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➔ CASE STUDY

Auto Dealership Deploys *i-Sight Complaint Handling Software* to Ensure Increased Customer Loyalty: 'It Really is Fantastic'

"Our goal is to create loyal customers. The i-Sight software plays a vital role by enabling us to record, track and manage every complaint quickly and easily. With i-Sight, nothing is ever left to chance."

Customer name: Michael's Toyota

- Challenge:**
- Customer complaints were being handled inconsistently, without standardized procedures and follow-up to ensure resolution
 - Senior managers had no way of monitoring the volume of complaints and no easy means of ensuring that each issue was dealt with appropriately
 - Inevitably, some complaints were overlooked or fell between the cracks, contributing to customer dissatisfaction and loss of revenue

- Solution:**
- Selected i-Sight Complaint Handling Software for its customizability and flexibility
 - All information is collected in a common database, whether received in person or by email, phone, letter, fax, etc.
 - i-Sight's simple web interface enables staff to record new cases quickly and easily
 - Automatic alerts ensure that every case is followed through to resolution
 - Senior managers are kept fully informed and can see at a glance where problems are occurring

- Results:**
- Company executives no longer worry about complaints falling through the cracks
 - Complaints are resolved quickly and professionally, leading to higher levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty
 - Managers have the information they need to deal with problems proactively and address root causes that previously might have gone undetected

Dan Warshawer doesn't hide his enthusiasm. "I've been in the car business all of my life and I've never seen anything like this," he says. "It really is fantastic. I love it."

Warshawer, the Operations Manager of Michael's Toyota in Bellevue, WA, isn't describing a new model of automobile, although he has been known to get pretty excited about those, too. Instead, he's talking about i-Sight Complaint Handling Software from Customer Expressions, the leader in customizable, web-based solutions for managing complaints, suggestions and other forms of customer feedback.

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At Michael's Toyota, i-Sight keeps track of customer feedback and ensures that every complaint is dealt with efficiently and professionally. The result: improved customer satisfaction leading to higher sales, more referrals and more repeat business.

"Our goal at Michael's Toyota is to create loyal customers," Warshawer explains. "The i-Sight software plays a vital role by enabling us to record, track and manage every complaint quickly and easily. With i-Sight, nothing is ever left to chance."

THE CHALLENGE

Michael's Toyota (www.michaelstoyota.com) is the largest dealer of new and certified used Toyotas in the five-state Pacific Northwest area. Family owned and operated, the company prides itself on competitive pricing, knowledgeable staff and superior customer service.

Until recently, however, Michael's Toyota lacked a comprehensive system and common set of procedures for managing customer complaints and feedback. Instead, each new case was handled separately, more or less on an ad hoc basis. Sometimes a customer's complaint would be written down and filed away, together with a note explaining what had been done to solve the problem. In other instances, the complaint might be handled on the spot, with no written record of either the problem or the resolution. Since there was no central database of customer feedback, company managers had no convenient means of looking up or monitoring individual cases and no easy way of detecting trends or patterns in the dealership's complaint history. Often, in fact, managers were not even aware that a customer was unhappy. Nor could an employee in one department – service, for example – easily check to see whether a customer had already complained about a particular problem on a previous occasion.

When Dan Warshawer joined the dealership as operations manager in 2005, he quickly determined that the company needed a centralized complaint-tracking system. "Pretty soon after I arrived here, I implemented a rough system for gathering customer information by hand. Next, I asked one of our IT people if he could put together a computerized tracking system, but what he came up with was too crude and not really what I wanted. At that point, I started looking around for a proven case management system that would really allow us to manage complaints quickly and effectively."

In addition to recording cases, Warshawer wanted a complaint-handling solution that would make it easy to search complaints by customer, by department or by any other relevant detail. His goal was a system that would ensure every complaint was dealt with as quickly and as professionally as possible, to ensure the highest possible levels of customer satisfaction.

THE SOLUTION

Warshawer's search for a fast, flexible complaint-handling system soon led him to i-Sight Complaint Handling Software from Customer Expressions. The i-Sight software is fully customizable, which meant that it could be tailored to fit the dealership's existing business processes. It is also extremely easy to use, so employees do not waste precious time entering and updating cases. And i-Sight is web-based and remotely hosted, so there is no requirement for special onsite hardware or technical expertise. The entire system is designed and managed by the professionals at Customer Expressions, so companies like Michael's Toyota can enjoy the benefits of a world-class case-management system without any of the hassles.

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THE SOLUTION

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"Once I saw the i-Sight web demo, I was sold," Warshawer says. "From that point on, everything went smoothly. Within two weeks, the team at Customer Expressions had a beta site ready for us so that we could begin testing." Over the following few weeks, Warshawer and his crew put the system through its paces and offered suggestions for improvements. For example, he says, "we got them to change some of the dropdown fields" in order to conform to standard auto industry terminology.

In less than three months from initial contact, the new Michael's Toyota complaint-handling system was officially up and running.

One of the things Warshawer likes most about the i-Sight solution is the ease with which new cases can be entered. "I really have to hand it to the people who designed this software," he says. "I can literally get a new case loaded in 30 seconds. That's an important benefit because it means there is never any excuse for not recording the details of a customer's complaint in the system. In fact, I've informed all our managers that if we ever receive a complaint from a customer and there is no record of that call in i-Sight, we have a problem."

Another key benefit of the i-Sight system is the ability to view a complete case history with just a few keystrokes, based on any one of a series of variables. For example, a senior manager could pull up all complaints involving a particular service adviser, or all complaints from a specific customer. "Some people come back and complain after every event, whether it involves our parts department, sales or service. We hope that's not happening but if it does, the i-Sight system allows us to see what's happening and to get to the root cause – in other words, what's going on and what's going wrong."

Warshawer describes i-Sight as a "proactive tool to make sure that our managers take action when problems occur." Once it is entered in the system, each new case is automatically brought to the attention of everyone at the dealership who needs to know about it – be it the business manager, the parts manager, the service manager, the controller, the operations manager or the owner. In cases where the customer has contacted Toyota directly, prompting an email from the manufacturer to the dealership, the information can easily be copied and pasted directly into i-Sight to ensure that it receives the appropriate attention.

"Before we installed i-Sight, none of us knew what the other departments were doing," Warshawer explains. "The advantage of i-Sight is that it lets each of us see at a glance what's going on. If I need to get involved, I can take action. Most of the time I don't need to do that, but at least I know a problem exists. Before, I might never have known. Someone on our staff might just have been dealing with it on his own. The left hand never knew what the right hand was doing."

Warshawer isn't just pleased with the i-Sight software – he's equally enthusiastic about the team at Customer Expressions who designed and implemented the solution. How enthusiastic? Warshawer praises Customer Expressions' rapid turnaround and "unheard-of great customer service."

"Let me put it this way," he adds. "They made me feel like I was a \$5 billion account instead of Michael's Toyota."