



Retail

Wireless Communication Drives Business for the O'Brien Automotive Team

The O'Brien Automotive Team is an automotive industry leader in the sales, service, and leasing of twelve different automotive brands of cars, trucks, vans and SUVs. It also provides parts, service and bodywork. The company has locations in California, Florida, Georgia and Illinois and employs more than 750 people.

Daily Use

- Employee Communication
- Customer Interaction

Solution

- KIRK Wireless Server 600v3 systems
- KIRK Repeaters
- KIRK 4040 handsets

Results and Benefits

- Enhanced customer service
- Customers provided with easier access to parts and service personnel
- Handsets provide significantly greater reliability and coverage than previous system
- Significant noise reduction on campus
- Increased productivity of sales people since they can communicate with customers at all times

Always a very competitive industry, the United States' retail car sales market is becoming increasingly so in an unstable economy. That's why the O'Brien Automotive Team is committed to offering the industry's best customer experience to differentiate itself from competitors.

"Happy customers lead to repeat sales and service business," says O'Brien IT Manager, Dave Stear. "Superior customer service at every level is an important O'Brien value

Enhancing the Experience

At the O'Brien Auto Park of Urbana, one of the company's four Illinois outposts, Polycom wireless telephones are having a major impact on customer satisfaction.

Industry research indicates that a typical customer calls a car dealership three to four times before purchasing a car. On the 40-acre Urbana property, which includes four single-story buildings, one two-story building, large outdoor display fields and requires a golf cart to traverse, connecting with the right O'Brien staff member on the first attempt was often a challenge. That's why Stear and the IT team implemented Polycom's KIRK Wireless Telephone solution.

"We had tried voice over wireless LAN technologies for use by the mobile staff previously without success," he explains. "But, we'd deployed the IP 501 Polycom VoIP desktop phones and were very satisfied, so we decided to give the Polycom KIRK system a try."

According to Stear, the addition of Polycom KIRK wireless telephones has provided existing customers with an improved service experience, and potential customers with a more peaceful shopping environment. "We're dealing with the educated customer in a changing auto business. First of

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Dave Stear, IT Manager, O'Brien Automotive

all, customers will not accept not being able to contact their sales rep directly. Furthermore, more and more customers will no longer accept the widely used overhead paging. We've overcome both these issues with the wireless telephone solution."

The Right Solution

The O'Brien Auto Park of Urbana has installed 18 KIRK Wireless Server 600v3 systems, 13 KIRK Repeaters and almost 100 KIRK handsets

"It's all about the handsets," says Stear. "We need sleek business-grade devices that can take drops to the floor without breaking, and the KIRK phones offer that. We also get full coverage and seamless handover across the entire 40-plus acre campus. In fact, we can enter and exit any buildings within the facility while on call and not drop any calls."

Getting Results

The implementation of the KIRK wireless handset solution has resulted in a drastic improvement in the way O'Brien employees handle incoming calls. Thanks to a significant reduction in calls forwarded to voicemail and shortened hold times, O'Brien customers are dealt with more effectively and professionally. Missed calls are nearly eliminated because employees have access to incoming calls from anywhere onsite.

Stear sees this improved communication affecting the company's bottom line. "Easier access to parts and service personnel is something that is helping us retain customers," he says.

Noise reduction was one of the primary goals of the KIRK implementation. Not only has overhead paging been virtually eliminated, replaced by quiet handsets that vibrate and send text-messages, the dealership easily meets current and future noise abatement requirements.

The KIRK wireless handset solution provides real-time communication among O'Brien employees in the lot, the garage, the sales and service departments, and even the car wash, which boosts overall employee productivity.

"We've seen productivity increase significantly since deploying the KIRK solution," says Stear. "It just makes sense to keep your salespeople on the floor selling, not running back and forth for telephone calls."

"Another key benefit of the KIRK solution is that our staff members don't end up using their private cell phones for work," says Stear. "We want to constantly monitor and improve our service, and we want to make sure that calls can be tracked. This can be done easily when call traffic is processed through our on-site PBX, and we keep the customer database in our systems – not in the directory of private staff cell phones. This

way we get better marketing information and better ROI on our wireless solution. In addition, we can also ensure that service calls are responded to promptly as our services coordinators can now pick up calls directly on their mobile handset wherever they may previously, these calls would have been directed to voicemail."

Moving Forward

Customer service has always been a cornerstone of the O'Brien Automotive Team mission and will continue to be moving forward. With the successful implementation of the Polycom KIRK wireless solution at the Urbana site, the company is in the process of rolling it out to other locations around the United States in order to reap the same customer relations and productivity benefits.

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