

# How Bidvest Automotive maximises the value of its investments - case study

Bidvest Automotive is one of South Africa's largest motor retailers with a trading history stretching back more than 100 years.



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## Overview

The multi-franchise business covers passenger car, SUV, and truck brands, with retail and vehicle maintenance operations for private customers and fleet managers delivered through a network of more than 100 dealerships across the country.

It is renowned for setting standards in technical training, its rapid adoption of online motor retailing technology, and the development of sophisticated systems to improve customer service.

However, after a major investment in a new dealer management software solution to replace an antiquated ERP system, involving one of the largest roll-outs of its type in the world to more than 4,000 users, the company was struggling to access and create the depth and quality of management information that was so critical to the future of the business.

So, commercial director, Preeban Munian, began looking at the marketplace to identify a solution. When he explained his selection criteria to Jarno Loubser from business intelligence consultancy B2IT, Qlik was selected as the ideal platform to

enable Bidvest to capitalise on its investment.

## **Closer to customers**

“We needed something we could integrate with our existing systems, that we could deploy easily at speed, that was cost effective and, most importantly, that would give us the level of meaningful management information we needed to roll out across a dispersed geographical footprint,” says Munian.

Qlik enables Bidvest to draw data from five separate automotive management systems that it operates and consolidate this information – on sales, profitability, stock, parts, and much more – into a single dashboard. This, in turn, enables management at both support services and dealer level to have constant visibility of business performance, enabling fast and informed decision-making.

Critically, the platform is helping Bidvest Automotive to get closer to its customers, creating what it calls its ‘Golden Record’; an intimate understanding of the characteristics and buying patterns of its customers. This informs communications, marketing, and advertising activity and spend, making it more relevant, targeted, timely and cost effective.

Bidvest describes its marketing operations centre as its ‘War Room’, with data crunched by Qlik enabling managers to focus its many customer-facing digital assets and resources, more than 100 websites and social media accounts at the last count, for best effect.

## **Maximising value of marketing spend**

Munian explains: “We focus heavily on digital communications rather than traditional means. QlikView provides vital intelligence for our campaigns, a myriad of information and statistics, while QlikSense is providing a single, real-time view of how our campaigns are performing, how they are directing our customers towards our retail offerings, enabling us to get the maximum possible value from our marketing spend.

“Our customers are noticing that we are getting closer to them, that we are starting to have a conversation with them through their ownership journey, as opposed to engaging with them through traditional media. Our digital activities, informed by Qlik, are enabling these conversations to be unique. We’ve also had positive feedback from our business partners who also appreciate this new conversational approach.

## **Common language**

“Qlik contributes to our business in many ways. There is the speed and ease of deployment and use, and the ability for the entire business to speak a common language when reviewing a set of results, allowing more simple engagement with executive leadership and dealerships. Everyone is looking at the same set of results, everything is done on Qlik, it’s the Holy Grail when it comes to our management reporting. This allows us to focus on our challenges rather than spending valuable time collecting and collating data, and converting it into management insights,” continues Munian.

“Our use of the platform is expanding into other aspects of our business too, such as distribution and after sales, it’s becoming pervasive, from our CEO down. He can access it on his iPad and have a finger on the pulse of the business, anytime, anywhere in the world.”