

CASE STUDY

MOHAWK HONDA

100 Years of Improving Customer
Connections Through Technology



VinSolutions

OVERVIEW

USING TECHNOLOGY TO PROVIDE THE BEST CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE POSSIBLE.

In celebration of their 100th year of business,

Mohawk Honda donated \$100,000 to local charities and performed 10,000 hours of community service.

Mohawk Honda has been a family-owned dealership, serving the Schenectady, New York, community for the past 100 years. In that time, they have seen a lot of change in the industry, but their core philosophies have remained constant—their passion for providing a great customer experience, offering a great place to work, and being an active part of their community.

This company culture has helped Mohawk Honda become the number one volume dealership north of New York City. One key to Mohawk Honda's success: **implementing advanced technologies like VinSolutions Automotive Intelligence and Automotive Marketing Platform.** The dealership has always been open to implementing new technologies to improve the business. And as long as they align with the company's core values and further its customer and employee-focused business model, the technologies pass the test.

"We are going to try a hundred different ways and new technologies and new processes to make sure that we show customers we value their time," said Andy Guelcher, general manager of Mohawk Honda. "That is our value proposition. We look at new technology with an open mind to really listen and understand how it could help us with our customers."

CHALLENGE

EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY WITH A PEOPLE-CENTRIC APPROACH



As Mohawk Honda's reputation for providing excellent customer service has grown, so too has the company's customer base. And while business growth is always good, an increase in customers over the years also led to an abundance of customer data. With limited resources and more potential customers in the market, Mohawk Honda looked to **VinSolutions Automotive Marketing Platform** and **VinSolutions Automotive Intelligence** to ensure that the company continued to deliver a highly personalized buying experience.

Even with Mohawk Honda's open-minded approach, it's not always easy to find technology that can improve human connection. But taking a people-centric approach to technology has led Mohawk Honda to implement tools that stand the test of time, including VinSolutions CRM and Automotive Intelligence.

"We have always been early adopters of new technologies to adapt to market changes and the needs of our customers," said Kristian VanBibber, Sales Manager at Mohawk Honda. "We use technology that provides our salespeople with smooth, repeatable processes based on the customer's needs. And we leverage tech to give managers all the information they need to make intelligent business decisions—both now and in the future."

CHALLENGE

IMPROVING HUMAN CONNECTION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

Mohawk Honda has been impressed with how Connect Automotive Intelligence and Automotive Marketing Platform have humanized their customer interactions and improved job satisfaction at the dealership.

“Because we’re using this technology, we’re able to improve the interactions that we have with customers and really tailor conversations based on their interests,” Andy said.

By aggregating customer data from VinSolutions CRM and from popular auto research sites Autotrader, Kelley Blue Book and their own Dealer.com website, VinSolutions empowers Mohawk Honda to understand where customers stand in the buying process and which messages will be most effective in reaching them.

Connect Automotive Intelligence has also helped managers keep track of salesperson engagement, follow up with leads, and improve employee training. All of these capabilities combined have resulted in a better buying experience for the customer and a more satisfied sales staff.

“The company’s philosophy as it relates to employee and customer satisfaction has been consistent for a hundred years,” Andy said. **“Whatever is going to help make the job easier, make the experience better for the customer and help our employees feel more satisfied in their roles at the dealership, is ultimately going to help us.”**



Andy Guelcher
General Manager | Mohawk Honda

CHALLENGE

PRIORITIZING PERSONALIZATION IN THE CAR BUYING PROCESS

Mohawk Honda uses VinSolutions Automotive Intelligence to gain insights into each customer's car buying journey from aggregated data. Features like Buying Signals, for example, show the sales team which make and model an individual customer is most likely to purchase. **With these unique customer insights, dealership staff are able to more quickly and easily tailor recommendations based on individual interests.**

The dealership's business development center also uses VinSolutions Automotive Intelligence to personalize the car buying experience. Through an easy-to-understand interface, **the Engagement Strength feature helps BDC employees see how far along customers are in the buying process.** Based on a recorded history of customer interactions, sales staff can then reach out to answer questions, be of assistance, and make efforts to keep them engaged in the buying process.



BENEFITS

MESSAGING THE RIGHT CUSTOMERS AT THE RIGHT TIME

Mohawk Honda has developed a substantial customer database after a century in business. But these customers are all at different stages in the vehicle ownership and purchase process. And each customer has unique needs and preferences.

"If we were simply trying to connect with everyone in our database, we'd miss the real opportunities," said Kristian.

"Automotive Intelligence helps us focus the efforts of our sales team. We are able to identify which customers are most likely to buy, which ones are most engaged, and what resources they are using. Are they on Kelley Blue Book? Are they on Autotrader looking for trade values?"

One of Mohawk's many significant achievements: retaining roughly 60% of lease customers, at a pace that exceeds national lease retention rates by 10 to 15%.

"For our lease customers, we are looking to get them out early or save them fees before they exceed their mileage," said Kristian.

"We've looked closely at the data to understand the leasing and retention cycles for our customers. We have refined our processes and alerts to understand when our customers would most benefit from a lease renewal."

"Instead of waiting until 90 or 45 days remaining on the lease, we are initiating the conversation about eleven months out. This gives each customer the chance to save money and determine the best route for them."

But it's not just lease renewals where Mohawk Honda claims superior results. Mohawk also leverages Automotive Marketing Platform for retargeting, lead nurturing, building pipeline, and other personalized campaigns.

Leveraging unique data insights and a wide variety of customizable campaigns, Mohawk can deliver for customers regardless of their needs.

"Everything starts with being a pillar of the community and serving our customers. We understand that they have choices, and we deeply appreciate their business. **So we are focused on putting the right opportunities in front of them that deliver the right value at the right time. Automotive Marketing Platform lets us do that efficiently, and with the right messages, tailored to where each customer is in their buying cycle,**" added Kristian.

RESULTS

UNDERSTANDING STAFFING AND HIRING NEEDS



40%

approximate increase
in Mohawk Honda



25-30 cars

average sales per
month by Mohawk
Honda salesperson
using Connect
Automotive Intelligence



60%

lease retention



With Connect Automotive Intelligence, Mohawk Honda salespeople have greater control over their own success. The dealership has found a way to be even more proactive, by giving their people the tools they need to find new sales opportunities. **And because they're using VinSolutions Automotive Intelligence, dealership staff can be confident they are using their time more efficiently to pursue customers at the right time in the buying process.** They're using data to work smarter.

"The huge depth of reporting in VinSolutions CRM allows us to manipulate our processes and structure them the right way to hit the customer at the right time with the right information based on their buying cycles. We know everything we need to know to effectively communicate with our customers," said Kristian.

Mohawk Honda also uses the data from VinSolutions CRM, Automotive Marketing Platform and Automotive Intelligence to understand its own staffing needs. By assessing the available opportunity among customers for sales, service and trade-ins, Mohawk can make informed hiring decisions.

"Our people are crucial to our mission, and we want to hire people based on an accurate understanding of in-market, near-future and long-term opportunities," noted Kristian. "You've got so much opportunity in your CRM that you could very easily look at it and say 'I need 10 people to do this job'—but you can't operate that way as a business. **With VinSolutions I feel more confident while building out the department because we deeply understand customer demand and intention to buy.**"

