Kodak alaris

Keypoint Intelligence Special Report

INfuse Smart Connected Scanning Solution

Executive Summary:

The desire to digitize paper-based processes and streamline document-centric workflows continues to be a key goal for organizations of all types and sizes. But delivering a truly customized, automated solution typically entails server- and workstation-based software at the client site, training of end users on how to use the solution, and hours of on-site setup and ongoing maintenance for the integrator placing the system. Kodak Alaris has changed that with its INfuse Smart Connected Scanning Solution. The solution enables Kodak Alaris partners to deploy bespoke business process workflows to their customers that automate even complex tasks.

To create this unique solution, Kodak Alaris combined several key technologies into a distributed scanning ecosystem. The Kodak INfuse Management Software provides Kodak Alaris partners with easy end-user set-up, remote configuration, and fleet management. Cloud-based business process applications, created and hosted by the Kodak Alaris channel partner or solution provider (typically an ISV or integrator), handle the input, bi-directional communications, and processing steps. At the customer site (or sites), INfuse AX Scanners are the touchpoint for end users. These Internet-connected scanners—which require no PC or software/drivers—securely transfer data, metadata, and finished image files directly into the target cloud application. The scanner employs Kodak Alaris' award-winning EasySetup technology, so configuring device settings is as easy as scanning in a cover sheet. The solution also includes end-to-end security features to protect data.

Keypoint Intelligence analysts have identified the solution as a disruptive technology that has the potential to greatly improve the typical workflow

scenario for knowledge workers tasked with capturing and routing/processing hardcopy documents. The INfuse Smart Connected Scanning Solution is ideal for account creation, employee onboarding, license and registration applications, and other processes that require disparate documents to be digitized, uploaded, and checked in real time. In fact, the analysts at Keypoint Intelligence recognized the solution with a 2020 Outstanding Achievement in Innovation award for its groundbreaking advancements.

CHIEF BENEFITS TO END USERS:

SAVE TIME: The solution empowers front-line knowledge workers to capture documents at the point of origin and have them delivered directly into workflow processes.

SIMPLIFY TASKS: Each workflow process can have a clearly labeled, dedicated button on the scanner, and the standalone scanner requires no PC-resident software or drivers for users to hassle with.

REDUCE ERRORS: The solution allows for real-time bidirectional communication between the scanner and back-end system, so users can receive feedback on job errors or exceptions while they are still at the scanner.

ENSURE SECURITY: The INfuse AX Scanner offers enterprise-level security, including a separate data path and control path to isolate confidential content for secure transmission.

CHIEF BENEFITS TO KODAK ALARIS PARTNERS

BECOME IRREPLACEABLE: Placing INfuse-based custom solutions strengthens a partner's integration into their customers' daily workflows, making it less likely that those customers will replace that partner in the future.
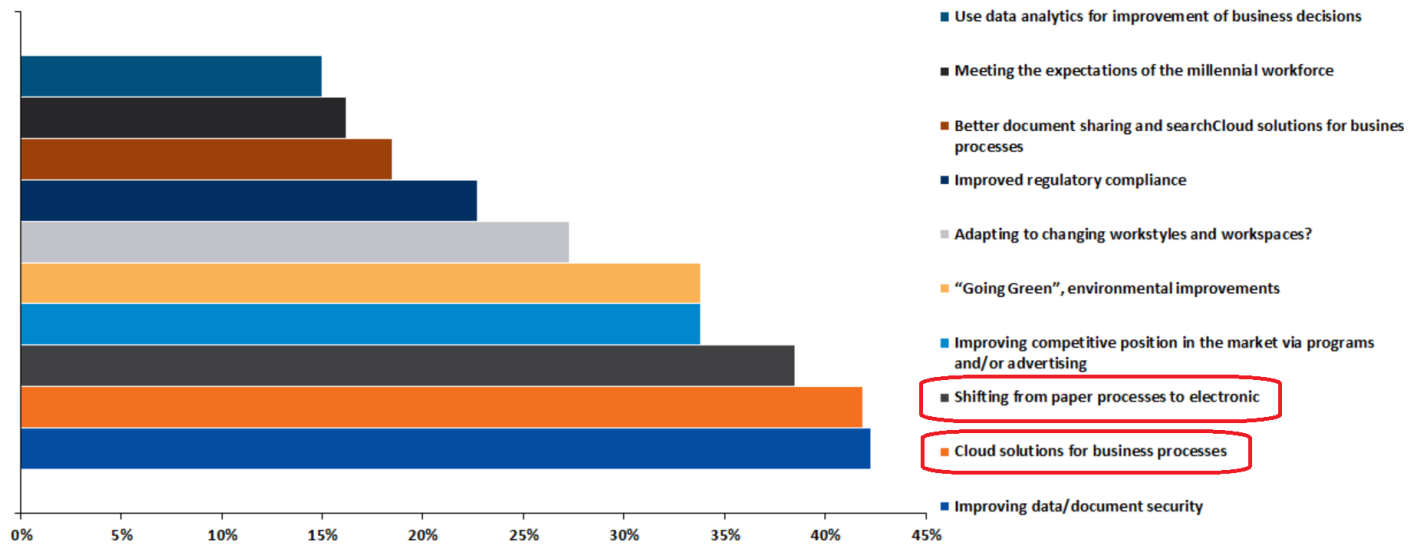
OPEN NEW REVENUE STREAMS: In addition to capturing the scanner sale, partners can charge professional services fees for ongoing development work as customers add functionality to the system.

GO REMOTE: The INfuse Management Software enables remote management (including firmware updates) of INfuse AX scanners and their associated apps. And partners do not even need to send a technician to a client site for initial setup, as the EasySetup technology allows customers to provision the scanners on their own.

Analysis

Despite decades of promises about "the paperless office"—the idea was first floated in technology circles around 1978!—much of the business-critical information that comes into an organization still exists on paper. This is especially true for government agencies; key vertical industries such as healthcare, education, and finance; as well as crucial "horizontal" business functions such as Human Resources and Accounts Payable that cut across industries.

Indeed, digitizing paper-based processes continues to be a main business priority. In a 2019 study by Keypoint Intelligence, more than 40% of IT decision-makers surveyed reported that "shifting from paper processes to electronic" was a key objective, and an even greater percentage indicated that "migrating to cloud solutions for business processes" was an imperative.

- Use data analytics for improvement of business decisions
- Meeting the expectations of the millennial workforce
- Better document sharing and searchCloud solutions for busines processes
- Improved regulatory compliance
- Adapting to changing workstyles and workspaces?
- "Going Green", environmental improvements
- Improving competitive position in the market via programs and/or advertising
- Shifting from paper processes to electronic
- Cloud solutions for business processes
- Improving data/document security

Over the next 3 years, what are your key business priorities?

The INfuse Smart Connected Scanning Solution from Kodak Alaris directly addresses these initiatives and improves upon traditional scanner- and MFP-based capture solutions. A few of its key attributes include:

- Unique combination of hardware and software that enables service providers, ISVs, and integrators to deploy custom, easy-to-use, remotely managed capture solutions to clients

- Ability to reduce otherwise complex, multi-step business processes to a button-press at the scanner, with no PC-resident software or drivers required

- Knowledge workers can be provided with real-time feedback about scanning errors and exceptions, rather than finding out after the fact and having to locate files and re-scan a job

- Simple setup and remote-management capabilities that streamline the delivery and management of the solution for Kodak Alaris partners

The INfuse ecosystem is comprised of three main elements: the INfuse API and development kit so a VAR, integrator, or other Kodak Alaris partner can integrate custom line-of-business applications that they build (or support); an INfuse AX smart connected scanner; and the INfuse Cloud Management software platform for remotely managing devices and apps placed in the field. For its part, the Kodak Alaris partner builds and hosts the workflow application on a Microsoft Windows 2019 server or Microsoft Azure, Amazon AWS, or Alibaba cloud environments. Support for both server- and cloud- hosted environments means greater flexibility for partners and their customers: Partners that have not embraced a public cloud platform, or end customers not ready (or able, due to governmental regulations) to move a business process to a multi-tenant public cloud environment can still take advantage of the INfuse Smart Scanning solutions. (And notably, Windows Server 2019 uses the same API calls as Azure, so partners can build the solution once and use it for either environment.)

The scope and type of applications that can be developed are limited only by the integrator's skill and imagination. Use cases include solutions to handle onboarding of patient documents in a medical office, capture documents and data in a loan-origination process, replace paper processes traditionally handled by fax, and many more.

connected scanning solution

1 Partner Applications
- Invoice Processing
- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- Customer Account Management
- Medical Records
- HR Records
- Logistics
- And many more

Provided by partner

2 INfuse Management Software
- API access and integration
- Fleet management
- Workflow setup
- Device configuration
- License management

Hosted and operated by partner
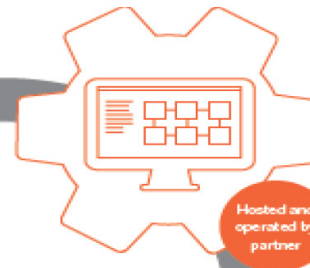
3 INfuse AX Scanner
- High-quality images
- Exceptional paper handling
- Extend capture to the edge of the enterprise
- Secure data and metadata transfer
- Partner branding
- End-user messaging

Deployed and supported by partner
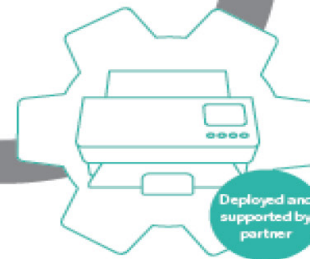
How it Works:

- The solution provider develops the desired workflow application in consultation with the end customer and deploys it to a supported cloud or Windows Server 2019 environment. (Kodak Alaris provides sample applications and APIs so partners can begin building the custom workflows for their clients.)

- The solution provider uses the INfuse Management Software to create a customer EasySetup sheet, which has a QR code that tells the scanner the settings to use for scans and the required configuration settings to connect to the back-end application.

- The end customer unboxes the INfuse AX scanner, connects it to the network, and scans the EasySetup sheet that the solution provider created. The scan settings are set automatically, and the job shortcuts are downloaded and appear on the scanner's control panel.

- The system is ready to go: End users simply load documents and select the desired scan destination/ workflow shortcut on the scanner control panel.

To make deployment as simple as possible, Kodak Alaris has built its EasySetup technology into the system. With EasySetup, an instruction sheet encoded with the desired device settings is created by the application developer and scanned in by the customer. The scanner's settings are configured automatically, ensuring that the image and communications settings are precisely as the application developer wants them. And end users can be locked out of changing scan settings, ensuring no errant tinkering will "break" the workflow process(es) being deployed.

Once deployed, the INfuse Smart Connected Scanning solution enables end users to onboard content directly into the custom application. Moreover, it takes the guesswork out of slipstreaming content into an organization's workflows: Clearly labeled buttons on the scanner control panel indicate the business process each launches. The INfuse AX scanner essentially becomes a no-hassle "scanning appliance" with preset functionality out of the box. This not only reduces the opportunity for human error, it gets employees back on task to the customer interaction or other primary job responsibility.

An INfuse AX scanner can be used as the springboard for customized document workflows that users can launch with the push of a button.

Notably, the platform's bi-directional communication capabilities provide continual feedback on the scanner control panel with messages indicating "Scanning" … "Transmitting" … "Processing". Within a few seconds, the end user will see a message on the scanner control panel indicating that the job has been successfully processed. And if the partner builds such intelligence into its solution, the user can be notified in real-time if something is missing or amiss (an unreadable invoice number, a missing document, and so on). This key attribute—a main differentiator between the INfuse solution and other distributed scanning solutions—greatly reduces the time employees spend correcting errors and finding and re-scanning documents.

Compared to traditional capture solutions, the INfuse Smart Connected Scanning Solution delivers a host of differentiators:

- Automated setup of the scanner itself

- Bi-directional communication in real time between the scanner and the back-end application allows validation logic built into the application to alert end users of errors/exceptions in real-time

- End users can be prohibited from changing scanner settings, so images arrive exactly as the back-end application needs them

- Scanner-resident Perfect Page image-enhancing processing increases accuracy and removes the need to send images to a PC client for post-scan cleanup

- INfuse Management Application enables remote firmware updates to be scheduled, so neither the partner technician nor customer IT personnel need to manually update firmware

- Unlike some solutions, encrypted data travels from the scanner to the secure back-end application, and never resides on Kodak Alaris' cloud servers

- Robust developer program and API for assisting partners in creating custom workflow applications for their clients

All communication is handled via a secure, private data channel between the scanner at the customer site and the processing application. Document images and metadata do not go through the INfuse management server. The INfuse AX scanner includes built-in Kodak Alaris technologies such as Perfect Page image-enhancing technology to ensure the highest-quality images are available for OCR processing, PDF conversion, archiving, or other uses by the back-end application. The scanner also supports the company's flatbed and passport-reader accessories to handle non-A4 and/or fragile documents such as passports, driver's licenses, bound documents and more. There is even card-reader support for easier sign-on, and so users can authenticate via the same badge they use for building access, operating an MFP, and so on.

Conclusion

The INfuse Smart Connected Scanning Solution improves upon typical "push" scanning, which simply sends captured files to a destination, in numerous ways. The solution enables true edge capture: Documents are captured directly into a business workflow where and when they enter an organization. Workers at a branch office, retail location, warehouse, or home location can benefit greatly from edge capture as a means to quickly get information off paper and into a business process. Indeed, edge capture speaks to the business priorities IT decision-makers have deemed most important while also increasing productivity, enabling faster turnaround times, and ensuring better adherence to data-privacy requirements.

Resources

Follow these links for more information:

INfuse overview video

DMV solution

Scan@Home Solution

Scan to Fax Solution