# Plustek and Trax launch a real-time OMR scanning solution at 25% the cost of traditional systems

○ The University of Brighton installs new equipment in the School of Health Sciences to speed up processing student examinations

London April 21, 2016 – Dedicated optical mark recognition (OMR) scanning and software systems for processing multiple choice exams, customer surveys and feedback questionnaires in real-time were historically capital intensive with each costing in excess of £5,000 given the requirement for specialist equipment.

Plustek, the Taiwanese photo and document scanner manufacturer, announces today that it has partnered with Trax UK, suppliers of innovative OMR software, to bring to market a lower cost yet feature-rich solution costing a quarter of the price.

Based on Plustek's SmartOffice PS406U duplex image scanner and Trax's Print & Scan/Multi Test software, the jointly developed OMR solution means that organisations in various market sectors such as education, health, local government, police, hotels, retail – any organisation which carries our surveys, assessments or examinations - will now have access to cost competitive, fully integrated, easy-to-use OMR system out of the box.

OMR technology is typically used to scan forms where a person has used a pencil to shade in a 'lozenge' on a form to answer a question or input data. National Lottery tickets, for example, are scanned in shops using OMR machines.

Traditional OMR scanners use special infrared heads to scan a form, working vertically to pick up the marks made. The machines then process data in real-time so as they read and scan, they'll make sure the information is correct before storing it in a data base - stopping if any errors are detected.  It is the use of these special scanners – along with the necessity to have very accurately printed forms – why OMR systems have been so expensive to date.

**Horizontal scanning means costs are lower**

Colin Woolhouse, Trax's operations director, says, "What's unique about our new solution is we're now using much lower cost image scanners to do the OMR work whilst still delivering the real-time processing capability.  To achieve this, Plustek has written a bespoke utility so that forms are actually scanned horizontally which is a first in the OMR marketplace. It means we don't need to worry so much if a form is fed through slightly skewed and neither do the tolerances have to be so small when it comes to the actual printed paper forms. The system stops automatically if errors are spotted."

The Plustek SmartOffice PS406U scanner is designed to process 2,400 sheets per hour and can output images in black and white, grayscale and colour at up to 600 dpi.  OMR form processing rates take on average between 0.8 and 1.2 seconds per sheet with the scanner processing A4 and letter size paper.

The Plustek Smart Office PS406U scanner comes with an automatic page feeder which takes 100 sheets and can process paper between 40 to 220 g/m² thick.

Shooping Lin, Plustek's UK sales director, says, "Our work with Trax means OMR solutions are now easily within grasp of all organisations seeking to automate the heavy lift processing of tests, multiple choice and survey forms.  And, of course, once you have finished doing this, you have a super scanner for all your other document management needs."

The Plustek SmartOffice PS406U scanner comes with a comprehensive software bundle which includes ABBYY FineReader Sprint and NewSoft Presto! PageManager 8SE.

**The University of Brighton is quick to deploy a system to process exam sheets**

The School of Health Sciences at the University of Brighton has recently purchased a new Plustek and Trax system to augment its existing OMR equipment.  Colin Woolhouse says, "The University is installing one of our new solutions to speed up exam processing with the obvious benefit that lecturer and clerical staff productivity is enhanced."

**An OMR solution which grows as you need**

With over 500 systems now deployed worldwide, Trax's Print & Scan/Multi Test software is Microsoft Windows-based and comes in three versions - Entry Level, Lite and Professional.

In addition to the OMR capture functionality, the Print & Scan/Multi Test software offers the ability for users to design their own forms, surveys and exams and create a Microsoft SQL database to store results. Extensive reporting and analysis modules are provided, too.  For more information, please visit Trax's website at www.trax-uk.co.uk

**Pricing and availability**

The combined Trax OMR and Plustek SmartOffice solution is available today priced at £995 for the Entry Level system and £1,890 and £2,500 respectively for the Lite and Professional versions. Prices exclude VAT.

- ENDS -

**About Plustek Inc**

Respected as a world-class imaging and surveillance solutions provider, Plustek Inc. manufactures high-quality, professional scanners as well as security devices for businesses, professionals and consumers.

Founded in 1986, Plustek has developed a broad portfolio of scanners including document, photographic, graphic, ID card, mobile and book scanners. Focusing on meeting customer needs, the company has also developed a server-based File Management System which helps users manage documents by transforming piles of paper into usable and searchable information.

For further information, please visit the web at www.plustek.com

**For further information, please contact**
**Tom Herbst PR**
**T:07768 145571**
**Email: tom@tomherbstpr.co.uk**