

MANAGED PRINT: THE BATTLEGROUND OF 2011

Managed print services will continue to be an area of substantial growth for vendors and the partners alike.

Kyocera managing director, David Finn, has previously been bemused by the lack of uptake in the vendor's own MPS offering. However, he maintains that it will be one of the most significant growth areas for Kyocera going into the new year, and is planning substantial activities in the new year to leverage on this opportunity.

"A printer is a printer – what's doing the real smarts is the software, and we're endorsing a product called FMAudit, supplied by PrintSolv, and that's the smarts," Finn said.

"Everyone's printers all have the intelligent smarts built in for these software products to interrogate. All the reseller has to do is maintain the relationship at the customer level, and the software will maintain the device at an operational level."

And managed print will be the battleground for printer vendors in 2011. In terms of technology, Kyocera printers will follow the trends of its competitors – faster, better quality prints, and smaller footprints, so the differentiation factor will be the 'intelligent' software and services that accompany the printer.

"The success from Upstream's POV is moreso from a device agnostic perspective – not so much on the hardware, it's finding a holistic approach and finding the right device for the right job."

WHERE THE MARGIN'S AT

And those resellers that embrace that services approach do find very healthy end margins, according to Lexmark.

"I think more and more solutions are a very generic and broad sort of term, but at the end of the fundamentally a good solution drives some sort of value and people are still prepared to pay for that," Lexmark channel and SMB manager, Stephen Bell, said.

"If you bring it down to a commoditised transaction where someone is just looking for a box at the cheapest price, then obviously the margin opportunities at that end of the scale are significantly less."

So 2011 should be a good year for printers, both from an end user, who will have a whole new range of products and applications to choose from, and vendors and their partners, who will have a whole range of new topics of discussion to have with those end customers. It might be almost to the point of loss-leading in terms of hardware, but resellers need not hang up those boots just yet. ■

KYOCERA FS-C2126MFP

Capable of printing and copying up to 26 pages per minute (ppm), the device has automatic duplex as standard. It is suitable for workgroups that need detailed colour output. The cartridge-free system means only the toner has to be replaced regularly and the drum units every 200,000. Warm-up time is about 29 seconds from power on.

It has a modular design which lets users add workflow enhancing functions as required. Status Monitor shows the printer condition and gives direct access to Command Centre for the modification of settings that are not contained in the drivers.

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RRP: On application



FUJI XEROX PHASER 3160N

The monochrome laser printer is designed for small office home office (SOHO) settings as well as SMB workgroup environments. It prints at speeds of up to 24 ppm with a first page out time of less than nine seconds. The printer is compact in design and fits well on a desk or in a small workplace. Toner Saver mode, according to the vendor, extends the yield of consumables and a high-capacity toner cartridge that prints up to 2500 pages. Users can opt for manual double sided printing to reduce the amount of paper consumed. The device comes with CentreWare Internet services to allow for checking of status of jobs and monitor the printer.

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RRP: \$199



LEXMARK PLATINUM PRO905

For the SOHO market, the printer can be connected to the Web wirelessly or through an Ethernet cable allowing users to tailor the device to their exact requirement through the Smartsolutions website. The website enables users to create document-based shortcuts such as scan to PDF, scan to email, scan to shared network drives and set up one-touch email groups. The printer has a 4.3-inch touchscreen and a 300 sheet maximum input capacity with two types of media able to be loaded simultaneously. Automatic two-sided printing is built-in. A 50-sheet automatic document feeder can be used for scan, copy and fax jobs. The printer carries a three-year warranty when bought through the channel.

DISTRIBUTED BY: Altech, Dynamic Supplies and Ingram Micro

RRP: \$599

