

Document Imaging Report

Business Trends on Converting Paper Processes to Electronic Format

4003 Wood Street ● Erie, PA 16509 ● PH (814) 866-2247 ● <http://www.documentimagingreport.com>

December 20, 2013

TWAIN Working Group Envisions Driverless Scanning

TWAIN has certainly come a long way in the 15 years I've been covering the industry. Back when I started in 1998, the scanning driver specification was just being introduced as an alternative to ISIS in mid- to high-volume applications. Recently, German manufacturer **InoTec**, which specializes in high-volume devices, was announced as the newest member of the TWAIN Board of Directors.

The **TWAIN Working Group**, which is managed by the board, is a volunteer committee that develops the TWAIN specification. The latest version, 2.3, was announced earlier this month. It includes improvements in areas like testing procedures, the wording of the spec, and its ability to be deployed across multiple operating systems.

"Versions 2.2 and 2.3 didn't include any huge milestones," noted Pam Doyle, Chair of the TWAIN Working Group and Director at **Fujitsu Computer Products of America**. "But both versions show continued commitment on behalf of the board. They really are working toward the betterment of the industry."

In regards to testing, the TWAIN Working Group has settled on **Atalasoft's** Inspector TWAIN as the de facto standard for scanner vendors wishing to self-certify their drivers. "Our goal is to make sure that TWAIN drivers perform as advertised," noted Jon Harju, Vice

Chair of the TWAIN Working Group and CTO at **Visioneer**. "Everybody interprets the TWAIN spec their own way and this sometimes leads to drivers behaving badly, which can be frustrating.

"A few years ago, Atalasoft [which was acquired by **Kofax** in 2011] came out with Inspector TWAIN, because its engineers were frustrated by the way some TWAIN drivers performed. Inspector TWAIN set a bar and became a de facto standard for testing drivers. For the release of 2.3, we worked closely with Atalasoft to add features to their test, as well as define the test more clearly.

"We've now set the bar for passing at a level that will hopefully take care of everyone's concerns. If a driver passes the Inspector TWAIN test, users and ISVs should be comfortable that it will work as advertised and not cause their systems to crash. And although we are endorsing Inspector TWAIN, if anyone else has developed a test tool that meets our standards, the TWAIN Working Group will provide a link to it as well."

TWAIN 2.3 also features a thorough review of the wording. "As content has been added to the spec over the years, not everything that should have been changed got caught," said Harju. "For this version, we did a comprehensive review and correction. This was helpful in

identifying and clarifying any ambiguity."

Harju added that work was also done to align the content of header files that are used when creating TWAIN drivers for different operating systems. "So now they look more alike for Windows, iOS, and Linux," he said, "which should ease development efforts."

SWORD is drawn

It seems however that this type of cross-platform alignment is not quite enough. The TWAIN Working Group's ultimate goal is to create standardized connections between scanners and devices running any operating systems. It is working toward achieving this as part of a new initiative called "Scanning without a required driver," or SWORD.

"Under the current driver model, for a capture software application to talk to a scanner, the computer being run by a user must have a driver installed," said Doyle. "However, what if the users' computer isn't running an OS that supports a particular driver?"

"It used to be that you could get away with creating drivers for Windows, Mac, and Linux. However, with the advent of BYOD, and the way the mobile devices have changed workflow and working habits, there is an increasing demand to be able to connect to scanners utilizing Android, iOS, and anything else that will arise in the future.

“For engineers, this creates the challenge of maintaining native drivers for additional OS. On top of that, many platforms don’t even have a common language. For example, you can’t find C++ in iOS or Android. We want to tackle this problem and find a standard way to address multiple OS.

“To accomplish this, we are working on changing the conversation and taking out native drivers. We want to make the conversation occur directly between an application and a scanner. This will eliminate the need to develop drivers for multiple platforms.”

Harju couldn’t say exactly how this conversation will be facilitated, but he said the TWAIN Working Group has gone down one path that didn’t work out and is on its way down another based on network protocols. The group plans to have a proof of concept ready by the 2014 **AIIM** Conference, which is scheduled to run April 1-3 in Orlando.

“With SWORD, the TWAIN Working Group is going in a new direction,” said Doyle. “And as long as I have been part of the group, this is the most aggressively we have ever moved forward with anything. We will continue to support production scanning, and SWORD is not designed for that, but we think it will fill a very large need. While we have historically focused on traditional OS, the market is going in a different direction and becoming more platform agnostic.”

For more information: <http://www.twain.org/>;
<http://inspectortwain.com/>

NEW TWAIN VERSION AVAILABLE

The TWAIN Working Group has announced a new version of its document scanning specification. Version 2.3 “expands print functionality, adds metadata value, adds a new section on best coding practices, and offers additional self-certification test procedures.” According to a press release, “The latest version of the specification removes ambiguity and improves clarity reinforcing our ongoing commitment to make it easier for developers to write world-class TWAIN software applications and hardware device drivers.”

Also, “TWAIN 2.3 continues to build on previous versions of the specification that ensure operating system independence, an all-inclusive feature set, and the ability to drive any scanner from personal to the highest volume production models.”

Historically TWAIN has been positioned more for lower-volume environments, but Pam Doyle, Chair of the TWAIN Working Group, and **Director at Fujitsu Computer Products of America**, feels that view is now obsolete. She points to German production scanner manufacturer **InoTec** joining the TWAIN Board of Directors as evidence. She commented, “The fact that InoTec drives its production scanners at speeds of up to 600 images per minute using TWAIN should bring to an abrupt halt the claim of naysayers that TWAIN is not production ready.”

For more information:
<http://www.documentimagingreport.com/index.php?id=2521>

Document Imaging Report

Business Trends On Converting Paper Processes To Electronic Format

DIR is the leading executive report on managing documents for e-business.

Areas we cover include:

1. Document Capture
2. Image Processing
3. Forms Processing/OCR/ICR
4. Enterprise Content Management
5. Records Management
6. Document Output
7. Storage

DIR brings you the inside story behind the deals and decisions that affect your business.

Vol. 23, No. 22



Editor: Ralph Gammon
4003 Wood Street
Erie, PA 16509
PH (814) 866-2247
FX (412) 291-1352
ralphg@documentimagingreport.com

Managing Editor:
Rick Morgan
PH (814) 866-1146
rickm@scandcr.com

DIR is published 23x per year, on the 1st & 3rd Fridays of the month, by:

RMG Enterprises, Inc.
4003 Wood Street
Erie, PA 16509
PH (814) 218-6017
<http://www.documentimagingreport.com>

Copyright © 2013 by RMG Enterprises, Inc. Federal copyright law prohibits unauthorized reproduction by any means including photocopying or facsimile distribution of this copyrighted newsletter. Such copyright infringement is subject to fines of up to \$25,000. Because subscriptions are our main source of income, newsletter publishers take copyright violations seriously. Some publishers have prosecuted and won enormous settlements for infringement. To encourage you to adhere to this law, we make multiple-copy subscriptions available at a substantially reduced price.

Subscriptions: \$597 (electronic) or \$670 (paper) per year.