



AutoNation

About Customer

AutoNation provides new and pre-owned vehicle sales and service at more than 300 U.S. locations, online, and through its store-to-door delivery model. The company is known for its excellence and innovation in the automotive retail experience.

www.autonation.com

Geo

North America

Industry

Automotive

Solution Area

Accelerate Core Applications
Activate Real-Time Analytics

Products in Use

Pure Storage® FlashArray™
Pure Storage FlashBlade®
Pure1®
Pure Evergreen Storage™

AutoNation Reimagines Car Sales and Service with Pure

AutoNation is transforming the automotive retail experience through a highly differentiated sales and service model – both in its stores and online. AutoNation Express, the company's online and mobile-optimized sales experience, lets customers not only browse car inventory and options, but complete an entire purchase, lease, or trade-in transaction in just minutes.

AutoNation Express relies on sales and service transaction data on thousands of vehicles and from millions of customers. To manage this high volume of data, AutoNation needed fast, reliable storage and a technology partner that could support its business growth now and in the future. The company turned to Pure Storage.

"When customers interact with us, we want their experience to be better than anywhere else. Pure Storage is a critical partner in our ability to continue expanding our digital services and deliver an unmatched experience to our customers."

ADAM RASNER,
VICE PRESIDENT
TECHNOLOGY OPERATIONS
AT AUTONATION

Impact on AutoNation



Transitioned to a digital-first automotive retailer in just three months



45% of sales now online, informed by deep customer insights



1,200 – 1,600 more cars sold monthly

Challenges



Improve storage performance to handle new digital services



Control costs and avoid disruption associated with storage upgrades



Provide flexible storage to meet new and increasing customer demands

Results



Supports TBs of vehicle data and thousands of sales transactions monthly



Access to latest storage technology to deliver uninterrupted services to customers



Provides scalable storage foundation for growth

Bringing Car Sales into the Digital Era

In a world where people can get meals delivered in minutes and online orders shipped fast and free within hours, customer expectations are higher than ever. For AutoNation, this presented an opportunity to, once again, set a new standard for excellence in the industry.

“The auto retail industry was overdue for digital transformation,” says Adam Rasner, Vice President, Technology Operations at AutoNation. “We wanted to differentiate ourselves by providing customers with an end-to-end, digital sales and service experience.”

To deliver on this goal, the company introduced AutoNation Express, an online and mobile-optimized experience that speeds and simplifies the digital and in-store customer experience. Customers can shop by vehicle type, options, and price; calculate payments; structure financing; estimate trade-in values; arrange store-to-door delivery; schedule service appointments; and sell vehicles in minutes.

Unmatched Experiences Built on Data

Providing customers with real-time vehicle inventory and a truly personalized experience is made possible by leveraging data on more than 75,000 vehicles and from nine million customers. One of AutoNation’s strategies is its in-house “Equity Mining Tool,” which automatically appraises a customer’s current vehicle and identifies a replacement vehicle for a similar or lower payment. The tool also considers data such as other household vehicles, a propensity to purchase, and service history as part of its assessment.

The Equity Mining Tool integrates with Customer 360, a proprietary CRM application with near real-time sales and service transaction data. By bringing all this data together, AutoNation can deliver personalized car recommendations to its customers.

Maintaining the proprietary applications and the vast amount of data required to deliver an excellent customer experience is no easy feat. That’s why AutoNation replaced its legacy storage with Pure Storage FlashArray//X and FlashBlade, both managed via the Pure1 platform.

FlashArray delivers the improved performance and resiliency AutoNation needed to run its Equity Mining Tool, CRM platform, and the AutoNation Express experience. Pure’s Evergreen Storage subscription model and non-disruptive upgrades allow the IT team to focus on priority projects instead of managing infrastructure.

“Pure’s FlashArray gives us the high-performance storage we need to deliver fast, flawless digital experiences to our customers,” says Rasner. “And, with Evergreen, as we continue to expand our digital services, we no longer have to worry about the costs or disruption of upgrades.”



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AutoNation is also in the process of migrating its Splunk environment to FlashBlade for higher performance analytics. As its customer base and data volumes continue to grow, the company wants to ensure its critical environments are running on a unified fast file and object storage platform that provides the scalability, reliability, and efficiency that FlashBlade provides.

Pure1’s VM Analytics also helps Rasner’s team manage its entire VMware environment, including VMware Site Recovery Manager, to enable disaster recovery.

Accelerating the Store-to-Door Experience

When the COVID-19 pandemic closed showrooms across the country, AutoNation experienced a couple of months of slumping sales when customers could not visit. Rasner’s team rose to the occasion, accelerating the development of AutoNation Express.

“When our showrooms closed, that initiative took on a new sense of urgency,” Rasner says. “Projects originally planned for 18- or 24-month development timelines shifted to ‘all hands on deck, let’s get this done in three months.’”

In the end, accelerating AutoNation Express paid off handsomely. Today, with 45% of its sales online, AutoNation Express is helping the company sell 1,200-1,600 more vehicles monthly than it did before.

Refining After-Sales Service

AutoNation continues to consider new ways to innovate. For example, today, some brands of AutoNation services have mechanics with virtual reality (VR) goggles and special gloves that, supported by master technicians at the manufacturer, can guide them to ensure customers get access to the best repairs available. The team is also building a mobile app to enable customers to engage in a video experience with mechanics providing after-sales service.

For AutoNation, providing a personalized customer experience is a central tenet, and Rasner’s team delivers what the business, and customers, need. “Our differentiator as a company is the technology,” Rasner says. “When customers interact with us, we want their experience to be better than anywhere else. Pure Storage is a critical partner in our ability to continue expanding our digital services and deliver an unmatched experience to our customers.”

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