



Konica Minolta Training

Making a strategic investment in dealer education

by: Laura Blackmer, Konica Minolta Business Solutions U.S.A. Inc.

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

One of Konica Minolta's top priorities for our dealer channel has always been providing outstanding service and working to make it easy for dealers (and customers) to do business with us. We place significant importance on training for our dealers, recognizing that well-trained partners are essential for our mutual success. Through a comprehensive portfolio of training courses, we aim to ensure our dealers develop the necessary knowledge and skills to support their customers at the highest levels possible. Training programs are designed not only to enhance our dealers' expertise, but to help them earn certifications that build trust and confidence among their customers.

By investing in continuous education and skill development, Konica Minolta fosters a collaborative environment where dealer partners can thrive, innovate and drive business growth. Here is an overview of some of our signature training programs.

Technical Training

Konica Minolta's Technical Education department provides courses for more than 330 dealerships within the United States, Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean. In addition to developing training materials for our products and solutions, we offer in-person classes at four Regional Training Centers throughout the U.S. These provide extensive hands-on experiences, preparing students to successfully support customers' investments. The team also offers several virtual classes and web-based training (WBT), saving dealers time and expense on travel.

Since January 2024, we have trained 730 dealer technicians at our centers, 571 technicians virtually and logged 22,714 WBT course completions. Konica Minolta also provides a suggested learning path for new service technicians based on their needs for office or production print products. The programs include "Outward," a worldwide certification program that builds the foundation for an employee to set a path for professional development.

Following completion of these courses, we provide training on office and production print foundations, office and production print engines, peripherals, Konica Minolta, Fiery and CREO controllers. We have had great success with our Authorized Training Partner program, which enables trained and certified instructors to conduct courses at their locations using Konica Minolta curriculum.



Enhanced Training Programs

We believe in fully empowering our sales forces through education, prioritizing the needs and feedback of our dealer community. In response to requests from our Dealer Advisory Committee, we recently announced a revamped training initiative aimed at enhancing product knowledge and streamlining the adoption of our sales support tools and resources.

Addressing Core Concerns

Konica Minolta dealer partners expressed the need for improved training on core product knowledge and better navigation of the resource material available in our dealer portal. They emphasized the importance of centralizing these critical resources to help their sales representatives quickly become proficient at proposing and selling our products and solutions.

To meet these needs, we launched the new "Sales Training for Dealers" collection in our Learning Management System (LMS) in October 2024. This central repository offers focused training specifically designed for dealer partners.

Product-Knowledge Training

Specific product-knowledge training emphasizes our core offering, the bizhub One i-Series MFPs. Multiple training formats are available, including:

- Live virtual-instructor-led sessions
- Online e-learning curriculum tailored to dealers
- Video training for key tools such as the Product Configurator and Product Collateral Generator

Training content highlights include:

- A complete system overview with a focus on competitive differentiation and customer benefits

- Intelligent i-Options available
- Security options
- Cloud applications via the Konica Minolta Marketplace

One of our most recently launched offerings, the remote service platform bizhub vCare, is another benefit for dealers working with Konica Minolta. vCare takes a remote-first approach to providing proactive service, integrating into the dealer's ERP and eliminating the need to contact anyone for support. vCare provides extensive data, monitoring product health, status and service needs. The platform completed 45,000 remote firmware updates in the first six months of 2024, leveraging the technology to save time and money on service calls, further enhancing the overall experience with us. This robust solution is reinforced through training opportunities for dealers that include:

- Training to effectively demonstrate the benefits of utilizing vCare for fleet management and assist technicians with navigation at dealer offices
- Hands-on demonstrations and discussions within several of our Technical Training courses that help familiarize technicians with vCare
- Virtual, hands-on, interactive courses for dealer technicians to learn, implement and maintain vCare for their customers

Tools & Resources Training

Konica Minolta has streamlined its training on tools and resources into three main areas of focus:

- Using the Product Reference Material tool
- Leveraging the Dealer Co-Branded Material tool within the Dealer Marketing Studio
- Utilizing the Product Configurator tool

Additional training and resources are also included within the collection, although the primary focus remains on delivering

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the specific support dealers have requested. We are committed to continuous improvement and ensuring our dealer partners have the essential training and resources to thrive in their sales efforts.

Konica Minolta's unwavering commitment to training and education for our dealer partners is a cornerstone of our business strategy. By offering comprehensive technical and sales training programs, we hope to ensure that our dealers are well-equipped to support their customers effectively.

Through initiatives like our Authorized Training Partner program and the introduction of advanced tools like bizhub vCare, Konica Minolta empowers our dealer network to maintain high standards of service and support. As a result, we continue to build long-term opportunities and trust within our dealer community, driving mutual success and customer satisfaction. ■

Blackmer, president of dealer sales at Konica Minolta Business Solutions U.S.A. Inc., is responsible for the sales and management of its extensive dealer network that represents and sells award-winning products and managed IT services. Her extensive experience includes 19 years in management and executive positions with Hewlett-Packard Company, Intermec Corp. and Sharp. In December 2017, Blackmer joined the executive team at Konica Minolta. She has been awarded "Best Female Executive" eight times at the Frank Awards, The Cannata Report's annual awards that highlight excellence in business technology. Blackmer has ranked on Tigerpaw Software's Top 100 Influencers in the managed print industry list two years in a row. She has also been named to CRN's prestigious Women of the Channel list seven times, is a five-time Channel Chief and two-time CRN Inclusive Channel Leader.

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