

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE



ABOUT QUIRK AUTO DEALERS

Type: A family-run business that has sold and serviced automobiles in the State of Massachusetts for more than 30 years

Number of dealerships: 15 dealerships throughout Massachusetts

Location: Massachusetts, U.S.

Employees: 400

Website: www.quirkcars.com

CUSTOMER NEEDS

- A reduction in the high monthly telephone costs associated with operating more than 600 Centrex lines
- The ability to perform adds, moves, and changes quickly and effortlessly—without third-party intervention
- A reliable telephone system that delivers high quality voice communications
- The establishment of long distance telephone privileges by job requirement

“The Mitel system has been in place for about two years now and we have not had one bit of problem with it whatsoever. It just works.”

— Dave Thomas, IT Administrator,
Quirk Auto Dealers

Quirk Auto Dealers Revs Up Cost Savings, Customer Service, and Convenience with Mitel

The Company

If you're looking to buy an automobile in the State of Massachusetts, chances are you'll visit one of Quirk Auto Dealers' 15 dealerships during your search. Employing some 400 people, this family-run business has been selling and servicing automobiles in Massachusetts for more than 30 years.

The Challenge

During this time, as the company grew, it added dealerships and moved others. Consequently, Quirk wound up with a complex telephone system comprised of more than 600 Centrex lines. In some cases, a call to one line would be forwarded to two or three other lines before reaching its destination.

“Basically, we were paying for three Centrex lines to make one call,” said Quirk's IT administrator, Dave Thomas. “The system was very expensive.”

Costly line charges were not the only disadvantage. Moves, adds, and changes were also problematic. For instance, if Quirk wanted to switch a hunt group or add a voice mail box, Thomas had to phone the Centrex service provider, initiate a trouble ticket, and then wait for the work to be done. “It was not a simple process,” he said.

Quirk tried to install a Windows-based primary rate interface (PRI) system to replace its Centrex lines, but this new system performed poorly. “It was dropping calls,” said Thomas. “There was a time factor in switching calls. Things just were not working out very well.”



SOLUTION COMPONENTS

- Mitel 3300 IP Communications Platform (ICP)
- Mitel NuPoint Messenger™ IP
- Mitel Enterprise Manager

RESULTS

- Reduced monthly telephone bill by two-thirds
- Improved customer service by answering incoming calls quicker and directing calls more efficiently
- Vastly reduced the time and effort required to add voicemail boxes, change passwords, move extensions, call forward lines, and perform a host of other administrative tasks
- Re-used some analog phones in new system, saving capital expense
- Improved efficiency by introducing four-digit dialing
- Operated system for more than two years without a single problem

The Solution

“Reverting to the Centrex system, Quirk continued to explore its telephone options, knowing that it wanted to get rid of its traditional copper lines. A Mitel® channel partner proposed a Mitel communications solution that offered both the cost savings and the functionality Quirk was seeking. The Mitel system was the best fit for our company,” said Thomas, “so we went with it.”

Quirk installed the Mitel 3300 IP Communications Platform (ICP) at 13 dealerships. The 3300 ICP provides enterprise IP-PBX capability and a variety of convenient call-related applications. Quirk also added Mitel NuPoint Messenger™ IP for relaying, storing, and retrieving voice mail messages at each location. The solution included Mitel Enterprise Manager to simplify administration.

In addition, Quirk deployed Mitel phones in its service and parts departments as well as in its sales managers’ offices. To reduce capital costs, Quirk reused its analog phones for its sales staff—a reflection of the versatility of the 3300 ICP.


Quirk has also expanded and purchased a Chevrolet, Buick, and Hummer dealership in New Hampshire that they plan to upgrade the communications to a 3300 ICP to provide seamless integration.

The Results

Quirk’s Mitel solution produced an immediate return. “We dropped our phone bill to about a third of what it was,” said Thomas, “so it didn’t take too long to pay for the new system.”

The Mitel solution also helped Quirk improve customer service. Under the Centrex system, unanswered calls would bounce from one phone to another to another. With the new system, a call to the parts department, for instance, rings simultaneously at all the phones in that department, increasing the likelihood that the call gets answered promptly. And a new four-digit dialing capability lets employees quickly transfer callers throughout a dealership—or even between dealerships.

“From the customer’s standpoint, it looks like we’re just switching the call within the same building,” says Thomas. “Customers don’t even notice any difference.”



What's more, the Mitel solution has greatly simplified managing Quirk's communications system. Capitalizing on Enterprise Manager, Thomas is able to add voice mail boxes, change passwords, move extensions, call forward lines, and perform a host of other administrative tasks—all from his desktop.

"It's a very simple interface to add modules or change things," he says. "I can do it from one location for all of our dealerships, so there's a lot of time saving. It's all at my fingertips, so I don't have to make a phone call, create a trouble ticket, and wait for the work to happen, if it happens. It's worked out very well."

Quirk's Mitel solution has also allowed the company to set long-distance calling privileges by job function, a cost-saving capability unavailable with Centrex. As well, Quirk uses the new system to track the success of advertisements and other promotional efforts. By assigning a new and unique telephone number to an ad or direct response marketing campaign, Quirk can quickly assess response to these specific communications initiatives.

Reliability is as important in the communications industry as it is in the auto industry, and Thomas is quick to praise the dependability of Quirk's Mitel solution. "The system has been in place for about two years now," he said, "and we have not had one bit of problem with it whatsoever. It just works."

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GD 96_1478 PN 51012652RA-EN

