

Case Study



Auto Retailer Tries to Rein in Costs, Time Spent Managing Millions of Documents Each Month

AutoNation 

AutoNation is the largest automotive retailer in the United States, with 302 new-vehicle franchises and 210 dealership locations across the country. The Fort Lauderdale, Florida-based company, which was founded in 1997 and employs about 19,000 people, is a member of the S&P 500 and has been named Fortune Magazine's "Most Admired Automotive Retailer" for six of the past eight years.

FUJITSU

Business Needs

A critical part of AutoNation’s business is moving paper. A lot of it. Vehicle sales require extensive documentation, from the “deal jackets”—the packets of information filled with the paperwork on each car—to inventory information, parts invoices, and check requests from the dealerships. In a typical month, AutoNation scans about 2 million documents.

For years, AutoNation used FedEx as a means of transporting documents to its Shared Services Center in Dallas, TX for scanning and processing. Stephen Noe, Lead Analyst and Programmer for AutoNation, says the process was time-consuming and expensive.

“We spent about \$480,000 annually on paper shipping services through FedEx and another \$360,000 on third-party outsourced scanning of documents,” said Noe. “The feedback from managers and controllers at our dealerships was that it was too time-consuming to ship documents to the shared services center. It typically took up to 36 hours before the documents were successfully scanned into a central server. And documents were often lost, requiring more time to find them and get them scanned and into the system.”

Noe, who had prior experience working with decentralized scanning solutions, felt there was a better way to conduct such an important aspect of AutoNation’s daily business. “We wanted to find a scanning solution that would be less costly and easy to use for people at our dealerships utilizing our network resources,” he said. “We also wanted to apply permissions to scanners, and have access to features such as connecting scanned documents instantly to email and FTP uploads.”

Solution

Nationwide Deployment of Fujitsu Network Scanners

The company decided to replace its old centralized scanning processes with the purchase of Fujitsu network scanners. AutoNation purchased more than 240 scanners, which provide a wide range of enterprise-level features. These include the ability to scan documents—everything from credit card receipts to long documents—and send them to email, network folders, fax machines, and printers. The Fujitsu scanners have intelligent scanning features that help to improve image quality and auto-

matically rotate pages to their proper orientation. The scanners also provide security and regulatory compliance features that help protect customer and financial data contained in scanned documents. Permissions can also be implemented to control access to the scanners and document management system.

Autonation, which is using the Fujitsu scanners with Kofax enterprise capture software, did extensive research and planning before deploying the new Fujitsu scanners. “The planning is often more important than the actual deployment,” Noe says. “We wanted to be sure we had a fool-proof plan in place before putting a single unit into the field, which is why our deployment was a major success.”

The company started with a single unit at its store in Austin, Texas. “With the success of that first pilot, we decided to buy 10 more scanners and used them in Arizona,” says Noe. “The scanners proved their value almost immediately. Once it was all proven to work with our systems, we decided to deploy the Fujitsu scanners in all the stores of our Western region.” While deploying gradually to other regions of the country, AutoNation also began using a new workflow for handling check requests, a development that ultimately required Fujitsu scanners to be installed nationally.

Benefits

Fast Return on Investment, A Fraction of the Time to Get Documents into Central System

With its nationwide deployment of Fujitsu scanners in place, AutoNation is saving substantial amounts of time and money while making the automobile documentation process easier for employees and customers alike.

“If you include the purchase of the scanners, delivery costs, and the replacement and maintenance contracts, we were able to offset the costs of using FedEx and our outsourced scanning in just 13 months,” says Noe. “Our leadership saw the numbers and knew that we would be in the black very quickly with the Fujitsu scanners in place. It was a no-brainer to deploy them, because they’re basically paying for themselves.”

The Fujitsu scanners are also helping to make workflows at individual dealerships more efficient, saving employees time. “One of the biggest complaints we used to get was documents getting lost when they were sent via FedEx,” Noe says. “With the Fujitsu scanners, people can preview a scanned document on a screen. If something is out of line or missing, they can fix it on the spot. With the Fujitsu scanners and the Kofax Capture solution, it now takes about 10 minutes to process a document. That’s compared to a 36-hour turnaround time in the past.”

AutoNation benefit snapshot:

- *Solution using Fujitsu scanners and Kofax Capture helped AutoNation realize a 13-month return on investment in its new technology*
- *Scanners are easy to use and can be controlled through permissions*
- *Typical turnaround time is now about 10 minutes between time a document is scanned and when it shows up in the central system, compared to 36 hours in the past*
- *Documents are no longer lost, a common problem in the past that led to additional work*

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