

# Canon recognizes OPI's three decades as a copier dealer

When Office Products Inc. (OPI) was recently recognized for its 30-year partnership with Canon USA Inc., Joey Bahr immediately was able to explain the reason for the longevity of "this amazing brand loyalty." As OPI technology sales manager, Bahr said "it all comes down to customer service by our local, family-owned business and by a national leader in the manufacture of reliable copiers. Canon provides great customer service to OPI and we pass this along to our clientele. "Canon is the top of the



**COURTESY PHOTO Joey Bahr**  
Kenny Vink, left, and Terry Vink, owners of Office Products Inc., display a plaque commemorating OPI's 30 years as a Canon authorized dealer.

line," Bahr added. "Early on, OPI sold other brands but we eventually became a single-line dealer. Canon has proven to be the best machine out there."

"In addition, Canon should be commended for providing factory training at Dallas, as well as updates right here at OPI and online. A Canon instructor was here just the other day. There is a wealth of information they share on a regular basis." Canon copiers are multi-functional machines, with the capability to copy, print, scan and fax, as well as connect to the Internet.

An especially attractive feature is the ability to automatically report maintenance information, Bahr noted.

"This feature can be compared to the check-engine light in your

car," Bahr explained. "It then reports all service information, which helps the operator keep up-to-date."

For example, a user might receive a signal that reports a paper jam; the Canon machine then records the event.

"We can access this and other background information to help us better troubleshoot and diagnose any problems," the technology sales manager said. "In the past, we could rely only on what the customer told us. And, of course, we still do that. But the machine's history is a great tool to help us pinpoint the problem."

Bahr also noted that Canon has one of the largest patent portfolios in the United States, "which demonstrates Canon's commitment to research and development."

Asger Hansen, Canon technical sales executive in the company's regional office at Irving, Tx., said "we are proud to present OPI with a 30-year dealer award. OPI has a decades-long history of providing exemplary service to Canon customers in the central Kansas marketplace."

OPI is located at 1204 Main in Great Bend; 516 Broadway in Larned; and 724 N. Main in Russell.



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## National Billing = value, integrity and respect

It is probably a cash-flow problem that initially attracts businesses to seek the services of National Billing (NB). But it isn't necessarily what keeps them coming back.

NB, 105 N. Main, Ellinwood, is a locally owned accounts receivable financing and management firm, which General Manager Mel Waite explained for the layman.

"When a business sells a product or service, and incurs receivables, we will pay those receivables," Waite said. "This is a cash advance. Then, we will bill our client's customer in our client's name. This is a valuable service because without capital, you will not survive."

Cash flow aside, however, NB clients "start to learn about our integrity and the value of our management services," Waite noted. "They opt to stay with us because of the value beyond the cash-flow remedy. They soon realize we can help with the management component."

"A business can do a great job of selling a product or service but might fall short on the management side," he continued. "If you don't monitor receivables, it can have a negative impact."

Waite emphasized that even though NB contacts companies on

behalf of clients, it is not a collection agency.

"We will make follow-up contacts with our clients' customers about what is happening," he said. "But we are proud of the fact that we treat their customers like our clients want us to treat them - with respect."

"We represent our clients with an understanding of rural America and business cycles," he added. "We also realize farmers are seasonal payers and that every business is unique."

NB's seven employees collaborate with all sizes of businesses - from the sole proprietor to large firms. Its client list includes retailers, manufacturers, distributors, medical services, agriculture dealers, repair shops, plumbers, mechanics and electricians.

While NB focuses on businesses in the Midwest it can also work with clients throughout the United States.

"Since its inception in 2005, National Billing has emphasized dependable and personal service for all its clients, with the highest degree of integrity," Waite said. "We take a tremendous amount of pride in serving business clients and helping them succeed."

"The importance of prompt funding of receivables

is constantly emphasized, while we maintain oversight and portfolio management for each client."

One of those clients is Wayne Schwartz at Schwartz Auto Service in Jetmore, said Everett Royer, NB director of marketing and product development.

"Wayne provides a very valuable service for his community," Royer said, noting Schwartz thanked NB with a testimonial. Schwartz went out on his own 18 years ago in a farming community and struggled with cash flow. "I was busy but I didn't have the money in the bank ...," Schwartz wrote in his testimonial. "Working with National Billing frees up my cash flow so I can profitably run my business. I'm able to get cash discounts with my suppliers ..."

"I also like the people that I work with there. My account manager is Tonya and she is fabulous to work with. She's a straight-shooter. If there are any issues with my accounts she will notify me and go through them all with me. She is very professional."

Another testimonial came from Stan Smith at Smitty's Tire and Battery in Quinter, who wrote: "It was economically more feasible for me to switch to National Billing than trying to run conventional accounts receivable with part-time office help. Cash flow up front is hard to come by and this gave me another tool to work with."

These are just a couple of examples of recent testimonials. Royer's background is in ag implement dealerships and he has been familiar "with the type of service NB offers. It all comes down to cash flow. And the perk is the management services we provide." Waite's career has been in ag, ag finance, public administration and economic development. "This is proof you can move from profession to profession and make it work," he laughed.

Waite and First National Bank of Hays formed National Billing LLC in May 2005. In January 2013, the majority stock ownership was acquired by Astra Bank as part of the sale of First National assets. NB maintains an affiliation with Astra Bank, along with other financial institutions as sources of dependable capital. It was originally located at Sunflower Bank in Ellinwood before moving up the street about five years ago.

"We have had growth over the years but like everyone else we have seen a downturn in this economy," Waite commented, noting the depressed ag and oil industries. "But we are fortunate to partner with others who have a commitment to rural America. We know we will rebound and are preparing for it."