

Fall Colors Retreat

BTA Southeast hosts event in Asheville, N.C.

by: Elizabeth Marvel, Office Technology Magazine

The 2022 Fall Colors Retreat, hosted by BTA Southeast, was held Oct. 13-14 at the Renaissance Asheville Downtown Hotel in Asheville, North Carolina. The event featured two keynote addresses, two additional educational sessions, exhibitor round-table discussions, plenty of networking time, a private tour of the Biltmore Estate and dinner at the Biltmore's Lioncrest Veranda.

The first keynote, "The Death of the People Business," was presented by Derek Shebby of Modern Sales Training. He spoke about the changes the COVID-19 pandemic has had on sales teams and explored how to reignite the sales processes that have been proven to work. Shebby also shared some more recent methods that can supercharge performance in the future.

The second keynote, "Personal Branding to Win," was presented by Rick Lambert of selltwin and In2communications. He shared steps dealers can take to elevate their personal brands to create more awareness, boost consideration rates and generate more leads.

The additional educational sessions: "Current State of the Industry & Insight Into 2023," by Mike Marusic of Sharp Imaging and Information Company of America; and "Eight Numbers to Help Deliver Managed IT Success for Dealers," by Chris Ryne of Growth Achievement Partners.

The exhibiting sponsors were: ACDI, Brother (breakfast sponsor), Cranel, Crexendo, ECI, eGoldFAX, FP, Great-America, Hytec, IBPI, Intermedia (lunch sponsor), Kodak Alaris, Konica Minolta, Kyocera, LEAF, Macquarie, Midwest Copier Exchange, NA Trading and Technology, Sales-Chain, Sharp (keynote sponsor), Technology Assurance Group (breaks sponsor), TROY, WatchGuard, Wells Fargo, Xerox, Y Soft and Zultys.

BTA's 2023 events are currently being scheduled. Visit www.bta.org/BTAEvents for more information on next year's events as it becomes available. ■

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Top: The Fall Colors Retreat featured two keynote addresses, two additional educational sessions, networking time, round-table discussions with exhibitors, a private tour of the Biltmore Estate and dinner at the Biltmore's Lioncrest Veranda. Bottom photos, left to right: 2022-23 BTA Southeast President Jim Buck; 2022-23 BTA Southeast President-Elect Mike Hicks; and 2022-23 BTA Southeast Vice President Blake Renegar serve as the event's emcees.



Above left: Shebby presents the first keynote, "The Death of the People Business." Above right: Lambert presents the second keynote, "Personal Branding to Win."



Above, clockwise from top left: Marusic presents his educational session; Ryne presents his session; and attendees network with peers and exhibitors during a break.



Above, clockwise from top: (left to right) John Alexander and Pat Meija of DaVinci iSolutions, Kansas City, Missouri, visit with Mark Watthuber of ECI Software Solutions during a break; attendees tour the Biltmore Estate; dinner is held at the Biltmore's Lioncrest Veranda; and Mark Grice of IBPI (left) visits with Anthony Lioco of The Lioco Group, Huntsville, Alabama, during the round-table discussions.

Managed IT Success

Chris Ryne of Growth Achievement Partners presented “Eight Numbers to Help Deliver Managed IT Success for Dealers,” at the Fall Colors Retreat. During the session, he shared the following eight “non-financial” data points that will help dealers who are considering getting into, or are already in, managed IT services.

(1) 100% — The percentage of dealers who have told Ryne they wish they would have been more disciplined in adhering to their target markets/ideal client profiles (ICPs) and tech stacks from the start. “The sweet spot [for the target market] is generally 15 to 75 [employees], but it does not have to be exactly yours,” Ryne said, following up with a warning about straying too far from your ICP. “... It’s hard to serve multiple markets with different expectations as you’re getting started, so pick your target market ... stay disciplined to it.”

(2) 50+ — The head start in years that the copier/MFP service side has on the IT service side. “We’re ultimately going to get — if not as good, but better — in delivering IT services than copier services, just by the nature of the service,” Ryne said. “And the office equipment reps need to have that same level of confidence and service delivery understanding as they do with the traditional business, so ensure they know just how well you are doing in delivering IT services too.”

(3) $\frac{1}{2} < \frac{1}{2}$ (or $X = (X-Y)$) — A managed IT resource that is shared with the copier business (Y) will always yield less (X) than expected on the managed services side. “I know this is not fiscally easy, but the message here is dedicate resources ahead of revenue or you may never get the revenue,” Ryne said. “... If you’re going to do this, you have to make an investment.”

(4) Greater than or equal to 1 — The number of dedicated vCIOs or SMEs you will need to get started. “This is the most important hire in the organization and it’s likely going to come from outside of the organization,” Ryne said.

(5) 70% and 3 — The percentage of initial contracts that will be sold to non-copier customers and the three reasons why: low copier rep confidence; wrong level of contact; and only 10% to 20% of current copier accounts will fit within your ICP. “You don’t need a huge portion of your current client base to become managed services clients to build a really, really nice business here,” Ryne said.

(6) 300 — The size for an appropriate list of ICP prospects that represents a “territory.” It should contain 20 to 40 prospects within at least one vertical market you focus on. “Find prospects that have outsourced IT relationships that are similar to what you sell and then nurture them,” Ryne advised.

(7) 16:2.4 — The ratio of initial monthly appointments with decision makers within target market prospects to new wins per month, over time. “Most [dealers] want to build their proforma on two to three deals a month, and most have the resources to be able to properly onboard two to three deals per month,” Ryne said. “Get 16 [appointments] and they should yield 2.4 [wins] over time.”

(8) Greater than 12 and less than 60 — For managed services sales, your first contact with a prospect may have been more than 12 months ago, but when an event occurs or the contract nears its end, the active sales cycle is typically less than 60 days. “It’s comparable to the office equipment space,” Ryne said. “... Play the long game. Find the right accounts ... and nurture them ... That’s why I think nurturing is more important than sales at this point.” ■

— Elizabeth Marvel