





DVRs Help NAPA Auto Parts Stores Control Shrinkage and Improve Customer Service

NAPA Auto Parts store manager Eldon Malek in St. Cloud, Minnesota: March Networks DVR system was instrumental in identifying a customer who paid for his purchase with a forged check NAPA Auto Parts franchisees in Minnesota are reducing losses due to fraud and theft and improving customer service with the help of digital video recording systems from March Networks.

An industry leader in the auto parts business, NAPA has more than 6,000 stores in Canada, the U.S., Mexico and South America.

The combination of national buying power and distribution expertise with local ownership makes NAPA an auto parts paradise for both professional repair centers and do-it-yourselfers.

However, as is the case with any retail business, NAPA stores have to contend with shrinkage, fraudulent checks and customer disputes. "Every retail business has these problems, so when (March Networks™ Certified Solution Provider) Marco organized a demonstration for our Chamber of Commerce, we decided to pursue it," says Skip Strandberg, owner of the NAPA store in Cambridge, Minnesota, 40 miles north of Minneapolis.

Strandberg's staff use their March Networks DVR system to resolve discrepancies following daily audits of returned goods.

"We take back starter and alternator cores and reconcile the credits with the cores on hand at the end of the day," he explains. "If there is a discrepancy, we simply review the video to see what happened. In one case, for example, we gave the customer a credit and accidentally also gave him back the core. In several cases, we discovered that we didn't give customers enough credit and called them to tell them we owed them some money."

"The quality of the video was much better than anything else I saw – that's what impressed me."

Jim Gratias

The DVR system records video from cameras in the shipping, receiving and retail areas of the 13,000-square foot (1,208 sq m) store. It also records audio from three microphones, including two at the cash counter.

Having the ability to both see and hear what's happening helps Strandberg resolve customer complaints and maintain a high level of customer service.

"When customers called to complain about our service in the past, I never knew exactly what happened because the stories you get from your employee and the customer aren't the same," he says. "Now I can actually see how a situation was handled. Does it happen often? No, but losing customers because of poor service is one of my biggest nightmares."

At the NAPA store in St. Cloud, Minnesota, 100 miles north of Minneapolis, video recorded by a March Networks DVR system was instrumental in identifying a customer who paid for his purchase with a forged check.

A video record of the transaction was retrieved from the archive and "it turned out to be someone we recognized," says storeowner Kurt Owen. "It was nice to be able to copy the image to a CD and give it to the police."

At the NAPA store in Alexandria, 120 miles northwest of Minneapolis, another March Networks DVR system proved its worth when an irate customer called to complain that he didn't receive an item he had paid for at the cash register.

The employee who took the call invited the customer to speak to the store manager and mentioned that a record of the transaction from the video recording system would help to resolve the issue.

The customer never called back, says storeowner Jim Gratias. "We looked at the video and saw the customer walk out of the store with all of his purchases."

Gratias and his store manager have access to live and archived video from their desktops, allowing them to keep an eye on what's happening on the sales floor and at the cash counter. "If they're backed up at the counter, we can go out there and help out."

Several of the NAPA storeowners are also anxious to acquire remote access, so they can review video from home on evenings and weekends.

Gratias evaluated several DVR systems before deciding on March Networks technology.

"The quality of the video was much better than anything else I saw – that's what impressed me. I'm very pleased with it. It has met all of my expectations."

NAPA Auto Parts

Napa Auto Parts (www.napaonline.com), founded in 1925, is the leading supplier of automotive parts in the Americas, with more than 6,000 stores and 69 distribution centers serving auto repair businesses and the do-it-yourself market. NAPA serves automotive consumers in Canada through its UAP division and operates as Auto Todo in Mexico.



Owen, who has a total of six NAPA stores, appreciates how easy it is to search for video using digital video technology.

"It's nice not having to search through eight hours of tape to find what you're looking for," he says. "You just specify the date and time and go right to what you want. It's a big timesaver."

All three NAPA franchisees purchased their March Networks DVR systems from Marco, a technology services provider with 10 branches covering the state.

"I know I can pay for my DVR system just by keeping people honest," says Strandberg. "Everybody knows it's there and they know it works."

Marco

Marco (www.marconet.com) is a technology services company providing voice, video, data and print solutions to a diverse customer base from 10 branch offices in Minnesota. To contact a sales representative, please call 1.800.892.8548 or email marco@marconet.com