



## COLOR RANGE

# KONICA MINOLTA RESELLER PLATINUM AWARD

Color is a diverse, fast moving and aggressively fought-over market where resellers vie for lucrative after-sales market sales, placing everything from desktop printers and workgroup MFPs through to pre-press proofing solutions and production megaliths. This added complexity brings with it a more diverse range of requirements, workflow demands, and types of users than the monochrome arena. These variables in turn place higher challenges upon the manufacturer to create a diverse color range capable of satisfying all these needs. After all, no reseller wants to say that they can only satisfy part of the color requirement of a customer – they want it all to maximize on their revenue opportunity and, equally as important, keep alternative suppliers away.

The reseller's satisfaction with the color range at its disposal is also dependent upon the customer mix with which it serves. If the reseller does not sell into the production space, it does not have a need for a 50-ppm juggernaut, large-footprint, color solution. Likewise, if its customers are all small companies that typically outsource their design needs, then there is probably going to be a low requirement for graphic art/pre-proofing color solutions.

Hence, the main-street, office-equipment reseller selling to small- to medium-sized companies is going to be looking for a strong business, color-family of products, while the reseller aiming at the larger enterprise/government departments, etc. will be looking for a more diverse color portfolio allowing them to offer solutions that span not just the front office but also the in-house marketing department and central reprographic department (CRD).

To understand this complex topic, we surveyed our resellers to learn how successfully manufacturers have targeted their color product range.

### About the Winner:

Konica Minolta was formed with the merger of two leading imaging companies, Konica and Minolta, in 2003. Both companies brought impressive credentials to the merge.

Konica introduced its first roll of black and white film in 1929. The company entered the business machines market in 1971 with the introduction of the U-BIX 480, Japan's first photostatic plain-paper copier. Konica went on to develop and market a full range of digital printers, copiers, fax and multifunctional products, as well as application software solutions designed to meet the demands of a busy office environment.

Konica's ECOJET system, which utilizes dry tablet from chemicals for photoprocessing, was introduced in 1994 and put into wide distribution the following year.

Kazuo Tashima established Minolta as a camera manufacturer in November 1928. The company joined the business equipment industry in 1960 with the development of its first photocopier.

Minolta launched the first color copier able to produce two color copies in a single process in 1987. The machine was called the EP490Z. In 2000, Minolta announced a research and development partnership with Konica to work jointly on numerous different product development fronts. The following year, Minolta established a venture with Fujitsu Ltd., intended to help the development of color laser printers.

Konica and former rival Minolta merged in a partnership spanning research and development as well as manufacturing and marketing. Prior to merging, the two companies had also formed a joint venture with the goal of creating a new, state of the art toner manufacturing plant.

### About the Awards:

The Readers' Choice Awards are the cumulative findings culled from thousands of BERTL surveys. Unlike other industry awards which are chosen by a small group of industry pundits, BERTL Readers' Choice Awards are decided by our reseller readers.