



‘The Ricoh Way’—Innovation in Merged Reality Service Delivery

How Ricoh’s teams of technicians and experts aligned Help Lightning with their successful, service-focused digital transformation

Introducing Help Lightning

Help Lightning’s patented technology uses merged reality to combine two real-time video streams into a collaborative work environment shared between a remote expert and an on-site technician.

Reaching beyond the limitations of simple video and audio calls, Help Lightning’s interactive help sessions accelerate and simplify problem diagnosis and resolution. Simply put, experts can be hands on and virtually reach out and touch what their customer or service technician sees in their field of view—even from thousands of miles away.

As we will find, almost any business unit can benefit from this extraordinary method of service delivery. This software-as-a-service (SaaS) solution is available as an Android, iOS, and web browser app, and it can be integrated into existing customer care and field service processes and systems.

Introduction

Ricoh is a global technology company with an entrepreneurial spirit. Since its founding in 1936, the company launched the first generation of fax machines, and has since transitioned into digital copiers and other collaboration tools and hardware.

Now, the company has a growing focus on cloud and IT. In 2019, Ricoh has 3,400 technicians in the field in the U.S. alone, who are tasked with everything from hardware repairs to working in sophisticated IT and network server environments.

Already a well-known company recognized for its hardware centricity, Ricoh has transitioned into a service-led business model. The company sought to identify new business lines and revenue-generating opportunities in this new paradigm and carry out specific approaches that would support their services transformation.



It was Ricoh's strategic partnership with Help Lightning that enabled them to provide a better service experience, both for their customers and their technicians—the latter of which also drove better outcomes for customers.

Ricoh's innovations in service delivery are part of a very specific strategy called 'The Ricoh Way.' In June 2019, Ricoh partnered with Help Lighting to address four main points of this transformative strategy:

- ▶ Innovation in Service Delivery
- ▶ 'What if?'
- ▶ Innovation – the Ricoh Way
- ▶ Transformation through Strategic Partnerships

Defining Innovation in Service Delivery

Though hardware is a critical part of Ricoh's legacy, their next evolutionary step was to transition from a hardware-centric enterprise to one of high-quality service and customer experience delivery. This would include adoption of more sophisticated technologies, both physical and digital.

Only a few years go, an analysis revealed that customers' print volumes were decreasing 30% year-over-year—a substantial rate of decline in this industry. As customers increasingly use digital tools for information exchange over print formats, Ricoh's need for primarily hardware-oriented technicians has declined.

'What if?'

The company set out to innovate its service teams to meet the new needs of their customers. They asked, 'What if we trained our teams to provide IT-related services?' They realized each of their technicians already had some level of IT industry certification and a great deal of customer service experience. Transforming their service would simply require additional trainings—A+ certifications, .NET+, Security+, and others—and the adoption of a new range of service-oriented digital technologies.

Ricoh would also re-engineer the customer service process for technicians, moving beyond the traditional scenarios of calling into a help desk at a centralized location far from the job site. In past cases, the operator may or may not have been

History of Innovation

- **1936**
Began innovating with photosensitive paper, imaging, and cameras
- **1974**
Developed first high-speed office fax machine
- **1990**
Introduced fastest digital color printer at 15 pages per minute
- **2001**
Released GlobalScan, the first server-based solution with embedded MFP software
- **2014**
Reimagined remote and onsite collaboration with release of the Interactive Whiteboard D5500
- **2018**
Introduced new innovation with Ricoh's Print Platform Cloud Service
- **2019** Launched strategic partnership with Help Lightning

a functional expert, often putting technicians on hold to gather additional resources, further delaying repair times and inconveniencing their customers.

Ricoh's new process for engaging technicians would couple them with the right resources at exactly the right times, and in the right contexts. Help Lightning became a central part of that new process.

As a foundation, Ricoh gave its legacy-trained technicians—already experts with Ricoh's hardware—the opportunity to become fully trained and certified in IT. The new approach would involve reactive IT support; schedule office support; and, with Help Lightning's merged reality technology, a hybrid of the two.

These new business units have already created real value for customers through improved service, and further illustrate Ricoh's commitment to employing leading-edge technologies.

“The key message to our clients is, we understand what their ROI targets are,” says Edward Krzysik, Director, Service Programs at Ricoh. “If we can put in the right resources, technology, processes, and best practices, we can help them achieve ROI at a much faster pace.”

Innovation – The Ricoh Way

The process that Ricoh developed begins with technicians in the field. A technician will launch a service call through an app, Twitter, text, or a phone call. It goes into a queue, and it goes into their centralized business group, called Ricoh Express Support.

Members of this team will self select service calls based on his or her own experience and functional expertise. In each case, the service call goes to the person who is most equipped to handle issues with that particular technology or product on behalf of the customer.

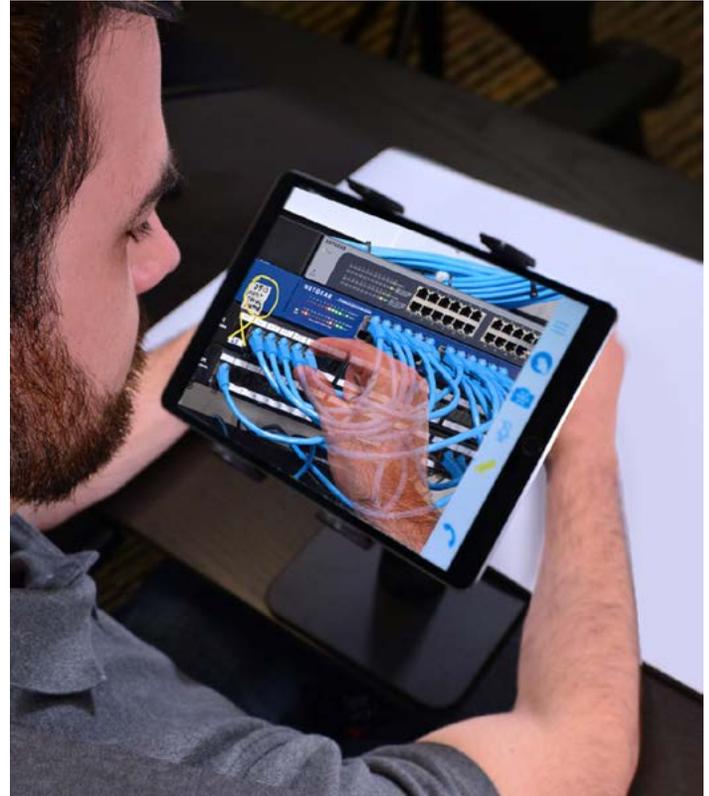
While a team member takes a call, that team member is gathering his or her knowledge base and any remote tools that team member would need. It is that person’s responsibility to reach back out to the technician.

The technician in the field, who is at a customer site, now has the confidence that the person who calls them back and the person who’s going to help them knows everything there is to know about that particular technology or product.

“It does provide an opportunity for us to take care of a bigger customer population at some fairly significant margins,” says Krzysik. “We know that we have a significant reliance on strategic partnerships and that’s where this very important relationship with Help Lightning comes into play.”

A Strategic Partnership with Help Lightning

Ricoh began accelerating its partnership with Help Lightning in December 2018, launching Help Lightning’s merged reality tool—a next gen technology that “has been a game changer for us,” says Krzysik. Starting with only 35 employees, adoption within the company “grew like wildfire”—especially in collaborations between IT-specialized technicians and Express Support teams. Specifically, Ricoh identified three key areas of improvement driven by the new partnership:



Ease of Transition

Help Lightning made Ricoh personnel’s transition into using the new technology easy. The key factor was regularly scheduled meetings with Help Lightning, sharing of best practices, and a consistent focus on successful change management. Ricoh was able to offer a unique message to their employees—the “Why” behind the technology.

It was easy to establish expertise after using the tool only a couple of times. After just a few phone calls, it becomes very intuitive.

“It is really an intuitive, very easy to use technology.”

Improved Workforce Management

With Help Lightning, Ricoh established its own team of functional experts. They also established a regular cadence with Help Lightning to go through training as group admins. The team became responsible for meeting with internal teams within Ricoh to do their own training.

“It really does run the gambit of how this tool could benefit the organization. It is a great decision for Ricoh, and we only see growth at this point.” – Edward Krzysik

Now, Ricoh has set up unique groups within the Help Lightning system, including subject matter experts working within a network environment. Technicians can very quickly identify who their subject matter expert will be—typically a peer—connect to that person via Help Lightning, and get to work immediately. Practically speaking, the technology puts a functional, tier-3 operator “in the room” with a tier-1 or tier-2 expert on site.

Company-Wide Applications

Thanks to Help Lightning’s accessibility, Ricoh has deployed the technology to multiple business units—admin teams, sales teams, and most importantly, the teams that are delivering the service day to day to customers. Ricoh now has almost 1,500 employees using Help Lightning, with extended capabilities:

- Service teams extend the value of service visits—increasing first-time fix rates, reducing time on the job, and improving the customer experience.
- Help Lightning supports live sales demonstrations on Ricoh-branded gear, allowing Ricoh to audit and validate a salesperson’s ability to conduct demonstrations to potential clients.
- Administrative teams can work remotely while on the same system, and instantly gain assistance as if colleagues are right there working with them.

Exceptional Business Outcomes

Now, Ricoh has reduced the amount of time from the technician’s very first meeting with the customer to completion of the job. The amount of time their technicians are on site handling next-tier issues has decreased to between a 9- and an 11-minute response rate—a decrease of 20 percent. Technicians’ ability to access a high-level expert “in the room” has increased first time fix rates as well.

As a dedicated partner and resource, Help Lightning helps Ricoh roll out the technology to new teams and customers with confidence. “This is an organization that took the time and effort to really understand our business in how we deliver the service, how we measure results, how we try to impact the end user,” says Krzysik. “I think that was really a key takeaway for us—that really means a lot.”

Through the execution of Help Lightning, Ricoh has become not just a service team, but a business partner to its customers. They now market Help Lightning, putting it front and center for their customers and during sales engagements, realizing they will appreciate their commitment and investment in advanced, service-oriented technologies.

About the Author

Edward Krzysik Director, Service Programs at Ricoh

Edward Krzysik has been with Ricoh since 2004 and has held several leadership roles including Area Director, Region Director of Operations, and Director of Service Programs. Today, Edward is responsible for the growth and expansion of Ricoh's SmartHands program, which uses Help Lightning to combine the technical skills of field technicians with subject expertise at Ricoh's Centers of Excellence to deliver exceptional customer service.



Ricoh transforms the way people work with breakthrough technologies that help businesses innovate and grow. Our focus has always been to envision what the future will look like so that we can help prepare you for success. Today, that means empowering digital workplaces with our broad portfolio of services, solutions and technologies — helping you remove obstacles to sustained growth by optimizing the flow of information and automating antiquated processes to increase workplace productivity. Learn more at www.ricoh.com.



With Help Lightning, we have completely reimagined how businesses, customers and employees are able to give and receive help using merged reality. We've eliminated the frustrations and inadequacies of phone or simple video chat, as well as dramatically reduced the need to drive or fly to interact in person. For more information, please visit helplightning.com.



WBR Insights is the custom research division of WBR (Worldwide Business Research), the world leader in B2B focused conferences. From research-based whitepapers to benchmarking reports, infographics and webinars, our mission is to help global institutions across a variety of industries to inform and educate their key stakeholders while achieving their strategic goals. For more information, please visit wbrinsights.com.