

Auto/Mate Customer

Auto/Mate Customer Saves
Thousands With New Printers
and Laser Forms





A dealer group had turned to Auto/Mate when Reynolds & Reynolds quoted them thousands just to move their check writing server to their new headquarters. The owners subsequently signed with Auto/Mate and installed within days.

It wasn't until Auto/Mate's hardware team visited the dealership during the implementation process that the dealership realized just how many low-grade hardware devices they were using to print and scan documents.

"We had multiple devices in each finance office," the dealer said. "One for scanning, one for printing impact forms and another printer for miscellaneous jobs." The group was spending 3 cents per page with their HP OfficeJets and \$75 each for six toner cartridges annually. Additionally, the dealership was forking up between \$30-40k each year for forms.

The first thing Auto/Mate's hardware team implemented in the dealership were Lexmark all-in-one devices. Compared to the low-end HP printers, the Lexmark model that was implemented has a higher print speed, requires four fewer cartridge replacements and doesn't need as much maintenance. This consolidated all of the individual devices each finance office was using.

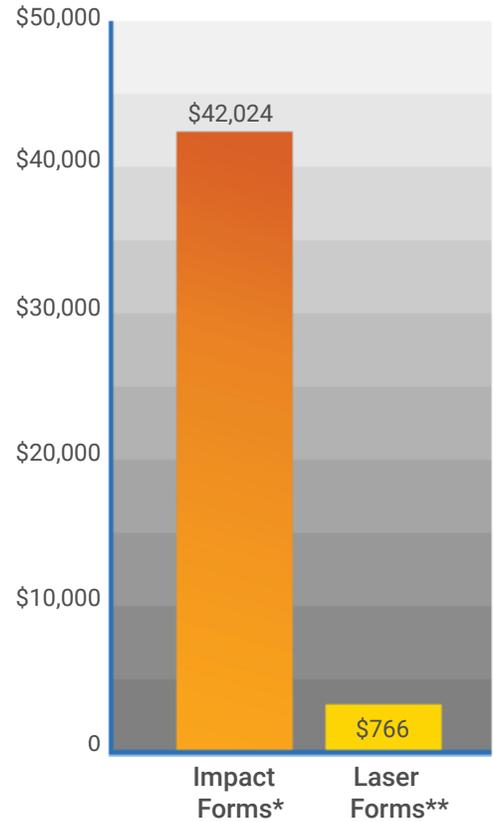
During the implementation process, Auto/Mate's Forms Department converted all non-licensed impact forms to laser. The auto group also purchased Auto/Mate's dispatching system, taking their old paper ROs and making them electronic. These changes allowed the group to nearly eliminate their \$3,000 monthly expense tied to impact form and paper RO orders.



Since consolidating all of their printers and scanners into all-in-one devices, the group is experiencing a 50-cent cost savings each page they print. With 2,000 pages being printed each month, that equates to a \$1,050 monthly savings.

The group's decision to move most of their impact forms to laser also resulted in substantial cost savings, since they don't need to reorder nearly as many boxes of paper forms.

"Implementing these changes saved us money, it saved our employees time and it allowed us to be a lot more efficient," the dealer said. As far as switching their DMS? The dealer says her only regret is not choosing Auto/Mate sooner.



*Includes upfront cost of OKIml8810n and the dealer group's \$40k in forms orders across all seven stores

**Includes upfront of Lexmark MB2442adwe and this printer's annual cost per page

About Auto/Mate

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Blue Knob Auto

Blue Knob Auto Delivers 500+ Vehicles During COVID-19 Pandemic with Auto/Mate's Remote eDEAL™



Blue Knob Auto in Duncansville, PA, is a large independent dealership in a small mountain town. The dealership does no advertising, yet averages 1,000 sold vehicles per month, attracting car buyers from as far away as Pittsburgh, 90 miles to the West, and State College, nearly 50 miles to the North.

Senior Manager Aaron Hobaugh credits the dealership's success to reputation and word of mouth. "We have a no-frills, no-haggle sales process, meaning we don't negotiate price. The price we post is the price you pay, and people love it because they know exactly what they're going to pay when they come in."

The Need: The COVID-19 pandemic was devastating to auto dealerships nationwide, and Blue Knob Auto was no exception. When Pennsylvania's stay-at-home orders took effect in mid-March, Blue Knob Auto shuttered its doors completely and remained closed for over a month. Toward the end of April, the governor of Pennsylvania allowed auto dealerships to start selling cars again, but only online.

In-person sales were still forbidden.

Fortunately for Blue Knob Auto, Hobaugh had just switched to Auto/Mate's dealership management system (DMS) in early March, after having used CDK's DMS for a decade.

"One reason we chose Auto/Mate was because it had an electronic signing feature, so we could get away from scanning papers," Hobaugh says. "Before the pandemic hit, we were already having our customers electronically sign all their documents on an iPad."

When the green light was given for auto dealerships to sell cars online, Hobaugh called Auto/Mate's customer support team to inquire about a way for customers to sign documents remotely.



The Solution: As it turns out, Auto/Mate's software development team had just added a remote signing feature to its eDEAL Signature Capture digital contracting tool. When a car buyer agrees to purchase a vehicle over the phone, the dealer simply sends the F&I documents to the customer via email.

Similar to how home buyers use DocuSign for real estate documents, the customer signs once, then taps to apply a signature and/or initials where indicated. The dealer rep stays on the phone to guide the customer through the process.

Blue Knob Auto was one of the first dealerships to implement the remote signing feature. Hobaugh scheduled an online training session for his F&I team. "They honestly trained us in about 20 minutes. It was remarkably quick, very easy to understand and adapt to. There were no hiccups or issues at all. It just worked."

Once the customer finishes signing the documents remotely, the F&I manager mails the title paperwork to the customer, as Pennsylvania still requires wet-ink signatures. When Blue Knob Auto receives the title paperwork back, the customer is free to pick up their vehicle with nothing exchanged but the key.

The Results: During the month of May, Blue Knob Auto sold a total of 456 vehicles using Remote eDEAL. "If Auto/Mate didn't offer this option, we would have remained shut down, dead in the water," Hobaugh notes. "This tool literally kept our business afloat once the governor gave the OK to sell cars online."

Because Blue Knob Auto has a no-haggle, one-price policy, the gross margins of its remote deals were the same as in-person sales. Service contract sales also remained the same.

"We rely heavily on selling warranties, with a rate of about 70 percent, which is pretty high," Hobaugh said. "We like our F&I managers to pitch products to customers over the phone. I think the person-to-person communications is one reason we're so successful."





Going forward, Hobaugh anticipates that the Blue Knob Auto team will continue using Remote eDEAL. “Our customers love it. It’s not for the older generation, people in their 70s and 80s, but for the younger generation especially, it’s so convenient. We’ll leave it up to the customer if they want to come in or not.”

Once Pennsylvania’s stay-at-home restrictions began to ease in May, in-person sales at Blue Knob Auto began to pick up again as well. For the month, Blue Knob Auto sold over 960 vehicles, nearly on par with its normal monthly sales average.

Overall, Hobaugh is thrilled that Blue Knob Auto made the switch to Auto/Mate. In addition to the electronic signature and remote signing capabilities, the DMS is highly customizable, which was an important feature he wanted. Another top priority was the ability to create custom reports. “The reporting system was one of the main reasons I chose Auto/Mate. We utilize this system a lot. You can easily build any report you want.”

Hobaugh also appreciates Auto/Mate’s customer support team. “Anything we want, they’re willing to accommodate us. In general, it’s been awesome. I’m very happy with the change.”

Although the COVID-19 pandemic was a tragic event, Hobaugh has seen a silver lining for Blue Knob Auto. “It was a way for us to hit the reset button and put old habits behind us. We had to change a few processes to adapt, and now we like the new ways better.”

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Freedom Kia

Freedom Kia accelerates sales process and improves customer experience with eDEAL





Freedom Kia of West Virginia faced a challenge most dealers faced during the peak pandemic months: providing a safe, convenient, and quick car-buying experience.

The Auto/Mate customer of more than 10 years turned to the DMS for a solution. In May 2020, the DMS released Remote eDEAL™, a component of its eDEAL Signature Capture feature allowing for remote signing ceremonies. The solution meant dealers could sell vehicles without their clients even stepping foot into the dealership.

When a car buyer agrees to purchase a vehicle over the phone, the dealership representative sends the F&I documents via email. The customer clicks on the link in the email to open the electronic documents and begin the signing process guided by the dealership rep. Once complete, the final documents are turned into a ZIP file and emailed to the customer.

Since its release, Auto/Mate has helped its dealerships close more than 12,000 remote deals.

But for F&I Manager Lee Cochran, it's the foundation of eDEAL that has provided the most value to the dealership. "The digital signing of F&I forms alone has sped up our sales process, whether our customers are signing in-person or from their couch," Cochran says. Additionally, all signed documents are easily accessible within the respective deal's forms history, eliminating the need for physical storage space at the dealership.

Cochran acknowledges that the time for delivering a faster, more modern sales process has come for the automotive industry. "We're using eDEAL for 100% of our deals."

While some speculate the demand for a remote customer journey will wither following the demise of COVID-19, Cochran disagrees. "The pandemic didn't create a phase for digital retailing," Cochran says. "Today's consumer will always expect a fast and convenient sales process, and eDEAL has helped us to meet that expectation."

To learn more about eDEAL, visit www.automate.com/edeal.



The pandemic didn't create a phase for digital retailing. Today's consumer will always expect a fast and convenient sales process, and eDEAL has helped us to meet that expectation.

Lee Cochran
F&I Manager
Freedom Kia

Five Star Dealerships

Five Star Dealerships Empowers Managers and Increases Productivity with Auto/Mate's Dashboard



“If you don’t know where you’re going, you’ll end up someplace else.” Yogi Berra’s quote resonates perfectly in auto dealerships. For Five Star Dealerships in Aberdeen, WA, transforming its culture to one of managerial empowerment and increased productivity was the result of powerful reporting and dashboard features in Auto/Mate’s DMS.



“Any time you make a big change like a DMS, it takes some getting used to,” said Mike O’Dell, corporate general manager of operations for Five Star Dealerships. “I expected it would take some time for employees to learn how to do certain things differently, but what surprised me was how the changes empowered our managers by making access to information so much easier.”

Mike O’Dell
General Manager
Five Star Motors, WA

The Need: Five Star Dealerships is an auto group with two locations on the coast of Washington. Three years ago, the group’s contract with its legacy DMS provider was nearing its end. And for the first time, the principals realized they had additional vendor choices, as Auto/Mate and another DMS provider had recently been approved by Toyota. After a thorough review, Five Star principals chose Auto/Mate for three reasons: significant financial savings, robust capabilities of the DMS and its reputation for superior customer support.

Once the switch was made, O’Dell immediately realized a benefit he had not anticipated – the simplicity of Auto/Mate’s Daily DOC (Daily Operating Control) reporting system. Previously, if managers wanted to view financial reports, they’d have to refer to a chart of accounts with different account numbers, they’d have to know which general ledger the information was located in, enter the account number, pull up a separate executable, enter dates and then finally get the detail of what was posted into that account. “Out of 120 employees, there were probably four in accounting who knew how to run those reports,” O’Dell said. If accounting employees were busy with payroll or other priorities, report requests would have to wait.



The Solution: With Auto/Mate, if a manager wants to view financial reports, all they have to do is pull up the Daily DOC and choose the report they want from pull-down menus. If they want to drill down to see more detail, they simply click on the dollar amount or line item of interest. O'Dell said the ability to run their own reports makes both the managers and the accounting department more productive, yet an even bigger benefit has been realized as departmental managers have become more empowered.

"Now, managers run financials more often and can easily see where they are spending money, where they are saving money, what the trends are and more," O'Dell said.

For instance, if a sales manager wants to see what his advertisement expenses are for the month, he can pull up the DOC in a few seconds, double click on the expense line, then double click on any expense to see the detail. It's also easy to choose different timeframes; with a simple click, the report can be changed from a current month view to a 12-month trend.

The ability to pull up DOCs on demand allows managers to instantly know which models are selling, how the sales department is performing relative to the forecast and which service invoices are paid or unpaid. The level of knowledge enables managers to identify and address problem areas immediately, ultimately leading to better decision-making and higher profitability. "It's really a whole shift in culture and has changed how we run things in a way that wasn't possible with the last DMS we had," O'Dell said.

Another feature that O'Dell quickly appreciated is Auto/Mate's dashboard. Users can virtually define any metric they'd like to track, such as rate of new vehicle sales, the percentage of gross estimate met in the service department or the number of vehicles sold with extended warranty contracts. The user can choose a widget to represent each metric in the form of a bar chart, thermometer, digital clock or other graphical element. This allows users to view critical metrics at a glance.

"The dashboard gives us a snapshot of everything we need to see on a daily, weekly and monthly basis," O'Dell said, who routinely looks at total store sales and total store gross figures, as well as the expense and net figures for every department. "Ten days into the month, I can glance at these widgets and know in my head where we are relative to our forecasts without having to run any reports. If there's a weakness somewhere, you can see it right away and go talk with that department manager."

The dashboard also enables users to directly click on the widgets to drill down for more detail. "Let's say I'm looking at finance chargebacks for the month," O'Dell said. "I click on the widget, and it will take me directly into that account. I can see immediately what has been posted, such as insurance contracts, finance products, a gap chargeback, etc. Then I click on a posting and I can see there's been a warranty cancellation, and I can see the dollar amount, customer name and other information. In four clicks, I can get every detail without having to run a report."



The Results: O'Dell compares Auto/Mate's reporting and dashboard features to buying a new computer that's 10 times faster than an old computer. "Imagine when you click on something on your computer, and you have to wait for the circle to stop spinning. It slows you down. That's similar to how the wrong technology can slow down processes in our store," O'Dell said. "Imagine if someone is trying to do their job and then has to stop and wait for something. But with the right tools, there's no slowing down. It makes all of our processes faster, and the time and cost savings from that are immeasurable."

In addition to the DMS reporting and dashboard features, O'Dell enjoys Auto/Mate's customer support. "What we like the most is that for anyone to work in Auto/Mate's customer support department, they had to work in a car dealership," he said. "Their Fixed Ops support person used to be a Fixed Ops Director, and same with the F&I support and hardware guys." Prior dealership experience enables Auto/Mate's customer support team to understand the questions, challenges and problems their clients may be having. "Their level of personal involvement with their customers is great; it doesn't feel like you're dealing with a big corporate entity at all," O'Dell said.

The principals at Five Star Dealerships chose Auto/Mate for three reasons, all of which have proven to hold true. The auto group has achieved significant cost savings, enjoys the DMS' robust capabilities and Auto/Mate's exceptional customer support. In addition, O'Dell was pleasantly surprised by the accessibility and ease of use of the reporting system and dashboard. "It's changed the way we run our business, empowering managers to make better decisions while increasing productivity."

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Mangold Ford

Mangold Ford's Accounting
Greatly Increases Efficiencies,
Reduces Costs with Auto/Mate



Life in accounting can be difficult, especially when you have to rely on other departments and too many manual processes. But for Illinois-based dealership Mangold Ford, switching to Auto/Mate greatly increased efficiencies in its accounting department while reducing overall dealership costs. Since switching to Auto/Mate in 2009, Mangold Ford has saved more than \$72,000 per year, and the accounting department has achieved such significant time savings that the next time an employee leaves, there will be no need to hire a replacement.

The Need: Mangold Ford sells upwards of 80 units per month and has more than 65 employees. After the 2008 recession, dealer Mike Mangold decided to switch DMS vendors as a way to reduce expenses. Mangold involved his department managers, including Office Manager Joni Allen, in the selection process. The team chose Auto/Mate because of the potential cost savings and because they trusted the sales team that had given the presentation. "Auto/Mate had a wonderful team who came in here and worked with every manager to prepare them for the changes," Allen said.

The Solution: Auto/Mate's strong customer support stood out to Allen while she was becoming familiar with the new system. When she called with a question, 90 percent of the time she was immediately connected with a person and her issue was resolved immediately. Mangold's DMS switch reduced the dealership's monthly bill by thousands, adding more per year to its bottom line. In addition, the dealership saves another \$300 per month by printing everything on plain paper instead of the costly forms required by the previous DMS vendor.



The Results: Beyond cost and savings, it wasn't long before Allen began to realize significant efficiencies in her department. "The main thing is that we can do several different tasks at a time, which we couldn't do with our previous system," she said. Auto/Mate's DMS enables users to have multiple tabs open on their screen at a time. If Allen is posting daily receipts and a customer calls wanting to know how much they owe on their last RO, she can simply click on the service merchandising tab, type in the customer name or RO number, answer the customer's question, then click back to the tab where she was entering daily receipts. With the previous DMS system, she had to exit the accounting system and open up the service merchandising system. Then in order to resume what she was doing, she would have to leave the service merchandising system and re-open the accounting system.

“The ability to instantly click back and forth between tasks saves us an incredible amount of time, compared with having to quit and reopen different parts of the system,” Allen said.

Even more time has been saved in Mangold Ford because of Auto/Mate’s intuitive interface. Tasks and functions are represented with pull-down menus, buttons and text that allow users to simply choose what they want to do. “Our previous system required a 4-digit code in order to initiate a procedure,” Allen said. “Not having to look up codes for everything saves a lot of time and certainly makes training easier.”

Auto/Mate also helped to streamline the printing of W-2 forms. With their previous DMS, it took Allen two days to print W-2 forms for every employee. This was due to the requirement by the vendor to use pre-printed W-2 forms. “It took me an hour to make sure I had all the forms lined up correctly before printing,” Allen said. With Auto/Mate, she clicks just one button and all the forms are printed. “The first time I did it, I said, ‘That’s it?’ Now, when people want their W-2 forms early because they want to do their taxes, it’s no problem. I can do them all the first week of January even with closing because it takes no time at all.”

Allen said switching to Auto/Mate is the best thing Mangold Ford has done to reduce costs and increase efficiencies since her more than 13-year tenure. She adds that Auto/Mate’s DMS is more than capable of handling the dealership’s anticipated growth. “One of the misconceptions was that the system would be too small for us due to the volume of sales and service that we do. But we could triple in size and Auto/Mate would still work

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Price Auto Group

Price Auto Group Boosts Service Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Revenue with Auto/Mate's Mobile Service Consultant



Price Auto Group is based in Delaware and has been a loyal Auto/Mate customer for more than 20 years.

The Need: In 2016, Trevor Shoun, director of technical operations, was looking for ways to improve efficiencies and customer experience in their Honda-Acura dealership's service department. Specifically, Shoun wanted to reduce the time associated with the check-in process and the Multi-Point Inspection (MPI) process.

Located in Dover, the dealership has 26 service bays, employs 34 technicians and 12 service advisors and averages 2,600 ROs per month.

The Solution: Shoun implemented Auto/Mate's Mobile Service Consultant. Available on Windows-based tablets, Mobile Service Consultant allows service advisors to view their DMS service module information and conduct the service write-up process on the go.

The first process Shoun focused on improving was check-in. Historically, when a customer had an appointment the service advisor would have to ask for their name and find their RO among a stack of pre-printed ROs. Now the service advisors can walk up to customers as they drive in and greet them by name, instantly convert appointments into ROs and view vehicle history.



MPI is a second process Shoun was able to improve. Service advisors use their mobile tablets to call up a new or archived MPI checklist form and identify potential maintenance items. The advisor then presents the findings to the customer on the tablet, or emails them to the customer, for approval and signature.

The Results: Auto/Mate's Mobile Service Consultant shaved two to three minutes off the mobile check-in process. The biggest benefit of implementing the mobile MPI is the extra time the advisors can spend with their customers, which helps to improve customer satisfaction and increase upsells.

The increased efficiencies in the check-in and MPI processes were a contributing factor that helped Price Auto Group improve the following metrics, measured YTD 2017 vs. 2016.



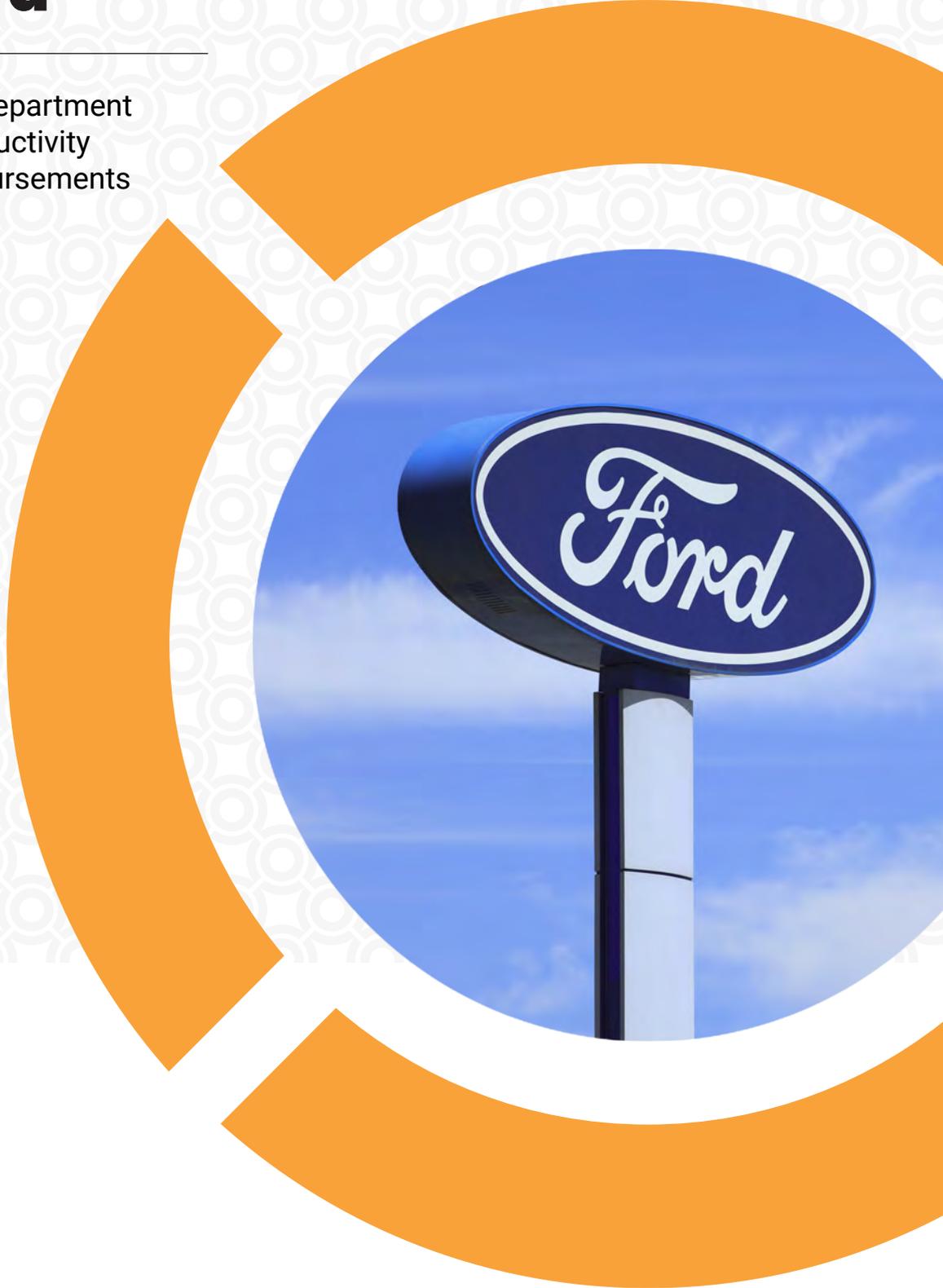
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Rowe Ford

Rowe Ford Service Department
Increases Shop Productivity
and Warranty Reimbursements
with Auto Dispatch



Rowe Ford is located in Westbrook, Maine and has been a loyal Auto/Mate customer since 2012. The Ford dealership is committed to offering a truly stellar customer experience at their store; a commitment that has garnered them multiple awards including a 2016 Reader's Choice Contest Winner by the American Journal for "Best Auto Dealer," and a 2017 Consumer Satisfaction Award by DealerRater.

The Need: Like many service departments, Rowe Ford had a problem with "cherry picking," when service techs search open ROs, assign themselves to jobs and view what other techs are working on. Automated dispatch solves this problem by automatically assigning open ROs to technicians and removing their ability to assign themselves to jobs.

Prior to becoming an Auto/Mate customer, Rowe Ford's service director struggled with implementing an auto dispatch system in their service department. The dealership management system (DMS) Rowe Ford was using at the time had a significant flaw: it limited the service manager's control over what functions technicians were allowed to perform.

This allowed cherry picking, which slowed shop productivity and had a negative impact on warranty reimbursements as unqualified techs frequently assigned themselves to warranty jobs.

With a large service operation that included 38 technicians, more than 3,500 ROs per month, a quick lane, body shop and retail reconditioning department, Rowe Ford's service manager needed an auto dispatch solution that gave him more control and increased efficiencies. This allowed cherry picking, which slowed shop productivity and had a negative impact on warranty reimbursements as unqualified techs frequently assigned themselves to warranty jobs.

The Solution: Shortly after switching to Auto/Mate's DMS, Rowe Ford's service director implemented its auto dispatch solution. Auto/Mate's auto dispatch allows skill codes to be assigned to each technician and assigns techs to each job based on their skill codes. The system automatically evaluates who's available and when the car is promised, while allowing some flexibility such as the ability to designate a waiting customer as a priority. Techs no longer have the ability to assign themselves to jobs and can only view RO's that include their skill sets.

Auto dispatching increases service department efficiency by freeing up a manager's time that was previously spent figuring out who is available to work, balancing work loads and monitoring progress on the various jobs.



The Results: Auto/Mate's auto dispatch solution immediately eliminated situations where techs assigned themselves to work they were not qualified for, freeing up those jobs for certified techs. This increased the number of jobs eligible for warranty submissions and as a result, significantly increased warranty reimbursements revenue from Ford.

The auto dispatch solution includes an electronic route sheet that allows the service director to view all jobs on a color-coded screen. In one glance, the service director is able to see the status of all repairs, how many waiters they have, whether they are living up to promised completion times, when a vehicle will be finished and more. The ability to view and track the status of jobs, along with the flexibility to make changes on the fly, significantly increased Rowe Ford's shop productivity.

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Scott Volkswagen

Scott Volkswagen Experiences
Cost Savings, Customer Service
and Streamlined Processes



Cost seems to be one of the biggest factor when searching for a DMS that can service all of the needs of your dealership. Scott Volkswagen, the largest Volkswagen dealership in New England, saved more than half a million dollars and simplified its processes since switching to Auto/Mate in 2006. Scott Volkswagen's employees enjoy Auto/Mate's premier customer service while using the DMS to streamline the F&I desking and the special orders parts processes in their fixed ops department.

The Need: Several years ago, General Manager Brad Scott decided to switch from his legacy DMS provider when his dealership was on the receiving end of poor customer service. "We found a lot of highly unethical charges on our bill, and when we asked about them the company became threatening toward us. It was a terrible experience," he said.

Scott heard about Auto/Mate from another dealer and eventually chose Auto/Mate's DMS because of the value of the system and reputation of the company. "The cost savings and the customer service were the most significant reasons for the switch," he said. "Since 2006, we have saved more than \$75,000 per year, which adds up to over half a million dollars. I had also been told – and it has been proven to me – the customer service is excellent."

The Solution: When Scott decided to switch its DMS, some employees were resistant to the change. "They grumbled a bit, but within two weeks, they had pretty much adapted to the new system and agreed it was the right decision," Scott said. "Auto/Mate's DMS is much more intuitive and simpler to work with."

He also credits the smooth transition to Auto/Mate's renowned technical support. "Everyone on the phone at Auto/Mate is friendly and extremely helpful," Scott said. "They get us answers to questions we have the same day, and if one person doesn't know the answer, they'll go out of their way to find someone who does."

To maintain the dealership's high level of customer satisfaction, Scott consistently reviews processes to see where there is room for improvement. "Technology plays an increasingly important role in our processes, because it allows us to inspect what we expect and focus on areas of improvement as opposed to collecting data," he said.



The Results: In fixed ops, Scott acknowledged inefficiencies in their special order parts process. When employees in the parts department ordered a special part for a customer's vehicle they hand-wrote the RO number on a slip of paper and gave it to the service advisor. When the part came in sometimes the parts department wouldn't call, or the service advisor forgot to include it on the RO when the customer came in to get their vehicle serviced."

We contacted Auto/Mate, and they told us about their special parts feature," Scott said. "Now when parts orders a part it generates an electronic order and attaches itself to the customer file." With the hand-written system, Scott estimates that 10-15 percent of special orders were not getting billed out appropriately, but since implementing the system through the DMS, that percentage has dropped to virtually 0 percent.

Scott's father had a saying: "Well done is better than well said." Scott's focus on customer satisfaction and implementing technology solutions to support that focus helps him streamline processes while continuing to add to Scott Volkswagen's bottom line.

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University Motors

Data Conversion to Auto/Mate's
Dealership Management System
Was Nothing to Fear For
University Motors



Every dealership knows that change is difficult and that this change is driven by the fear of having to acclimate to something new. But for many dealerships, including University Motors in Morgantown, WV, Auto/Mate's data conversion and installation processes with Auto/Mate have become so streamlined that auto dealers and dealership employees no longer have to fear major disruptions to their business. In 2014, University Motors switched to Auto/Mate in three of its stores with zero downtime and minimal impact on operations.

The Need: In May 2014, Dealer Andy Claydon received a notice from his previous DMS vendor of 15 years that his dealerships' contract with them was expiring in 60 days and that he would have to make alternative arrangements. "We were surprised, but with less than two months to effect change, we knew we'd have to move fast," Claydon said. "Our DMS provider eventually gave us options to continue with them; however, the notice spurred us to look for a new DMS vendor, and we decided to continue the process."

Claydon knew it would be difficult to find a vendor who could be ready for an install within 60 days. After a referral from another dealer that pointed him to Auto/Mate and a week-long vetting process, Claydon made the decision to switch to Auto/Mate. "I heard great things about their customer service, and they guaranteed we would be up and running on the new system within 60 days."

The Solution: Auto/Mate assigned an installation team to University Motors, and team members immediately began working with every department manager. Before a data conversion, it's critical to determine how employees use the system and which data will be transferred. In accounting, this involves reviewing setups, how splits and additions are handled and making a list of everything to be converted.

The week of the DMS data conversion, Auto/Mate's team arrived in Morgantown to get ready for the switch. Claydon, his managers and the Auto/Mate team had a hands-on meeting to discuss the steps involved in the conversion process. "Then we just carried on running our business while the Auto/Mate folks worked around us with minimal interruption," Claydon said.

Claydon admitted there was some resistance from his employees at the idea of switching to a new system. "I made a decision quickly so there was nothing anyone could do about it," he said. "We were all worried because in 2000 when we last switched systems, it was not a pretty conversion. It was two to three months of headaches and caused a major interruption to our business." But Auto/Mate's installation team reassured Claydon and his employees that, this time, things would not be bad.



The Results: The conversion itself happened after hours, the day before the old DMS was scheduled to shut down. The next morning, Auto/Mate's DMS was up and running with all the data University Motors needed. "Because the entire process was rushed, I never saw an Auto/Mate screen until the day before the conversion," Claydon said. "Everything looked and performed differently. Initially, it took a little longer to find things and figure things out, and we all had to work a little harder." Within weeks, however, Claydon and the dealerships' employees adapted to Auto/Mate's user-friendly interface.

Today, Claydon appreciates Auto/Mate's reporting capabilities. "With my old DMS, I would have to ask my office manager to run reports for me, then scan through 30-40 pages of a DOC to gather the information I wanted, all of which took time," Claydon said. "Now, everything is right in front of me. My computer screen looks like CNN on Election Night. I've got widgets telling me where we are with sales and revenue, where we were this time last month and any other metric I want to see. For me, it's brilliant. It's a huge upgrade."

Additionally, Claydon appreciates the customer service he heard so much about. Every time anyone has a problem or question, they call Auto/Mate and the issue is resolved immediately. "The people from Auto/Mate are absolutely splendid; no problem is too big or too small or too complicated," Claydon said.

"All we really had was a big learning curve," Claydon said. "Any time you're learning a new software, it takes some time, but the training was very good. The installation team from Auto/Mate was knowledgeable and made the best of what could have been a very fraught time."





Another benefit University Motors realized after the switch was a significantly lower monthly bill. “Cost wasn’t the reason I switched, but I’m spending at least 65 percent less than I was and probably saving even more than that,” Claydon said. “The important thing is they’ve charged us exactly what they said they would every month. Before, we often had to question our bills.” For dealers considering switching to Auto/Mate, Claydon offers this advice: “Absolutely do it. I wouldn’t have changed if I didn’t have to, but I’m very happy I did,” he said. “Before the conversion, it’s important to give the installation team whatever they ask and make sure you think about all the questions they give you about how you use the system. If you follow the process, everything will be fine.”

For more information on how to prepare for a DMS data conversion, download Auto/Mate’s free eBook, “The Auto Dealer’s 10-Step Guide For A Successful DMS Data Conversion.”

About Auto/Mate

Auto/Mate by DealerSocket is a leading dealership management system provider. Our innovative software delivers the functionality, flexibility and value dealers need to maximize profits, optimize processes and enhance the customer experience while saving thousands on their monthly DMS bill.

The addition of Auto/Mate to DealerSocket’s suite of products creates a new choice for dealers seeking a connected platform that’s driven by innovation and backed by award-winning customer service. Together, we serve more than 9,000 dealerships and 300,000 users. For more information, visit www.automate.com or follow us on Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn.