



Empowering Technicians

Ricoh equips partners to deliver great customer service

by: Chris DeMars, Ricoh USA Inc.

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

With the advent of the modern digital workplace, staying ahead in the office technology industry means more than just offering cutting-edge products and services. It requires a commitment to empowering the people who go the distance each day to deliver and support those solutions in the market.

At Ricoh, we believe that our dealers are more than just a sales channel — they are at the heart of our business and an extension of our brand, values and dedication to customer satisfaction. Nowhere is this partnership more critical than in the service and support experience.

Along with providing thorough sales and marketing training to help our partners successfully win business and grow, Ricoh has made long-term, strategic investments in technical service training for dealership technicians, ensuring they have the knowledge, tools and confidence to deliver extraordinary service in our rapidly evolving office technology industry.

Ricoh's commitment to service training began in the 1980s, and since then we have continuously evolved our programs to meet the changing needs of the industry and our dealer network. Today, our training supports a wide range of roles, from service managers and service engineers to IT and solutions specialists across every stage of their professional development. The training we provide ultimately empowers technicians with the skills they need to solve problems efficiently, support customers confidently and build relationships while representing their dealerships and Ricoh with excellence.

Comprehensive Curriculum, Real-World Relevance

Ricoh's service training covers a broad range of technical competencies, including hardware maintenance and repair; installation and troubleshooting; firmware updates and device security; hardware connectivity and solution implementation; and service pricing tools and cost estimation.

Hardware training begins with Ricoh Office Technology Fundamentals, a course designed to introduce new service engineers to core concepts, Ricoh-specific terminology and our technical



support resources. From there, technicians follow one of two learning paths: an “update path” for those already familiar with a product family, or a “standalone path” for those encountering it for the first time.

We also offer specialized courses in print and scan technology, MFP device security and hardware troubleshooting, along with seminars that reinforce hands-on skills and real-world application.

Flexible Delivery for a Dynamic Workforce

Recognizing the diverse needs of our dealer network, we deliver training through a variety of formats, including: self-paced online modules; instructor-led classroom sessions; virtual instructor-led training; telepresence-based hands-on training; and blended learning programs. This flexibility ensures technicians can access training in a way that fits their schedules and learning preferences, whether they are in the field or working remotely.

One standout example is our Strategic Partnership in Ricoh Education (SPIRE) program, a “train-the-trainer” initiative that helps dealerships build internal training capacity and foster a culture of continuous learning.

Tools for Enhanced Learning & Performance

Ricoh integrates modern learning technologies to make training more engaging and effective. Our Technology Solutions Resource Center (TSRC) hosts microlearning videos, simulations and “just-in-time” content that technicians can access in the flow of work. These resources are also embedded in instructor-led sessions and available on demand for ongoing support. We also use web meeting tools and webcams to deliver telepresence training, allowing technicians to gain hands-on experience without the need for travel.

Certification & Recognition

For service technicians, we offer certification programs on Ricoh's full product lineup — from office MFPs to production print equipment (including our advanced cutsheet systems) — that are necessary for validating technical expertise and ensuring consistent service quality across our dealer network.

All training is tracked through the Ricoh Learning Institute (RLI), our centralized learning management system.

Upon completion of most hardware training courses, technicians can generate certifications that validate their expertise. We also assign a set of codes to link learning objects in RLI to specific models that enable us to track certification levels by the individual or dealership.

Our ProVision recognition program further incentivizes excellence by honoring dealers who meet Ricoh's high standards for service training and performance. To qualify, dealers must have at least two service engineers certified on a minimum of 85% of the products they sell and support.

Supporting Technicians Beyond the Classroom

Ricoh's commitment to dealer success does not stop when training ends. We offer a range of post-training support resources, including: Wednesday Morning with Ricoh Service webinars; the TSRC continuing education portal; on-site skills development seminars; network solutions seminars; and quarterly production print webinars.

These programs reinforce learning, address emerging challenges, and help technicians apply their skills in real-world scenarios. For example, our on-site skills development seminars employ a "take-it-to-the-field" approach involving visiting machines that have experienced issues and applying lessons learned to improve performance.

We also offer ride-alongs, field performance assessments and technical assistance — both virtual and on-site — to help dealerships continuously improve their service delivery.

First-Level Support for Technicians

Just because a dealership technician has completed training does not mean he (or she) is without help if he ever requires it. Ricoh provides first-level support through resources such as our Technical Support Call Center. When calling in, technicians will receive support with troubleshooting, be provided service bulletins and pointed to resources on our global knowledge site. This support acts as a safety net for technicians in the field and serves as the escalation point for issues that are challenging to resolve.

Measuring Impact & Driving Improvement

Ricoh uses a combination of quizzes, exams and learner surveys to evaluate the effectiveness of our training programs. Feedback is reviewed by our Service Training Instructional Design team to identify areas for improvement and ensure content remains relevant and impactful.

When looking at our Technical Support Call Center, we

By offering training that is comprehensive, flexible and forward-looking, we are not just supporting technicians, we are strengthening partnerships ...

find service engineers are reaching out for basic support when they are not familiar with the equipment they are working on. This allows us to review with our dealers and improve the service engineer's on-site time, while also preventing returned calls and unnecessary repeat visits.

Adapting to a Changing Market

Reflecting our commitment to staying ahead of industry trends and ensuring our dealers are equipped for what's next,

we introduced Ricoh Office Technology Fundamentals as a blended learning program for first-time service engineers. The program prioritizes hands-on application of critical service processes and provides certification on the most popular Ricoh MFPs, ensuring plenty of opportunities for application of training when in the field. We are also piloting a mentored on-the-job training (OJT) program that provides an alternate path to learn and demonstrate hands-on proficiency without the need to travel to a training facility.

And as the demand for office printing declines and production printing grows, Ricoh is proactively adapting its training strategy, having recently launched a task force to explore new ways of preparing technicians for the complexities of production print support — an area that traditionally required years of experience. We also facilitate a three-day training program that has already helped more than 50 technicians earn the Fiery Technician Certification.

Writing the Next Chapter Together

At Ricoh, we understand that our success is inseparable from the success of our dealers. By offering training that is comprehensive, flexible and forward-looking, we are not just supporting technicians, we are strengthening partnerships, enhancing customer experiences and building a future of mutual growth.

Together, we are writing the next chapter in the office technology industry — one where every technician is empowered, every dealership is supported and every customer interaction reflects a shared standard of excellence. ■

Chris DeMars is a seasoned leader in the office technology industry, with more than three decades of progressive experience in technical support, service management and dealer relations. Currently serving as senior director of dealer services in the Dealer Division at Ricoh USA Inc., he plays a pivotal role in driving dealer growth, profitability and operational excellence across the nation.

DeMars can be reached at chris.demars@ricoh-usa.com. Visit www.ricoh-usa.com.

