

## **A Background Document**

The Versitec 2000 Automotive Integrated Marketing Solution

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## **The Background**

Versitec 2000 Ltd is a marketing agency, with a particular specialisation in the development of web, new media and technical marketing solutions, and importantly the integration of these marketing channels with existing client database applications. Our extensive knowledge of, and dealings with the automotive sector over many years at a local, regional, and national level make Versitec 2000 the ideal partner for developing innovative and importantly 'useable' customer facing marketing solutions.

An understanding of current dealer activity in respect to their local web marketing, the relationship between this advertising channel and the manufacturers national site activity, and a knowledge of the incumbent Dealer Management Systems, has prompted the agency to develop a concept that we have called the Automotive Integrated Marketing Solution. (AIMS) is designed to allow dealers to be more targeted and importantly more proactive in their used car marketing, utilizing database management techniques and the relationship between these and high quality dynamic marketing materials.

## **Current Status – Web traffic**

Without generalising too much, most dealers currently rely heavily on manufacturer-routed enquiries for used cars and or Autotrader type search engine products. In more recent times the general public are more likely to visit the manufacturers sites initially to search for a particular used cars. Perceptually this should deliver more results on their search criteria, but there are a number of disadvantages to the local dealer / group on this route of enquiry: -

- Where the dealer does not hold comparable stock, the customer enquiring will be directed to the next and closest franchise dealer that can match the enquiry. This obviously pushes sales potential out of the dealer's home territory, which ideally the dealer would like to be servicing.
- Where there are no appropriate matches, such processes rely on the customer re-visiting the portal at a later time (not very likely!) This inevitably will reduce the number of test drive opportunities generated.
- The quality of presentation material available over the web although getting better is not as good as perhaps it could be.

Although very often dealers and dealer groups will have their own 'dedicated' used car web sites, in many instances these are unable to link to other databases or applications (Autotrader, the DMS) and usually have little to no pro-active functionality built in. AIMS is the interface solution that achieves just this along with much more!

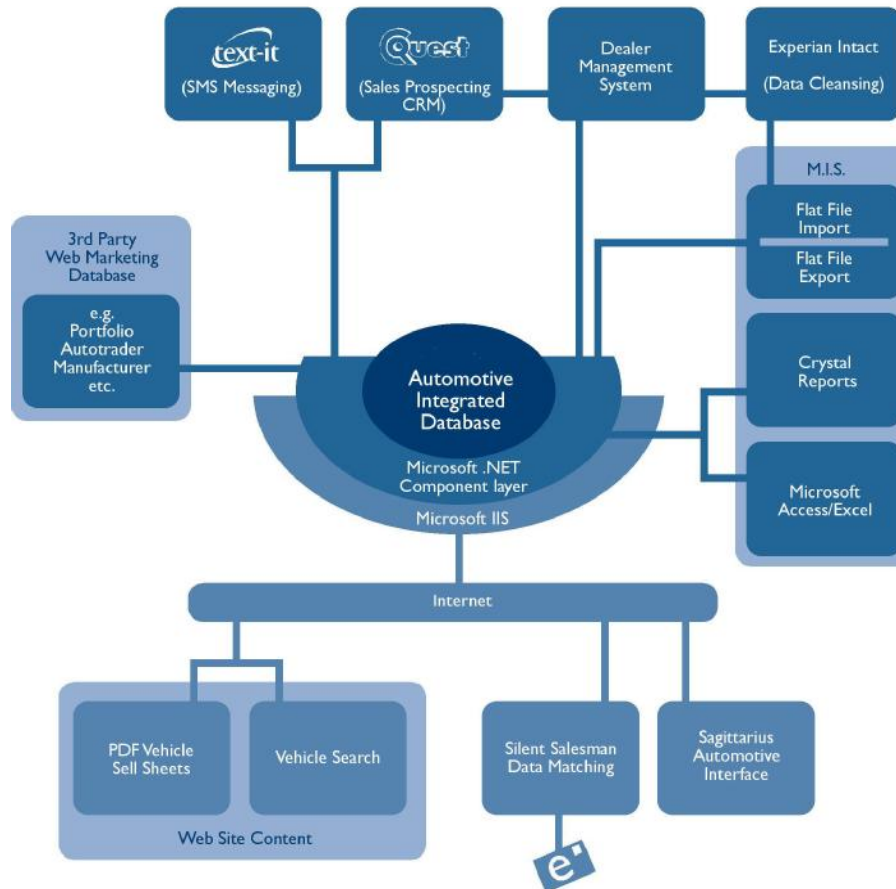
## **The Objectives behind AIMS**

- Provide a simple, automated and proactive solution for the positive marketing and management of used car stock records within the dealership environment, whilst having the ability to integrate with existing web-based solutions.
- To allow the dealer to regularly or automatically review records within the DMS that are 'maturing' at the appropriate points. Records that might represent potential matches for the 'required used car searches' being made via the used car web pages.
- Alert the Sales Manager to possible matches, so creating the opportunity to
  1. Source a potential used car for an enquiring customer (help meet the need)
  2. Create an additional sales opportunity with the current or historic customer (maximise customer retention levels).

- Using the database elements of the solution, allow customers searching the site to 'register' an interest in particular vehicle types, models, etc and subsequently make the database monitor incoming stock vehicles and or the DMS stock.
- Compile and email multi-page pdf vehicle description sheets (similar to but better than the Portfolio static vehicle spec sheets common to many franchises) automatically to the registered potential customer, and alert the SM of the activity when undertaken for salesmen follow up.
- Provide a used car stock control platform for the SM and salesmen, and real time used car search tool for customer facing or telephone enquiring potential customers. E.g. customer X phones enquiring about used car model Y priced at Z. A search on AIMS delivers three results that are instantly compiled and emailed as multi-page pdf vehicle description sheets. (you now have an email address for inexpensive future marketing). Equally these records could be printed out for showroom customers visiting the dealership, as a quality silent salesman tool.
- Be the main data capture and upload portal to populate the Automotive Integrated Database, and where required 'feed' Portfolio or other manufacturer and 3<sup>rd</sup> party browser upload systems currently being used (negating the need for double entry).
- Integrate easily with other existing and future applications so providing a 'total marketing solution' to the used car advertising requirement.
- Provide the confidence for the dealer to pro-actively and aggressively market 'their dealer used car web site' and so reduce the reliance on the micro-site association with the manufacturer-hosted sites.
- Maintain the dealers ability to continue fulfilling their obligations in respect to data upload to the manufacturer and or other 3<sup>rd</sup> party web sites, without the need for double data capture, upload and administration.
- Help the dealer to start benefiting from aspects of CRM (customer relationship marketing) where sales cycle and vehicle ownership trends are used to identify possible used car stock opportunities from existing and historic customers (DMS) but in a more automated and structured way.

## AIMS – What it will do!

The following schematic illustrates how AIMS will integrate with a number of applications and modules within your business and marketing platform.



## The Modules – A More Detailed Description

### Versitec 2000 Automotive Integrated Database

This is the core database that is fed and feeds the other applications illustrated, and is the main 'data engine' for the process.

### Microsoft .NET Component Layer

The industry standard .NET programming architecture that provides a scaleable, flexible solution allowing for integration with common IT applications.

### Microsoft IIS (Internet Information Services)

The web application server that serves the web pages and provides the line of communication back to the .NET applications.

### Internet

The AIMS system uses the Internet as a cost effective way in which to remotely access all of the products and applications, and adopts a 'thin' client approach requiring no client installed software applications.

### **Web Site Content**

This is the client front end of the system, where vehicle requirements can be searched on, results generated, and multi-page pdf vehicle specification sheets generated for viewing, downloading, or printing out.

### **Silent Salesman Data Matching**

This is the area where vehicle search requirements are logged and future-matched against the records held in the database. Multi-page pdf emails are created and despatched, and Sales Manager alerts generated about the automated marketing activity sent.

### **Versitec 2000 Automotive Interface**

The browser based system used for uploading vehicle and customer record data.

### **M.I.S. (Management Information System)**

The AIMS system supports standard database protocols and therefore integrates with common M.I.S tools.

### **Dealer Management System**

Where permissions allow AIMS will communicate with the DMS allowing access to the customer data and vehicle record files.

### **Intact Electronic Data cleansing**

AIMS could be used (in line with the DMS) to allow for electronic data cleansing of the customer record data.

### **C-Quest**

AIMS will integrate with other data applications such as C Quest, our Sales prospecting / marketing CRM tool

### **Text-it**

The solution is totally scalable meaning that new products like text-it, the automotive SMS marketing system can easily be included and hosted on the system. E.g. text alerts could be used to instantly inform a potential customer of a match against their requirements.

### **3rd Party Web Marketing DB**

Duplicate data entry is a major problem as more and more IT solutions become available to the industry. AIMS is designed in such a way that the database will 'feed' other 3<sup>rd</sup> party applications, such as Portfolio, other manufacture sites, Autotrader etc.

AIMS can deliver measurable benefit to dealers frustrated with either their current used car web based marketing, and or the inability for this activity to be more integrated, dynamic and pro-active in it's presentation.

Versitec 2000 is a company hugely experienced not just in traditional advertising disciplines and channels, but in web and new media solutions too. Our understanding of the automotive market is extensive, and it is because of this that we are able to identify many of the pitfalls and failings currently associated with marketing used cars over the Internet. We are confident that you will see the benefits of developing AIMS for your used car marketing operation.