

PROMOTION

Border Kei gains Ricoh representation through Fusion Office Automation

FUSION Office Automation has been appointed a Ricoh Authorised Dealer for the Border Kei region in the Eastern Cape.

The agreement extends Ricoh SA's reach into the region with the ability to service both commercial and government contracts and supports the entire range of Ricoh products, services and solutions.

"Fusion Office Automation has the capability to deliver throughout the value chain for our numerous clients in the region," says Jacques van Wyk, executive GM of indirect operations at Ricoh SA.

"The Border Kei region is a strategic one for Ricoh SA since many of our national customers, both commercial and government, maintain operations there."

Ricoh SA is a supplier to government according to the RT3 tender.

Van Wyk adds: "It was important that we appoint a partner that has the right skills, qualifications and people to achieve that, as well as sharing our value of putting customers first. We investigated a number of potential partners and although there are many good companies in the region only Fusion Office Automation met all of those criteria. We only appoint a select number of Authorised Dealers so we are particular about which companies we work with."

"We established our business in 2006," says Jason van der Walt, director and one of two partner founders of Fusion Office Automation, "and have built up a client portfolio of over 2 500 companies due to our focus on service delivery. We are the only business in our industry in the region to have a

four-hour service level agreement (SLA). Businesses operate based on the documents they process so they absolutely have to have them available at all times."

Existing Fusion Office Automation customers include the likes of Aspen Pharmacare in East London, Discovery Health, Aon South Africa and GIBB, an existing joint Fusion Office Automation and Ricoh SA customer.

Van Wyk says Ricoh SA was unwilling to compromise its national service delivery standard and Fusion Office Automation invested in training, skills development and the requisite onsite spares to ensure it could maintain optimum service delivery across the Ricoh portfolio.

"Ricoh is a global brand with its headquarters in Japan," says Van der Walt, "and offers a highly competitive product, service and software solution portfolio, which is why we have selected them as our brand of choice. That doesn't mean we have turned our backs on the equipment we have at various clients – we will continue to support those clients just as we did in the past. Our future endeavours, though, are focused on promoting and supporting the Ricoh brand because we believe it will help us to continue offering the best available solutions to meet our customers' business needs now and in the future."

Fusion Office Automation currently maintains an office in East London at 95 Chamberlain Road and another in Durban. It employs close to 40 people across the two locations with plans to establish an office in Johannesburg within a year and expand to a national footprint in the



Fusion Office Automation directors Jason Van der Walt and Andrew Gardner, seated second row from front, with staff outside their office on the corner of Chamberlain and Vincent roads in East London
Picture: NICOLETTE SCROOBY

next five years.

"We have gained increasing exposure to the industry since our

inception seven years ago," says Van der Walt, "and we find that Ricoh offers the best products with

aggressive pricing and a thorough product bundle that means we can offer more to our clients. They

particularly have exceptional software solutions that integrate tightly with the copiers and printers, such as TotalFlow, the workflow and document management system, and MarcomCentral, the software-as-a-service (SaaS) Web-to-print solution for commercial printers.

Ricoh SA products range from printers and multifunction printers to wide format printers, facsimiles, production printers, digital duplicators, copiers and projectors. It also offers a range of software for document capture and distribution, output management and security, device management, document storage and management and workflow.

Equitrac Office monitors, measures and manages network-wide document output. It is modular and tracks copy and print activities in detail while allowing customers to easily and accurately allocate costs to specific individuals, departments or groups.

Complementing Equitrac Office is

@Remote, which is an Internet-based remote management tool. It automatically alerts Ricoh technicians about any technical issues that occur with any of the connected devices and defines the problem so that a technician with the correct spare parts can be immediately dispatched. It also automatically reads meters and orders toner when the consumables run low.

Van der Walt and Andrew Gardner, East London natives who worked in the financial industry in Johannesburg before returning to East London, founded Fusion Office Automation.

"Since returning to the Eastern Cape we have been extremely active in business circles and have found that businesses have been crying out for strong business relationships and service excellence," says Van der Walt. "We built our business from the ground up giving us the opportunity to understand customer needs better and give them a fresh new look into the industry."

That ethos garnered the business a Daily Dispatch Border Kei Chamber of Commerce Emerging Entrepreneur of the Year award in 2009 as the top emerging entrepreneur in the Eastern Cape that year.

Both business partners understand and acknowledge the necessity for successful businesses to offer something back to the communities in which they operate.

Fusion Office Automation recently adopted East London Child Welfare as its primary charity and also supports other charitable events in the East London community throughout the year. The company's management and employees are growing increasingly excited about their upcoming sponsorship of the green colour-blast station for the inaugural Jawitz Colour My Run event on September 14. Proceeds go to St Bernards Hospice, one of Fusion Office Automation's valued clients.

"We grew up in the area," says Van der Walt of himself and Gardner, "which is why we are involved in the region. This is our home town and we want to play our part in caring for our neighbours." — Supplied

Fusion Office Automation contact details:
Tel: 0861 000 845
E-mail: service@ricoh-fusion.co.za
Ricoh SA contact details:
Tel: 0800 111 014
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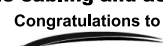
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