

Document Imaging Report

Business Trends on Converting Paper Processes to Electronic Format

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September 9, 2005

THIS JUST IN!

PLASMON INTRODUCES FILE SHREDDING FOR WORM DISC

Records management has always been about destruction as much as retention. Those in the know understand that timely deletion of documents can be just as important as their meticulous archiving. However, WORM optical media has traditionally made that deletion cumbersome—at least on an individual file basis. To destroy a file stored on WORM has meant destroying the whole disc. You can imagine the potential headaches when files on a particular disc have differing destruction dates.

“Even SEC Rule 17a-4 distinguishes between retention periods for records of different types of financial transactions,” said Dave DuPont, senior VP of sales and marketing for optical storage specialist **Plasmon**. Plasmon, which introduced next-generation UDO optical storage in 2003, has come up with an answer for selective file deletion from WORM. Late last month, Plasmon introduced Compliant Write Once UDO media.

With the help of some free firmware, UDO drives can now employ electronic shredding to selected files on this new generation of WORM disc. “We have been receiving quite a bit of demand for this technology— so we know the market is strong,” said DuPont. “In North America, it’s coming from businesses that don’t want a ‘smoking gun’ around. In Europe, there is more focus on destroying files because of privacy regulations.”

The Compliant Write Once media and firmware upgrade are available now. The media carries a list price of \$65 per 30 GB disc—\$5 more than traditional WORM UDO media. Plasmon is now counting on its ISV partners to fully leverage the new option.

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

Has TWAIN’s Day Finally Arrived?

For years, considered a weak sister in the driver space, new financial backing could push TWAIN into the forefront of document scanning.

Last month’s announcement that scanner vendor **Visioneer** had acquired TWAIN driver specialist **JFL Peripheral Solutions** may not have seemed like a big deal. After all, JFL is just a small technology-driven company that has done some contract work for several vendors throughout the industry. This certainly wasn’t akin to **Captiva** merging with ActionPoint or **Dicom** acquiring **Kofax**; was it?

Granted, the scale might not be the same, but as the premier developer of TWAIN drivers for document scanning, JFL carries some weight. With the financial backing of even a mid-sized hardware vendor like Visioneer, who knows where JFL can take TWAIN?

“JFL was limited by its financial resources,” said Murray Dennis, president and CEO of Visioneer. “As the proprietor of a small business [JFL President and CEO], Jon [Harju] had to be both an engineer and a collection agent. This will allow Jon to focus on what he does best—driving engineering.”

Harju is known around the industry as “Mr. TWAIN.” His client list includes **Fujitsu, Böwe Bell & Howell, Kofax, Xerox, AnyDoc Software**, and of course Visioneer. Harju’s TWAIN career actually began while at **Corel**, where he was responsible for the CorelTWAIN product line.

“At that time, the TWAIN standard was not ready for



Murray Dennis, president & CEO, Visioneer.

business document scanning," Harju told *DIR*. "However, by implementing a lot of features that fell outside the standard, I was able to make CorelTWAIN work with document scanners from vendors like Fujitsu and [Böwe] Bell & Howell."

Harju launched JFL in 1996, which was about the same time the **TWAIN Working Group** began upgrading the open TWAIN standard to make it a viable alternative to the proprietary document scanner drivers developed by vendors like **Pixel Translations** and Kofax. Harju was soon asked to join the working group's board, where he maintains a seat today. Many in the market feel that the current TWAIN standard offers all the capabilities of ISIS or Kofax drivers.



"As TWAIN has grown in popularity and capabilities, we've begun pushing the envelope of what you can achieve with it."

— Charles W. Jackson, AnyDoc

The problem has been unlocking those capabilities. Historically, the market has been plagued by TWAIN driver inconsistencies and poor quality. Over the past couple years, Harju, with the help of some other members of the TWAIN Group, has been on a mission to change that.

"ISIS [and Kofax] drivers are controlled by the vendors that develop them, and these vendors do quite a bit of testing and certification," Harju told *DIR*. "Because TWAIN is an open standard, people develop their own drivers and there is no certification program to ensure everything works together. As a contractor, even JFL is limited by the commitment of its customers."

To improve this situation, prior to the acquisition, Harju had been leading the movement to create some sort of TWAIN certification for document imaging. "I don't know if that will continue, but I am looking forward to creating drivers for Visioneer that can act as the standard for the rest of the industry," he said.

Pam Doyle, the chair for the TWAIN Working Group, agrees that certification has been needed for a long time. "As an independent board, we cannot control the quality of manufacturers' drivers, but we can establish guidelines for what makes a quality driver that adheres to the specification," she told *DIR*. "We are currently working on various badges that denote certain degrees of functionality. Jon Harju has been very instrumental in helping develop this program."

As the only production capture software vendor sitting on the TWAIN board AnyDoc Software [**Adobe** also sits on the board but production capture is just a small part of its

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

Areas we cover include:

1. Document Capture
2. Image Processing
3. Forms Processing/OCR/ICR
4. Enterprise Content Management
5. Records Management
6. Document Output
7. Storage

DIR brings you the inside story behind the deals and decisions that affect your business.

Vol. 15, No. 17

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DIR is published 24x per year, on the 1st & 3rd Fridays of the month, by:

RMG Enterprises, Inc.
5905 Beacon Hill Lane
Erie, PA 16509
PH (412) 480-5116
<http://www.documentimagingreport.com>

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business] is also in favor of a TWAIN certification program. In lieu of that, however, AnyDoc has already set up its own in-house testing lab featuring multiple models from all the leading industry scanner vendors. AnyDoc also contracted JFL to write the TWAIN driver for its software. "It's very important that the hardware and software components of drivers understand each other and work well together," said Harju.

AnyDoc, in fact, was at least partly responsible for introducing Visioneer to JFL because AnyDoc was not completely happy with the performance of Visioneer's previous TWAIN driver. JFL had been working with Visioneer for approximately five months prior to the acquisition.

According to AnyDoc President and CEO Chuck Jackson, the TWAIN drivers implemented in his company's capture application have been able to match the robustness and speed of the Kofax drivers AnyDoc has traditionally used. "As TWAIN has grown in popularity and capabilities, we've begun pushing the envelope of what you can achieve with it," said Jackson.

"One of our **Blue Cross Blue Shield** customers recently began having trouble with its Kofax boards. So, we went in and replaced all of the Kofax drivers and boards with SCSI interfaces and TWAIN drivers. When you do something like that at a BCBS site, you better make sure you don't affect performance levels, or they'll throw you right out of there."

Merit Greaves, product development manager at AnyDoc, discussed with us some of the issues that a TWAIN certification program might solve. "The TWAIN standard can support a lot of features, but not every driver supports every one of those," said Greaves. "For example, some TWAIN drivers don't support headless scanning, which is very important for ease-of-use in higher volume environments, but not in ad hoc situations."

Greaves agrees with Doyle's vision for a system to designate which features are supported by a particular TWAIN driver. In addition to standard features, TWAIN drivers can be designed to support capabilities proprietary to certain scanner models. The dual-stream capabilities on **Kodak** and **Panasonic** models, which are supported by AnyDoc through TWAIN, are examples of this.

"When dealing with TWAIN, ISVs have the advantage of working directly with the scanner manufacturer instead of having to wait for a third-party, like a Captiva or a Kofax, to certify a driver," said Jackson. "Often times, it takes awhile before the third-party driver is able to leverage all

the capabilities of a particular scanner.

"As long as we get a scanner in-house far enough in advance of its release, we can have our application ready to work with the TWAIN driver as soon as the scanner hits the streets. We are hoping to move our hardware relationships to the next level by offering scanner vendors a copy of our software to test when developing their drivers. This should give them a better understanding of how the hardware will work in the real world."

AnyDoc first revealed it would be fully implementing TWAIN in its product line at **AIIIM/On Demand 2004**. "Contrary to what some people have said, we have not made a deliberate effort to move away from Kofax drivers; but we have increased our efforts around TWAIN," said Jackson. "For the past year, we have been educating our reseller channel on using TWAIN and are starting to see some results. I wouldn't say half the product we ship is utilizing TWAIN drivers, but that time is rapidly approaching."

Visioneer's Dennis also conjectured that TWAIN use is on the rise as sales of workgroup [sub \$2,000] scanners continue to grow at a rate far outpacing the rest of the market. "A lot of these workgroup scanners are implemented for desktop applications," said Dennis. "You don't see ISIS as much on the desktop as you do in high-volume production applications. Based on our strategy of attacking the fast growing, workgroup segment of the market, the acquisition of JFL makes a lot of sense."

Dennis added that Visioneer will continue to support ISIS and Kofax drivers and JFL's TWAIN expertise will continue to be available to other hardware and software vendors. Harju has officially been named Visioneer's senior VP of engineering,

TWAIN SUPPORT IMPROVING

Historically, one of the biggest questions surrounding the use of TWAIN drivers has been support for end users. In fact, **Pixel Translations** GM Jim Vickers recently pointed to an identifiable support team as one of the advantages that ISIS has over TWAIN. That advantage may be gradually disappearing.

Because **AnyDoc Software** tests and certifies all TWAIN drivers used with its capture application, AnyDoc's Merit Greaves said her company is very comfortable taking TWAIN support calls. And now that **Visioneer** has purchased **JFL**, it would seem at least one hardware vendor has significantly upgraded its TWAIN support resources. It will be interesting to see who follows Visioneer's and AnyDoc's lead.

but will continue to work with his staff out of Ottawa, Ontario. "JFL signs a non-disclosure with every one of its customers and Visioneer will not be privy to the information covered by those agreements," said Dennis.

Harju added, "We've worked with competitive manufacturers for many years and have never had an awkward situation as a result of it."

Dennis concluded by saying that, in addition to his work with TWAIN, he expects Harju to lend expertise to other projects. "We have already set the standard for ease-of-use with our one-touch capabilities," Dennis said. "I think you will see more innovations coming out of Visioneer, as we add more engineering resources."

For more information: <http://www.visioneer.com>; <http://www.jflinc.com>; <http://www.anydocsoftware.com>; <http://www.twain.org>.

eCopy Ups European Efforts; Strengthens Ties With Ricoh

This April's Paper Connection Forum represented a high-water mark for **eCopy**. That doesn't mean the capture vendor has stopped moving upstream. Paper Connection, in fact, laid the foundation for a couple important announcements made this summer.

The first was eCopy's appointment of Alan Cornwell as its general manager of European operations. This is part of a significant upgrade to the Nashua, NH-headquartered vendor's overseas operations. The second announcement involved eCopy joining **Ricoh Corporation's** Technology Alliance program. This reflects a tightening of the relationship between eCopy and **Canon's** top competitor in the digital copier space. Canon, of course, has been eCopy's primary partner to date and even has an equity investment in the company.

Let's take a closer look at each of these two announcements:

At Paper Connection, *DIR* noticed an inordinately large contingent of European journalists. Even though, traditionally, less than 10% of eCopy's revenue has come from Europe, it seemed half the journalists in attendance hailed from overseas. It turns out that Europe represents one of the fastest growing markets for the fast-growing company.

In its fiscal year 2004 (ended June 30), Europe accounted for approximately 8% of the company's

\$30 million in revenue. In 2005, that rose to 13% of eCopy's overall projected revenue of \$44-45 million, or just under \$6 million. "In 2005, we had a 137% increase in European sales," Tim Corkery, senior VP, worldwide sales, for eCopy, told *DIR*. "In 2006, we expect to grow across all geographies, but we expect our biggest growth to come in Europe."

To accommodate that growth, eCopy plans to double its European staff, and has hired Cornwell to oversee things. Cornwell brings 30 years of high-tech experience to the company. Most recently he held a variety of senior management positions (including CEO and COO) at **Sealed Media**, a digital document rights/access management specialist.

"This represents a deepening of our relationship with Ricoh and is a stepping stone toward further distribution discussions."

—Tom Richardson, eCopy

Cornwell shared with us some of his thoughts on growing eCopy's European operations. "So far, eCopy has had great success working through Canon's channels in Europe, and we will be adding some more resources to support those channels," he said. "We will also be adding support for other manufacturers as they sign up."

Corkery noted that the hardware partnerships announced at Paper Connection involved only the North American arms of digital copier vendors. "In Europe, we are purposely behind North America in building relationships with additional vendors," he told *DIR*. "We have been pretty busy with Canon, and our sales have really come on strong in the past 18 months. This success has piqued the interest of Canon's competitors, and we are now in the early stages of forming additional hardware relationships in Europe."

Cornwell added that eCopy is actively working to form partnerships with European-specific ISVs and has even hired an executive to focus on this area. "Initially, we will be focusing on ISVs in the same horizontal and vertical markets as the ones we've partnered with in North America," he said. "This includes document and content management, as well as the legal space. In time, I see us integrating with vendors in areas like ERP and CRM."

As eCopy's hardware and software partners were the stars of Paper Connection, we asked if and when

a similar event might be scheduled in Europe. "We are just beginning our conference planning for next year," said Corkery. "We are planning on doing something both in the States and in Europe."

In addition to increasing its number of partnerships, Cornwell indicated eCopy needs to increase its European brand awareness. "This is especially important when working with large accounts," he said.

He added that while there are some large, multinational European companies in areas like pharmaceuticals and transportation, there are also a lot of smaller companies compared to the U.S. market. This is because many European companies do business only in one or two countries. "Because of this, it's important to increase our presence in several geographical areas," said Cornwell.

eCopy currently has offices in the United Kingdom (where Cornwell is based), France, Germany, and Scandinavia. "To date, we've probably had the most success in the U.K., but that's just because we've had an office there longer than anywhere else," said Corkery.

Cornwell added, "Our biggest hurdle to doing more business in Europe is getting enough resources in place to educate, train, and support our distribution channels. We need to build on the locations we already have and introduce people into some new geographies."

"One key to overcoming the multinational makeup of the European market is hiring local nationals. Also, although we are not going to support all 30 languages used in Europe, we are well on our way to improving localization of our product."

EXPECT MORE TWAIN ON COPIERS

Ricoh is one of two **eCopy** hardware partners whose digital copiers feature a networkable TWAIN driver. **Canon** is the other. In both cases, eCopy offers integration of its *ShareScan* application through the TWAIN driver to facilitate a simpler user interface.

"It's just a matter of a couple steps, and when other vendors add TWAIN drivers, it will be simple for us to integrate with them," said Tom Richardson, eCopy's director, platform alliances. "I think more digital copier vendors haven't really embraced TWAIN because they have been focused on developing embedded architectures. But, embedded applications haven't been adopted, or developed, as fast as many people expected. I think you will see some hardware vendors taking another look at TWAIN."

eCopy, in fact, has one of only two third-party applications we are aware of that runs on Canon's open embedded architecture platform—known as MEAP. Legal services specialist **Ribstone** has the other [see *DIR* 6/3/05]. eCopy has also signed on for Ricoh's embedded architecture program. "Because of our experience with MEAP, we have been able to offer Ricoh advice we feel will make its embedded platform better," said Richardson.

We are not aware of any commercial applications currently available for Ricoh's embedded platform, which was announced more than a year and a half ago. In IKON's booth at **AIIM/On Demand 2005**, eCopy competitor **NSi** did demo its *AutoStore* application running embedded on a Ricoh machine. Sharp and Toshiba have also indicated to us their plans to release open-architecture embedded platforms in the future. Chai appears to be **HP's** version.

For more information:

<http://www.ricoh-usa.com/products/concept/esa.asp?catname=ESA>

eCopy, Ricoh Still Working Things Out

As a top competitor of Canon in the digital copier space, Ricoh's April announcement that it would be partnering with eCopy gave serious credibility to eCopy's decision to open up its platform. However, announcements don't sell product, and since that announcement, there has been no news regarding a distribution agreement between the two companies. In fact, our discussions with Ricoh at Paper Connection indicated they were less than enthusiastic about offering eCopy's *ShareScan* application as an alternative to their own developed *GlobalScan* [see *DIR* 4/22/05].

According to Tom Richardson, director of platform alliances at eCopy, the recent announcement, which was issued by Ricoh, is basically a co-marketing agreement. "This opens the door to take advantage of some of Ricoh's marketing in areas like Web sites, printed materials, brochures, and other sales tools," said Richardson. "It also enables us to participate with them in trade events where they have a large presence. From our standpoint, being associated with a major manufacturer like Ricoh will increase brand awareness. From their standpoint, it should help them sell more networked devices."

"This represents a deepening of our relationship with Ricoh and is a stepping stone toward further distribution discussions."

eCopy has made no secret that its preferred distribution method is through the digital copier vendors themselves. This channel has accounted for all of eCopy's success with Canon. Digital copier manufacturer **Toshiba**

began distributing *ShareScan* in May. Indications are that eCopy is hammering out a similar distribution agreement with **Sharp**.

“Ricoh actually sells its products under several brand names including **Gestetner**, **Savin** and **Lanier**,” said Richardson. “Each brand has its own channels and dealers, so finalizing a distribution agreement with Ricoh is very complicated, but we are actively working on it.”

In the meantime, eCopy has launched a program targeting Ricoh’s independent dealers. The program requires an investment by the dealer of between \$15,000 and \$50,000, depending on the level of partnership. In its first two weeks, eCopy signed up three dealers.

IKON represents one of Ricoh’s largest independent dealers. IKON already distributes *ShareScan* through its relationship with Canon. At Paper Connection, IKON announced it plans to sell *ShareScan* for its Ricoh and **HP** lines. Details of how that will work are still being ironed out. IKON would prefer to buy directly from eCopy, instead of going through the copier vendor, as it must with Canon.

Finally, like Ricoh, HP announced support for *ShareScan* at Paper Connection but has yet to finalize a distribution agreement.

With several of the partnerships announced at Paper Connection still being finalized, Richardson told us to expect plenty of news from eCopy in the coming months.

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

Metro Looks like Viable PDF Alternative

While we’ve dedicated quite a bit of coverage to PDF-A recently, we haven’t written much on **Microsoft’s** Metro format—which some are calling the potential “PDF Killer.” Metro is the code name for the .XPS file format scheduled for release with the next generation of the Windows operating system—known as Windows Vista.

Vista is scheduled for full release in the second half of 2006. A beta version of Vista hit the streets this summer and apparently includes some elements of XPS. “Longhorn,” which is the name we have seen most often associated with Metro as the next version of Windows, is apparently the Windows Server edition, which has now had its release date pushed back to 2007.

So, what exactly is Metro or XPS? Well, XPS stands for “XML Paper Specification.” According to a Microsoft spokesperson, XPS “includes a cross platform, open XML document format that allows customers to effortlessly create, share, print, and archive documents. These ‘fixed layout’ documents can be viewed or printed without the application in which they were created, while maintaining their advanced color and graphics. Any device or application can realize the benefits of using this portable, efficient format without requiring Windows or Windows components. Microsoft has used Metro to optimize the print architecture for Windows Vista, dramatically improving print fidelity and performance.”

Yes, this sounds an awful lot like PDF. There are further similarities as well. These include Microsoft’s plans to make the specs for .XPS available royalty free, the release of a viewer specifically for .XPS files that will be packaged with Vista, XML-based conventions for storing, managing, and digitally signing XPS documents, APIs for integrating XPS technologies and files with other applications, hardware, and the Web, and an XPS printer page description language.

Added the Microsoft spokesperson, “With Windows Vista, Microsoft is introducing a new fixed document format that can be generated from virtually any Win32 application with the included Windows Digital Document Writer found in the print menu. Featuring the power of WinFX, these documents faithfully capture all of the resolution of the original source material while enabling more secure distribution.”

Nowhere did we find any information on XPS that specifically addresses scanning and document imaging. Based on Microsoft’s history, it’s probably safe to assume documents originating on paper have barely crossed their mind. It is important to remember, however, that **ScanSoft**, which has vested interests in both the PDF and document imaging markets, has licensed Microsoft some of its imaging technology and remains a Microsoft partner.

“Our technology acts as the scanning on-ramp for *Office*,” said Robert Weideman, ScanSoft’s Senior VP, marketing and product strategy, productivity applications. “We’ve had a long-standing and good relationship with Microsoft and are committed to supporting their Metro efforts. Beyond that, I don’t want to tip our hand.”

Weideman does think Metro (XPS) will become a viable alternative to PDF. “Microsoft is not necessarily targeting PDF, but it has had demand from businesses that want a non-editable,

presentation format for *Office* that can be used for archiving and sharing documents,” he told *DIR*. “Metro has those capabilities. As part of the operating system, it will become an important format very quickly.”

For more information:

<http://www.microsoft.com/whdc/Device/print/metro.msp>

<http://www.microsoft.com/presspass/presskits/windowsvista/default.msp>

Intrepid Partnership Shores Up FCPA Service

Fujitsu Computer Products of America (FCPA) has signed on **Intrepid Technical Services** to complement its existing service offerings. Intrepid will join **Scan-Optics’** Access Services to take calls that FCPA’s own service engineers cannot handle because of volume or geographical constraints. “We wanted to make sure that if our FCPA and Access technicians in a certain area are out, that we have some flexibility,” said Theresa Herweg, FCPA’s director, service marketing. “The partnership with Intrepid basically puts more feet on the street. Like any business, we want to make sure all our eggs are not in one basket.”

Herweg did not comment on whether Fujitsu was worried about Scan-Optics’ potentially selling off Access to an FCPA competitor, such as **Kodak**, which already boasts one of the industry’s strongest third-party service organizations. Scan-Optics recently went through a major reorganization, including management and ownership changes, and its future direction is somewhat uncertain. Herweg did say that Fujitsu had been piloting the arrangement with Intrepid since the Dec ‘04/Jan. ‘05 timeframe, which was months before things really hit the fan at Scan-Optics.

As of last month, FCPA had 34 of its own technicians, which were handling 80% of the company’s service calls. “Those technicians are stationed in geographical areas with dense enough installation bases to warrant them,” said Herweg. “We will continue to add technicians as our sales dictate. We recently added one in Oklahoma and another in Chicago.”

Access and Intrepid technicians are both receiving training directly from Fujitsu. Other than FCPA technicians, they are Fujitsu’s only certified services providers (with the exception of an organization that handles service in Hawaii). “We launched our current service program four years ago,” said Herweg. “Before that, our service came from a variety of providers, including resellers (which FCPA no longer offers training to). Our current strategy is

based on quality control and ensuring our customers’ experience with service is the best it can be.”

According to Herweg, 58% of the scanners currently being sold by resellers in FCPA’s Service Star Alliance program include a service contract. “The majority of our service contracts are sold through our resellers,” said Herweg. “All the reseller has to do is sell the service, and they get a check from us. They don’t have to process any invoices.”

Herweg added that FCPA revamped its pricing strategy in April and first-year service agreements now list for approximately 20% of the price of a scanner. Like most of its competitors, FCPA offers several levels of service, including packages incorporating preventative maintenance visits, consumables, training, and advance exchange.

One thing that FCPA does not offer yet, but is considering, is service on competitors’ scanners and MFPS. “Intrepid already services a number of products in the imaging market,” said Herweg. [On its Web site, Intrepid touts service for products from **Böwe Bell & Howell, Canon, HP, Kliendeinst, Kodak, Panasonic, Ricoh, and VisionShape.**] “Although, we haven’t made a definitive decision to expand our service contracts to include other vendors’ products, the partnership with Intrepid gives us the flexibility to do that.”

For more information: [http://www.servright.com/;](http://www.servright.com/)

<http://www.fcpa.fujitsu.com/warranties/service-programs/imaging-service-offerings.html>

OmniPage 15 Boasts Strong PDF Capabilities

ScanSoft has introduced a boatload of new features in *OmniPage 15*, the latest incarnation of its market-leading desktop OCR application. Not least among these are improved accuracy and layout retention. ScanSoft has also included its full-PDF capabilities in this product, which include batch conversion to PDF from a number of formats, as well as PDF-to-Office capabilities. Full-text searchable PDF files can be created from both scanned images and electronic documents.

ScanSoft is also testing the waters by promoting PDF as an archiving format, although it is waiting for PDF-A to be formally posted before announcing capabilities specific to that format. However, the improved layout retention in *OmniPage 15* goes a long way toward making *OmniPage* archive-ready. We have seen other PDF products that do not retain layouts as well when creating PDF Normal files from electronic documents. This has given rise to questions about PDF’s archiving potential. Some vendors have even suggested converting files to PDF Images before archiving them and leveraging hidden text for indexing purposes.

For more information: <http://www.scansoft.com/omnipage/>

ERP Integration Paying Off For Capture Vendors

In the past few months, we've written about capture modules from **Top Image Systems (TIS)** and **ReadSoft** that promise tight integration with ERP workflows. Early feedback shows this integration is paying off. Both companies recently reported strong second quarters and have announced significant deals involving integration with **SAP**.

The strong financials mark the continuation of a growth trend that began late last year and has been driven by strong sales of invoice processing software [see *DIR* 4/8/05]. TIS' second quarter revenue of \$4 million, represents a 66% increase over the previous year. ReadSoft's second quarter revenue of \$12.8 million represents 14% growth. Both companies had similarly strong first quarters.

A week before the announcement of its second-quarter results, TIS announced that **Festo**, a worldwide manufacturer with headquarters in Germany, had purchased the latest version of the company's flagship *eFLOW* software to capture approximately 5,000 faxed-in purchase orders per day. The data and images are being delivered to an SAP R/3 ERP application and an **Open Text/IXOS** archiving system. This is exactly the type of integration TIS envisioned when it announced its *eFLOW Ability* module this summer [see *DIR* 8/5/05].

In its interim report for the first six months of the year, ReadSoft spotlighted a pair of *INVOICES* deals with SAP integration. The first was a \$325,000

contract with media conglomerate **BBC Worldwide** for processing invoices from 20,000 different suppliers. ReadSoft also touted a "number of valuable" deals in the Americas, including one with a large utility company that "decided to integrate its SAP system with ReadSoft's [capture application] to process 150,000 invoices per year."

Of course, ReadSoft has talked about expanding beyond SAP and integrating with applications from other ERP vendors. Recently, in its home country of Sweden, ReadSoft worked in collaboration with ERP vendor **Intentia** to land a deal with Nordic chain **Optimera**. The contract calls for a system to process more than 600,000 invoices annually in Norway and Sweden.

With the turnarounds at ReadSoft and TIS gaining momentum, and **Captiva** and **Kofax** having already established records of consistent, profitable growth, it would appear the document capture space is indeed one of the healthiest segments of the ECM, if not the entire technology, market.

We've been saying it for a couple years and will continue to hammer it home—scanning paper is finally hitting the mainstream, for a combination of reasons. That's not to say the technology is completely mature and no more improvements can be made. But, we will say that the stuff out there right now is pretty good—much better than it was five years ago—and the time to make some hay has arrived.

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

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