



FASTrack GPS Fleet Tracking Helps PacWest Triple Revenues

A Sierra Wireless Asset Tracking Solution

Auto Theft on the Rise

The Seattle area ranks among the highest in the nation for auto theft.* So, when Guy Post founded PacWest to train finance and insurance managers in car dealerships, he knew that car buyers would want a service to locate, track, and protect their vehicle at all times.

"We're a port city, and a border town, and it's tough for law enforcement to keep up with auto theft here," says Post. "Car buyers want theft prevention and quick recovery. But even more important, they want security for their vehicle and everybody in it. They know the technology is there for locating and protecting their teenage drivers, family members, friends, and caregivers anytime it's necessary. But the products in the market were one-trick ponies limited to stolen vehicle recovery."

In addition, most products use an on-board diagnostics (OBD) plug-in. "It's the first thing a car thief looks for," says Post.

BACKGROUND

Bellevue-based automotive services company, PacWest Dealer Services, sells its real-time GeoTrackerGPS system through auto dealerships in Washington State. Built on FASTrack™ Fleet, a managed IoT solution from Sierra Wireless, PacWest offers car buyers peace of mind and security, while helping PacWest triple revenues within four years.



Why Sierra Wireless

Seeing the opportunity to beat radio-based theft-recovery products, and cover all of the consumer's auto security needs, Post went to market with GeoTrackerGPS, a GPS tracking solution that uses Sierra Wireless's FASTrack Fleet application and a CalAmp LMU-1230 device. What's more, Post decided to connect these devices to the Internet using Sierra Wireless's reliable, accurate network services. Choosing Sierra Wireless for its connectivity enables PacWest to provide peak responsiveness in loss or theft situations, helping customers locate exactly where vehicles are and where they've been.

"In my previous company, we offered a GPS tracking service that ran on FASTrack," he says, "and it did exceptionally well in my region. When I started PacWest, and we designed the GeoTrackerGPS system, FASTrack was one of the primary products I wanted to offer. So I contacted Sierra Wireless."

PacWest hard-wires their GPS tracking unit into each vehicle. In less than 30 minutes, a technician can install the unit so that it is far less accessible than an OBD plug-in. With an internal battery backup, the unit is trackable even if the thief can find and remove it. Location data and status information is displayed on the FASTrack Fleet web application, a configurable portal that collects, stores, and analyzes data, helping users gather actionable business intelligence.

PacWest's competitive advantage is clear: robust, interactive GPS tracking integrated with the vehicle's security system so that the car owner receives an alert if the alarm goes off. Instead of finding out about car theft hours after a vehicle goes missing, the owner finds out right away and can disable the starter and contact the police.

Turning Theft Challenges into Revenue Opportunities

Guy Post reports that the vehicle owners derive the most value from the FASTrack web portal, and the ease of using the app. Most PacWest customers track their vehicle and even kill their starter directly from a mobile device.

"We've worked with dealerships to integrate FASTrack at the point of sale," Post says. "They install units on the vehicles of their sales reps, then right in the showroom they demonstrate to buyers how the PacWest solution works on a PC and a smartphone. We've focused on differentiating between an ordinary radio product and a GPS tracker."



The PacWest solution has been responsible for multiple arrests of car thieves in the Seattle area, one of which drew widespread media attention. Post is pleased that his product plays a role in theft prevention and recovery, and he emphasizes that as part of overall security and ROI.

“To get value from most dealer services,” he says, “something bad has to happen. With GeoTrackerGPS, nothing bad has to happen. Buyers can get value right away. If they’re worried about their teenager driving at night, their parents wintering in Florida or the valet parking their car, they can pull out their phone and get peace of mind. Customers get excited about all the ways they can use the product right now. Sure, GeoTrackerGPS helps them avoid all the headache of losing their car, dealing with insurance and getting a new car, but with so many other benefits, theft recovery is a by-product.”

Post points to even more concrete ROI: PacWest’s revenue from GPS tracking has grown from 10 to 40 percent of the company’s revenue over four years. Besides the ongoing revenue from retail buyers, he has discovered a sweet spot in fleet customers with five to 50 vehicles. While most large GPS tracking companies ignore that market, PacWest can easily extend its dealer relationships to serve it.

The company is exploring the marine market as well. “Boating is big in Puget Sound,” according to Post. “We have in mind the same model: selling the service through boat dealerships and installing the same hard-wired CalAmp unit. When boat owners put a geofence around their boat slip or marina and the boat moves, they’ll get an alert. As with cars, that’s a huge benefit compared to finding out too late.”

+ ++ Source: <http://www.iii.org/issue-update/auto-theft>

About Sierra Wireless

Sierra Wireless (NASDAQ: SWIR) (TSX: SW) is an IoT pioneer, empowering businesses and industries to transform and thrive in the connected economy. Customers Start with Sierra because we offer a device-to-cloud solution, comprised of embedded and networking solutions seamlessly integrated with our IoT services. OEMs and enterprises worldwide rely on our expertise in delivering fully integrated solutions to reduce complexity, turn data into intelligence and get their connected products and services to market faster. Sierra Wireless has more than 1,400 employees globally and operates R&D centers in North America, Europe and Asia.

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