



# CASE STUDY: CARFAX



## CARFAX DELIVERS GREAT ONLINE SERVICE, AUTOMATES DIVERSE WORKFLOWS, AND SUPPORTS BUSINESS GROWTH WITH RIGHTNOW

It's great when you find a technology that actually delivers the results it promises. But it's even better when you can leverage that technology to achieve a wider range of unexpected business benefits as well. That's what happened with CARFAX. CARFAX's implementation of RightNow has not only enabled it to cost-efficiently provide its customers with superlative online service. It has also empowered the vehicle reporting market leader to automate a wide range of business processes—so that its entire business runs more efficiently and reliably.

“In addition to substantially improving our ability to communicate with our customers via email and the web, RightNow enables us to better serve both our customers and our partners by automating a wide range of workflows that are critical to our business,” declares CARFAX applications administrator Paul Henry. “It's a robust, flexible solution supported by a great company that is very focused on helping us quickly achieve concrete, quantifiable goals.”

### Fast Implementation and Quantifiable Results

CARFAX had been through several vendors' products before connecting with RightNow. Its last vendor relationship, with Kirkland, Washington-based Talisma, was particularly rocky. It took CARFAX around 30 days to get Talisma up and running, but after six months the system wasn't fully implemented. Talisma had difficulties with the scale of CARFAX's implementation, especially when it came to the 100+ business rules CARFAX needed to put in place.

CARFAX's experience with RightNow was completely different. The company was able to go from contract to full implementation in less than two weeks. And instead of having to bump support issues all the way up to the president of the company, as it did with Talisma, CARFAX found RightNow's frontline technical support to be proactive and extremely helpful. “One of the great things about having RightNow as your strategic internet customer service vendor is you can see they are great practitioners of the art themselves,” observes Henry.

More important than its excellent implementation experience are the actual results CARFAX gained from RightNow in both the short and long term. Within three weeks, so many customers were finding their own answers online that the company's email workload dropped by a full 50 percent. This generated significant cost savings and substantial improvements in customer satisfaction.

In fact, CARFAX's self-service success rate is now running at about 98 percent. And, while its business has doubled in size since it first deployed RightNow, it has actually been able to reduce the number of contact

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**Industry:** Software / Online Services

### Goals

- Provide superlative customer service exclusively through online channels
- Streamline business processes involving customers, partners and/or internal staff
- Cost-efficiently support a rapidly growing and evolving business

### Achievements

- 98% of 50,000 monthly online queries answered by self-service
- Customer emails answered within 90 minutes
- 14% of contact center resources shifted to higher-value tasks
- Workflow automation leveraged across the business

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center staff devoted to answering emails by 14 percent. Even better, it responds to most of those emails within 90 minutes. For a company that provides customer service exclusively via the internet in order to control costs, this efficiency is essential. “RightNow is a major enabling technology for our online-only business model,” Henry declares. “It’s an indispensable tool for retaining customers, growing the business, and protecting our brand.”

**Continually Expanding RightNow’s Business Impact**  
RightNow’s reporting capabilities have also had a significant impact on CARFAX’s business. By closely tracking customer issues and dispositions, CARFAX has gained tremendous insight into its customers’ needs and concerns. One report, for example, helped Alethea Christon, CARFAX’s consumer affairs manager, and her team determine that the number one reason behind customer refund requests was their perception that CARFAX was not providing them with as much information as they wanted. CARFAX responded by creating new offerings with more information—a move that resulted in higher customer retention and higher revenue.

Because RightNow is a fully web-based application, CARFAX can also extend its functionality to anyone anywhere any time. That means employees can check email queues from their homes over the weekend, and CARFAX can retain experienced customer service representatives who move away or need alternative work arrangements.

Even more interesting is the way CARFAX has leveraged RightNow’s automated incident workflow capabilities to streamline a wide range of business processes. For example, when an error is discovered in a vehicle report, an incident is created in RightNow. This incident can then be resolved by any CARFAX data manager correcting the information appropriately.

“In the past, that was a manual process where whoever discovered the error would call or email a person who could fix the problem,” explains Christon. “But if that person was out of the office or missed the message it would take a while for the correction to get made. With RightNow, the process now has accountability built into

it—and everyone on the data management team can see all requests for corrections.”

Similarly, CARFAX is using RightNow to manage contract administration. Car dealers fax in their completed contracts, which CARFAX receives on a networked fax server. The image of the contract can then be automatically distributed to various departments as an attachment to a RightNow incident automating the workflow and making the process paperless.

## Supporting Growth and Change

Perhaps the most important workflows that RightNow is being used to automate are those relating to CARFAX’s partners. Because CARFAX is an excellent tool for supporting sales of certified pre-owned vehicles, most of CARFAX’s business growth in recent years has come from its partnerships with car dealers rather than in direct sales to consumers. By creating a variety of workflow rules and message identifiers (such as three-letter partner codes in message subject lines and the use of specific email addresses for specific purposes), CARFAX can automatically route incidents to multiple recipients and keep all of its data in sync.

“RightNow is so flexible that we can use it to solve a very broad spectrum of business problems,” says Henry. “Once you get the hang of how to use it, you can leverage it in virtually countless ways.”

Henry adds that it’s not just RightNow’s technical functionality that has enabled his company to so effectively leverage its investment. It’s also the ongoing relationship that RightNow has maintained with CARFAX over the years. “Our account manager has been awesome and the level of support we have received has been consistently excellent,” he says. “That’s important when you’re always trying to push the envelope.”

The continued evolution of RightNow’s solutions also gives Henry a lot of confidence for the future: “It’s very disruptive to change strategic vendors every time your business enters a new stage in its development. But with RightNow, we haven’t had to do that because they are continually growing and changing with us.”