



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, 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," said Andy Claydon, dealer of University Motors. "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

