June 22, 2012

"How do you go bankrupt?"
"Two ways," Mike said. "Gradually then suddenly."

— Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*

This Could Be It for info 360

NEW YORK—Was it the end of an era? One person I talked with told me he'd been to the AIIM show (now officially called info 360) more than 20 years in a row. Personally, I've been to every one since 1998 (a string of 15). Everyone in the industry has at least one great AIIM story. Remember the **Microsoft** party in Atlanta 1998 when they kept extending the open bar? How about Reynolds Bish taking his "victory lap" in 2006 after engineering the sale of Captiva to **EMC**? Didn't Rick Kay have the Atlanta Falcons cheerleaders at OTG's booth one year?

WTF **Questex**? How did you screw up this thing so badly? When Advanstar (Questex is an Advanstar spin-off) bought the event from AIIM back in 2002, attendance numbers for that show alone were approximately 20,000. In 2003, when the event was co-located with the On Demand printing show which Advanstar/Questex also owned, combined attendance was north of 30,000 (although exhibitors were already complaining about falling numbers). Just nine years later, at this year's info 360 (AIIM pulled its branding after last year's event)/On Demand, attendance by our estimates had slipped to less than 3,000. And exhibitors

certainly weren't happy. There was even talk of refunds.

Word going around is that Questex is going to blow up the whole event and start over next year, moving out of the cavernous Javits Center, where this year's event was held, and into a smaller hotel venue. Perhaps Questex is going to try and do something closer to what AIIM is already doing with its new annual national conference. This wouldn't be surprising as Questex never has been the most innovative organization.

Basically, this year's event had the same format as the previous 14 shows, although it was much smaller. The show floor ended up with some 80 exhibitors on the info 360 side and another 40 for On Demand, but most of the booths were small. **IBML**, for example, for the first time in memory, didn't have an ImageTrac open track scanner set up (it did have some other hardware, which we'll discuss later).

After a brief flurry of traffic early Wednesday morning (the first day of this year's event, which was mercifully shortened to two days), which elicited positive feedback from the exhibitors about the New York market and real end users,

attendees pretty much dried up. Thursday, even though it was only the event's second day, was like a typical Thursday at recent AIIM/info 360 events, where you could practically see the tumbleweeds blowing through the aisles.

Regarding the conference, although there were 14 different tracks, the data capture track, for example, featured only three sessions spread out over two days. I will say the one session I did attend, "Decentralized Records Management: Building a Better Workflow," which was presented by **Fujitsu Computer Products of America** (FCPA) and **AutoNation**, played to almost a full room. (FCPA personally invited me and presumably did a good job getting the word out to others as well.) I also heard that some of the keynotes, especially the one delivered by ex-EMC exec Whitney Tidmarsh, now with **Box**, were well attended.

This is probably a good point to change streams and focus on some of the positives. Yet again, this proved a great networking event for *DIR*. While I maybe had half as many meetings scheduled as in years past, I'd still say I had 20 solid conversations with players, movers, and shakers in

the document imaging industry. I mean, where else was I going to get to see the new meta data extraction technology being promoted by **Pingar**, a New Zealand-based company that now employs Owen Allen and Doug Cripps, veterans of **Microsoft** and FCPA, respectively? Or get a brief presentation on **OPEX's** $10 million investment in solar panels so it can leverage "renewable energy" in its manufacturing process? Or catch up with Prateek Kathpal, who joined **Accusoft** last year when he sold his viewing technology business to them [*see DIR 11/4/11*]?

Here are some highlights from this year's info 360 event from my perspective:

IBML introduces tabletop scanner

IBML calls it desktop or distributed scanning, but its new ImageTracDS 1150 is really a high-speed scanner by most people's standards. It is rated at up to 150 ppm/300 ipm, but what makes it special are the two output pockets and the bundled software, which combine to enable users to deploy capture-and-sort workflows. The 1150 carries a starting list price of $45,000-$50,000, which includes IBML's Softrac Capture Suite (SCS) configured on the bundled PC.

"We are looking at two primary target markets," said Brett Rodgers, director, solutions consulting, Americas, at IBML. "The first is current IBML customers looking to expand into distributed scanning. The second are lower-volume users who have been hesitant about making the investment in our traditional ImageTrac models."

The 1150 is an OEM model, in contrast to IBML's traditional ImageTracs, which IBML manufactures itself. The 1150 also features a U-shaped feeder, instead of the open track IBML is known for. But, coupled with SCS, it has the ability to outsort items based on information captured in-line from bar codes, patch codes, MICR lines, zonal OCR, and document size, into two output pockets. According to Rogers, with in-line intelligence enabled, the scanner is rated at 85-100 ppm.

Captured data can also be exported from SCS to third-party software that can use it for processes like document identification. "We have customers that utilize our traditional ImageTracs and SCS in their centralized operations, and who want to run the same jobs at distributed sites but don't have the volumes to justify another traditional ImageTrac," said Rodgers. "The way the 1150 is configured, users can export the same jobs they are running in their centralized environment and upload and run them in their distributed environments on the 1150."

Rodgers gave the example of a service bureau that has a hospital requesting that the service bureau scan its medical records on-site. "Insurance providers with multiple agencies are another market," he said. "Organizations that want to save money by re-using cover sheets can take advantage of the outsorting on the 1150. A lot of organizations also still like to outsort checks."

In addition to utilizing the same software as its big brother ImageTracs, users can load the feeder on the 1150 the same way they load their other ImageTracs—with documents aligned against the left edge of the ADF. "Some other scanners we support with SCS are center feeding, which forces users to adjust their document prep," said Derrick Murphy, president and CEO of IBML.

IBML will continue to support other vendors' scanners with SCS for uses like exception scanning and lower-volume distributed scanning. That said, a prototype of a lower-volume ImageTrac DS was also on display at info 360.

IBML's new ImageTrac DS 1150 features a U-shaped feeder and dual output pockets and comes configured with the Softrac Capture Suite.

The DS 1150 software bundle includes a seat of IBML's QC module for reviewing scanned batches, as well as SCS Analytics for batch management. Analytics can be used to track distributed operations at a centralized site. "Our goal was to put together a bundle with some very powerful production scanning capabilities," said Dan Lucarini, chief marketing officer for IBML.

IBML will service the ImageTracDS 1150 through its regular channels. It is currently taking orders for the device, which is scheduled to begin shipping next month.

http://tinyurl.com/DS1150

More than one way to an ROI

Lucarini noted that he was working with **AIIM** on a Webinar that was to be presented this week discussing centralized and distributed scanning options. Lucarini pointed out that **Kofax**, when promoting distributed and mobile capture, likes to use the phrase "capture at the point of origin." Lucarini, in contrast, is promoting the phrase "capture at the point of entry," which describes where a document enters an organization—which could be a mailroom, best suited for high-volume, centralized scanning.

I bring this up because I heard two stories at AIIM that illustrate Lucarini's point that different organizations have different scanning requirements. The first was in the aforementioned FCPA and AutoNation session. AutoNation owns some 255 dealerships throughout the United States and has deployed more than 300 Fujitsu fi-6010N network scanners to feed documents to its shared services center.

In contrast, **FirstGroup America** has transitioned from a process in which it received its invoices at multiple branches to one in which it now receives them at its Cincinnati, OH, shared services center. Its documents are scanned centrally and then processed electronically using **Image Integration Systems'** (IIS) DocuSphere workflow application. DocuSphere provides access to the images for approval by remote users.

The common ground in both implementations was a tremendous ROI. According to Stephen Noe, lead programmer/analyst at AutoNation, the company's distributed capture implementation paid for itself in less than a year. This included an almost half-million savings on **FedEx** spending for overnighting documents to the Dallas shared services center. Ron Kelly, principal and VP, business development at IIS, told *DIR* that First Group America is saving $1.5 million to $2 million per year with its centralized scanning deployment—with a good chunk of that also coming at the expense of FedEx. [I found it somewhat ironic that FedEx, which was one of the pioneers in the adoption of distributed scanning, see *DIR* 9/7/01, ended up as the big loser in both these implementations.]

There are a couple other interesting similarities between the applications:

■ Both started with automating invoice/accounts payable processes and are now expanding into other areas. According to Noe, AutoNation is approaching 25 processes. First Group America has expanded from invoices to capturing items like trip tickets and debit and credit transaction records.

■ In both implementations traditional document scanners were replaced with less conventional devices. By going to a distributed model with network scanners, AutoNation was able to eliminate $56,000 in annual maintenance fees it was paying for devices to scan its documents centrally. Apparently, it is not paying maintenance on the fi-6010N units and instead just replaces them if they break (list price is $3,000 per unit, but we're assuming AutoNation gets a nice volume discount). First Group America, meanwhile, is now using the **OPEX** AS7200i with an integrated envelope opener/extractor. According to Kelly, the OPEX device has significantly reduced document prep and sort time.

One difference between the implementations was that it made more sense for First Group America to reroute its documents to a centralized mailroom.

While AutoNation may have been able to reroute its invoices and A/P documents to Dallas, there are apparently a good number of documents related to car sales that originate at its branches and need to be quickly transferred to the shared services center. The A/P documents had been piggy-backing on those FedEx shipments. Now, the situation is reversed and those sales documents can be captured using the same scanners being used for A/P.

Noe said AutoNation went with the fi-6010 because of ease of use and deployment. The network scanners can be configured and administered centrally. The interface is reduced virtually to button scanning, and AutoNation is able to train users through an on-line video. Noe also cited the large touchscreen that provides ample image previews. He said AutoNation chose dedicated network scanners over MFPs because of their ability to successfully auto-feed a greater variety of paper.

http://www.aiim.org/Events/Webinars/20120621-webinar
http://scanners.fcpa.fujitsu.com/casestudies/casestudies/autonation-cs.pdf

A mobile document camera

Mobile document capture is another emerging option for end users, and at info 360 I saw a couple interesting technologies that address this avenue. One was from a Singapore-based company called **piQx** that employs ex-**Epson** engineers. piQx has developed what it calls a "document camera" that can be used to capture a variety of items, including loose pages, book pages, cards, and receipts.

The scanner itself has about the same form-factor as a smartphone and contains an 8 megapixel camera. It connects to a computer through a USB cable and is also USB powered. The device has a clip that can be attached to the top of a laptop screen, so the camera, facing down, can take a picture of an item on a flat surface. piQx even provides such a surface, via a fold-up background that can be laid across your laptop keys. There is also a stand to mount the camera independent of a laptop.

But, it is not the hardware that is the most impressive thing about the device, which piQx has branded the Xcanex. The software works very quickly and offers automatic perspective correction, cropping, rotation, and orientation. In a demo I saw, in a matter of seconds, the Xcanex was able to create high-quality (piQx compares them to 300 dpi images created through conventional scanning), well contrasted, cropped images that are ready for OCR. piQx will bundle **ABBYY** FineReader when the product starts shipping, scheduled for

September.

Basically, a user tosses a card or document on the background, and the Xcanex automatically locates, processes, and creates an image. For book scanning, a user can flatten the pages manually with their hands and their fingers can be automatically removed from the image. Leroy Lee Boon Chien, manager of sales and marketing, cautioned that the Xcanex is not designed for capturing entire books in this manner.

piQx's Xcanex is a document camera that can be attached to a laptop screen and comes with some impressive image processing capabilities.

Pricing has not been determined, but the configuration that was demoed at info 360 seems to be only the tip of the iceberg. According to Loi Yew Kein, executive director of piQx, potential uses for the technology include, "scanners for counters (front desks), scan kiosks, and scan modules for printers." He also discussed the potential of using the device to "scan to the cloud."

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

Scan to Android app

Accusoft has also entered the mobile capture market with its new Accusoft USB scanner app. The app enables users to connect document scanners to mobile devices running **Google's** Android operating system, as long it is version 3.2 (Honeycomb) or newer. Users can capture images directly to their devices or to destinations like **Evernote**, **Google Drive**, **Box**, and **Gmail** accounts through the app, which can be launched directly from interfaces within those destinations.

According to Rick Scanlon, director, sales engineering, for Accusoft, the app basically enables the TWAIN drivers in scanners to communicate with SANE driver technology that runs within the Android OS. Android is a Linux operating system, where SANE drivers have historically been the most popular way to connect scanners with software [*see DIR 12/31/08*]. The app can be used to create multi-page documents and save them in multiple formats.

The Accusoft USB scanner app is available through Google Play for $9.99. "The long-term plan is to take the technology included in the app and make it available to ISVs," said Scanlon, noting that Accusoft's core business is as an SDK vendor. "It could be used as a front end for capturing

documents from mobile devices into the ISVs' core systems."

HP introduces MFP capture software

HP introduced a new capture software application for its MFP devices. Capture and Route offers document scanning, processing, and export functionality and compares with solutions from HP partners **NSi** and **Nuance**. The main difference is that Capture and Route is more tightly integrated with the HP infrastructure, including HP's Open Extensibility Platform (OXP) framework, Web Jetadmin, and HP Access Control.

The Capture and Route server has the ability to read bar codes, apply full-text OCR, perform document conversion (to Word, for example), compress images and output PDFs and TIFFs, and connect to third-party software applications. The application can be accessed through the touchscreens on OXP-enabled MFPs. Logging in enables users to see a personalized screen that can be controlled by the administrator, who manages Capture and Route workflows. These workflows can be launched by as little effort as pushing a single button.

Users can also log in from their desktops to create bar coded cover sheets that can be used to capture documents with MFPs that are not OXP-enabled. There is also a "scan reservation feature" that enables a user to set up a scan job at their desktop and execute it after logging in to an MFP. There are scan-to-desktop, -print, and -e-mail options, as well. Multiple destinations can be included in a single workflow.

Capture and Route's SharePoint integration is fairly innovative. From within a SharePoint screen, Capture and Route enables a user to "upload" an image directly into a SharePoint library. According to Richard Nelson, solutions business manager for HP's Imaging and Printing Group, HP is taking advantage of some "existing technology" for third-party software integration, and thus Capture and Route already has "connections into virtually every back-end workflow and ECM system."

Nelson compared Access Control to Nuance's Equitrac print management software. He said Web Jetadmin can be used to configure devices running with a Capture and Route server.

Capture and Route lists for $2,500 per server and $2,500 for failover functionality. The cost to connect a single device is $750, with discounts increasing with the number of devices added. 1,000 devices,

for example, cost $400 each. Nelson said that thousands of devices could potentially be run with a single server. "It really depends on the volume and type of documents hitting the server in a given period of time," he said. "The decision to add servers would depend on how much processing power a user needs."

Capture and Route is being positioned for the "general enterprise" office and was announced in May. It is being sold by HP directly and through its reseller channels. Nelson said that HP will continue to carry seemingly competitive products like Nuance's eCopy ShareScan and NSi AutoStore. "There is certainly some overlap, but all our partners are in our portfolio for a specific reason," he said. "eCopy, for example, has a huge install base and a great legacy.

"Overall, we have 156 developers in our Solutions Business Partner Program that are developing on the OXP platform. This includes Nuance and NSi, as well as **Hyland** and Kofax."

Meta data capture start-up

There has been a lot of talk in technology circles recently about the concept of managing "big data." Big data basically defines the rapidly growing amount of information that enterprise systems are being inundated with due to increasing electronic communication and transactions. Of course, paper documents, by their nature mostly fall outside the realm of big data—that is unless they are imaged and the information on them is somehow translated into a format a data management system can understand.

That's where Pingar comes in. The New Zealand-based ISV develops technology in the area of meta data extraction. Its software leverages natural language processing and semantics to automatically capture meta data from unstructured documents, including document images to which OCR has been already applied.

"It's fairly straightforward to capture basic meta data like a file name, an author, or the date a file was created," said Owen Allen, a former senior product manager for SharePoint ISV partners at Microsoft who joined Pingar late last year. (He is familiar with a lot of people in the *DIR* community from his days at **Microsoft** as well as his time spent as an independent consultant for SharePoint ISVs.) "It's getting to that next level that is the challenge."

The second level of meta data can include

introducing information like people mentioned in a document and/or places, business names, e-mail addresses, and credit card numbers. Pingar has the ability to extract 14 such "entities," as it calls these fields. "Due to our software's intelligence, we have the ability to understand if 'Washington' is a name or a place, for example," said Allen.

Pingar was founded in 2007 and initially launched a product last year. It offers its product both as a hosted service and an SDK. It has developed a SharePoint integration through which users can submit documents to the Pingar software directly from a SharePoint interface. Pingar will extract meta data fields that correspond to the fields in the SharePoint library and populate them. Users can set up new fields and apply the Pingar technology to the entire library.

Allen stressed that Pingar is not married to SharePoint. "It can work with any ECM system," he said. "We are also looking to integrate with applications in areas like forensics, accounting, and e-discovery.

"We are not planning to sell our technology as a complete product. It's a tool that can be used to help other applications perform better. We are currently looking for ISV and SI partners."

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

I.R.I.S. Partners with Evernote

I caught up with a couple members of the **I.R.I.S** team at info 360. The Belgium-based capture ISV recently released a new version of its ReadIRIS desktop OCR product that includes connectors to cloud-based applications **Dropbox**, **Evernote**, **Google** Docs, and **Box**. "Basically, with ReadIRIS 14, users can now save their OCR'd documents to the cloud," said Joe Siegel, senior OEM/VAR account manager for I.R.I.S.' U.S. operations.

Siegel indicated that I.R.I.S. had elevated its relationship with Evernote to the next level and is offering coupons for three free months of Evernote's premium service inside the ReadIRIS box. "Evernote is also licensing our technology and coupling it with some of its own for OCRing documents in its application," said Siegel. (Not sure if he had anything to do with this deal, but we thought this was a convenient time to point out that John Hoye, who has spent several years in our industry, most recently with **PFU Systems**, is now director, business development at Evernote.)

(Just, as a historical note, someone at info 360 reminded me that Evernote also has a connection with recognition ISV **Parascript**, having merged with a spin-off from Parascript back in 2004. See *DIR* 10/8/04.)

Ramping up IDR efforts
On the B2B front, I.R.I.S. is ramping up its efforts to sell its IRISXtract capture software in North America. Xtract is based on the technology I.R.I.S. acquired with German ISV Docutec in 2008 [*see DIR 4/8/08*]. At info 360, I caught up with Guenter Hensges, the former CEO of DocuTec, who now runs I.R.I.S.' German operations.

"We are looking for two primary types of customers for the Xtract technology," Hensges told *DIR*. "The first are shared services centers and the second are VARs with experience in workflow and content management."

Xtract is an auto-classification and extraction platform. According to Hensges, I.R.I.S. currently has "three or four" implementations in the U.S. for invoice capture. He also shared with us a case study on **Salumatics**, which offers document scanning services and solutions to the healthcare market in Canada. Salumatics has set up a service for automatically classifying and extracting information from patient records, as well as an invoice capture service.

For more information:
http://www.salumatics.com/partnerships.asp;
www.irislink.com

Ricoh Increases Focus on Delivering Services

LAS VEGAS—Info 360 wasn't the only conference I was at last week. I also took a trip out west to spend some time with MFP leader **Ricoh** and more than 600 dealer representatives at its annual Convergence conference, which was held at the Wynn.

Like most other MFP vendors, Ricoh is an organization in transition. Ricoh's goal is to re-invent itself as a "services-led, product-focused company."

That was how Martin Brodigan, the new chairman and CEO of Ricoh Americas, described the vendor's direction. Brodigan, a long-time Ricoh executive, was promoted to his current position on May 1. He basically said that Ricoh's 2011 results in the U.S. were "unacceptable" and that it is his job to turn the

operation around.

Ricoh certainly has quite a bit going on. First of all, it's still completing the digestion of IKON—the $4 billion MFP mega dealer it acquired in 2008. The IKON acquisition is especially pertinent to Ricoh's dealer channel because it greatly increased the size of Ricoh's direct sales force, which now numbers some 4,000 people, compared to 460 dealer entities (most of which presumably employ multiple salespeople) for Ricoh's three brands—Ricoh, Savin, and Lanier.

David Greene, senior VP of sales for Ricoh USA, admitted that the organization "needs better balance and coordination" between its direct and reseller channels. "We're investing in both," he said. "However, now that we've gone through the IKON and Lanier integrations, we can take more resources and invest them in our dealers."

Some of these resources are being used to support services-led sales. One of the big messages at the conference was that dealers should take advantage of Ricoh's CHaMPS managed print services program. CHaMPS is basically a portfolio of services provided by Ricoh that it makes available to its channel to mark-up and resell.

Pertinent to our industry, these services include systems integration and document conversion. On a broader scale, they include IT outsourcing. "CHaMPS is about making all of Ricoh's assets available to our customers through our resellers," said Brodigan.

At Convergence, Ricoh had a panel which highlighted some of the success its dealers have had with CHaMPS. The panel included Bill McLaughlin, CTO of New York-based **Atlantic Business Products**. McLaughlin estimated Atlantic is doing $6 million annually of **DocuWare** sales. Atlantic has developed the DocuWare practice on its own, but takes advantage of Ricoh's backfile conversion services. "For every dollar of document management software we sell, we expect to sell two dollars of backfile conversion," said McLaughlin.

Ricoh utilizes the former IKON legal document services locations for conversions. There are 46 spread out across the U.S.

Rabbit Office Automation in Sunnyvale, CA, is taking advantage of Ricoh's general IT services. The Rabbit representative basically said that if Ricoh charges $25 per month to support a PC, Rabbit is able to resell this service to its customers for $50. It achieves similar mark-up on server support.

As you can imagine, these margins are fairly attractive to dealers who have traditionally sold hardware. And, although it was a small sample size, all the dealers on the panel seemed happy with the way Ricoh handled delivery. The consensus was that Ricoh basically delivers what the dealers ask for— without putting unnecessary burdens on the dealer.

During the general session, Jim Coriddi, VP of Ricoh U.S.' Dealer Division, stressed that Ricoh's management team is trying to establish a new level of trust with its channel. "Historically, dealers have been hesitant about bringing in Ricoh services because it meant giving up their customer information to Ricoh," said Coriddi. "That shouldn't be the case any more, as we've made a concerted effort to help the leaders of our direct sales team understand the value of a strong dealer channel."

Offsetting declining print volume

So, why is it so important for Ricoh to move more aggressively into services? Well, according to Terrie Campbell, VP, strategic marketing, Ricoh Americas, "Last year, print volume worldwide was down 10%. By next year, it's expected to be down another 16%.

"Printing is down, but the amount of information users are producing is up. We have to begin to think of hardware as an information management portal. This means we have to understand input as well as output."

Campbell talked about "managing transactions," which, of course, has long been a core competency of the *DIR* space. "We have to focus on mapping out processes around these transactions and fixing the breaks and clearing the bottlenecks," Campbell said. "This is where the concept of business information management comes into play."

Campbell broke down Ricoh's competencies into three major areas:
- input, which is addressed through "advanced capture solutions" in areas like scanning and e-mail capture
- process, which is addressed through workflow solutions both in the cloud and on-premise
- output, which is addressed through "advanced distribution solutions," including print, the Web, and storage and archiving.

VISIT DOCUMENT IMAGING TALK

Obviously, there was a lot more going on in the news than what we picked up at these two trips. Please visit our blog http://documentimagingreport.blogspot.com/ for regular updates and analysis on the market.

You can see that quite a few of these competencies cross over into the traditional *DIR* market.

Gateway to the cloud

Of course, at the center of its services offerings, Ricoh remains a product vendor, and at Convergence it discussed some new hardware and software offerings. This includes an MFP platform that runs Java code behind the scenes and enables users to interact with the Web through a browser on color touchscreens.

"We see the Web-browser interface as a gateway to the cloud," said Steve Burger, VP, product marketing. "Good products are the ante for playing in the services game."

"Being able to use SmartMFPs to get to the cloud enables our dealers to offer services that they haven't been able to in the past," added Mike Hunter, director, product marketing for Ricoh Americas. "They will be able to link customers with cloud applications. This will help them move out of the commodity business of selling hardware."

Ricoh's initial cloud offering is the ICE (integrated cloud environment) platform it previewed last year at Convergence [*see DIR 6/10/11*] (although technically, Hunter pointed out that Ricoh has been in the cloud market for years with its DocumentMall hosted software). ICE is targeted for launch later this year, and it features several options including OCR and integration with multiple cloud-based processes and destinations.

Revamped ISV program

Ricoh also continues to work with many partners who integrate their software with its hardware. At Convergence, Ricoh announced it is implementing a new ISV program designed to better organize its portfolio. Between its IKON and legacy Ricoh relationships, Burger estimated Ricoh has more than 150 ISV partners.

The new program will be limited to 15 Premier partners, whose products will be included on Ricoh's general price list and sold by all Ricoh channels. From what I understand, from our market, at least **Nuance**, **NSi**, and **Westbrook** will be given premier status. Other partners can qualify for Specialty and Development status.

Brodigan concluded by discussing some of the opportunities and challenges that Ricoh faces as it attempts to re-invent itself. "Our whole business has been built on box sales, with refreshes being done every four to five years," he said. "Leading with services helps eliminate the varying revenue associated with this type of model. Instead of waiting four or five years to renew a deal, the plan is to constantly be selling services and just replace the hardware as need be as part of a services contract.

"However, one challenge we face is understanding the pricing philosophy that goes along with leading with services. While historically, we may have sold a solution with a six-month ROI and made 30 points on it and thought it was great, under our new model, we have to consider if we should have been selling a 12-month ROI and getting 80 points."

For more information: http://tinyurl.com/RicohMFPplatform; http://www.ricoh-usa.com/

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