UNPRECEDENTED OPPORTUNITY REQUIRES UNPRECEDENTED CHANGE

How PERRY proTECH is Partnering With MWAi and SAP Business One to Pursue Extraordinary Growth

Executive Summary

For the past 40 years the imaging industry has enjoyed a highly successful track record, creating a business model universally applauded for its ability to create new clients and convert them to long-term customers capable of embracing everything from the analog copier to today's highly sophisticated imaging devices. Yet there is a barrier to entry when it comes to moving into adjacent markets such as managed network services, medical and government verticals with high-security requirements, business intelligence communities, and other high-technology fields. The copier industry has also been faced with the need to move past a supply chain that was designed four decades ago, and cannot work in today's supercharged, high-speed business environments.

The industry's tried-and-true business model incorporates hardware contracts, break-fix support, and the supplies that are the lifeblood of the industry. These factors must remain within the model, but in a way that enables dealers to optimize their businesses for the needs of both the dealer and clients for the next 40 years.

BPO Research believes that the office imaging market has reached an important inflexion point. With this white paper, we will look closely at the challenges currently facing the imaging channel to identify best practices for future business success. In particular, we will closely examine how one dealer, PERRY proTECH, is taking business transformation head on through a strategic partnership with MWA Intelligence (MWAi) and SAP.

JEFF BOATE (LEFT) AND JOHN SWALWELL

Introduction

The transition to digital content combined with the rapid adoption of mobile technologies and cloud computing is fundamentally changing the way we work with information. Vendors and their channel partners are investing in strategies to expand their offerings by pursuing new business opportunities, such as managed IT services, data backup and recovery, and business process optimization (BPO). One area in particular that is witnessing superior growth is managed services.

In some ways the imaging industry has lagged behind other industries because of its basis in decades-old legacy business-management systems. These systems are often fraught with years of applied problem-solving manual systems, or supported by equally old "bolt-on" software programs; programs that are neither integrated nor able to function in real time. By extension these systems are unable to deliver real-time big data analytics, business intelligence, or other data necessary for today's business to thrive.

Replacing or re-architecting a business system, however, is a complicated endeavor. The tendency is to find workarounds and bolt-ons to existing business software, which often introduces further inefficiencies. The result is a network of unrelated business programs that are not well integrated, leading to increased bottlenecks, restricted access to data, lack of visibility across the organization, poor productivity, stifled innovation and unhappy customers.

PERRY proTECH is one dealer that has suffered through the challenges associated with growth and expansion. Over the years, the company has evolved to become one of the most successful office equipment dealers in the United States. Through various strategic acquisitions, PERRY proTECH has branched into multiple businesses — not only driving incremental revenue growth but also increasing its penetration and wallet share in existing accounts.

But these changes have not come without pain. Over the years, the company's business operations software had become a complex myriad of disparate systems. Sales, operational, and accounting processes were completely disjointed, and in many cases there were multiple systems required for different companies and divisions within the organization. At the same time, sales reps and administrative staff had become mired in manual, paper-based processes.

Recognizing the need to unify on a single ERP system, PERRY proTECH eventually selected MWAi's FORZA product with SAP Business One. The solution will not only help PERRY proTECH gain control over critical business functions, it will position the company for long-term success by providing a platform to support any future new line of business.

FORZA was chosen because it is an enabler of growth. PERRY proTECH needed a vehicle for expansion; they elected to break away from the legacy models of the industry that are stifling innovation and instead chose to own the innovation. They are leaving the last three generations behind, and establishing the precedent for the next three generations and beyond.

This is a unique point in the industry. SAP has invested tens of millions of dollars into their Business One product. Thanks to the additional millions invested by MWAi along with several years of engineering, dealerships now have the opportunity for the first time to run their businesses on a "true" ERP, effectively eliminating all the bolt-on systems that are plaguing the industry currently and slowing down growth.

The solution is an open-architecture, fully automated one that allows for remote service, predictive and preventative maintenance, true uniform automated metering, and automation of business demands for today as well as into the future.

Background and History

To fully comprehend PERRY proTECH's transitional path it is important to understand the company's background and history. Established in 1965 and headquartered in Lima, Ohio, PERRY proTECH is recognized as a leading provider of business technology solutions and products throughout northern and

Goals, Objectives, and Opportunities

▶ Continue rapid growth without barriers

▶ Improve management control over operations

▶ Reduce incidence of manual errors

▶ Improve data accessibility with real-time, live access and mobile platform support

▶ Greater data visibility across separate business groups

▶ Improve data accuracy

▶ Increase process efficiency

western Ohio, northeastern Indiana, and southern Michigan. With annual revenues of approximately $65 million, PERRY proTECH serves thousands of clients in a variety of industries including financial services, health care, manufacturing, education, telecommunications and utilities. An employee-owned company, PERRY proTECH currently has more than 220 employees.

Like many dealers established during the birth of the office printing market, PERRY proTECH has built a successful dealership offering a broad array of office products and services, including printers, MFPs, document storage and retrieval, networked systems, and managed print services. At the same time, PERRY proTECH has been on the leading edge of traditional office dealers looking to advance into new business segments, both through acquisitions and by developing in-house capabilities.

In 2007, Perry Corporation purchased SMS proTECH, a leading IT services company, which propelled the firm into the managed IT and network services space. Then, in 2011, the company acquired a security company called Digital C.O.P.S. By 2012, the company had assumed the name PERRY proTECH and expanded its offerings even further with new document and print solutions, enhanced services, security technologies, managed IT services, and even a private cloud offering.

Jeff Boate, president of PERRY proTECH, is recognized as one of the more forward-thinking and visionary figures in the office equipment channel. As a frequent speaker at various industry events, Boate talks openly about the industry's need to evolve, as well as the opportunities that exist for dealers that are able to make the transition.

Hired in 2005, Boate was brought in to lead PERRY proTECH through the next phase of its business. But it did not take long for Boate to understand the depth of the challenges he faced. "I knew about one-and-a-half hours after I was hired that there was a major problem here," he explains. Like many office equipment dealers, PERRY proTECH was running legacy business software designed specifically for the copier industry. "They were still doing business like it was 1985, and I was scared," he says. "I was going to be a change agent, and as I learned more about the industry I started to realize that there really were no better options out there."

Escaping the Purpose-Built Platform

Boate and his management team, including vice president and CTO John Swalwell, embarked on a strategy to either revamp or replace the company's existing business system. Naturally, there was concern among the ranks as to the costs and return on investment. According to Boate, these types of decisions are magnified with employee-owned businesses. "The culture is very different," he explains. "It creates a stronger buy-in but it also creates challenges. As you become more and more vested in the company you become more risk averse."

Indeed, Boate stresses PERRY proTECH's core Midwestern values as an inherent part of the company's conservative approach to business philosophy. "It is quite interesting that PERRY proTECH would be an early adopter of a forward ERP system because we do tend to be an incredibly conservative company," he says.

PERRY proTECH identified several goals and objectives when scoping out the core capabilities for a future ERP platform. Fundamentally, the company needed an integrated ERP system that would support new lines of business — allowing continued growth and expansion into new market segments without barriers or limitations. "We believe dealers in the future are going to have to look at

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technology adjacencies to their core business to continue to grow," Boate says. "The print market is rather mature and the compound annual growth rate is probably not what we all want." Recognizing that growth is likely not going to come from the print market, PERRY proTECH is rapidly expanding its capabilities in a variety of business segments.

Security, in particular, is a growing area of focus for PERRY proTECH. "In many ways we are a security company," Boate proclaims. "We've always protected your documents as they move in and around your organization. Now, with our Digital C.O.P.S. division, we take that security one step further and it is premise-based. So we are protecting your facilities and your actual physical infrastructure." Boate believes that security will dominate IT spend in the coming decade, and he is positioning PERRY proTECH to be at the forefront of that opportunity. "It is our opinion that you are not at the highest level with your client until you are managing their security," he says. "That makes you the highest advisor you can be."

Eventually, Boate and his management team came to the conclusion that it needed to be free of the constraints of what Boate calls the "purpose-built" ERP system. "This industry needs something different," Boate says. "It can't be purpose-built because purpose-built does not allow

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– JEFF BOATE

for us to acquire other technology adjacencies to our core business, and that is what we are going to have to do to drive share value and growth." Many dealers face a similar dilemma: abandon the business software that is central to your core line of business, or continue to work within the limitations of that system to ensure that old processes and metrics are left undisturbed. For Boate, it can all be boiled down to one simple question. "Are you building your dealership for the last 20 years or the next 20 years?" he asks.

Spider Webs
The problems associated with a purpose-built architecture are compounded by the fact that, over time, many businesses are forced to install additional applications, systems, or bolt-ons to provide functionality that is often not supported by the central business software. As it turns out, this was particularly problematic for PERRY proTECH. "Our IT division runs on a purpose-built platform," says Boate. "Our imaging division runs on a [separate] purpose-built system. They don't share CRMs, and I have another totally separate CRM. I have so many systems running today, it looks like a giant spider web when you try to connect them together."

According to John Swalwell, working with multiple, disparate systems creates havoc in numerous ways, something he found out not long after he joined PERRY proTECH. "I spent the first two years doing nothing but cleaning up and consolidating contracts," he says. "I was working in a square hole environment with round pegs all over the place. We were

forcing OMD into areas where it really should not have been used — and to some extent we continue to do that today."

The inefficsoiencies and errors introduced in such an environment are potentially too numerous to mention. Boate says that PERRY proTECH has been forced to "manually automate" various processes just to perform basic tasks. "I will challenge any other dealer to tell me they are not manually automated," he asserts. "We built workarounds and systems, and we wait for the end of the month to run all these reports." As Boate puts it, most dealers operate in what could best be described as a reactive business model, waiting for month end before reports can be generated and data can be analyzed.

We Have a Form for That
The number of manually automated processes required in such an environment can be staggering. For example, Swalwell notes that, at last count, PERRY proTECH had more than 900 different structured programs related to various service program types. "It makes it extremely difficult for our administrative staff to process orders," he explains.

Meanwhile, the company's sales reps were often buried in paperwork that would stagnate them to the point where important work was giving way to menial tasks. Swalwell says that a running joke at PERRY proTECH was, "we have a form for that." His point is, if a sales rep is forced to stay late, the preference would be that it was not to finish paperwork. "I'd rather have you designing a new marketing attack on a group of accounts in a specific vertical," he says. "That is what we need those people doing, but the burden that our existing business system put on them was unreasonable and we could not allow that to continue."

Indeed, freeing up resources and reallocating assets is one of the most important benefits of an ERP system

redesign. By consolidating what had grown to 13 different systems under a single unified ERP system, PERRY proTECH expects to fully eliminate various processes so that individuals can be reassigned throughout the organization. "For us, a big part of this will be eliminating the paperwork associated with our transactions," Swalwell says. "We are heavily paper-based, and we have frontline sales reps who are spending hours completing documentation for a single transaction, which is then reviewed by a branch administrator."

Freeing up individuals so they can assist in more appropriate areas of the business is something that gets Boate and Swalwell very excited. They see opportunities now to increase sales efficiencies by putting administrative staff in positions where they can actually help drive new business, while allowing sales reps to stay on the frontline. "It is similar to the talk track that we have with our clients when we approach them on managed services," Swalwell says. "Why does a law firm have an IT person? Their business is law, so go do that and let us manage your IT for you."

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Data Accessibility

One of the more significant problems associated with outdated systems is the lack of visibility and access to data. According to Swalwell, PERRY proTECH's frontline sales reps currently are unable to log in to the company's core business system because they operate solely from a separate CRM with a price book. Since the business system is not connected to that CRM system, there is no ability for sales reps to see some of the more basic pieces of information, such as the status of an account. This not only hinders the productivity of sales reps but it can also expose the company in negative ways to its customers, potentially leaving an impression of incompetence. Boate says that PERRY proTECH often has different sales reps calling on the same account at the same time because neither has visibility across other areas of the business.

At the same time, Swalwell envisions a time when sales reps will be able to leverage mobile devices to gain immediate insight into customer activity. While in the area they can review customer agreements, request a buyout, or check inventory to determine if a product is available before even setting foot in the customer's office. "You can take it so far as to put together a proposal and a contract, and have it electronically on the tablet with them," he explains. "The portable capabilities of the SAP Business One platform are really tailored to that type of functionality — enabling those knowledge workers who are in a mobile situation."

Meanwhile, Swalwell says that a unified ERP system will be crucial in the future when it comes to keeping high quality talent. "When we start talking about dealing with the millennials who are moving into our organization, ensuring that you have a platform that they can comfortably operate within is going to be a real key," he says. "Failure to provide

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>
> **— John Swalwell**

that is going to give them a reason to walk out the door. Their patience is so short when it comes to their expectations of the types of systems they should have access to and how rapidly they require information to come to them. If we are not adapting to that new workforce that is coming along, we will have a difficult time keeping the seats full and getting people in front of our clients."

Finally, Boate says that data visibility is crucial to keeping customers happy. "I want to make it easier for our clients to do business with us," he explains. "I want to free up our technicians, our sales people, to have real-time access to data in the field with a true platform that is built around mobility. From a billing perspective, I also want our clients to be able to be billed the way they would like to be billed, and [have bills] presented in a way that they want."

FORZA and SAP Business One

There were several critical factors that ultimately led PERRY proTECH to partner with MWAi on the FORZA platform. First and foremost was the stability and functionality of the SAP Business One system that runs underneath. "Our biggest focus when we were evaluating the marketplace

[for a new ERP system] was that flexibility," says Swalwell. "Being able to bring in those adjacent businesses and create that seamless overall package that could be used by different groups was key." In other words, PERRY proTECH needed a system that would support any new line of business that the company might choose to pursue.

Some of the built-in characteristics of SAP Business One that were specifically appealing to PERRY proTECH included:

▶ **Financial management:** Automated financial and accounting processes, including support for multiple currencies, budgeting, and bank reconciliation
▶ **Warehouse and production management:** Manage inventory across multiple warehouses, track stock, and manage production orders based on material requirements planning
▶ **Customer relationship management (CRM):** Offers sales and opportunity management and after-sales support
▶ **Purchasing:** Automate procurement from purchase order through to vendor invoicing
▶ **Mobility:** iOS app for iPhone and iPad to interact with SAP Business One on the back end
▶ **Reporting and business intelligence:** Provides access to data in order to create new reports and to customize existing reports through integration with Crystal Reports
▶ **Optional analytics powered by SAP HANA:** Using in-memory computing technology, the SAP HANA database platform provides instant access to real-time insights for business intelligence

Meanwhile, FORZA with SAP Business One offers a single sign-on, single-database business management platform that has been customized

specifically for office automation and imaging channel resellers. Essentially, MWAi has invested significant time and resources to develop a customized system that runs on top of SAP Business One to meet all the business needs of a typical office equipment dealer, including components for meter management, service and dispatch, rentals and leasing, just to name a few. "The challenge is you really have to have the meter read and that collection process in there, which is unique to this industry," Boate explains.

According to Swalwell, the level of customization combined with the system's open architecture is what sets FORZA with SAP Business One apart from competitive offerings. "As a small business, we don't have the resources to embark on that kind of implementation and customization," he says. "With the partnership we have with MWAi, we will have access to truly a world-class system — not something that has maybe only a thousand companies on it. This is a world-class system running in an extremely wide variety of languages.

> It will give us the ability to operate not only in a platform that has the flexibility to adapt in the future, but more importantly meet all the needs we have right now.
>
> — **JOHN SWALWELL**

Benefits of FORZA and SAP Business One

▶ Automated business functions throughout the company

▶ Improved efficiency, especially when interdepartmental communication is required

▶ Reduced errors due to manual operations

▶ Provide instant access to business data, providing better customer experience

▶ Provide management with information necessary for making decisions

▶ Automated forecast generation

▶ Improved structure and discipline for maintaining product naming consistency

▶ Automated inventory updating for increased reliability and reduced effort

▶ Demonstrated corporate maturity to customers

▶ Retire legacy systems

▶ Continued growth without fear of encountering software related ceilings

Just about anything we could think of to do with this system, somebody has probably already tried to do something like it."

A Sledgehammer of Resources
The ability to draw on MWAi's knowledge and experience in the industry was also a determining factor. "Knowing the industry the way they do and understanding what those different supplier requirements and capabilities are, that is key," Swalwell says. "The luxury we have, and the gift that MWAi is giving us is access to a platform that your typical small business [with] a unique requirement would never have."

According to Swalwell, MWAi is uniquely positioned because it has always been a dealer advocate and yet has direct access and sight lines into the major OEM suppliers. "They work with all the manufacturers, they work with all the dealers," he explains. "Their experience and wealth of knowledge in dealing with the channel as well as the direct side is immeasurable. They understand the requirements of the business and what it takes to deliver the service levels that our clients expect. There

are a lot of folks that could have said they want to take SAP and go after the marketplace, but having someone with that knowledge is important."

PERRY proTECH also sees significant value in the resources that SAP and MWAi can bring to bear. "With the assistance of MWAi, we can partner with an organization like SAP, with a huge sledgehammer of resources and desire to provide a viable product for a very long time, and meet the needs of an organization or group of organizations like our industry," Swalwell says. "To have somebody that has their knowledge of the industry that can bring us through and provide the mild customization we are doing within SAP with FORZA, it is a fantastic situation to have. It will give us the ability to operate not only in a platform that has the flexibility to adapt in the future, but more importantly meet all the needs we have right now."

While it has taken some time to materialize, Jeff Boate believes that PERRY proTECH has finally found an ERP system that will take his company through the next phase of its business. "We rode through a wave that allowed us to get to this moment in time," he says. "We think the SAP

platform — specifically the Business One platform — is going to give us another 20 to 30 years for our employee owners. So, this is a legacy decision for us."

Both Boate and Swalwell look forward to the operational efficiencies they expect to occur once the integration of FORZA and SAP Business One is complete. "In my opinion, the move to the FORZA product will allow us to be in a proactive business model — an in-the-moment business model," Boate proclaims. "It is also going to free up knowledge workers to actually have access to knowledge, myself being one of those people. Today, if I want a sales report or a sales pipeline report, it is very manual and I have to go to multiple people to get that. We think with FORZA and the Business One product that lies underneath, I will be able to run the custom reports I want from my own desktop when I want them. To me, that is a game changer."

SAP HANA
One final element that was instrumental in PERRY proTECH's decision to adopt FORZA with SAP Business One was the SAP HANA platform. Utilizing in-memory computing technology, SAP HANA represents next-generation database technology that delivers significant performance improvement for real-time data analytics. "When we saw what the HANA architecture was going to offer as far as instantaneous access [to data] and the speed of operations, for us that was critical," Boate explains. "It led to us purchasing the HANA license that will be implemented."

According to Swalwell, HANA represents a massive upgrade in computing technology. "The speed at which the data is accessed and delivered is truly revolutionary compared to what previous systems could do," he says. "It is a massive jump in productivity." But for Swalwell, it was not just the performance of the HANA architecture

but the system in which it is being implemented and supported that is key. "When you have a vendor as substantial as SAP as a partner, and MWAi fostering that relationship, then we have complete faith in moving in that direction," he explains. "When you start understanding the analytic capabilities of the HANA platform, and explaining the architecture and benefits to the database folks we have internally, as well as showing them the roadblocks that are being removed, they just start getting starry eyed," he says. "You don't compile and process, it is 'just go look at the data.'"

Leveraging data analytics to drive real-time business intelligence is an important part of PERRY proTECH's future. According to Boate, "big data" has become a buzzword in the industry but it is also something that is beginning to resonate with customers. "The reason is because of all the data that is being digitally created today by knowledge workers," he says. "When you sit down with the CFOs, CIOs, CTOs, and CEOs, they are concerned about all of this data — not only from the security side but how do they get quick access to that data?"

BPO Research believes that the office of the future will be heavily influenced by initiatives around big data, data analytics, and the Internet of Things (IoT). We are rapidly moving to a fully connected office environment where intelligent devices can self-monitor, provide updates or notifications based on user preferences, stay current through automatic firmware updates, and perhaps most importantly, collect usage data for as long as they are installed and connected.

The future office represents new and exciting opportunities for the imaging channel, not only in terms of creating customer value and competitive differentiation, but also in terms of driving new revenue growth. Swalwell agrees. "If we can manage those 10,000 bits of data that are inside of that single standalone

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>
> **— JEFF BOATE**

multifunction copier, and aggregate that in some intelligent way with our entire population, and then more importantly start working with partners that are on the same platform across the country, this opens up the doors to do preventative maintenance," he says. "We can be proactive and be at the client site before they even know they have a problem."

Swalwell says that the FORZA platform will be instrumental in helping PERRY proTECH achieve that type of functionality. "The connectivity that will be supported through some of the other actions that MWAi has going on, where these communication portals begin to materialize that are not there now, that will create an aggregation of big data. Without a platform like SAP and in particular the HANA platform, you couldn't make logical sense of it and look for patterns so that you can be predictive as opposed to reactionary. It is going to make a big difference in the way that we do just about everything."

Implementation Costs
What about implementation costs? According to Boate, it is something PERRY proTECH looked at closely in terms of measuring functionality and performance against some type of return on investment. "As we started going into this process with MWAi and we really felt that this was the right product, cost is something that we dug in deep on," he says. "We are an employee-owned company, and I will tell you right now, share

value for us is always a big deal."

Pointing back to PERRY proTECH's conservative nature, Boate says that the company did not take this decision lightly. "We don't make quick decisions," he says. "That is why I think it is rather unique that PERRY proTECH is one of the early adopters because we are just not known for sticking our necks out too far." Nevertheless, he says that if the cost targets had shown the need to spend four times what the firm is currently paying for its various business systems components, he would have made the recommendation based on his own confidence that the return on investment would be there.

Interestingly, after final analysis the firm determined that the investment necessary to implement FORZA with SAP Business One would basically be a wash. "We found that the costs would ultimately be completely the same, if not less," Boate proclaims. Of course, Swalwell points out that you must consider the costs associated with managing and maintaining the various systems the firm is currently operating. "You start adding up those disparate systems and the ongoing maintenance, and the fact that the licensing for FORZA is very competitive and the ongoing maintenance is reasonable. Honestly, when we got into the deep dive on the math — that was the easy part of the decision. It was competitive and agreeable so we just moved forward."

Conclusion

The continued evolution off the office imaging market is putting increased pressure on dealers to diversify. Some are already well down that path, while others have yet to make the leap to expand beyond the relative safety of print and print-related services. Many dealers have enjoyed so much success over the years that there is a reluctance to change the business model to any great degree. "A lot of them do have their heads in

the sand," Boate agrees. "They don't see a need to effect change because they have heard for a long time that the industry will continue to evolve."

Nevertheless, the office equipment channel has shown a great capacity to adapt and move in new directions over the years. No doubt most dealers are either considering new lines of business, or at least evaluating certain adjacent opportunities for the future. But what are these dealers

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> ### – JEFF BOATE

doing within their own organizations to support those new businesses? More importantly, is their existing system capable of growing and expanding along with the dealership?

Many dealers continue to operate under the notion that legacy systems designed specifically for the traditional copier/MFP market can be customized to provide the level of integration necessary for multiple business models. But PERRY proTECH's Jeff Boate remains skeptical that any system can provide the stability of a single-source platform that compares with SAP. "Oddly enough, when we look at the purpose-built applications that are out there, they are quite excited to have exceeded 1,000 installations," he says. "We are looking at the SAP Business One model with more than 45,000 installations. It is interesting to me that they would find comfort in what is almost a homegrown product."

The argument is compounded when you consider the broad range of benefits and what appears to be minimal impact on cost of implementation. "Why would I spend the same money to move into a duplicate of what I have, that is just slightly more modern, and still have to strap on another six or seven systems just to bring it up to a reasonable level?" Swalwell asks. "We are not talking about it competing with FORZA. It is not going to get there. So, when we looked at what we are paying now, we knew it would be an additional investment to move to a more modern platform, and when we did the comparison over time, the FORZA product isn't going to cost us any more, and it will give us the capability of not only meeting more of our needs now but having the flexibility to meet the unknown needs for the future."

BPO Research believes that MWAi is in a prime position to help office equipment dealers transform their business models. FORZA with SAP Business One provides a single database solution that supports the broadest range of business applications. Combined with the upfront customization that MWAi delivers through the FORZA product, dealers can migrate to a fully functional ERP system that not only supports new lines of business but is also customized to meet the needs of the office equipment industry. ●

About BPO Research
BPO Research provides market research and consulting services focused on office workflow transformation, BPO, mobility, managed services, and the entire document imaging and printing market. We strive to combine meaningful industry insight and intelligence with actionable analysis to drive sustainable business practices, competitive positioning, and market development activities for our clients.