

# Customer Success Story



THE ANSWER COMPANY



[www.advantageds.com](http://www.advantageds.com)

Advantage DataSystems provides integrated sales and marketing solutions to dealers and manufacturers in the automotive repair marketplace. Using direct sales and marketing services, outbound call center services, and strategic database management, Advantage's team of over 120 automotive experts measures its success by improving its clients' profitability.



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The Answer Company has installed, supported, and provided software training for businesses across North America since 1994. Its experienced technical team works with clients from project assessment through systems implementation and beyond, evaluating business processes and recommending the most appropriate solutions. The Answer Company's consultants, technical staff, installation experts and trainers are all committed to providing excellent customer service.

## Advantage DataSystems: Better Financial Reporting for a Growing Company

BURNABY, BC - Advantage DataSystems is growing quickly. Its offices in Canada, the United States, and the UK have over 120 employees, and serve more than 2,000 clients in the automotive repair industry. When Advantage needed a new accounting system to handle that growth, it turned to MAS 500 software, installed and implemented by The Answer Company.

### The Challenge: A Small Accounting Department With a Big Job

"We had outgrown our old systems. We had three separate companies with two different accounting packages - ACCPAC for DOS for Canada and the US, and Sage 50 in the UK," said Steve Kirstiuk, chief financial officer of Advantage. "There were limitations on the number of account segments, two different Charts of Accounts, and needs in the areas of consolidation, product profitability and budgeting. Plus, a very small accounting staff to deal with receivables from over 2,000 dealer franchises."

Advantage also calculates sales commissions for more than 65 of its employees. "We needed an accounting platform that allowed us to perform the basic accounting functions, plus the ability to grow into more sophisticated uses later."

### The Solution: MAS 500 Implementation and Integration

Working with The Answer Company, a Canadian consulting firm with over a decade of experience, Advantage evaluated a range of accounting packages. They focused on three product options, then selected MAS 500 from Sage Software, an enterprise-level business management system with the features, speed, and ease of use Advantage sought.

Shawn Ostheimer, president of The Answer Company, devised an effective deployment plan. "We provided implementation and training services over a five-month transition period." The project also required links to existing systems. "Advantage has its own proprietary customer relationship management (CRM) application," said Ostheimer. "MAS 500 offered a solution that could be tightly integrated to their CRM system because they both store information using Microsoft's SQL Server relational database."

### The Benefits: Improved Reporting, Consolidated Accounting, Better Profits

MAS 500 can accommodate a number of account segments, and has allowed Advantage to restructure the Chart of Accounts to share a single accounting system - with identical accounting policies - across the company's three divisions on two continents.

Since MAS 500 brought all three divisions together, and quickly linked to the company's other software, Kirstiuk of Advantage began to see benefits immediately after it came online. "We have significantly improved financial reporting and reduced effort with consolidations. Budgeting and product profitability benefits will follow."