

Helion Saves Mossy Automotive Group Over \$400K by Upgrading IT Infrastructure



Summary

Mossy Automotive Group, which operates 14 stores in the San Diego area, grew to that size without a unified technology strategy in place. As a result, they were experiencing cost overruns, security vulnerabilities, and other issues related to IT.

Working with Helion, Mossy was able to overhaul their IT infrastructure to eliminate waste, improve performance, and reduce risk, saving over \$400,000 in the process.

The Problem

Like many auto groups that have grown gradually, Mossy's IT infrastructure was not built according to a master plan.

"We have 1,200 employees using over 1,000 PCs," says John Epps, CFO of Mossy Automotive Group. "For years, we added equipment on an as-needed basis, so our network was a hodge-podge of PCs, operating systems, network connections, and off-the-shelf software."

Eventually, that hodge-podge infrastructure started to cause major issues. Mossy was expanding at such a rate that internal IT staff had problems keeping up with growing

demands. Server crashes, network glitches, and carrier issues were contributing to increased system downtime, which brought down productivity.

"We had too many instances where our network was down for more than a day, which has a huge negative impact on our daily gross," says Epps. "We decided we had to do something."

The Solution

Mossy Automotive Group's CPA firm referred Epps to Helion, an IT managed services provider that focuses exclusively on dealerships.

The first step to upgrading Mossy's IT network was an evaluation of the current infrastructure by Helion's IT consultants. After the assessment, Helion made the following recommendations:

Switch to a new data network provider.

Helion switched Mossy Automotive Group to a new data network carrier that provided 1,000% more Internet bandwidth to Mossy stores over a fiber optic network. The best part? It came at half the cost of their previous data provider.

Helion also took steps to increase resiliency and reduce outages.

"Most of our locations had single Internet connections for data, so Helion made sure the new network had built-in redundancies. This means that if one connection at one location fails, another connection will instantly pick up the slack, so there is zero downtime," says Epps.

In addition, Helion identified a risk to Mossy's wireless networks that had gone unnoticed.

"They reconfigured our various wireless network access points to establish a barrier between the wireless network we used internally and the public Wi-Fi we offer

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customers," says Epps. "Had we not done that, a hacker could easily have used our public Wi-Fi to gain access to our private network data."

Switching to a new data carrier while increasing resiliency significantly reduced costs for Mossy Automotive Group.

"Before Helion, we were having multiple email server failures that would shut us down for a day or so. There's a definite return by not having those down days," says Epps. "Switching data carriers and consolidating equipment has easily saved us more than \$300,000."

Eliminate unnecessary equipment.

Helion's assessment also identified equipment redundancies that were adding unnecessary costs.

For example, Mossy Automotive Group had 36 servers, including exchange servers for moving data from store to store and from dealer management systems to OEMs. Helion reduced the server count from 36 to 12, maintaining functionality while eliminating waste.



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Helion also replaced hundreds of outdated PCs with newer, faster computers. This has increased employee productivity and contributes to a more secure network. Prior to intervention from Helion, many employees were still using Windows XP, which no longer receives security patches from Microsoft.

Switch to an IP phone system.

IP-PBX systems are less costly, easier to manage, and more reliable than traditional PBX systems. They also provide integrated and unified messaging across multiple locations.

Switching phone carriers has saved Mossy Automotive Group "in the multiple thousands of dollars," according to Epps.

Eliminate redundant software licenses.

In their initial assessment, Helion identified hundreds of redundant equipment licenses in Mossy's systems. Helion used its experience and industry knowledge to renegotiate these licenses with vendors.

"This alone saved us \$100,000," says Epps.

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The Results

Since partnering with Helion, Mossy Automotive Group hasn't looked back. The maintenance of its IT network has become a top priority, but fortunately, it's one they no longer have to worry about.

"Helion's round-the-clock monitoring allows us to maintain our business uptime, which is absolutely essential for any dealership. If systems go down, our dealers can't write repair orders or sell vehicles," says Epps. "Partnering with an MSP has saved us hundreds of thousands of dollars and many headaches, while allowing us to focus on doing what we do best: selling cars."

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