

Kroll Ontrack "certifies" 1,000 firms--50 locally--with podcasts on data recovery, destruction

By Jeremy Stratton

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The Line

While Kroll Ontrack bills itself as the largest data recovery provider in the world, the Eden Prairie-based company's new Ontrack Data Recovery Partner Program is focused locally: at the level of the storefront, small business, and home.

The online certification program aims to better equip smaller IT equipment and services providers to handle data recovery and data destruction for small- and medium-sized businesses and home users, says Ken Gibson, Ontrack Data Recovery partnership channel manager.

Since the U.S. launch in December, more than 1,000 companies have completed the certification training, including about 50 in the Twin Cities, says Gibson.

The training process is simple and easy by design, he says. Organizations watch at least four of five free podcasts, available online. Topics include the basics of data recovery, how to present and sell data recovery services, data recovery in virtual environments, data destruction, and data management for Microsoft Exchange and Microsoft Office SharePoint servers.

Certified organizations are ramping up existing services or adding a new aspect to their businesses in an attempt to differentiate themselves from competitors, says Gibson.

Kroll Ontrack hopes to do the same with the program; while "lots of other partner programs exist," admits Gibson, he believes Kroll Ontrack "provides more value than extending a discount."

The training is designed to improve organizations' handling of data recovery needs--whether that involves performing the service themselves or knowing when and how to pass the work on to Kroll Ontrack.

The program also strengthens a partnership that obviously benefits both Kroll Ontrack and the organization. Certified partners receive promotions and discounts on software, as well as a 10 percent commission for pass-through referrals to Kroll.

Gibson notes specifically the training in data destruction--a growing concern and need as consumers and companies "churn through" hardware at an increasing pace.

"What do you do with that old [laptop]?" asks Gibson rhetorically. "What happens to the data? You need to include data destruction with any data plan," he says, "because you really are protecting the lifeblood of your company."