



Trained to Lead

The Sharp approach to dealership development

by: Haley Raspanti, Sharp Imaging and Information Company of America

Editor's Note: This is the fourth in a series of article submissions from BTA-member OEMs providing a look at their current dealer training programs.

Sharp is committed to providing world-class support to its dealer network, not just through innovative products, but also through comprehensive training programs. The learning, development and support team at Sharp plays a vital role in this effort, offering structured, scalable and hands-on education to ensure that dealer service technicians are well-equipped to install, maintain and troubleshoot Sharp's full portfolio of office and production print solutions.

Through a carefully designed combination of web-based training (WBT) and instructor-led training (ILT), Sharp's training programs deliver a tailored experience that accommodate the evolving needs of modern dealerships. Whether a technician is new to the industry or highly experienced with production equipment, Sharp provides the tools and support to help him (or her) grow his expertise and contribute to superior customer service.

"Our goal is to ensure that every Sharp dealer technician — whether they're new to the field or a seasoned pro — has access to the tools, training and support they need to succeed," said John Menzzasalma, senior learning, development and support manager at Sharp Imaging and Information Company of America. "We're not just teaching how to fix machines — we're building a foundation of knowledge that helps our partners deliver exceptional service, every time."

Dual Platforms for Sales & Service Learning

Sharp's dealer training efforts are anchored by two learning platforms — one focused on service and one on sales. The service learning platform, known as Sharp Academy, is a dynamic and ever-evolving online environment that houses a wide array of training modules and learning paths. Sharp Academy features in-depth training content that spans the company's entire range of print products, from A4 desktop printers and MFPs to high-volume production equipment.

This virtual learning center is specifically designed for technicians and service teams, with self-paced modules that build technical acumen, product knowledge and diagnostic skills. For sales professionals, Sharp offers a separate learning experience tailored to the needs of the customer-facing side of the business. Together, these platforms support a cohesive and coordinated approach to dealer development.



The Foundation: Core Courses & Product Training

For technicians who are new to Sharp products, or to the print industry in general, Sharp offers a structured progression beginning with core courses. These foundational classes cover MFP theory, device operation and Sharp-specific technology, helping new service personnel understand both the fundamentals of printing systems and the nuances of Sharp's solutions. Technicians gain practical knowledge in servicing both monochrome and color MFPs, enabling them to quickly become valuable members of their dealerships' service organizations.

Beyond the core curriculum, Sharp provides focused product training for both A3 and A4 devices. A4 product training is primarily delivered via web-based courses, allowing dealers to train technicians on demand and at scale. A3 training, on the other hand, is more often delivered in classroom settings and covers a broader range of speeds and capabilities, from 26 to 65 pages per minute (ppm) in both color and monochrome models.

Specialization for Production Equipment

For dealerships supporting high-volume and production print environments, Sharp offers a specialized training path focused on production equipment — devices capable of speeds ranging from 70 to 136 ppm. Due to the complexity and advanced capabilities of these devices, Sharp mandates a combination of prerequisites and classroom instruction to ensure technicians are thoroughly prepared.

To better serve technicians who have varying levels of experience, Sharp has developed a three-track Production Learning Pathway:

■ **Track 1** is designed for technicians with prior production print experience. It includes a skills assessment to validate knowledge and determine whether a shorter learning path is appropriate.

■ **Track 2** is an intermediate option for technicians who are familiar with Sharp equipment but new to production-grade models. This track includes an overview of the product line and prepares the learner for a five- or 10-day classroom training session.

■ **Track 3** is intended for technicians with little to no background in production print. It offers in-depth training to ensure they are ready to succeed in a rigorous 10-day, in-person training program.

This tailored approach ensures that every technician, regardless of his starting point, has a clear and achievable path to mastery.

Continuous Learning & Recognition

One of the standout features of Sharp Academy is its automated course enrollment system, which tracks technician progress and automatically enrolls users in the next appropriate training module once prerequisites are met. This ensures a seamless, structured learning journey and allows dealership managers to track team development with confidence.

Sharp also recognizes excellence in service through its Platinum Program, which honors dealerships that have achieved an “A” rating or higher in Sharp’s Platinum Level Service Provider evaluation. These top-tier dealerships consistently exceed service benchmarks and demonstrate commitment to customer satisfaction and industry best practices.

For dealers who wish to take training in-house, Sharp offers the 3T Program (Train the Trainer). This initiative enables certified dealership personnel to conduct product training sessions at their own locations, providing even greater flexibility while maintaining the integrity of Sharp’s education standards.

These resources aim to help dealers enhance service quality, support evolving customer needs and adapt to the changing demands of the print industry.

In-Person Learning at Sharp Training Centers

While online training provides flexibility and accessibility, Sharp also places high value on in-person learning experiences. The company hosts regular classroom training sessions at its state-of-the-art facilities in Montvale, New Jersey, and Santa Ana, California. These immersive sessions allow technicians to work directly with Sharp equipment, engage with expert instructors and network with peers — all of which contribute to deeper learning and long-term retention.

A Commitment to Dealer Success

Sharp’s learning, development and support program is designed to strengthen the capabilities of its dealer network through structured training, performance recognition and flexible learning options. These resources aim to help dealers enhance service quality, support evolving customer needs and adapt to the changing demands of the print industry. In addition to offering a wide range of office technology solutions, Sharp provides ongoing education and support to help its partners deliver consistent, high-quality service. ■

Haley Raspanti has been with Sharp for nearly four years, currently serving as a learning management systems administrator. She supports a wide range of learning and development initiatives across the organization and is primarily focused on classroom training and the online Sharp learning portal, Sharp Academy. Raspanti oversees user and content administration, continuously optimizing the learning experience for Sharp’s service teams and dealer channel. She can be reached at haley.raspanti@sharpusa.com. Visit www.sharpusa.com.

