

SOUTHSIDE AUTO CUSTOMER

INCREASES EFFICIENCY AND SATISFACTION AFTER MIGRATING TO ACTIVANT PRISM



PROFILE

Headquarters: Port Alberni,
British Columbia

Annual Sales: \$1.2 million

Sales Breakdown: 50% installers,
20% light industrial, 30% retail

Number of Employees: 7

Locations: One

Founded: 1983

Affiliation: Uni-Select

“Series 12 customers should migrate as soon as possible to Prism. The only regret they will have is having waited so long.”

DON MALLON
OWNER
SOUTHSIDE AUTO

Executive Summary

Located in the central interior of picturesque Vancouver Island, Southside Auto serves automotive repair shops, logging companies, industrial businesses and retail customers. In order to increase functionality and electronically order with its main supplier, Southside Auto migrated from Activant Series 12® to Activant Prism® in July 2005. Soon after migration, Southside recognized

gains in the form of increased efficiency, improved customer service and more confidence in inventory and stocking levels.

Series 12 to Prism is a Logical Progression

“It wasn’t one critical need or key feature of Prism that convinced us to make the move. It was a number of features. Our main supplier Uni-Select stopped supporting electronic ordering through Series 12. Our competitors had better electronic catalogs,” explains Don Mallon, owner. “It became apparent that it was time to make the change so we could take advantage of the power of the Prism solution.”

Activant consulting resources helped convert data and train employees so that on the day of go-live, it went smoothly. Activant was on-site for the first two days to ensure employees understood how to use the new system. “We closed business on a Monday with Series 12 and at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, began running on Prism. Overall, the conversion was very smooth,” continues Don.

Improved Customer Service and Counterperson Efficiency

Some of the most visible differences Southside Auto immediately noticed were at the counter. Facing competition from major auto part chains, Southside Auto credits Prism with improving customers’ perceptions of its business. “Our countermen can do just about everything they need to do without leaving the counter. They look up prices, prepare quotes, check availability, and order from our supplier— all without the customer having to wait. It’s much more efficient,” states Don.

Southside Auto customers appreciate the increased professionalism. Countermen stand at the counter and ask descriptive questions while using the electronic catalog and Activant Cover-to-Cover®. Invoices contain more detail and make it easier for customers to trace parts to the vehicles being repaired. “We look more state-of-the-art which gives customers increased confidence in us,” says Don.

Better Inventory Management and Returns Processing

“The number one challenge for a small operation like ours is inventory. We need breadth of products to make sales, but can't be burdened with too much inventory. With Prism we have the confidence that we won't have zero stock on the parts customers want. We make the sale instead of having customers phone our competitors,” asserts Don.

Returns are more accurate with Prism. It's easy for counter men to see exactly when a part was bought and how much the customer paid. The invoice and the credit have the dates, part number, and exact amount paid and credited. The customer is credited the proper amount and it's easy to trace the part back to Southside inventory, or a supplier. This takes guesswork out of the process and presents a more professional look to the customer.

Customized Pricing and Discounts

Prism allows for flexible pricing by individual installer and product. Instead of offering blanket discounts, Southside Auto is fine-tuning pricing to offer discounts appropriate for historical purchase volumes. “We'll see more gross margin with the ability to customize discounts. We have far more pricing flexibility that we ever had before,” notes Don.

Increased Competitiveness and Overall Business Productivity

Many tasks are more automated in Prism, which both frees staff time and reduces the opportunity for errors. “The monthly close process is more automated. The daily close takes a fraction of the time. Instead of waiting for the back-up to run and for daily reports to stage, I just take the cash box, put it in the safe and walk out the door. We get hours back every week,” remarks Don. “At the end of the month, I was staying an extra couple of hours to run all the monthly reports. I don't have to do that anymore either.”

Stock order reports automatically run overnight and are waiting for Don when he arrives in the morning. Within minutes, he's reviewed the order, electronically sent it to the supplier and has a confirmation of what will be shipped to Southside Auto. Before, he had to manually create a report, review it, print it and fax it to the supplier. “Prism gives me piece of mind and makes it easy for others to pick up my tasks if I'm not around. I spend far less time explaining how to get things done,” says Don.

The gains from Prism permeate the business. Tasks are much more automated. The business is more professional looking to customers. It's easier to check stock and electronically order from the primary supplier. According to Don, “All Series 12 customers should migrate as soon as possible to Prism. The migration was a 'piece of cake'. The only regret they will have is having waited so long.”



Using the electronic catalog and Activant Cover-to-Cover it is easier for customers to trace parts to the vehicles being repaired.

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, please call 888.463.4700.



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