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California Car Dealer Drives Down Document Storage And Retrieval Costs, Improves Customer Service With Advanced DocSTAR Technology

Customer Profile

Established in the early 1940s, Watsonville Cadillac Buick Pontiac GMC is a thriving auto dealership in Santa Cruz County, California employing about 40 to 50 people. President Todd Millslagle is the third proprietor of the dealership, which serves residents of a medium-sized farming community between Monterey and Santa Cruz.

Application

According to Millslagle, Watsonville Cadillac has been using the DocSTAR system primarily in their service and parts departments, to scan and instantly retrieve service repair orders and associated paperwork. Also, after clearing California regulatory hurdles, the dealership's sales department will soon begin scanning vehicle sales documentation into the system.

The Problem

Before DocSTAR, Watsonville Cadillac's service and parts departments were storing all repair orders and related papers by VIN number in roughly 15 file cabinets. A typical service file could number six to eight pieces of two-sided paper, and documents had to be retained for several years for warranty audits and legal reasons. Plus, with an average of 70 service jobs generating new paperwork every day, the departments' document storage needs were quickly outgrowing available space.

The Solution

"When we first installed DocSTAR, our employees quickly realized the benefits: the document was there, it couldn't be altered, they'd save time, and they could access it from any PC. It was a no-brainer," Millslagle said.

He added that when auto factory representatives used to visit his dealership to conduct warranty audits, they would be there for hours as his staff searched for documents. Now, with DocSTAR, "we punch in the VIN number and the auditor's got everything right there."

The Benefits

Document retrieval is now extremely simple with DocSTAR, Millslagle said. "We search by punching in the last eight digits of the customer's 17-digit VIN and instantly pull up everything we need to know about work performed on the vehicle."

Training on DocSTAR was simple and painless, he added. "Basically, if you can run a copying machine, you can run DocSTAR."

With DocSTAR, Watsonville Cadillac has eliminated five file cabinets that were being used to store their service documents, and has scanned enough new documents to make an additional five cabinets unnecessary.

DocSTAR has definitely made things much quicker for my parts department and service advisors," Millslagle said. "In the past a customer would come in and say years ago we had this done to our car and it's doing it again. Our service advisors had to leave their customer and go back to the file cabinets to try to find the paperwork. If papers were misfiled, they could be searching for quite some time. Now, they just punch in the VIN and everything comes up on their PC instantly. It's just terrific."

In fact, Millslagle was so impressed with DocSTAR's capabilities, he recommended the system to two other dealerships: North Bay Ford and Subaru of Santa Cruz