

# Document Imaging Report

Business Trends on Converting Paper Processes to Electronic Format

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## EPM to Focus on Film

### *Crowley takes over hardware sales*

**Eastman Park Micrographics** (EPM) has refined its business with the recent launch of a wholly owned subsidiary, Eastman Park Micrographics Equipment (EPME). EPME will focus on the distribution of EPM's Imagelink hardware and software. In addition, EPME has signed on the **Crowley Company** to handle all its sales and marketing. EPM, meanwhile, has narrowed its focus to distribution of microfilm media.

EPM acquired **Kodak's** micrographics business, which included the Imagelink equipment and film lines, in 2011 [see *DIR* 4/22/11]. "EPM has spent a lot of work over the past couple years focusing on being a reliable media distributor and complementing that by getting our own equipment out into the market," said Tim Mortenson, VP of global operations for EPM. "When we made the initial deal with Kodak, it called for us to distribute the film they were manufacturing for us, as well as take over the equipment business.

"Now that Kodak's film manufacturing operations are winding down, we have signed (in January) an agreement with **Agfa** to distribute their film under our Imagelink brand. This ensures we

will have a steady supply of film for the market. EPM's goal now is to focus on being a worldwide provider of media.

"And while it's nice to have film, that business will only work if you have a full portfolio of equipment to use it with. Focusing on equipment is a little different than focusing on media, so we launched EPME and brought in Crowley for its sales and marketing expertise in micrographics equipment. Crowley also has some equipment of its own, some of which EPME would like to OEM to augment the current Imagelink product line."

Basically, going forward, Crowley will handle all marketing, pre-sales, sales support, and sales of Imagelink branded hardware and software. All orders and back office functions will be managed by EPME. EPM has traditionally worked through a reseller channel for its hardware, which Crowley will maintain.

According to Mortenson, the mechanisms for hardware service will remain unchanged. "It will primarily stay spread throughout a number of resellers," he said.

Mortenson said that EPM has

only a small U.S.-based sales staff that has primarily focused on media sales. "The equipment has been going through VARs, and like most people in the micrographics industry, many of them have been in the market a long time. They know our products pretty well and are fairly sophisticated about selling them. They really don't need much support."

That said, Crowley plans to increase its support for EPME's resellers. "With the EPME products, we will continue to focus on a reseller channel, and, in fact, we already share quite a few resellers with EPME," said Matthew McCabe, VP of sales and marketing for Crowley. "Our goal is to leverage our partner reps to assist Imagelink resellers in their communication and product knowledge. To manage our expanded channel and product line, we are looking to add some seasoned internal sales reps and some more reseller channel reps."

EPME's product line consists of the Imagelink 9600 Archive Writer Series, the Imagelink Archive Processor, and two ImageLink DV Plus models for on-demand viewing, printing, and scanning of microfilm images. EPM, and Kodak before it, primarily

marketed these devices as complementary to digital imaging systems—a strategy Crowley will continue to follow.

“We view film as an augmentation to a digital strategy,” said McCabe. “We think users digitize material they need quick access to, but if their need is long-term preservation and retention, like 500 years, then film is the better option. How many times have organizations had to migrate digital data from different types of storage media—from 18-inch optical platters, to 5.25-inch discs, to some form of RAID, etc? These migrations can be costly and there is data loss each time you migrate. The ultimate back-up is microfilm, for which all you need is a light to see the images, and you can always scan to convert the images to digital if you need to for accessibility.”

Mortenson added that the micrographics industry has stabilized over the last 10 years as users have determined where the technology is best utilized as an alternative to digital imaging. “I think that most of the applications that could have migrated to digital are already there,” he said. “You look at markets like vital government records, where document retention periods might be longer than in your typical application, even back-up of digital systems, in those areas users are purchasing media and equipment to create more microfilm.”

McCabe added that commercial users in markets like financial services, insurance, and pension management are also big microfilm users. “They all have documents they need to keep in perpetuity,” he said. “In addition, there are service bureaus that address these markets.”

McCabe said demand is strong for the Archive Writer Series, as well as the Imagelink DV Plus models. “We are also seeing demand to augment the DV Plus series with an entry level microfilm scanner, like the ones manufactured by Crowley’s Wicks and Wilson group,” he added. “That may be the first EPME Imagelink OEM product.”

Crowley, which was originally founded as a reseller that expanded into services, acquired U.K.-based Wicks and Wilson in 2011. Crowley first entered the manufacturing business with the 2003 acquisition of high-speed micrographics scanner vendor Mekel. “The EPM products are not competitive with the current Crowley product line,” said McCabe. “The ImageWriter is a fairly unique product and our scanning products are higher volume than the DV Plus models.”

Mortenson concluded that the initial feedback EPM has received from its customer base regarding the launch of EPME and the partnership with Crowley has been positive. “It reaffirms to our customers and partners that there will a long-term supplier of Imagelink micrographics equipment,” he said.

For more information: <http://bit.ly/EPMElaunch>;  
<http://bit.ly/EPME-Crowley>

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