

# ACTIVANT EAGLE FOR J-CON PASSES THE TEST AT AUTOMOTIVE PARTS HEADQUARTERS



## PROFILE

**Headquarters:** St. Cloud, Minnesota

**Annual Sales:** Over \$60 million

**Sales Breakdown:** 70% installers,  
30% retail

**Number of Employees:** 650

**Locations:** 1 distribution center,  
66 company-owned stores,  
30 independent stores

**Founded:** 1920

**Affiliation:** The Alliance

**“Eagle for J-CON is the right solution for our stores. The counter is more efficient which improves productivity and delivers better customer service.”**

COREY BARTLETT  
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT  
AUTO PARTS HEADQUARTERS

## Executive Summary

Automotive Parts Headquarters (APH) is a dominant force in the upper mid-west serving the automotive aftermarket parts needs of Minnesota, Wisconsin, parts of North Dakota and the upper peninsula of Michigan. This leading organization recognized that Activant Eagle® for J-CON® was the right business management solution to accommodate its future growth and implemented it in

one of its nearly 100 stores as a test. The store manager immediately reported increased counter productivity and a faster learning curve for new employees. Passing the test, Eagle™ will be installed in all APH locations in the coming months.

## Eagle for J-CON—Right Solution for Today and the Future

With a move to a state-of-the-art distribution center in the spring of 2006, APH was able to increase business volume and has been aggressively growing. Approaching 100 locations, APH relies on Activant A-DIS® at its distribution center and Activant J-CON in its stores. “We were happy with our J-CON system, but recognized its limitations. It’s an older solution without a Windows interface or Internet access. We needed a system that could handle our business today and be ready for whatever we needed in the future,” explains Corey Bartlett, executive vice president. “We decided to be among the first to migrate to Activant’s new Eagle for J-CON automotive solution. We started in one location in Willmar that was conveniently located near our corporate IT team. We wanted to make sure that the solution worked seamlessly with A-DIS and would be a real improvement for our stores. Based on the success at Willmar, we’ll soon roll out Eagle to all of our locations.”

## Cover-to-Cover™ Saves One Sale After Another

“Our countermen rate Cover-to-Cover as their favorite module. With Eagle’s seamless integration with Cover-to-Cover, it’s simple for countermen to look up part pictures and specifications from within the Eagle application. Often a customer comes in with a broken part in hand needing a replacement. Cover-to-Cover lets our countermen quickly compare pictures with the actual part so the customer leaves with exactly what they need. We save the sale of at least one item every day because of Cover-to-Cover,” asserts Corey.

A side benefit realized by APH is the ability to identify and fix incorrectly boxed parts. “Occasionally we send parts to a customer who claims they are incorrect. We pick up the part, compare it with the Cover-to-Cover picture and determine whether it was boxed incorrectly. If so, then we quickly order another part to get to the customer. This has

happened five or six times since we began using Eagle and Cover-to-Cover,” explains Kevin McCarthy, store manager, Willmar Auto Value.

In the rare instances when items are not included in Cover-to-Cover or Activant PartExpert®, access to manufacturer Web sites proves invaluable. This is especially important locating parts for new vehicles. “Internet access has improved customer service. For example, we can go directly to the WIX’s Web site, look up a filter for a new VW and often find that item on our shelf. Again, we save a sale,” says Corey.

### Returns, Sales and Even Training in Half the Time

Returns are a business reality in the automotive aftermarket, and customers that return product don’t always have their receipt. With Eagle, it’s easier to pull up the old transaction and see the exact SKU number and price paid. “It’s much faster and more accurate to process returns. We see what was paid and can credit the correct amount back to the customer. One of our favorite features is the ability to reverse an entire transaction. All we have to do is press the ‘reverse transaction’ key, enter the invoice number and the entire transaction is reversed. The countermen have mentioned many times how much they like the speed and ease of this feature,” describes Kevin.

With the move to Eagle, Willmar Auto Value installed VIN Lookup at every station. “It’s now very easy for us to find the right part for customers that have limited English skills or don’t know the model year. They hand us the VIN, or we go out to their vehicle and get the VIN. We can then find the exact year, make and model in an instant. It’s dramatically faster for us to find the right part,” continues Kevin.

Eagle’s familiar Windows interface significantly reduces training time for new employees. “Counter men who are familiar with Windows just fly on Eagle. They grab the mouse and away they go. It’s much easier than the old system,” explains Kevin. “In fact, we trained a driver to work the counter, and within a week he was able to look up information without any trouble. It would have been at least twice as long on the old system.”

### Doing More with Less

Willmar Auto Value was recently short one counter man, but with the Eagle system the workload was manageable. “Before Eagle, it was painful when we were down a counter man. Now we’re keeping up with customers and have time to do physical counts in preparation for our physical inventory,” asserts Kevin. “It’s just faster and easier to do transactions with Eagle, which frees up time to spend on other activities that benefit the business.”

“Eagle is the right solution for our stores. The counter is more efficient which improves productivity and delivers better customer service. The Willmar store runs better. Customers have noticed the improvement. We look like a technically advanced, modern operation. I know that Eagle will keep us competitive,” concludes Corey.



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Corey Bartlett  
Executive VP  
Auto Parts Headquarters

### ABOUT ACTIVANT

Activant, a leading technology provider of business management solutions serving small and medium-sized businesses, offers customers tailored proprietary software, professional services, content, supply chain connectivity, and analytics. Activant’s systems are designed to help customers increase sales, boost productivity, operate more cost-efficiently, improve inventory turns and enhance trading partner relationships.

To learn more about this or other  
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