

MARKET NOTE

Konica Minolta Expands Workplace Hub Services Portfolio to Meet Evolving Market and Partner Requirements

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EXECUTIVE SNAPSHOT

FIGURE 1

Executive Snapshot: Konica Minolta Expands Workplace Hub Service Portfolio to Meet Evolving Market and Partner Requirements

This IDC Market Note looks at how Konica Minolta is expanding its Workplace Hub service portfolio to equip its partners and meet the requirements of the vast and varied small and medium-sized business (SMB) market segment.

Key Takeaways

- COVID-19 has underscored the need for SMBs to consider business resilience and continuity.
- Strategic outsourcing delivers on several key fronts: cost reduction, efficiency gains, risk sharing, flexibility to scale, and access to technology and expertise.
- By outsourcing IT and print, SMBs can focus on their core business.
- Via the Workplace Hub portfolio, Konica Minolta and its dealer partners can offer SMBs a one-stop solution.

Source: IDC, 2020

IN THIS MARKET NOTE

This IDC Market Note looks at how Konica Minolta is expanding its Workplace Hub service portfolio to meet the evolving requirements of the SMB market segment and of its Workplace Hub partners.

In July 2020, Konica Minolta made two key announcements related to Workplace Hub.

Firstly, it announced that it would launch the Workplace Hub Pro on September 1, 2020. Workplace Hub is an ecosystem that can manage and coordinate IT infrastructure and services across existing and future IT systems, devices, and services. This can be done via a central dashboard that shows IT usage patterns across the whole business, enabling simple system management and optimization.

The Pro version utilizes smart office printing technology from Konica Minolta's bizhub i-Series A3 color MFP, with print and copy speeds ranging from 25 pages per minute (ppm) to 65ppm and scanning speeds ranging from 100/200 images per minute (ipm) to 140/280ipm. It also offers features and applications such as print and document management and cloud backup.

The Workplace Hub Pro solution joins the Hub and Edge versions in the lineup:

- Hub – designed for the office space – comprises MFP hardware. It also includes an admin dashboard that provides an overview of companywide IT usage, including information on users, usage, applications, server, storage, and Wi-Fi.
- Edge is like Hub, apart from the MFP hardware. It is an IT server solution designed for the server room. It could be used as a standalone server resource or as a complement to an existing solution. Scalability is its key feature as it enables SMBs to have an IT function that can expand and contract in line with business growth and needs.

The common features and benefits of these solutions include:

- **Asset management.** These solutions enable management of all hardware and software assets, including asset reassignment due to personnel changes.
- **Wi-Fi management.** These solutions help manage user permissions and rights.
- **Storage and backup review.** Data can be stored locally and/or in the cloud and backed up at Konica Minolta datacenters.
- **User management.** These solutions help manage user rights and authentication levels.
- **Konica Minolta Marketplace.** This is a proprietary store that provides access to IT applications, software, solutions, and services.
- **Application management.** Facilitates assignments of applications to relevant users

Secondly, Konica Minolta provided an update on its Workplace Hub Partner Program, which launched in October 2019. As of July 2020, its members exceeded 50 dealers from 13 countries. This program offers training courses to participating dealers to educate them in the Workplace Hub sales approach. Within the program, there are different levels of partnership to suit each dealer's IT capabilities. For dealers that previously did not include IT solutions in their portfolios, the partner program enables them to restructure their offerings – Konica Minolta digitally transforms their business together with them. For dealers already experienced in providing IT solutions, the Workplace Hub service portfolio offers a new solution to complete their existing product and services set. Dealers will have the latitude to handle everything from sales, installation, and management of their customers' Workplace Hub solutions entirely in house. The partnership also provides the opportunity to resell any service or application on top of Workplace Hub.

IDC'S POINT OF VIEW

One size does not fit all. Within the SMB sector, there is myriad of company types and sizes spanning all sectors and industries. Each company has its unique requirements and Konica Minolta is expanding its range to appeal to as many of these organizations as possible. The speeds and feeds of this Pro version clearly target SMBs with a greater need for ingesting and printing information at speed. The latest edition in the range will also help Konica Minolta enlist more dealers to its already growing Workplace Hub Partner Program. So far, partner dealers have enjoyed some success with the

Hub and Edge versions. Engagement types range from providing basic IT services to overseeing complete IT and printing infrastructure and digital transformation projects. The addition of the Pro will give them more options to offer potential customers.

The pandemic has highlighted the need for SMBs to be able to work in a hybrid way, connecting their IT with their paper and digital processes. Disaster recovery and business resilience are the current watchwords. By outsourcing to providers with expertise, SMBs can ensure secure business continuity and keep capital and operational costs low, enabling them to focus on their core business. IDC believes that the pandemic disruption will drive SMBs to seek external IT expertise to mitigate risk and to cater for the new home and office workforce. Dealers would therefore be advised to add IT services to their portfolios to enable them to become one-stop solution providers and valuable partners for customers. In so doing, dealers will be able to survive and thrive in the next normal.

LEARN MORE

Related Research

- *Print and Document Management Market Dynamics: Developing a Winning Services Offering for an Evolving Marketplace* (IDC #EUR146482820, July 2020)
- *Konica Minolta Workplace Hub: An IT Services Ecosystem Serving SMBs into the New Decade* (IDC #EUR145687119, December 2019)
- *Konica Minolta European Leadership Campus 2019: Guiding Partners to Explore New Business Revenue Streams* (IDC #EUR145620219, November 2019)

Synopsis

This IDC Market Note looks at how Konica Minolta is expanding its Workplace Hub service portfolio to meet the evolving requirements of the vast and varied SMB market segment and of its Workplace Hub partners.

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