

American Dealer

The Next Generation in Auto Dealer Information

What It Takes To Provide V3 Technical Support

Have you ever wondered why there aren't a lot of DMS software choices out there for independent car dealers? With over 47,000 independent car lots in the country, you'd think there'd be a few more choices than one finds actually available.

To understand why, one need only consider some facts about the manner in which most independent car dealers operate:

(1) Days Off: None. Seven days a week, rain or shine.

(2) Holidays Off: I don't think so. Labor Day? A perfect time for selling cars. As is the 4th of July, Memorial Day, New Year's Day and... One car dealer in California is even open for deals on Christmas. Ho Ho Ho! Wanna buy a car?

(3) Hours Worked: The lot's open by 0800 or 0900, but lot managers or owners are usually on deck by 0600 or 0700, getting things done and preparing for a busy day. With most lots open until 2000, 2100 or even 2200, that makes for

12-14 hours a day. Not counting closing tasks and procedures. Not counting the "Midnight Madness" specials.

So, what you've got, in essence, on your typical independent-dealer car lot, is lots and lots of time. And, throughout *all* of that time, the DMS programs and machines need to be up-and-running. Unfortunately, with no thanks to Allah, those terminals don't all wake up properly in the morning.



Which means: A technical support person for that software and those terminals needs to be available from 0700 hours until 2200 hours. Minimum. 15 hours a day. Seven days a week. *And* on holidays.

When you further factor in the fact that Skywerk's V3 DMS technical support operates out of the West Coast time zone, and additionally supports dealers in three of the other four U.S. time zones, this adds

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New V3 DMS Features: WA "E-Temping" Now Available

The new V3 DMS feature of Washington State "E-Temping," mentioned as a "Coming Soon" feature in last month's American Dealer, is now available for V3 terminals throughout the state.

Use of the feature requires V3 version 11.72 and above, and interfaces directly with Washington's Department of Licensing's computer operations to pre-populate all the needed fields for obtaining an "E-Temp" permit for newly-sold vehicles.



The Washington DOL recently moved over to performing its "E-Temp" operations online, giving dealers the opportunity to obtain the permits via an Internet connection.

And, up until now, it was necessary for Washington dealers to re-type all the necessary information on the DOL's "E-Temp" screens via a web browser.

No longer: The new V3 feature bypasses this need completely, back-piping and interfacing directly with the DOL's computer systems instead, pre-populating the fields for the dealers on the fly. Total operation time needed: 8-10 seconds.

And let's give a round of applause to Lori Fleek of I-5 Motors in Fife, Washington, for supplying Skywerks with all of the necessary information to accomplish this mission. Thanks Lori!

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Introducing Art Polo Of Technical Support

Speaking of V3 DMS technical support: Skywerks would like to



welcome Art Polo to our team as our Technical Support Manager.

Well-versed in all aspects of the computer

technology environment, Art is not only a Microsoft Certified

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The "Coming Soon" Section:

V3 DMS To Interface With Signature Pad

Tired of acquiring a dozen signatures on a deal? Do it ONCE with the Topaz Signature Pad, for capturing buyer, co-buyer and dealer signatures. At under \$100, you'll make your money back quick. Check it out here:

<http://www.barcodesinc.com/topaz/signature-lite-1x5.htm>

Technical Support - Continued From Page One

another three hours to the pile. Which brings the total hours of operation, West Coast time, to 18 hours per day.

And, during any one of those 18 hours, an independent car dealer could need assistance, and will ring the tech support phone to get it. And the surest way to lose an independent car dealer as a Skywerks customer? "Don't be there when they call," said Martyn Olliver, V3 software creator.

DMS software technical support is just like Point-Of-Sale support, in the sense that most of the time, when a client calls, they are in the middle of a transaction with a customer right in front of them. Their forms are not printing right, or not printing at all, or there's an error in the deal structure, or the software won't even start up, or their network isn't functioning properly, or... Any one of a million other problems that can interfere with the smooth functioning of closing the deal. The dealer needs help, and he needs it *NOW!* Woe to him who is supposed to be providing that help in a timely fashion but is not reachable when it is needed. A technical support representative *might* be able to pull that trick *once* and get a second chance, but don't count on a third

opportunity, for your customers will be disappearing faster than President Obama's voting base.

With Skywerks currently managing over 2,000 terminals, this means that at least one technical support representative needs to be available throughout all of that time - and, during "peak" hours, better make that two or even three, since a busy signal is just

as bad as an unanswered call.

And the fact is, independent DMS programmers just generally don't have that kind of time and money. The best program in the world doesn't do a car dealer much good if the support for it is unavailable when needed, and it's a rare breed indeed who can provide both and still make a profit at it.

The "Unabashedly Stolen From The Internet" Department



HERE YOU GO, BABY! - When Bubba got his clock cleaned in divorce court, he graciously and selflessly decided his ex-wife was entitled to the house and truck he paid for, after all.

Skywerks, in these senses, provides a refreshing exception: The V3 programming team has been working car lots for 30 years, and knows exactly what car dealers need in their DMS software. This expertise has translated over time into a significant base of independent-dealer usage and support, and it is through that large and ever-growing base that technical support dollars become available to do the job correctly.

Shy of such resources, the obstacles confronting the independent-dealer DMS programmer are more than just considerable, they border on the impossible. Which explains why only a handful of DMS programmers are out there doing it. "You have to start somewhere," Olliver said, "and that 'somewhere' for Skywerks was 18 hours a day."

Art Polo - Continued From Page One

Systems Engineer but has operated and managed his own computer business for many years. With his knowledge and "get it



done right" philosophy, Art is a perfect addition to the V3 support staff and a great asset to the Skywerks community.

"The position of Technical Support Manager offers many challenges and opportunities for fulfillment for me personally," Polo said. "My approach to this responsibility is one of educating the user and trying to create a comfortable and reassuring environment for the end user that there is quality help available for the client's software and hardware concerns."

Having just recently assumed the responsibilities of being Technical Support Manager, Polo continued: "I have found, in the short time I have held this position, that most of the clients have a very good understanding of

their use of the Skywerks software," and Polo has already had numerous compliments on his approach to problem solving. "Art is a great catch for us," said Martyn Olliver, Skywerks founder, "and is just the person we

The "Best License Plate Of The Month" Department



need to provide the kind of support our V3 clients demand." When Art isn't helping out V3 users, he enjoys travel, golfing and the great outdoors.