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What's in a Name? Hybrid Dealers on the Move

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Crowley

When it comes to climbing the print management food chain, quite a bit can apparently be found in a name.

The Photizo Group provides consulting and research in the print management sphere in what they call "managed print services."

"It's really just a matter of semantics," Edward Crowley, CEO and founder of the Photizo Group, said in relation to titles of print management and managed print services.

For those involved in managed print services solutions, another key name has popped up in some circles: hybrid dealer.

"The Photizo Group coined the phrase 'hybrid dealer' to describe those dealers that represent a hybrid mixture of the best aspects of BTA/copier dealers — excellent service capabilities, flexible financial programs, and a long-term account ownership service focus — with the best aspects of an IT VAR/reseller — support of multiple vendors product lines, ability to speak the IT language and to integrate products into an IT environment," Crowley said.

In a recent Photizo Group webinar, hybrid dealers were characterized as having some of the following strengths: Having a high level of managed print services ability and high level of commitment to the business and having not just a product focus, but having a service focus. In fact, the group contends, the entire business model is driven around a service-business model.

The term "hybrid" is hardly a catchall expression in the imaging world, but one some agree in concept with.

"I don't know if I would call it hybrid," said Ray Loisel, president of Phoenix-based LMI Solutions and a provider of print management solutions. "I do see it as a copier dealer adding another product to their services. If you do not enter this space, you will be at a distinct disadvantage when selling to your customer."

It was noted in a December Recharger article that industry figures show that 4.2 trillion printer clicks occur each year and just 3 percent are under managed print contracts. Some figures show there aren't many hybrid dealers to catch all that untapped business yet.

According to Photizo Group estimates, less than 5 percent of all dealers of managed print services fall under the hybrid label. Business will be good for that small group though, according to Photizo, as it's forecasted that revenues will grow by 18 percent a year through 2012 for hybrid dealers.

Marco Inc. is a St. Cloud, Minn., company that deals in managed print services.

"We've been serious about it (MPS) for about three years," said Trevor Akervik, manager, print division for Marco. "About two years ago, I think you could start calling us a hybrid dealer. We take a service approach."

The Photizo Group sees the hybrid dealer profile including some of the following:

- Have typical revenues of \$20-30 million — large side \$40-50 million, small side \$10-12 million.
- They began transitioning to the hybrid model three or more years ago.
- They have a strong document management storage offering.
- They're able to speak the IT language.



They continue to offer excellent service.

— Dan Mooney

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