

MIO sells more than 11,000 cars a year through 39 dealerships in Malaysia. It requires hundred's of thousands of customer interactions to achieve this level of sales, all conducted locally by individual dealers.

At the national level, MIO Malaysia is unable to lend assistance in customer acquisition, customer care or targeted market development activities as customer data and the relationship reside locally.

But, times are changing. As the automotive industry enters the Digital Economy, industry players are forced to re-think how they manage customer relationship, spare parts sales, and consumer-lifecycle management.

Customer relationships

Typically the dealer captures customer data about their interests, preferences, lifestyle, demographics and financial profile in databases locally. This is invaluable information and closely guarded by dealers but also of vital importance to HQ.

As the automotive industry moves towards the Digital Economy, the acquisition of customer data is crucial. In collecting and sharing vital data, three challenges arise, 1) how and what data to collect, 2) how to systematically collect structured data across all dealerships, and 3) how to control what information is shared.

eSimon addresses these three challenges with three important features; Community, aggregated multi-format communication, and the Walled Garden.

Community

A Community serves to manage multiple customer interfaces, known as *Hubs*. Communication and relationships generated at the *Hub* level "belong" to the Community. In this manner, the *Hubs* serve the purpose of cultivating engagement with customers from which valuable

data can be extracted.

A Community can also manage and curate its own *Hub* in parallel with other *Hubs* in a given market so that customers have access to information and interaction with the national or International HQ. Content such as R&D or strategic initiatives or global collaborations that can only be generated at the national or international level.

Hubs

Hubs are "communication centers" and serve as an effective means by which to engage with customers through mixed media. Through this communication, they gather structured data from, and about, customers for analytics.

In the automotive scenario, each dealer would be allocated a *Hub* for interactive communication between Mio and customers, and amongst customers.

Hubs use communication *Streams* to manage multiple separate dialogs, for example, on customer service, promotions or branding.

A *Stream* dedicated to branding for instance, engages SUV owners to share and create activities as an "owners club", increasing the value of purchasing this type of vehicle, and networking among like-minded individuals.

Tools, such as Polls and Events are useful in gathering feedback and organizing physical activities. Both of these generate valuable customer data.

Walled Garden

A Walled garden is like a fence

How a National Car Company builds a successful B2B2C business on eSimon

around vital data. It allows the *Hubs*, and Communities, to control what data is visible and shared.

For the *Hubs*, it allows the sharing of their customer data without exposing sensitive information such as names, contact details and such.

For the Community, it allows them to restrict access and view of their members by parties outside of the Community, and also regulates what other parties in the Community can see.

In this manner, data such as social insights, relationships and customer behaviors can be gathered nationally and analyzed to assist in acquiring and servicing customers, better.

An uncertain future

Increasingly, the automotive industry is under tremendous pressure to change and improve efficiencies. Faced with internal competition from existing Brands moving into new segments, and external forces such as Uber decreasing the need to own a vehicle, the industry is finding it necessary to redefine their business.

Customer lifecycle ownership instead of customer acquisition becomes the focus. To achieve this, structured data collection and analysis based on comprehensive customer interaction is necessary to accomplish and maintain this long-term relationship.

It's no secret that knowing your customer boosts profitability and brand reputation. For many businesses in the automotive industry, the mystery is how to get there without significantly boosting costs.

