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imagine. change.

We all know how frustrating it is to receive poor customer service – perhaps you have experienced a utilities provider unable to access your latest account records or a retailer with no record of a previous complaint. For businesses everywhere, this kind of issue can be the difference between securing happy customers who keep coming back or driving customers into the hands of your competitors. The one thing that underpins the relationship between a business, its customers, and their information are document processes: the core interactions that occur regularly and repeatedly throughout all businesses in critical areas such as HR, finance, procurement and accounts.

At Ricoh, this is where we are adding value to our clients and in turn it is how we support them in enhancing their own client responsiveness. In our daily interactions with our clients across Europe, we are often finding areas of untapped potential to optimise and streamline business document processes for improved business agility, customer service and employee knowledge sharing. Such activity is often left unexploited as organisations are challenged by keeping up with the speed of technology lead change. Their technology is evolving faster than the processes they have in place to use it and is contributing to frustrated customers as a result.

In fact, research by the Economist Intelligence Unit and sponsored by Ricoh Europe shows that 3/4 of European business leaders are not reacting to changes fast enough and just 24 % can rapidly take advantage of new opportunities or adapt to unexpected changes. Their key bottlenecks are unconnected technology platforms and out-of-date business processes.

For many businesses, effectively capturing, storing and streamlining the growing amounts of information is also becoming a challenge. With the global growth of data increasing exponentially, and estimated to grow by 40 % year on year the Big Data trend is set to continue indefinitely. In anticipation of the future impacts of these changes, it is critical that organisations review and optimise their business critical document processes. Optimised processes in turn will enable them to react more quickly to customer needs, support employee knowledge sharing and ensure an agile and flexible business structure.



Business leaders can start with an audit of the business critical document processes, assessing the journey critical business information travels before it is turned into action and is adding business value. Employees should be able to access information quickly to support their core business roles. It is also essential to challenge the traditional 'way of doing things'. There is no doubt the processes were efficient when first implemented but are they meeting business needs today? Questioning the status quo will enable organisations to uncover bottlenecks that are impacting business agility.

The workplace will continue to change but on-going audits will mean that businesses information processes are led by business needs, and can change with the organisation. This preventive approach can also reduce any unnecessary overheads created

as a result of outdated document processes; improving information flow and ultimately driving savings across the entire organisation.

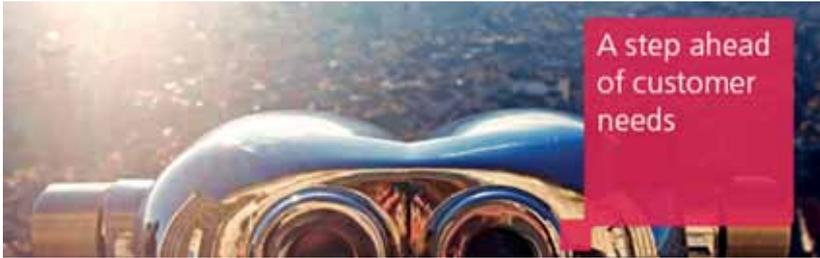
Companies of the future are not just innovative and enthusiastic adopters of new technology but also able to change core business processes to ensure true organisational change. Only by reviewing technology, processes and people in tandem will business leaders be able to evaluate the business as a whole and truly state that agility is a part of their culture and that they are operating with the DNA that is required to succeed and add customer value into the future.

**About Ricoh**

Ricoh Europe companies have successfully adopted the EFQM since 2000, with the goal to ensure the organisation is flexible and ready to transform to meet the changing needs of businesses into the future. It has achieved this while remaining a high performing business for the benefit of its employees and stakeholders.

To date, Ricoh has undergone a significant transformation from a manufacturing lead operation to a product and document services expert, partnering with organisations around the world to manage and optimise their business critical document needs.

Into the future, Ricoh will continue to remain a step ahead of its clients' needs by focusing on developing product and service mixes for different industries and business sizes.



ADDING VALUE FOR CUSTOMERS