

AUTOVIA Unveils New System for Automotive Part Distributors; Enhanced Internet Service Gives Distributors Greater Control Over Proprietary Information

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In its ongoing effort to connect automotive distributors to their repair shop customers via the Internet, AUTOVIA(TM) introduced its new service upgrade to allow automotive part distributors to reach out to new customers. In addition, AUTOVIA is providing new features that allow distributors to choose what information is presented to repair shops on the network.

The company's new preferred vendor system creates an instant link between distributors and their key repair shop accounts that further their existing one-to-one relationships. Repair shops can now order parts from their designated single preferred vendor instantly. On one screen, repair shops will be able to view their preferred vendor's parts availability and negotiated pricing exclusively, with no other vendor being viewed on this screen.

If a parts distributor cannot meet a shop's service requirements, the repair shop can access its alternate vendors on a separate screen. Each distributor on this "multiple vendor" screen now has the ability to choose which customers are shown costs, reducing the distributor's concern about price shopping.

Distributors may also use this new technology to reach out to new customers. AUTOVIA provides distributors with a continually updated list of local shops that are purchasing through the network. Automotive parts distributors may invite shops, who are currently not buying parts from them, to set up an account and add them to their list of suppliers. AUTOVIA, which was created to be a virtual counterman, is the next generation replacement for distributors' costly and slow proprietary terminals.

"This is a win-win situation for automotive part distributors," said Rod Georgiu, founder and CEO of AUTOVIA. "Not only does AUTOVIA cut down on the cost associated with the automotive parts business, but it also enhances existing relationships between distributors and shops.

"By listening to our customers, AUTOVIA has created a service where distributors have a choice in how their online business is run," said Georgiu.

Other distributor advantages include:

- Using AUTOVIA as a marketing tool to tie in key repair accounts
- Providing shops with faster access to inventory
- Reducing distributor and repair shop ordering terminal overhead costs as well as reduce the financial burden support and training can have on their bottom line

- Increasing visibility of inventory including slow-moving items
- Increasing productivity by freeing employees from laborious phone calls at stock checks
- Receiving market share, transaction, and true lost sales reporting that helps distributors benchmark their position in the marketplace
- Increasing awareness of distributors' priority status with their customers

AUTOVIA's service is free of charge for repair shops. Distributors pay a small transaction fee for each order they receive from registered customers. This minimal fee is significantly less than the 10-12 percent in extra costs that stem from processing orders by the traditional phone method.

AUTOVIA facilitates the procurement and distribution of automotive and truck replacement parts by connecting parts wholesalers and repair shops in local markets over the Internet. AUTOVIA's service utilizes a comprehensive electronic parts catalog and integrates directly into the wholesaler's business system. Repair shops are now in control of automating the traditional time consuming process of searching for and ordering parts. AUTOVIA enhances existing business relationships between the automotive parts distributors and repair shops, as well as greatly improving their overall business operations by increasing sales, reducing part returns, and improving their staff productivity. Sellers significantly reduce their order processing cost, while buyers get their parts faster and have more time to perform repairs. Launched in 1998 by a team of leading automotive industry experts, including Rod Georgiu, founder of ALLDATA, AUTOVIA is backed by several venture funds, including Internet Capital Group (Nasdaq:ICGE), Crosspoint Ventures and Hearst Corporation. Its integrated web-based Electronic Parts Catalog includes more than 650 national brands. Based in Sacramento, AUTOVIA currently offers service in selected metropolitan markets and plans to expand into the nation's top markets. More information about the company can be found at: www.autovia.net.

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