

# Going once! Going twice! SOLD!

## Case study

**Fowles Auction Group**

<b>Industry</b>	Automotive
<b>Market</b>	Vehicle Auctions
<b>Applications</b>	Inventory Management Job Tracking
<b>Products</b>	Intermec 2100 Access Point Intermec 2425 Hand Held Terminal Intermec 3400 Thermal Printer



### Vehicle inventory control

Anyone that has been to a vehicle auction will know it's a fast paced environment where, if you blink, the deal of a lifetime could pass you by. Making sure each car gets its fair go on auction day is crucial. Any car missed on the day could actually cost money to sell next time around. This is one of the many reasons to have real-time information on the ground before, during and after auctions.

Most major fleet owners including motor manufacturers, government organisations, rental companies and large corporations require an efficient and cost effective method of moving thousands of vehicles per week to market. Similar requirements exist for vehicles at 'end of lease' repossessed and insurance 'write offs'.





## Vehicle inventory control

Mr. Barry Wilson, the IT Manager at Fowles, indicated the flow of vehicles had improved dramatically with the introduction of the wireless system; in addition, they offered a far more responsive interface to both sellers and buyers.

These new efficiencies allowed Fowles to provide an effective low cost service to their clients which, along with the service quality clients were assured, has certainly helped with the growth of the Fowles business. Mr. Wilson also noted that he was proud that the IT Department had provided a system that assists completely in the complex logistics processing involved in vehicle remarketing.

Fowles Auction Group provides a comprehensive and invaluable service to these organisations via their auctions, and sells thousands of vehicles per week to dealers and individuals.

Fowles not only auction the cars, but also handle the complete re-marketing process that includes the inspection of vehicles, rectification or repair, detailing, transportation, advertising and auctioning.

To keep track of the cars that come through, Fowles selected Gamma Solutions, a well-established and professional provider of wireless systems, to supply and support a front-end wireless data collection solution. The first step at the site is the receipt of a vehicle. The registration number, or VIN number, is keyed into the Intermec 2425 hand held terminal and the receiving operator receives a response to indicate if an inspection is required or if the vehicle has been pre-inspected off site. For future identification a barcode label is printed on the Intermec 3400 thermal printer and placed on the vehicle.

The pre-inspected vehicles will go straight to a holding bay whilst those needing inspection will go to the inspection area. No matter where the car ends up, the barcode is again scanned and the vehicles location is registered on the central system. This location becomes very important, and therefore this ability to easily and quickly change a location, or to locate a car, is priceless. After inspection, and any decisions that are required have been made, the vehicle is driven to an onsite location. Again this location is entered, the barcode scanned and, via the wireless unit, this information is registered on the central system. Each vehicle is unique and may pass through one, or many, locations on the way to final auction.

Even in the auction area there are separate positions for various classes of vehicle e.g. ex-government, ex-rental, trucks etc. In addition to these areas, Fowles also handles insurance write off's and major repair situations which are also tracked via the Intermec 2425 terminal.

The system, based on Intermec 2.4GHz wireless communication, uses Intermec 2425 wireless hand held terminals, which are both rugged and reliable. The system provides input to the SAP ERP application and conveys information back to the vehicle handlers so they can take the appropriate action.

Intermec's environmentally sealed (IP54) 2100 Access Points are placed around the site totally exposed to the elements, to give one hundred percent coverage over the large internal and external areas, ensuring piece of mind in this complex solution.

The operational environment at Fowles is both indoors and outdoors, for which the 2425 unit was specially designed, explains Peter Jaman of Gamma Solutions. He added that the interfacing of the new system to the SAP ERP system handled two way communication between both the system and the vehicle handler, and was providing not only a paperless process, but one where there were dramatic operational benefits over a batch based paper concept. These advantages included increased efficiency in the use of time, labor and machinery.

Mr. Jaman added that Gamma Solutions supplied complete system support for the total hardware solution. The support contract ensures immediate telephone or onsite systems support, plus a guaranteed 24-hour turnaround time on repairs, or Fowles are given a free loan unit.

Mr. Wilson noted this was an essential part of the agreement with Gamma Solutions as any slow down in the process could result in vehicles missing an auction date. By ensuring there was minimal disruption, Mr. Wilson said Fowles were able to provide superior service levels to their clients.

This superior service level provided by Fowles ensures that the only reason a deal of a lifetime will be missed is because the bidder blinked, and not because the car was not ready for auction. Using real time information, every car will get its chance, and every potential buyer and seller can be assured a good deal.



### Intermec 2100 Access Point

- High speed wireless access
- Enterprise roaming
- Radio Independent™
- 10/100 Ethernet
- NEMA4/IP54 Sealed
- -25° to 70°C



### Intermec 2425 Hand Held

- Telnet, VT / 5250
- 2.4GHz Radio, 1.6 to 11 Mbps
- Inbuilt scanning options
- Large, high contrast display
- Rugged casing, IP54 Sealed
- -20° to 50°C



### Intermec 3400 Thermal Printer

- 104mm wide print area
- 203 to 406 dpi print resolution
- Up to 203mm per second print speed
- Full Windows compatibility
- Rugged steel casing
- Serial, parallel, Ethernet or 802.11b