

## Auto Shop Pulls Ahead of the Pack with Customer Service

Larry's Foreign and Domestic Car Service uses Smart Business Communications System to improve service and productivity.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
<p><b>LARRY'S FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC CAR SERVICE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industry: Automotive Repair</li> <li>• Location: San Jose, CA</li> <li>• Number of Employees: 6</li> </ul>
<p><b>CHALLENGE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve and streamline customer service</li> <li>• Enable owner to work from home</li> </ul>
<p><b>RESULTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated voice, data, and video surveillance provide instant access to customer information when calls are received</li> <li>• VPN allows owner to work from home, improving productivity</li> </ul>
<p><b>SOLUTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cisco Smart Business Communications integrated with Mitchell 1 application, IP video surveillance, and VPN</li> </ul>

### Challenge

Larry's Foreign and Domestic Car Service has spent decades building a reputation for responsive service and personalized customer care. Based in San Jose, CA, the firm is proud of its ability to stay ahead of competitors through solid customer loyalty.

"The shop has been here for more than fifty years, and many of our clients have been lifelong customers," says Michelle, office manager at Larry's Foreign and Domestic Car Service. "We consider them not just customers, but friends."

Larry's Car Service is a dynamic business, with employees constantly on the move. Customers may call several times a day to check on the status of a job, and the office manager needs instant answers. She also has to help ensure that technicians have the parts they need to complete jobs and manage the schedule going forward. In this busy environment, maintaining effective communication with customers,

vendors, technicians, is essential. However, an aging desktop phone system and unreliable wireless network made it difficult for Larry's to work efficiently and limited their ability to deliver the level of service that they desired.

"I often had to run out to the shop to ask someone a question," says Zogaris. "If the phone rang when I was away from my desk, I might miss an important call from a customer."

Larry's needed a network solution that would make it easy for employees to reach the people, information, and communications tools that they needed, from anywhere in the business.

"Efficiency is key to our business," says Zogaris. "To be able to keep things moving and flowing smoothly makes your day a lot less stressful and keeps customers comfortable."

Larry's Car Service is a small business with no IT department, so the solution would have to be reliable and easy to use.

## Results

Larry's Car Service worked with Team-SOS, a Cisco Certified Partner to install the Cisco® Smart Business Communications System, which lets the company bring together all of its voice, video, data, and wireless networking on a single, easy-to-manage network. The Cisco solution lets Larry's integrate its phone system with the Mitchell 1 application, so employees can deliver personalized service to customers at the instant they call.

"We use the Mitchell 1 application to keep track of all our customers, start work orders, and create estimates," says Zogaris. "Now, with the Cisco CallConnector, when a customer calls in, their name and all of their vehicle information pop up right on my computer screen. If I need to reach a vendor, I can phone them at the click of a mouse. The Cisco Smart Business Communications System is great because it keeps me rolling quickly."

Having customer information at their fingertips not only helps employees serve customers better, but also helps the firm generate new business.



"Our Cisco Smart Business Communications System integrated with Mitchell 1 includes a past recommendations reminder, which is great because a lot of customers may forget or delay maintenance on their vehicles. For instance, if a customer calls, I can remind them that we had discussed resurfacing their brake rotors on a previous visit. It gives customers peace of mind in knowing that the car repairs they need are being taken care of."

Larry's also installed IP video surveillance cameras at locations throughout the businesses, so employees can respond to customers more quickly, without having to leave their desks.

"A customer called me to check on their vehicle," says Michelle Zogaric, Shop Manager. "I could just glance at the video monitor, see the technician working on the car, and give the customer an immediate, detailed status update right over the phone."

Employees enjoy secure access to the Cisco network not only in the shop, but at home as well, so they can work productively from anywhere, at any time.

"Having access to IP video surveillance at home is incredible," says Zogaris. "If I'm running late in the morning I can log in to check and see that my technicians are working on the proper jobs. After hours I log in from home, look at the vehicle, and order the correct part. The solution lets me keep things running smoothly from home, which is a huge help."

Perhaps most importantly, the Cisco solution lets Larry's Car Service accomplish more with its small staff, to stay competitive with larger firms.

"The Cisco solution lets me multitask very easily," says Zogaris. "I can be on a phone call with one customer, and if another customer calls, I can direct that incoming call right over to the owner or another employee. Everything moves very smoothly here with the new system. It's very user friendly."

“We use the Mitchell 1 application to keep track of all our customers, start work orders, and create estimates. Now, with the Cisco CallConnector, when a customer calls in, their name and their entire service information record pop up right on my computer screen. If I need to reach a vendor, I can phone them at the click of a mouse. The Cisco Smart Business Communications System is great because it keeps me rolling quickly.”

—Michelle, Office Manager, Larry’s Foreign and Domestic Car Service

## Solution

Cisco Certified Partner Team-SOS played a key role in helping Larry’s Car Service choose a solution that was designed specifically for small businesses. “The Cisco Smart Business Communication System was built from the ground up to integrate many different technologies,” says Gia McNutt, CEO and co-founder of SOS. “The solution brings together phones, wireless, IP video surveillance cameras, security, and, of course, network infrastructure. Support for all of this is built in, making it a great value proposition for the small business.”

Team-SOS installed the Cisco Unified Communications 500 Series for Small Business, which replaces the firm’s old phone system with an all-in-one solution with rich built-in features like automated attendant and Cisco Unity® Express voicemail. “The voice mailboxes are so easy to use,” says Zogaris. “I just pick up the phone, hit the ‘messages’ button, and get every message, so I can return calls to customers in a timely manner.”

To help employees keep in touch when they are roaming around the business, Larry’s Car Service chose the Cisco Unified Wireless IP Phone 7921G. This lightweight, second-generation wireless IP phone combines convenience with rich features and superb sound quality.

“Having a wireless phone in the office is indispensable,” says Zogaris. “It’s great to be able to just pick up my phone and run out to the shop to check with technicians, or get a car’s VIN number to order a part. If a call comes in, I can answer it anywhere without missing a beat.”

Zogaris finds the phones’ Caller ID feature especially helpful in a busy environment. “We get a lot of calls here, and if I’m on another line, I can actually see another call coming in,” she says. “The Caller ID will pop up, and I can be sure our owner won’t miss an important call. I can also use the missed call feature to see what calls I missed.”

Installation and training were fast and painless, thanks to expert technical support provided by Cisco Partner Team-SOS.

“SOS has been great,” says Zogaris. “They took their time to show me how to use the solution, and printed up extra documentation. I felt very comfortable asking questions, and they were able to answer my questions in a very easy manner so I didn’t feel intimidated by the new system.”

### PRODUCT LIST

#### Network Solution

- Cisco Smart Business Communications System
- Cisco Unified IP Phones
- Cisco PVC300 IP Video Surveillance Camera

With so many of the firm’s most important business processes running on the network, reliability is a top concern. For peace of mind, Larry’s Car Service chose the Cisco SMARTnet® technical service offering. This award-winning support plan offers direct, anytime access to Cisco engineers, parts replacement plans, and access to a wealth of online service resources.

## Next Steps

With its new Cisco solution in place, Larry's Car Service is already exploring new ways to save time and boost efficiency through the network. "We are talking with Larry's Car Service about placing wireless laptop computers in the service bays, so technicians could look up schematics and parts without having to leave the car," says McNutt.

The Cisco Smart Business Communications System was designed to be flexible and scalable, to accommodate new applications and changing business needs well into the future.

## For More Information

To learn more about the Cisco solution, visit <http://www.cisco.com> or contact your authorized Cisco salesperson.



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