



Interview: Autologue Celebrates 30 Years

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In 1985, Jim Franco bought Autologue Computer Systems and moved the company from New Jersey to Fullerton, Calif. Shortly thereafter, he sold his auto parts stores and moved Autologue to Buena Park, Calif. We recently chatted with Franco to learn the secrets of the company's success.

Q: How do you stay on top of technology in the automotive aftermarket?

Franco: First and foremost, we listen to our customers, and second, we attend 25 to 30 trade shows, conferences and industry events annually. Third, most of our management team had been in the automotive parts and service business for many years before joining Autologue.

Q: What feedback do you receive from customers on improving your products and services?

Franco: The feedback from our customers is invaluable. Just to give you an example, most of our e-commerce products developed over the past 10-plus years were first introduced as Beta software to our customers for the sole purpose of getting their input and assistance to help us finish the development process of each individual product. Most recently, our newest offering, eSalesBI (outside salesperson tool), was installed as Beta with more than 35 customers with a combined total of more than 100 locations. Their constant input and critiques have guided the development of this product almost entirely. We consider each and every request and suggestion for implementation based on its value to the entire customer base. Our monthly user webinars provide an incredible amount of input and engagement by our Beta group and we respect and appreciate their input.

Q: What would you say you're most proud of in serving the automotive aftermarket after all these years?

Franco: I would say it's difficult to pinpoint one thing. I'm the most proud of serving the automotive aftermarket (for 30 years!). I think the No. 1 thing is how Autologue, and all its divisions, has helped so many distributors grow their businesses, expand to multiple locations and be successful in this very competitive parts distribution industry. Secondly, I'm very proud of the team members that we have assembled. These individuals take personal pride in helping our customers whether it's during or after business hours.

For example, Bob Fasano helped a customer from the dentist's chair, and Randy Hoke helped get a customer up and running during a ride on his mountain bike, from a smartphone. Our average employee's tenure is more than 15 years. The most impressive point of the Autologue team is that they encourage the company to look for and acquire technology companies to become part of the Autologue family. We wrap our arms around them using our incredible marketing skills, which increases their overall performance. With every acquisition, now more than 16, we acquire quality employees, giving them a fresh outlook and a reason to come to work. I've enjoyed the ride. I love the industry, my team, my customers and plan to continue "living the dream" for many, many years to come.

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