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How to Find the Deal Details Already Stored in You DMS Save Time, Money and Keep a Neat Desk Too

After all it was Benjamin Franklin who coined the often quoted phrase “Time is Money” and I think it is safe to assume that your time is worth a handful of Benjamins.

There are lots of good reasons for not “un-filing” that deal jacket after it has been security filed away.

The first reason I ask you to consider is your time. After all it was Benjamin Franklin who coined the often quoted phrase “Time is Money” and I think it is safe to assume that your time is worth a handful of Benjamins. Consider the amount of time it takes to just get the physical deal jacket to you desk. Depending on your filing system and the physical distances between your desk and the filled away deal jacket it could be many minutes or even hours compared to the seconds it typically takes to bring detail deal information to your computer screen.

I call this, which to me is the most important reason for sourcing deal information from the DMS the “instant access factor”.

Instant access to information saves you money. Another Benjamin Franklin quote that gets a fair amount of air time is “a penny saved is a penny earned” and of course it is not the pennies that interest us but how to turn them into fives, tens, twenties and lots of Benjamins.

Other Benjamin saving factors to consider are:

- ✓ Quick answers to customer or employee questions (more of the “instant access factor”).
- ✓ Why pay for retrieving and refiling (misfiling) the jacket when it is not necessary (what? You thought it was free!).
- ✓ With the deal jacket out of secure storage privacy issues could be jeopardized (I am sure you have been informed on how expensive it is to break that law).
- ✓ Exposure to lost or misplaced documents (I have personally never lost or misplaced a document but someone out there sure does).

- ✓ Time lag involved in getting the jacket back to its official storage location (now lets see, who had it last? Talk about time wasters).
- ✓ Ability to access information off site (the curse of technology, you can work from anywhere that has computer access).
- ✓ Exposure to painful paper cuts (my personal favorite).

Sure, I know that there are some occasions when it is essential that you have the information that is stored away in the deal jacket. But, please consider that unless you must verify a signature (that is if you don't have digital signature) all other information should be stored away in your DMS database ready for quick and easy retrieval.

Some of my favorite reasons I have heard for not keeping the deal filed and locked away and using the DMS data are:

- ✓ Too busy to learn a new computer feature (I call this procrastination).
- ✓ The hardware and software are too expensive (Duh, you already own it).
- ✓ Too hard to implement the process with all of my staff (Again, I call this procrastination).
- ✓ I am not confident that the computer data is accurate (Oh boy, as most of the database is built as a result of generating the transaction it had better be accurate or you have bigger problems than this to solve).
- ✓ I really love paper (Thanks for being honest).

Most Dealership Management Systems provide flexible deal retrieval tools that are so simple to operate anyone can use them. The solution is to inform only the staff who's responsibilities require them to view stored, deal details that they can not have access to the paper files anymore. Make sure your DMS's security setups give them access to the computer features that provide the information (they have signed confidentially agreements, right?). Then lock the files away and you keep the key (figuratively of course). The only valid reason for requiring access to the paper files is to verify signatures. Everything else should be in the deal database. So when they come to you for the key, please keep in mind that they might not know the information they are looking for will come to them with a few keystrokes. If you do find that there is missing information in the database get help fast. Missing or inaccurate deal information is a category of expense that you should not have to endure.

Your DMS deal database does not make the paper file unnecessary and the paper file does not make the DMS database unnecessary. The information that they contain, except maybe for signatures, should be exactly the same. The DMS deal database simply allows for better (lower cost) information retrieval.

Please keep the old saying "there are no stupid questions" in mind while you are implementing the process with your staff. After all it is from their questions that you will find out where the problems are and how difficult the implementation will be. Actually there is a stupid that I recommend you make sure is in the process; the stupid we all love, the one in "KISS".

For ADP Users

Enter FI (Finance & Insurance) at Function Code on the F&I account then enter R (Recall Deal) or press Enter at the Finance & Insurance menu or enter RCD (Recall Deal) at Function Code on the F&I account.

At the Recall Deal prompt do one of the following:

- ◆ Enter the first three letters of the person's last name. For example, enter SKE for Jim Skeans.
- ◆ Enter the person's last name, a comma, and the first initial. For example, enter SKEANS, J for James or Jim Skeans.
- ◆ Enter the person's first name or first initial, then the last name. For example, enter J SKEANS.
- ◆ Enter the first three letters of the company name. For example, enter WAL for Wall Mart.
- ◆ Enter the first word of the company name. For example, enter WALL for Wall Mart.
- ◆ Enter the deal number.
- ◆ Enter the quote number.
- ◆ Enter the prospect number.
- ◆ Enter # (pound sign) and the stock number of the vehicle.
- ◆ Press Enter or F3 to return to the F&I menu.

If you enter a valid name or number, the Recall/Modification screen of that deal displays. If more than one deal or quote matches the information you entered, a list of items displays. Select a deal or a quote. Important regarding quotes: A quote or Sales Advisor jacket recalled using the Recall Deal function is automatically converted to a deal. A deal number is immediately assigned. *Submitted by Jim Skeans of Jim Skeans Consulting Group LLC*

For ARKONA Users

Retrieving an old deal on ARKONA is the same as retrieving a deal that you are working. Since no deals are ever archived or purged from the ARKONA database, simply take the following steps to recall an old deal.

1. Take option **1=Deals** from the Business Office menu.
2. Key in the stock number to retrieve the deal; or
3. Use function **F1=Position** to move to the Function line.
4. Use function **20=Retrieve** to display a list of deals.
5. Position to the customer last name or company name.
6. Take option **1=Select** by the deal to display it on the Deal screen.

Submitted by Jim Jensen. Product Manager, ARKONA

For Dubuque Data Services Users

Users have a several options (search by Name, Unit, Make, Model, or even Finance type Lease or Standard). Either through the Toolbar (binoculars) or CRTL + D with bring up the search window.

Searches can be performed by look for any of the following:

- Enter the first few letters of the customer's last name.
- Stock number
- Make
- Model
- Blanket search by deal status
- Blanket search by deal type (lease/finance)

Please note that combining any of these will narrow the search and search time.

Dealers can keep pending deals for as long as they like, we recommend 6 month purge. Closed/Sold deals can be accessed indefinitely; detailing the recap, profitability, trade-in information, rebates (with coding), aftermarket sales, related product sales, insurance coverage, extended service plan information, and client information.

To review a recent deal (closed or billing) you access the following:

The options Deal review can be Pending, Closed, Closed (Active), Billing, and Dead. With password permission you can recall and modify the deal, if it is already closed. Reprint any information about commissions, forms, or other valued information Also the business applications or "Snapshot" has the ability to detail wash-out reports, customer purchase history, trade-in history, etc. *Submitted by Ehren M. Padget, Sales Manager Dubuque Data Services*

For Reynolds + Reynolds Users

From the F&I DEAL RECALL (4771) screens choose from the following options.

- 1 DEAL NUMBER
- 2 STOCK NUMBER
- 3 CUSTOMER LAST NAME
- 4 FIRST NAME, M.I.

- ◆ At the DEAL NUMBER field, enter the number of a specific finance or lease deal. Or press [RETURN] to skip this prompt.
- ◆ At the STOCK NUMBER prompt, enter the stock number of the vehicle for the deal. If the stock number you enter is associated with more than one deal, the system displays a list of the associated deals and you can select the specific deal. Or press [RETURN] to skip this prompt.
- ◆ At the CUSTOMER LAST NAME prompt, the customer's last name, or at least the first three characters of the name followed by an asterisk (*). If the name you enter is associated with more than one deal, the system displays a list of deals with that customer name, or those three characters. Select the specific deal. Or press [RETURN] to skip this prompt.
- ◆ • At the FIRST NAME, M.I. prompt, enter the first name and middle initial of the customer. If you enter a last name and a first name, the system searches only for names with that combination. Or press [RETURN] to skip this prompt. If you entered information that identifies only one deal, the system recalls, deletes or closes the deal you selected. If you entered information that identifies more than

one deal or if you press [RETURN] through all the prompts, the cursor displays at the command line.

Note: If a deal was recalled to another terminal, you will see the message RECORD CURRENTLY IN USE AT XX BY XXXX. PRESS [RETURN] TO RETRY, 'Q' TO QUIT. The deal must be restored from the terminal (port) which recalled it before you can recall it to your terminal. *Submitted by Jim Skeans of Jim Skeans Consulting Group LLC*

Jim Skeans is the president of Jim Skeans Consulting Group LLC and has been in the automobile business for more than 35 years. Jim is a former senior consultant for an international automotive consulting group and has served in all of the traditional dealership management and staff positions as well as director position with a large national dealership group.