

The digital car dealership

A digital pioneer: The Autohaus Gitter car dealership has been using VaudisX from the very start



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Jürgen Ketzler, Managing Director, Autohaus Gitter

“We’re not reinventing the wheel – we’re turning it forward.” As his maxim clearly shows, car dealership Autohaus Gitter looks ahead and is not content with the status quo for either itself or its customers. Providing excellent service for Toyota and VW cars is the top priority at its locations in Erfurt and Weimar. And digital innovations are to make increasing contributions. For the car dealership, “digital” doesn’t only mean modernity and an improved customer experience. They also want the IT support to generate tangible business value. Firstly, they wanted to optimize workflows in service processes. This greater efficiency not only benefits employees, but also sets the company apart from its competition. Secondly, the IT needed to capture specific business potential – in other words, generate additional sales.

At a glance

- Demand for more efficient service processes
- Replacement of the VAUDIS legacy system with VaudisX
- Higher service quality
- Strengthen customer relationships
- Identify additional business potential
- The data remains with the car dealership
- Connections to external systems possible (sales force, TKP repair shop planner)
- Modern user experience

The reference in detail

The challenge

VAUDIS – it's hardly an unknown among VW service partners. VAUDIS is a dealer management system that has reliably supported process flows at car dealerships for over 30 years. VAUDIS still has a strong presence. Nearly half of all VW dealerships still trust in this dealer management dinosaur. However, the system cannot provide sufficient support for modern requirements, such as customer intimacy for an optimized customer experience, that benefit both customers and the repair shop. What's more, the user experience when working with VAUDIS is stuck at the level of the late 1990s. Car dealership Autohaus Gitter in Erfurt didn't want to settle for this situation any longer: "We wanted to make the entire service process as smooth and elegant as possible," explains Heiko Etzhold, one of the dealership's managing directors. It was important to the VW and Toyota partner that any potential replacements both maintain existing links to crucial, established tools and support connections to modern applications like Salesforce in the future. The dealership also wanted to make sure that all its customer data remained on their local servers.

The solution

T-Systems teamed up with users from dealerships to develop VaudisX, the next generation of VAUDIS. This modern dealer management system comprehensively maps the service processes at the dealership, which runs the software on its own in-house servers based on a user-oriented, monthly payment model. VaudisX serves as the central hub for all service processes, from booking an appointment to returning the car to the customer.

The dealership's employees can find all history information at a glance in the archived customer and vehicle files; all process flows between service consulting, repair shop, and customer are coordinated on a single screen. The new system makes switching between different programs a thing of the past. What's more, VaudisX gives the dealership new options for services. When a service customer arrives at the dealership, their process is already defined and pre-qualified. Thanks to integration with other back-end systems, they can tell at once whether the customer is affected by a recall campaign. Waiting times are eliminated because the service appointment has been optimally planned in advance, including the repair shop resources and necessary spare parts. The digital solution keeps customers in the loop even if they don't stay on site. The repair shop uses a tablet PC for electronic remote check-in. The tablet also makes it possible to document previously unidentified repair needs by taking pictures of the car directly. To extend the order, the photo can be sent to the customer's smartphone, together with a cost estimate. The customer can then decide – again, using their smartphone – whether they want the dealership to include the repair in the current service or wait until a later point in time. Postponed services can then be used to address the customer proactively later, because they are not lost – as was previously the case – thanks to archiving in VaudisX. In addition to making process flows more flexible, the structured, pooled storage of customer and vehicle information in a database archive also enables other analyses, to get to know the customer better and optimize the customer experience.

Customer benefit

"Users are guided step by step, from appointment scheduling and planning to order qualification and repair shop planning, even up to invoicing and archiving," says managing director Jürgen Ketzler, full of praise for the system. The diverse customer communication channels that the DMS offers were another convincing argument for the dealership manager. The end-to-end process support increases efficiency, benefiting employees and customers alike. Ultimately, VaudisX also helps Autohaus Gitter get a leg up on the local competition: it lets staff give better, more competent advice, which in turn strengthens customer relationships. What's more, the new dealer management system helps the service consultants at Autohaus Gitter save a lot of time when organizing service orders. At the same time, VaudisX also opens up new business potential, by enabling customer targeting. Facts and analyses provide a much more solid foundation for sales talks, significantly increasing the chances of closing a deal. The software architecture of VaudisX opens the solution up to both the past and the future. Established tools like the TKP repair shop planner can still be integrated or used via interface. And new applications like Salesforce can be used at any time. And because VaudisX has a brand-neutral design, the dealer management system can also be used for the processes in the dealership's Toyota division.

Further advantages:

- Fixed price per user per month
- Simple addition and cancellation of users
- Joint further development with the customer
- Potential to run as SaaS from a T-Systems data center

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