

ACTIVANT PRISM INCREASE

HELPS REVENUE AND PRODUCTIVITY AT DEB'S AUTO PARTS



PROFILE

Headquarters: Landing, New Jersey

Annual Sales: \$2 million

Sales Breakdown: 80% installers,
20% retail

Number of Employees: 16

Locations: 2

Founded: 85

Affiliation: Uniselect

“Every time we add a module, we see a return on our investment. Thanks to Activant, we run more efficiently and have increased sales.”

CLIVE TREHARNE

OWNER

DEB'S AUTO PARTS INC.

Executive Summary

Deb's Auto Parts Inc. (Deb's) has been serving the automotive aftermarket in northwest New Jersey for 20 years. Deb's built a strong business by exceeding customer expectations on delivery speed, having stock of needed parts and delivering the right part the first time. With a growth strategy to add satellite warehouses in markets with strong sales, Deb's relies on its Activant Prism® solution to accurately track

inventory in multiple locations, deliver outstanding counter productivity and increase customer satisfaction and thus build the business. “A key advantage we have is that we are technologically more advanced than our competitors. With our Prism solution, we have the information and the system to provide superior customer service,” asserts Clive Treharne, owner.

Inventory Management Technology that Pays for Itself

In the past 20 years, the number of parts has exploded, requiring Deb's to offer more than \$100 million in available inventory. “Twenty years ago, I knew most of the part numbers for popular parts like distributor caps and brake pads. There is no way I could do that today,” recalls Clive. “Instead, we rely on Prism to help us manage in this complex market.”

Deb's uses RF technology to assist in many aspects of inventory management. By using bar-coded labels and an RF gun, inventory accuracy has noticeably improved. “With bar-coded labels, we seldom have sales of our ‘unknown’ part number, which used to be our biggest seller. Taking it a step further, RF has transformed our physical inventory process. It used to take about six weeks from start to finish. With RF, it's less than two weeks and far more accurate,” claims Clive.

The receiving process at Deb's has also been accelerated through the use of RF. According to Clive, “Having an RF gun in receiving is much faster and much more accurate. Our payback on RF was six to eight months. It's another area of our business that was transformed with technology.”

Getting the Sale on the First Call

Key to automotive aftermarket success is the ability to answer inquiries while the customer is on the line. “You risk losing a sale when you have to call a customer back. With AConneX®, we don't have to call customers back just to research part availability,” explains Clive. “Instead, we can check our distributor's stock online and instantly quote price and delivery time. The customer gets a fast answer, and we make the sale on the first call. This kind of customer service means more sales for us.”

The customers at Deb's also use AConneX to see inventory and order online 24/7. "Every week, the percentage of our AConneX business grows and will continue to do so. For many of our customers, it's much more convenient," continues Clive. "We arrive in the morning, and we have orders waiting for us to fill. We get the sale, and they get to order when they want. It's a win-win."

Manually Entering Prices is History

Deb's buys from a number of vendors that aren't on an automated pricing program. In the past, those prices had to be manually entered, which was both time-consuming and ripe for errors. Today with Activant PowerPricer™, that task is extremely easy. "Vendors e-mail their prices in a spreadsheet, and we easily upload 30,000 parts into Prism. In fact, we have more prices in the system than we ever did before," says Clive. "Our tool supplier regularly sends us 200-page color catalogs that we give to our installers. Before, when installers ordered tools, they'd give us the part and page number, and we'd manually look up our cost and calculate a price. Now the supplier's price list is uploaded with PowerPricer. It's all in our system. We quickly and accurately quote prices."

One Right Part Instead of Three Parts and Two Returns

The old saying "a picture is worth a thousand words" has proven true at Deb's. Since installing Cover-to-Cover™, returns have dropped from as high as 20 percent to the low teens. Reducing returns has had a positive effect on counter productivity and inventory levels. "The typical scenario was for an installer to call needing 'xyz' part, and we'd have three parts that might be the correct part. Then we'd send all three and then go back and pick up the unused two. While the parts were out, we might reorder based on the physical count, not knowing which would come back," explains Clive. "Today with Cover-to-Cover, we send the installer pictures so that the installer orders only one correct part. We save a trip to pick up parts, our inventory is more accurate and the customers are very impressed when we show them the pictures."

Accurate Information Improves Margins

A notable business improvement at Deb's is increased margins from having more accurate cost and inventory data. Clive knows exactly how much each part costs and ensures his price delivers an appropriate return. "We no longer guess at pricing, and I know that some of my competitors still do. That's a huge advantage for us to be able to accurately price so that we win the business and deliver a return to the bottom-line," describes Clive.

"I rely on Activant to help run the business. I use several daily reports that indicate sales, margins and inventory. Every time we add a module, we see a return. Thanks to Activant, we run more efficiency and have increased sales," says Clive.



Deb's uses RF technology to improve inventory accuracy and to expedite the receiving process.

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
Activant products and services,
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