

case study



Fletcher Jones Mercedes-Benz Better Information Access Improves Customer Service

The largest Mercedes-Benz dealer in the USA, Fletcher Jones Mercedes-Benz (FJMB), is using DocuWare to store car sales documentation and repair orders. Improved access to information allows FJMB to provide superior customer service and simplify internal document management practices, all while reducing costs by over \$40,000 annually.

Located in Newport Beach, California, Fletcher Jones Mercedes-Benz is the largest Mercedes-Benz dealership in the country. With 580 employees, the dealership sells upwards of 700 cars a month and services 440 cars a day! The dealership is devoted to the lasting satisfaction of Mercedes-Benz owners and the long-term maintenance of their automobiles.

Documents

The documentation generated every time a car is sold is comprised of a stack of documents about a ½ inch thick. Selling 700 cars a month meant the dealership generated 29 feet or almost 9 meters of records a month just from sales! Repair Orders (RO) piled up just as fast with an average RO length of 12 pages. Servicing 440 cars a day caused the ROs to quickly add up to over 126,000 sheets a month.

Work Process

Office space at FJMB is at a premium and the company could only store six months of documentation onsite. The company utilized their cashiers, as well as temporary employees, to box up records older than six months and move them to a third-party offsite storage facility. Onsite paper records took up so much space that call center employees were scattered throughout the building, limiting the efficiency and customer service of the department. Employees were constantly visiting the file room to access information. With only one way of looking up information, by Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), retrieval was slow and could take as long as 24 hours if the record needed to be brought by courier from the offsite location. The paper-based system was not keeping up with the volume of records FJMB needed to manage; it was slow, cumbersome and expensive, costing an estimated \$40,000 annually.

Solution Requirements

Wayne Fitkin, IT Director for Fletcher Jones Mercedes-Benz, spent three years researching electronic document management solutions and compiling a detailed list of requirements. He wanted a system that could index automatically without the need for manual intervention, and that had the ability to scan a stack of documents and automatically recognize and separate the pages into individual records. FJMB only wanted to invest in a system that stored the images in a non-proprietary format and gave them the ability to backup information on CDs or DVDs that would work as a stand alone system. The system needed to be an out-of-the-box solution that didn't require extensive programming and could provide employees with web-based access to information.



Solution

DocuWare was installed at Fletcher Jones Mercedes-Benz. After a repair is completed and the paper work has been processed, the ROs are scanned and automatically indexed. A stack of ROs are placed in the scanner and DocuWare automatically separates the images into multi-page repair records. Using OCR technology, the RO number is "read" from the page and used as a match-code to pull indexing information from an existing database; indexing the document without manual intervention. For legal reasons, original paper documents are kept for four years and then destroyed. In the event the original document needs to be produced, the electronic record specifies which box contains the record. Sales documentation is scanned and automatically indexed in a similar way. Employees can access the information through the company intranet using a web browser.

The Task

- Eliminate the storage of paper records
- Enhance customer service
- Improve document security and information access

Appointed Modules

- DocuWare
- ACTIVE IMPORT
- AUTOINDEX
- CDMAKER
- INTERNET-SERVER
- ISIS PRO
- RECOGNITION

The Benefits

- Original documents are secure, limiting legal liability
- Access to information is instantaneous, improving customer service and increasing sales
- Reduced document management costs enhances the bottom line

The Benefits in Detail

User Benefits

FJMB employees now have instant online access to information and never need to wait for a courier to deliver a box of documents, improving employee productivity and raising job satisfaction ratings. DocuWare is the tool FJMB employees needed to help them focus on their core responsibilities. Missing and misfiled documents have been eliminated along with most manual filing tasks.

Department Benefits

Moving to DocuWare allowed the company to eliminate the filing room and create one physical location for their call center, contributing to better departmental communication and team unity. Customer service improved dramatically now that documentation can be retrieved not only by VIN number, but by car model, customer name or date purchased; thus providing the Service Advisor instant availability to the entire repair history for a specific car. Electronic annotations are now made directly on the ROs stored in DocuWare, giving any Service Advisor the ability to answer customer questions and eliminating the practice of writing notes directly on the hard copy document.

The IT department loves that fact that DocuWare file cabinets are virtually unlimited in size. The system currently contains 300 GB of information, but search queries return a response in just seconds. The system is backed-up nightly. As an additional step, for disaster recovery purposes, each month a copy of all the documentation from new car deals and ROs is burned to DVD

or CD. In the event of a catastrophe, FJMB can be back in operation in a timely manner as the information on the DVDs can be easily reloaded or simply accessed from the disc.

"There is so much capability within DocuWare. It is an incredible product. Not only did we eliminate the filing room, but we are better managing our business processes, increasing profitability and looking to expand the solution enterprise-wide," said Fitkin.

Corporate Benefits

On a corporate level, FJMB now has complete control over original documents by securely storing them in an onsite warehouse immediately after scanning, reducing legal concerns and liability. Accessing information electronically, FJMB eliminated the need to store and access documents from a third-party storage facility, eradicating tens of thousands of dollars in annual storage cost and courier service fees. Temporary employees are no longer needed to purge documents, eliminating another cost and the huge headache of managing and training short-term help.

Today, there is not one filing cabinet left in the file room and FJMB has regained premium office space. However, what is most impressive is that the dealership has seen dramatic improvements in customer service now that the call center is located in one place. Better customer service helps FJMB maintain its strong commitment to the customer which in turns contributes to new and repeat business resulting in greater sales.

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*Wayne Fitkin,
IT Director,
Fletcher Jones Mercedes-Benz*

With DocuWare, the company has the capacity to monitor purchasing and repair trends for different models. The software's many search capabilities can provide management with a snapshot of history and paint an accurate picture of overall activities.

"DocuWare's search capabilities allow us to search by any index field. We can even search by phone number and come up with a list of every car a family owned or a list of all service on a particular model during a period of time. The product has infinite search capabilities," said Fitkin.

FJMB is very satisfied with their document management solution and are planning to expand their system by implementing workflow processes in the A/R, A/P and Controller offices.

The bottom line is that the FJMB's investment in DocuWare helps the company meet its mission of providing Mercedes-Benz owners with lasting satisfaction and superior long-term maintenance of their automobiles.

For more information
please visit our website
at www.docuware.com