

## Comparative Assessment Case Description

Exotic Cars Inc. (ECI) is a company specializing in sales and maintenance of the exotic (hence the name) cars.

The cars that ECI sells come from multiple sources: some are shipped directly from the factories, other purchased from the private collectors, and yet some other cars are traded-in by the customers of ECI.

ECI also provides a regular maintenance service of the exotic cars, such as engine tune-up, tire rotation, oil change, etc. You do not have to buy a car from ECI to use its maintenance service; consequently, some owners of the exotic cars purchased elsewhere also use ECI maintenance service.

ECI appreciates continuing business of its patrons; consequently, the company wants to maintain as much information about each valuable customer as it possibly can.

As a result, ECI diligently records how much money each customer spends on buying cars (more than a half have purchased two cars and about third bought three or more), on maintenance service (how much customer spends overall, and per car), and whether or not a customer ever traded a car in.

Similarly, ECI maintains detailed data on all the dealers, companies, manufacturers, and other sources that provide the company with needed services, parts, or cars.

ECI is not a “backward” organization, but things have been done there pretty much the same way since ECI was founded in 1966. Owners of ECI feel like it is about time not just to move forward, but “leapfrog” the competition.

Additionally, the management has been receiving complaints from ECI’ customers; specifically, the customers complain that:

1. It takes a long time to trade the cars in
2. It takes a long time to perform the maintenance of the exotic cars (primarily due to the time it takes ECI to get the needed components)
3. Some collectors noted that the quality of the inventory of exotic cars, for which ECI was always known, have gone down.

## **Organizational structure of ECI**

There are three operational locations of ECI; one in Washington, DC, second in Richmond, VA, and third in Virginia Beach, VA. Corporate headquarters located in Charlottesville, VA.

Every location has a general manager, which is responsible for authorizing/rejecting whatever requests area managers of that location may have. Normally, area managers only handle the issue relevant to their area, for example, sales/trade-in area has its own manager, body shop/repair shop has its own, and service area has its own area manager. Every area manager is authorized to make financial decisions up to \$10,000.00. If the amount exceeds the limit of an area manager, then general manager of that location must authorize it- the general manager has discretion of making financial decisions of up to \$100,000.00. If the amount exceeds this number, a request is send to the headquarters, where it is approved or rejected by a VP of the area (e.g., service, sales, and repair); a VP of the area is authorized to make a financial decision of up to \$250,000.00. If the request exceeds this amount, it must be addressed by the CEO of ECI.

## **What is next?- this is what you need to do**

You have been hired by ECI to find a way of dramatically increasing the level of performance of ECI. The goal is to identify and propose to the management an information system that will allow for increasing in effectiveness and efficiency of the business processes of ECI, as well as increasing the level of customer satisfaction of ECI' customers.

In this case you need to perform a comparative analysis of the following options:

1. Enterprise system
2. Custom developed system
3. Generic off-the-shelf system
4. System developed in-house.

Once you identified ( and provided a justification for your choice) the most feasible choice out of the four, you need to identify the intended functionality of the system (you may choose between Use Case Analysis and Data Flow Diagram to do so) with the

purpose of identifying essential components/modules that the system must possess. Once the essential modules have been identified, you need to rank them and to concentrate on the top three components.

Specifically, you need to identify three products that, in your opinion, could be used to comprise the future system. Clearly explain the reasons for your choice and list the criteria you used in selecting the products.