

# Vertical Helps Autopart International Take Customer Communications to the Next Level



## Background

For Autopart International (AI), a recognized leader in the highly competitive automotive aftermarket business, the ability to convert a caller into a loyal customer has been a trademark for over 55 years. AI's business model is rooted in the company's ability to field incoming calls quickly, efficiently and completely. It is routine for each of the more than 200 stores from New England to Florida to receive upwards of 100 calls a day from automotive repair shops looking for parts and information.

AI takes pride in servicing customers better than anyone by supplying them with premium parts from an inventory of more than 40,000 SKUs. AI serves as a parts warehouse for its customers, providing "hot shot" parts delivery to help shops get their end-customers' vehicles off the lift and on the road again.

Since a large part of AI's success depends on its ability to provide reliable, prompt and accurate service over the phone, it needed to continually monitor and refine its call handling processes; however, AI's previous communications system made this task nearly impossible. Each of the company's stores operated

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Customer: Autopart International (AI)
- Industry: Wholesale manufacturer (Automotive aftermarket)
- Location: 200+
- Employees: 3,000+

## CHALLENGE

- Ensuring timely and efficient response to high call volumes
- Inconsistent administration of incoming calls throughout chain
- Inability to track call handling to ensure sustained customer service levels
- Lack of real-time/historical business intelligence (BI) for insight into organizational operations and calls

## VERTICAL SOLUTION

- Wave IP 500 Business Communications System
- Wave Call Navigator
- Wave Global Reporter

## RESULTS

- Improved call response times and enhanced consistency of call handling with centralized call management throughout organization
- Intelligent call routing to individual branches and departments for more direct call resolution
- Improved BI with real-time and historical call reporting to enhance operational efficiency and customer service

as a separate silo, and there was no global method in place to monitor and manage the frequency and dynamics of inbound calls.

“Without a system-wide view into such vital information, it was literally anyone’s guess what the quality of call handling was at each counter and whether these calls were translating into positive customer experiences,” explains Jim Russell, AI’s director of infrastructure and operations. “As an organization, we understood that it was essential to find a communications solution that could not only give us hard data regarding our performance, but would also replace the patchwork infrastructure we had with a seamless, cohesive network that would grow with our company and allow us to work much more efficiently.”

## Solution

To seamlessly integrate the entire organization’s communications and easily manage them as one system, AI elected to deploy a Vertical Wave IP 500™ communications platform from Vertical Communications® at over 100 locations. In addition to a full range of features already embedded in the Wave – including desktop call management, unified messaging, visual voice mail, mobility, collaboration and presence management tools, and call recording – Vertical also integrated its powerful Wave Global Reporter application into AI’s network, giving the company direct visibility into the call handling performance at each store. Global Reporter not only aggregates the call processing metrics for each individual location, it generates regular reports that are distributed to AI’s executives and senior managers, who rely on the data to project trends and make adjustments to staffing and inventory as necessary.

“The COO loves these reports and the tangible value they bring,” notes Russell. “Before, call handling reporting was a real blind spot for us, but now we are scaling up and scaling down operations as needed, revamping inventory content and quantity, and learning how to more quickly and

effectively ensure positive call resolutions the first time, every time.”

Russell also noted that the documented trending evidence available through Global Reporter allows the company to fluidly adapt its operations based on fluctuating call volumes. This helps AI ensure quality call experiences for its customers while avoiding both over- and understaffing situations, to better manage costs.

In addition, AI relies on the Wave Call Navigator application to intuitively route calls to an available team member. Through this intelligent call routing solution, customers are automatically directed to the next available agent, avoiding bottlenecks during peak hours, and ensuring that those all-important incoming queries are handled completely and expeditiously.

## Results

Since integrating Vertical’s communications solution at its stores, AI has seen an immediate benefit to its operations. Where it once operated in the dark, AI is now tracking and anticipating volume trends in call traffic across the organization through actual hard data, both locally at each store, as well as globally across the chain.

“Vertical Communications has helped AI become an even more responsive and customer-focused operation,” summarizes Russell. “They have given us a solution that streamlines our communications processes, and given us instant access to actionable data that has a profound effect on how we satisfy our customers’ needs. Most importantly, Vertical’s technology will evolve with our business and remain relevant for years to come.”



For more information on products and solutions from Vertical Communications®, contact your Authorized Vertical Business Partner, call 1-877-VERTICAL, or visit [www.vertical.com](http://www.vertical.com).

### Corporate Headquarters

3940 Freedom Circle  
Santa Clara, CA 95054  
Phone: (408) 404-1600  
FAX: (408) 969-9601

### RMA and Technical Support

4717 East Hilton Avenue  
Suite 400  
Phoenix, AZ 85034  
Phone: (480) 374-8900  
FAX: (480) 374-8852

### Europe

Vertical Communications  
GmbH Domagkstrasse 785551  
Kirchheim Germany  
Phone: +49 89 90779460  
Fax: +49 89 90779488

