



How a Ton of Paperwork Became a Smooth Flow of Digital Information for Gosch Automotive Group

SITUATION

Group of automotive dealerships employing 625 people creates 250,000 plus documents per month. A majority of these need to be retained for 7-10 years. Using paper-based systems, the dealerships store documents offsite and anywhere there is room.

OBJECTIVE

Create a document management solution for paperwork related to automotive sales and service records first, eventually expanding to bookkeeping functions. Reduce paper and storage needs significantly, while delivering easier access, improved workflow, and greater productivity. Gradually scan legacy documents into system.

SOLUTION

A smart combination of **Kodak** i40 and i260 Scanners and **FileBound** Content Management Solution, customized and implemented by Advanced Document Solutions, Inc.

COMMENT

"The money we are now *not spending* on outside services more than pays for the depreciation on the system On a scale of one to ten, I'd say we are at a nine plus in satisfaction."

~ Richard Rodgers,
VP and CFO, Gosch Auto Group

"We create 250,000 documents a month between our six dealerships," says Richard Rodgers, VP and CFO of Gosch Automotive Group in Southern California. "Paperwork associated with an automotive sale, including the contract, credit application, DMV paperwork and so on—the deal docs—must be kept for ten years by law. Our service-related records—such as repair records, warranty documentation, technician's notes, invoices and others—have to be retained for seven years."

By almost any standard, that's a whole car lot full of documents! And in the days before their digital document management solution, Gosch rented an entire off-site building for paperwork storage while dealerships also stashed paperwork wherever there was room. Gosch also spent a very significant sum annually on service bureau costs to burn records to disc for safekeeping and backup.

Much of the dealership's paper-based information is extremely valuable. Compliance is critical, and when paper gets lost, it can be costly. "In the business office, if a credit application is rejected, you have to be able to produce that document for seven years," Rodgers says. "If you can't, legal action can get expensive. Knowing that you've secured those documents for fast access is crucial." In terms of service records, each auto manufacturer requires different documentation.

Discovering document imaging with auto dealers in mind

When Rodgers arrived at Gosch two years ago, he knew a document capture/storage/access solution was a necessity, yet recalled an unsatisfactory search for a similar auto-targeted system at a previous job. "I remembered a world of click charges and concurrent license costs,"

he notes. "Then, when I began talking with Mike and Mike (Brown and Hawley of Advanced Document Solutions, Inc. or ADocs), their proposals didn't contain any of those expenses."

When he began researching his solution in 2005, Rodgers quickly realized that a distinct advantage for ADocs was that not many competitors had created systems focused on the unique needs of automotive dealerships.

"We're in tune with how dealerships operate, and I believe this gives us an edge in creating a system that offers sophisticated document management while addressing the subtleties and complexities of the business" says Mike Brown, a co-owner of ADocs, who heads up their sales and marketing efforts. "We knew, for example, that deal docs included non-standard forms, including one that's 32 plus inches long," notes Mike Hawley, ADocs' other owner, in charge of IT professional services. "To address that, we recommended **Kodak** i260 Scanners with expanded RAM.

Gosch takes advantage of distributed scanning where **Kodak** i40 Scanners are utilized, because as soon as a document is completed the dealership scans it for approval and routing. "For scanning by salespeople and service documents, and other distributed needs, we love the **Kodak** i40 Scanners, which Gosch purchased," notes Brown. Rodgers agrees with the hardware choices.

"We're amazed how robust the i40 Scanners are," Rodgers says. "We've put hundreds of thousands of documents through them in a very short time. I'd say at least 1.4 million, and the speed and consistent image quality are outstanding."

Kodak Capture Software is also ideal for distributed scanning use. "You're dealing with many people who are not always technically oriented, so the big buttons are a plus. They simply put the document in, push a green button, perform quality control or index, and they're done," Hawley states. ADocs is partial to **Kodak** Products. "We worked closely with Kodak years ago when we were both in a service bureau business," recalls Brown. "Their scanners were always built well with excellent durability. We joined the **Kodak** Authorized Imaging Reseller Program when we started ADocs." ADocs' headquarters are in Valencia, just north of Los Angeles.

FileBound Software was a perfect match for Gosch's back-end document storage and retrieval system, as it was scalable to any volume limit that Gosch might reach. "Currently, about 200 users use the system, and we can limit the access employees have to data and functions," Rodgers says. "The way that ADocs customized **FileBound** Software for us makes this solution far more flexible than some other systems we investigated."

Start in the present, then move backward

The initial goal at Gosch was for existing employees to scan current documents. Now Gosch employs designated "back file scanner operators"—entry-level people or college students who are gradually scanning their way back through legacy paperwork in reverse-chronological order.

The ADocs' solution was gradually rolled out throughout the dealerships. "We have a centralized accounts payable function," says Rodgers. "Now we have great control and

timely processing for routing to someone else in another department. This is a large, labor-intensive operation and we've streamlined the flow greatly, eliminating duplicate efforts at the dealership level." Gosch is also now scanning vendor insurance certificates, copies of all insurance forms, all of the notes, lease agreements, tax returns, tax payments, and other critical data.

Thanks to features implemented by ADocs, Gosch is utilizing preprinted barcodes on repair forms, and generating barcodes to determine keys, such as store number and document number. These keys are compared to an access table to populate the indexes that are used to search for the individual document.

Changing a business and culture

Making the transition to this system was a challenge. "We weren't just changing a way of doing business, we were changing a culture," say Rodgers. "We were taking a piece of paper away, and people love to hold that paper. Soon they saw they could access, view and reference documents much more quickly and print them, if needed. They quickly went from fear to acceptance to being huge proponents. Now, when someone comes to visit, they like to show our system off."

On a practical level, Gosch employees no longer have to pull a file, then replace it, and worry that it could now be out of order. There's easy access on the bookkeeping side when researching and reconciling, right from the desktop. Deal docs are handled by centralized accounting, rather than at the varying dealerships.

Streamlined savings in time and money

"We've achieved great productivity advantages, but our biggest savings will come a year or two down the road, once we've back scanned our critical mass of documents," claims Rodgers. "Our offsite storage costs are high, and those will go away. For years we've taken all of our month-end reports and sent them to a service bureau for burning to discs. Now, we download to a text file and input directly into **FileBound** Software. "The money we are now not spending on outside services more than pays for the depreciation on the system.

"On a scale of one to ten, I'd say we're at a 9+ in satisfaction."

The project is an evolution that's progressing extremely well. We couldn't have done this without ADocs. They're very responsive and innovative in the way they've customized **FileBound** Software, and made what we believe are the best scanner choices from Kodak for our business and auto dealerships," Rodgers concludes.

Buoyed by their success at Gosch, ADocs plans to take their dealership solution to the National Auto Dealers Association's (NADA's) annual show to promote it nationwide. And they'll be integrating the new **Kodak** Scan Station 100 into their options, believing its ease of use makes it perfect for distributed scanning by non-technical folks.

To learn more about **Kodak** Document Imaging Products and Services, contact your Authorized Reseller of **Kodak** Products, call 1-800-944-6171, or log on to www.kodak.com/go/docimaging.



Eric Gosch, President of Gosch Auto; Richard Rodgers; Mike Brown; Mike Hawley

Kodak i40 Scanner —
Speed, simplicity and advanced
imaging for workgroup applications

