



Coastline BMW Caloundra Experiences Smooth Transition to UNITS™ Dealer Management System

Coastline BMW at Caloundra, the first dealership in Australia's BMW franchise group to implement the Auto-IT UNITS™ dealer management system (DMS), is now fully operational after an extremely smooth transition period that delighted its management and staff.

Coastline BMW General Manager Tristan Kurz says the change to the new system, which he expected could have taken up to 12 months, in fact took only three, with the dealership now operational on all aspects of the software.

“The change management process was a lot faster and smoother than we expected,” Mr Kurz says, “and this translated into a lot less stress than anticipated. Importantly, it meant minimal disruption to our day-to-day activities and, of course, no interruption to customer service or loss of profits.”

Smooth transition with on-site support team

Auto-IT's installation team of four key technical staff was on-site at Coastline BMW for three weeks to install and implement the system and train management and staff in the software.

“The fact that key staff from Auto-IT stayed on over the implementation phase got us there,” says Tristan Kurz. “They were available both in person while we needed them and, later, by telephone or email to troubleshoot for us and ensure that, whenever we had questions, they were answered quickly. Auto-IT's hands-on approach and the fact that they were so supportive during the process of changing over to UNITS™ really helped to smooth the transition for us and get us up and running quickly.”

Innovation to boost productivity and profitability

The \$60m Coastline BMW dealership, located on Nicklin way, Caloundra, incorporates BMW vehicles, BMW motor cycles and MINI. The dealership has implemented the Microsoft Windows-based UNITS™ DMS software to boost the franchise's productivity and profitability, as well as customer service.

“We chose the UNITS™ system as it is the latest in new generation, Windows-based technology so it was up-to-the-minute in terms of its technical capability, as well as being simple to use, and it had the flexibility to meet our needs now and in the future,” Mr Kurz says.

“UNITS™ is already making inroads into staff productivity and efficiencies, which are impacting positively on Coastline's customers.”

“We had been operating on a system that was not as advanced as everything else in the business and was starting to slow us down and impede productivity,” he says. “Already we are seeing immense benefits in the administration department where productivity and job satisfaction levels are so much higher, yet the stress levels are so much lower.”

“For the customer, we are also seeing greater efficiencies, particularly in the servicing experience, such as with the use of BMW's electronic vehicle keys and how they interface with our system. These keys record important vehicle information such as chassis number, current kilometres and

information about what servicing is required on the vehicle, what we call 'condition-based servicing,' where the vehicle itself is doing the analysis of its servicing needs," Mr Kurz explains.

"Instead of servicing being done within a pre-determined timeframe or after a set number of kilometres, it is done when the vehicle actually needs it – such things as replacing brake linings, oil changes etc. This information is transferred via the customer's key back to the system, and the software is critical in this process. With the UNITS™ system, we are now much more efficient when servicing, as we can minimise the time the customer is required to spend in the dealership."

"Also, we have staff here from 17 to 87 years of age, and they all needed to be able to use the system, so it had to be simple, and the UNITS™ system is very user-friendly."

BMW-endorsed software

Mr Kurz says the decision to change to UNITS™ involved minimal risk as the software had already been endorsed by BMW, with extensive interface work carried out prior to the system being made available to the dealerships.

"The interface between the UNITS™ system and BMW had been through rigorous development work in order for it to be suitable to be nominated as a BMW-endorsed product. We knew that it would meet our needs and would also perform to the requirements set by BMW," he says.

"We needed to change to a more technologically-current system, one which could provide a high level of productivity among the staff and lead to a much better experience for our customers at the sales and servicing levels. Ultimately, we were looking for a system that would provide us with a better ability to be able to drill down and analyse the business, leading to a greater efficiencies, better customer service and higher profit."

Ken Fife, chief executive officer of Auto-IT says, "The successful software installation at Coastline BMW follows more than 12 months of work behind the scenes between Auto-IT and BMW's IT department to develop the necessary technical interfaces between our Windows-based system and BMW's technological and business requirements. The result is BMW's endorsement of Auto-IT's UNITS™ software as one of its preferred dealer management systems, opening up the opportunity for potential take-up by other BMW dealers Australia-wide."

Sue Jochheim, IT Operations and Dealer Systems Manager from BMW Group Australia said, "We are very pleased to have Auto-IT on-board and to be able to endorse its UNITS™ dealer management system software. It is not only state-of-the-art technology, but Auto-IT has been very responsive in meeting the changing needs of our business and in working with us to find solutions that meet the requirements of both the BMW Group and our dealers."

"The interfaces to some of our products that come out of Germany, particularly in the service and parts area, are critical – without those interfaces built into the software the dealers would not be able to use it and that doesn't happen without a lot of work from the DMS supplier," she said.

The UNITS™ DMS system is now being implemented at BMW dealers Westco Motors in Cairns and McGuigan BMW in Port Macquarie.

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11 June 2008