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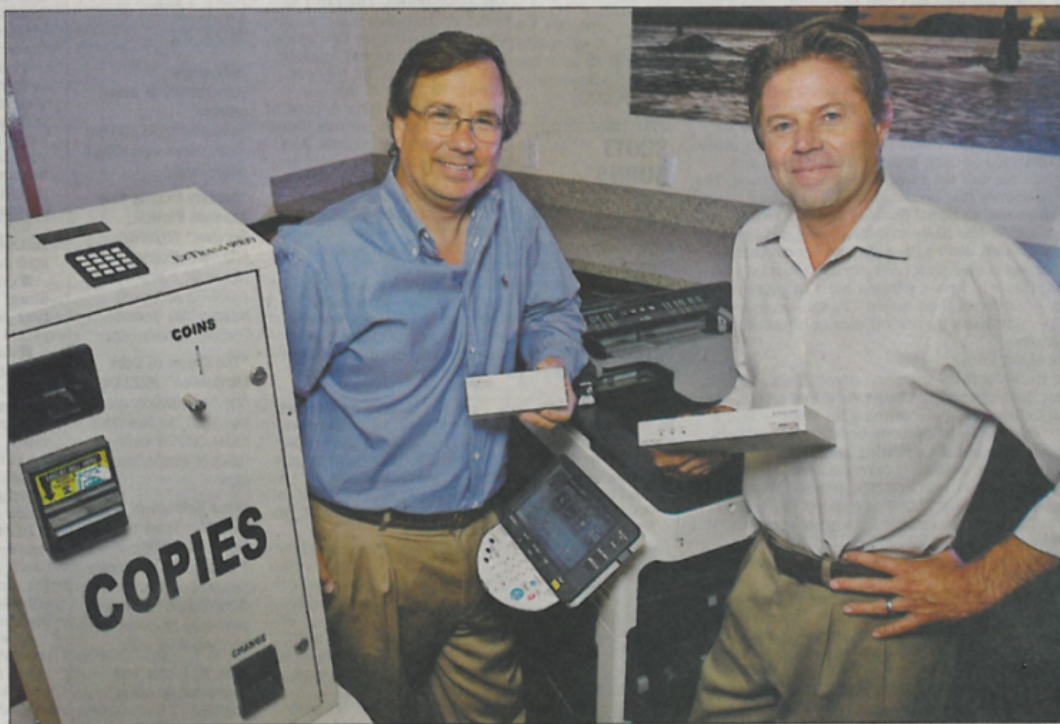
Number of rooms in hotels where Showcase finds its charge-and-use model is most efficient

20,000

Number of hotels in that range, which Showcase calls its "sweet spot"

500

Number of "sweet spot" hotels that include a Showcase business center



Robert Casillas/Staff Photographer

Showcase Business Center Inc. founder and CEO Paul Rajewski and company President David Reynolds say the copy machines, computers and printers they install in the business centers they provide at airports, hotels and universities are more reliable than those of their competitors.

Keeping Travelers CENTERED

Torrance firm develops business technology suites

By Ryan Furlong
Staff Writer

A frequent business traveler often needs printers, copiers, fax machines and, most importantly, the Internet.

Torrance-based Showcase Business Centers Inc. makes sure that need is met.

Though today's technology allows anyone to check their e-mail on an iPhone while sitting in a hotel room, nothing has replaced the hotel business center.

Showcase Business Centers Inc. provides furniture, printers, computers, Internet access and fax machines to the hospitality industry. The Torrance-based firm is responsible for the installation of hundreds of business centers

throughout the United States and Canada.

All of Showcase's business centers are set up with secured equipment that charge users based on several factors, including time spent online, number of copies made and number of color or black and white pages printed.

Showcase business centers can be found in Hilton Hotels, Marriott Hotels, Renaissance Hotels and Resorts, Hyatt Hotels and Resorts and Radisson Hotels and Resorts.

Showcase CEO and founder Paul Rajewski said his company also recently became a recommended provider for Best Western, the largest hotel brand in the world, and has been a recommended provider for Hilton Hotels for five years.

There are more than 200 Hilton Hotels in the U.S., and Showcase has business centers installed in 70 of them, Rajewski said.

A business center can cost anywhere from \$1,500 to \$20,000 to establish depending on the size of the hotel, according to Rajewski.

In smaller hotels with 100 or fewer rooms, Rajewski said, Showcase typically provides the equipment as a free service to guests.

"If it's under 100, it's not going to be generally profitable for us to do anything," he said. "So it's a complimentary service the hotel is giving away and the hotel is paying us to provide that."

Smaller hotels normally require only one computer in the lobby, Rajewski said.

"It's literally a desk with a computer on it and a printer," he said. Showcase's charge-and-use model is most efficient in larger hotels that have 200 to 700 rooms.

"When you get over 200 rooms and stay below 700 rooms — that's kind of a sweet spot for a business center," he said.

There are 20,000 hotels in Showcase's sweet spot, according to Rajewski. It has business centers installed in slightly less than 500 of them.

Rajewski said a business center in its target market might have one to three computers, a copier and a fax machine.

Hotel guests need to follow only

SHOWCASE/D3

\$20,000

High-end cost to establish a Showcase business center

20

Number of business centers Torrance-based Showcase installs per month

70

Number of U.S. Hiltons with Showcase centers. There are more than 200 Hiltons in the U.S.

SHOWCASE

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a few easy steps to use the equipment, but Rajewski insists the technology is not simple.

"There is so much behind the scenes that is incredibly complicated and very difficult to do," Rajewski said. "That's why there's not very many people specializing in it."

Showcase, which does not usually sell its equipment, but contracts it out, generally receives a portion of the revenue from each installed business center.

"Most of the deals where we are charging are revenue share. We make money by the hotel guests using our stuff," Rajewski said. "It can be everything from we keep it all to they get 90 percent — and it's everything in between."

Showcase uses a sophisticated accounting system that lets it put in different contract terms for different customers.

"We are really very flexible with our customers, depending what the requirements are for, what they are trying to

"In the hotel segment you typically have clients that expect everything to be perfect all the time and you have an industry that promotes that perfection."

— PAUL RAJEWSKI,

CEO and founder of Torrance-based Showcase Business Centers Inc., which provides furniture and business equipment to the hospitality industry

accomplish and what we are trying to accomplish."

Showcase normally charges 49 or 59 cents a minute to use the Internet, which might seem expensive to some, but Rajewski said Showcase also provides larger equipment that travelers are unable to take along on a trip.

In its early years, Showcase — which was founded in 2001 — would buy a third party's equipment to keep track of customer transactions. As a result, Showcase did not always know whether the machines were working or whether they were generating revenue, according to

David Reynolds, the president of Showcase.

"Paul and I got together and said if we are going to be for real in this business, we are going to have to develop our own solutions," Reynolds said.

Showcase then developed the EzTrans, a credit card transaction device that charges customers different price tiers depending on whether or not a customer is printing or making copies in color or black and white. The EzTrans also provides real-time statistics allowing equipment operators to track transactions.

The EzTrans has become so successful

that Showcase now sells the product line to other businesses.

Showcase is expanding into several other markets including libraries, universities and law firms.

"Hotels will be our biggest revenue for five more years," Rajewski said. "As we add universities and libraries, those will grow."

Showcase currently has equipment installed at the USC, the University of Redlands and Virginia International University.

Rajewski said the hardest thing about working in the business center industry is customer service.

"In the hotel segment you typically have clients that expect everything to be perfect all the time and you have an industry that promotes that perfection."

To keep customers satisfied, Showcase — which installs about 20 business centers per month — is sent an e-mail every time one of its printers or copy machines is running low on ink. Showcase then sends the toner to the company ahead of time before it runs out of ink.

"Our stuff is reliable," Rajewski said. "I know that you can't say that about all my competition."

BUSINESS WATCH

Name: Showcase Business Centers, Inc.

Location: Torrance

Revenue: Would not disclose

Year founded: 2001

Employees: 30

Products: Business centers for the hospitality industry

Executives: Paul Rajewski, CEO and founder; David Reynolds, president

Web: www.showcasebc.com