups told us that we should work on eliminating double-feeds rather than discovering them,” Bailer told *DIR*. “All the scanners we’ve released in the last year have included a special set of rollers that run the opposite direction of the feeding rollers. They are designed to keep pages from being fed through on top of other pages. Other feeders I’ve seen use cork pads that wear and are less effective at preventing double-feeds.”

The new scanners include long document capture capabilities for items like EKG reports. “Across the board, healthcare is the single largest growth industry in the United States,” Bailer told *DIR*. “The costs are exorbitant, and there is demand to improve efficiencies. We are also targeting related markets like pharmacies that need to scan insurance cards.

“The small footprint and on-board image processing make the KV-S102xC models attractive to the transportation industry. We have been discussing applications in which truckers could run their scanners with tablet PCs. The tablets would leverage Bluetooth and a satellite hookup to transfer scanned images to a server. These tablets often don’t have the RAM and/or CPU power to handle an image processing application such as VRS.”

Finally, the new scanners have a feature designed to address the security requirements of government agencies. This feature ensures images are automatically erased from the scanners immediately after they are captured and processed.

For more information:

http://www.panasonic.com/business/office/cat_scanners.asp

Pixel Adds Network Feature To ISIS

*A month ago we wrote about some of the intriguing potential of network TWAIN drivers [see [DIR 4/7/06](#)]. In the interest of fairness, and also because **Pixel Translations** is moving toward network-enabled ISIS as a standard feature in its driver technology, here’s a follow-up story on network ISIS:*

Pixel has announced network ISIS is now shipping with the **Fujitsu fi-5900C**, as well as the **Böwe Bell**

& **Howell** Truper 3200 and **HP** Scanjet 7800. Like network TWAIN, network ISIS is targeted at distributed capture. "The idea behind network ISIS is that it enables a group of PCs to share the same scanner," said Kai Wille, director, Pixel direct sales, for **Captiva Software** [now a subsidiary of **EMC**]. "We're all comfortable sharing printers in today's workgroups. We are trying to encourage the same use scenario for scanners."

"We're all comfortable sharing printers.... We are trying to encourage the same use scenario for scanners."

— Kai Wille, Pixel

In a typical network ISIS set-up for a workgroup, the administrative portion of the driver is loaded onto a networked PC, which is directly attached to a document scanner. The administrative portion of the driver acts as the server, and ISIS clients are loaded onto the other PCs in the workgroup. The ISIS clients go through the sever PC to connect to the scanner. "One option is to set up a network-based capture application on the same server as the ISIS driver," said Allyson Johnson, account manager for Pixel. "You could then create a scanning kiosk that could be leveraged by the entire workgroup.

"One of the trends we've seen with front-office scanning is that, often, the person who pushes forward the initiative ends up with the scanner at their desk and becomes the scanning guru. Then, every time someone needs a document scanned, this person has to stop what they are doing and either help, or scan the document themselves. Network ISIS is designed to get everyone involved in scanning. Our hidden agenda is that, by exposing more people to scanning, we will educate them on its value. This should lead to more capture hardware and software sales."

Pixel customizes its ISIS drivers to fit the demands of its hardware partners. "Basically, once an ISIS client initializes with the server, the scanner will be locked down and won't be released until the user lets it go or a batch is scanned," said James Bailey, Pixel's senior software engineer. "If a vendor has a button on its scanner, we can configure the driver so the user can start the scanning process by pressing it."

Johnson concluded that Pixel doesn't view network ISIS as a major technological breakthrough. "It's really just a way to add value for our scanner partners and make our product more useful as

distributed capture becomes more important."

For more information:

<http://www.captivasoftware.com/products/isis.asp>

ABBYY Introduces Recognition Server App

The document capture space is starting to embrace the Web services evolution. The first step is moving the components of capture off a PC attached to a scanner and making them accessible in a completely server-based architecture. **ABBYY USA** has taken this step with the upcoming release of the *ABBYY Recognition Server*. It will make its debut in two weeks at the **AIIM Conference and Expo** in Philadelphia.

"*Recognition Server* is designed to plug into an ECM workflow," said Dean Tang, president and CEO of ABBYY USA. "It can be set up to receive documents from capture applications or watched folders. Based on the source of the documents or the data in an XML-ticket, *Recognition Server* can be programmed to perform specific functions. These include creation of full-text searchable PDF files or conversion to a **Microsoft Word** or *Excel* format. *Recognition Server* also has an open API that enables it to place these converted documents into an ECM or records management system or into the next step in a workflow process."

ABBYY's goal for *Recognition Server* is for it to act as a "black box" for recognition technology. "It is designed to facilitate large, unattended conversions," said Tang. "It's great for a law firm that might run into a large case file once every couple weeks, but does not have enough consistent volume to support a staff trained specifically in OCR conversion. We also see it as effective in distributed organizations that would have a difficult time maintaining desktop OCR applications across multiple offices. Users can submit their images through a Web interface and the conversion will be done for them on the server."

ABBYY will be distributing *Recognition Server* through its value-added reseller channel. "This is not a plug-and-play product like our retail applications," said Tang. "*Recognition Server* is designed to be part of an integrated solution, along with capture and ECM elements. Initially, we plan to focus on the SMB space—businesses with 50 to 1,000 employees. We think users doing capture with networked devices like digital copiers are particularly good candidates."

ABBYY already has ISV partners like **Notable**

Solutions, Inc. and **Kofax** that have embedded its technology into their own server-based solutions. "The *Recognition Server* architecture cuts down on integration time," said Artur Vassilyev, director of Professional Services for ABBYY USA. "It reduces it from a couple weeks to about a day."

ABBYY's *Recognition Server* lists for \$10,000 for deployment with the first CPU and \$7,500 for each additional CPU. The page volume is only limited by CPU processing power, and the product offers multiple output formats of the same image. Modules with special functionality like extra language support and bar code recognition are available for a premium.

We asked Tang if ABBYY had considered hosting the *Recognition Server* and allowing customers to utilize it on a pay-per-page basis. "That would be an interesting approach," he acknowledged. "However, instead of going to market ourselves with that model, we'd prefer to have *Recognition Server* bundled as part of an entire hosted solution."

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

Kyocera Introduces Imaging-In-A-Box

It seems **Kyocera Mita America** may have been a little ahead of the market with the 2005 launch of its *KYOcapture* distributed scanning application [see *DIR* 1/6/06]. At this year's National Dealer Meeting, held recently in Orlando, the digital copier vendor introduced a simpler scanning solution, aimed squarely at small- to medium-sized business (SMB) and departmental installations. *iTag*, which lists for \$15,000, is advertised as an out-of-the-box solution that includes hardware and software for capturing, indexing, storing, and retrieving documents.

"*KYOcapture* is really designed for users that already have a document management system or a corporate-wide document management strategy," said Akisa Matsuda, KMA's product manager for value-added systems. "We found that neither the majority of our dealers, nor our customer base, was ready for that advanced of a solution."

"The majority of our customers are SMBs and departmental users who, although they realize they need a document management strategy, don't know where to start. And many of our copier dealers do not have the experience or the knowledge to recommend or implement a document strategy."

Like *KYOcapture*, *iTag* includes **NSi's** *AutoStore* technology, albeit a stripped down version.

"Basically, *KYOcapture* consists of some 80 potential components," said Matsuda. "We have preconfigured seven in *iTag*."

iTag includes a PC touch screen, which is used as an alternative to the smaller touch screens already on Kyocera's copiers. Capture application specialist **eCopy** has had tremendous success promoting the larger PC touch screens for their ease-of-use. They provide a larger surface area for processes like preview and indexing of scanned images.

iTag also includes a **Dell** server running **Microsoft SharePoint Services**, a departmental version of the popular *SharePoint Portal Server* application. A 15 concurrent-user license is provided. All *iTag's* elements are preconfigured before they are shipped. Users can leverage a GUI interface to set up details, such as defining document types and index fields.

The announcement of *iTag* does not mean Kyocera is abandoning its vision for enterprise-wide distributed capture using digital copiers. "Because it's built on technology like *AutoStore* and *SharePoint*, users can easily upgrade," said Matsuda. "They can always expand to the *SharePoint Portal Server*, or, if they want to move to another document management system, *KYOcapture* connects to a number of third-party applications. *KYOcapture* can also be leveraged to introduce workflow steps like OCR, forms processing, Bates Stamping, and watermarking documents."

According to Matsuda, to be eligible to sell and install *iTag*, dealers are required to complete online training. "If they move up to *KYOcapture*, we require them to attend classroom sessions," she said.

For more information:

<http://usa.kyoceramita.com/KMAGlobalpub/jsp/Kyocera/KyoSolution.jsp>

Ricoh Awards Capture Vendors

Congratulations to **Omtool**, which has been named the Grand Prize winner in the **Ricoh** and **Sun** Java Solutions \$100,000 Developer Challenge. The contest involved applications that run on the Java-based embedded platform for Ricoh's Aficio line of digital copiers. Omtool led a clean sweep for document capture vendors of the top three prizes. **eCopy** finished second. **Notable Solutions, Inc.**, was third.

Omtool was honored for its **AccuRoute** application, which targets the legal and financial services markets. The judges, a mix of Sun and Ricoh employees, as well as *MFP Report* publisher

Brian Bissett, were impressed with *AccuRoute's* ability to handle both electronic and paper documents, its authenticated scan-to-email capabilities, and its ability to route to multiple destinations simultaneously. Omtool currently has an OEM agreement with **Xerox**, which resells *AccuRoute*.

Omtool will receive \$50,000 in marketing money from Ricoh, as well as some hardware and support. eCopy and NSi will also receive Ricoh hardware.

Embedded Platform Leader

Ricoh launched its embedded architecture in 2004. The idea for the contest was conceived almost immediately afterwards to drum up ISV interest. "A couple weeks after the contest is done, we hope to have 10-12 commercially available solutions," said Joe Gormley, who heads up Ricoh Corporation's developers' program. "Overall, we have about 25 companies doing development on our Java platform."

This would put Ricoh substantially ahead of its competitors in the embedded app game. **Canon**, for example, which introduced its multi-functional embedded platform (MEAP) in 2003, has certified only a handful of MEAP applications. **Sharp** only recently announced its Web services-based application integration platform, which is slated to be shown at AIIM this month. And we are unaware of embedded platforms available from **Toshiba**, **Xerox**, **Konica-Minolta**, or **Kyocera Mita**, although at least Toshiba has indicated it is heading down this path.

"I think the large response has to do with the fact

that our tools are very easy to work with," said Gormley. "Of course, we also offer sales and marketing support, and many ISVs would love access to our channel. Our marketing alliance program is based around referrals. We also encourage our partners to market directly to our dealers. Of course, we have an option to pick up and resell these solutions, but will only consider a very small number."

<https://developersupport.ricohcorp.com/contest.asp?choice=contest>

NSi/MEAP, FROM PAGE 1

application, plus \$1,000 for a Connector. That's a minimum of \$4,000 per device for an integrated implementation.

"We charge \$3,700 for our server piece and \$800 per additional device connected, with all our application connectors included. If Canon dealers view this price difference as helping them shorten sales cycles and making them more competitive with other dealers offering less expensive scanning solutions [including competitive versions of *AutoStore*], we have a big advantage." [Editor's note: NSi's traditional pricing model has been \$600 for each additional device. MEAP royalty payments account for the extra cost for *AutoStore* for Canon.]

By no means is NSi content to rest on the laurels of its partnership with Canon Europe. Concluded Tehranchi, "We are in negotiations for a possible licensing agreement involving Canon in North America."

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

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