

Volvo Cars Belgium drives superior customer services



CASE STUDY

BUSINESS FIT

The Progress OpenEdge platform and the Sonic Enterprise Service Bus (ESB), are helping Volvo dealers throughout Belgium and Luxemburg standardize on a dealer management system and inter-operate more efficiently with centralized Volvo business applications.

BUSINESS RESULTS

Web services help Volvo dealers throughout Belgium and Luxemburg provide their customers the premium services they expect; and 98% of all Volvo parts ordered are delivered overnight.

OPERATIONAL RESULTS

From customer order through vehicle delivery and customer service, dealers are able to track a vehicle through its entire lifecycle to ensure a consistently superior customer experience.

IT RESULTS

It took only two weeks for the new dealer management system to be integrated with central Volvo business applications by using the Sonic ESB.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

As a premium car company, Volvo is a world leader in safety and innovation. Equally important to Volvo is its customer support and service. And that means having the best car dealers and the most efficient IT infrastructure to support them.

Christoph Cordier, Volvo Cars Belgium Customer Service Manager, stated that "the evolution of the automotive sector has a tremendous influence on our dealer systems. For every demand of the customer—from product evaluation to configuration of cars to diagnostics and maintenance— Volvo has a system in place. It is important that we link these corporate systems with dealer management systems, and Volvo Belgium conducted an evaluation to identify the applications vendor best equipped to provide us with a robust dealer management system with the flexibility to link to corporate applications."

SOLUTION

The Volvo Cars (Belgium) management team worked closely with its dealers to evaluate different dealer management systems, and then selected the XPower dealer management system (XDMS), a cutting-edge solution from Progress® Application Partner (AP) XPower. According to Cordier, "We really needed a supplier that understood the needs of our dealers and understood our Volvo Cars philosophy."

The XPower dealer management system is based on Progress OpenEdge® and uses Sonic ESB® to connect the DMS to Volvo's corporate car configuration system and its Vehicle Information and Diagnostics for after sale system (VIDA). The XPower dealer management system, which was deployed across all 65 dealers in Belgium in a record-breaking eight months, has delivered tremendous business benefits to Volvo and increased its ability to offer an enhanced purchase, support and service experience for their customers.

XDMS is service-oriented architecture (SOA)-enabled and leverages the Progress OpenEdge business application platform. Through an SOA, it delivers flexibility so that companies can leverage existing technology, quickly adapt to new technology, easily connect with customers, partners, and suppliers, and rapidly adapt as market and business requirements change.



CONNECTING APPLICATIONS VIA SONIC ESB

XDMS was the first dealer management application to seamlessly integrate dealerships with two of Volvo's most important enterprise applications—the car configurator for the custom ordering, and the vehicle information and diagnostics system used for tracking and troubleshooting any mechanical issues with automobiles. Cordier said, "Within two weeks we had a perfect connection between the dealer system in Belgium and the heart of Volvo in Göteborg, Sweden. We rely on the Sonic ESB to create a messaging layer connecting XDMS with the two critical Volvo applications."

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*—Christoph Cordier,
Volvo Cars Belgium
Customer Service Manager*

The Sonic ESB, which is the world's first enterprise service bus, is a powerful and efficient approach to application integration. Combining XML, enterprise-grade communication services, and an SOA based on Web services standards, the Sonic ESB provides a cost-effective way to integrate applications and manage services distributed across an extended enterprise.

XPower's Keymeulen explained, "XDMS is a very stable and reliable application based on rich dealer management expertise, but we needed to find a way to integrate it with corporate applications running in Sweden. By adding the Sonic ESB on top of our application to build a communications layer we could quickly and easily integrate XDMS with Volvo's corporate business applications."

Web services help Volvo dealers throughout Belgium and Luxemburg provide their customers the premium services they expect, and 98% of all Volvo parts ordered are delivered overnight guaranteeing that a Volvo customer will never have to wait long to get back behind the wheel of their car.

Dealers can now respond to customer demands very quickly. For example, if a customer ordering a car decides on an extra towing hook, a single transaction can update the purchase price and order parts immediately—and they will probably be available the next day. The system will also update the dealer's accounting records to reflect this change in the sales order.

IMPROVING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

"We want to be the most successful and desirable car brand in the world," said Cordier. "In order to do that we need a key differentiator like superior customer service. That's why the seamless integration of our dealer management systems with enterprise applications is so important."

Cordier explained, "Our dealers now have the tools to act quickly to respond to customer and prospect inquiries. Dealers and their employees have to listen carefully to customers, and dealers have to closely coordinate their resources to serve customers. For example, a customer coming in for a simple repair will likely communicate with a receptionist, a workshop manager, and a parts shop manager, and they each need flexible access to the same information so they can track the repair and manage customer expectations."

"We worked with our dealer council and selected XPower to deliver this platform because they understand the importance of translating the soul of the brand into processes and systems. The power of Progress OpenEdge and the Progress development tools allowed XPower to rapidly deploy the dealer management system we needed that would be flexible enough to allow dealer personnel to efficiently communicate with customers to provide the premium experience customers expect from Volvo."



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Progress Software Corporation (Nasdaq: PRGS) provides application infrastructure software for the development, deployment, integration and management of business applications. Our goal is to maximize the benefits of information technology while minimizing its complexity and total cost of ownership.

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