

AUDEV RACES TOWARD GUI FINISH LINE

by **Elizabeth Barnett**

In Quarter 4 of 1999, we first profiled Aucon BV, the Dutch software consulting company that was in the middle of a huge, software language migration project. Now in beta testing with its newly named Car IT system, Aucon has successfully converted an old, character-based Siemens Nixdorf application for car dealerships into a slick, modern GUI application that can handle all of a dealership's management needs, from tracking parts inventories and repair work orders to sales transaction processing. And all of it was accomplished using BASIS Visual PRO/5®, the PRO/5 Data Server®, the BASIS ODBC Driver® and BASIS Solution Partner SW-Tools' TRIO.

A Division of Labor

In order to speed and streamline progress on Car IT, Aucon earlier this year spun off Audev, a new company for the software development. Wimco Driesse, Audev Technical Manager, explains that Aucon will provide sales, installation, training and technical support to end users in the Netherlands while Audev works exclusively on product development and second-line support. At this time, however, in preparation for a first product release late in Quarter 1 of 2001, Audev is training the Aucon support team on the system. Audev is negotiating with other partners in Europe and the rest of the world to sell and install Car IT products.

Wimco says the first release of Car IT will include a dealer management system module, Car IT-DMS, and a customer relationship management module, Car IT-CRM. The dealer management module includes warehouse, service and sales components. Other modules, such as time registration and cash register modules, are planned for later releases.

Built on BASIS and BASIS Solution Partners

Audev is accomplishing the application development with BASIS Visual PRO/5's GUI development workbench, GUIBuilder®, and the Grid Management Library.

Additionally, Audev has taken BASIS Solution Partner SW-Tools' product, TRIO, and seamlessly integrated it into the application. In fact, "it's not only seamless, it's invisible," Wimco says. "We chose SW-Tools because it was easy to integrate within the package."

Interest in CAR IT has been high. Mitsubishi, Opel, and BMW are among the car companies considering the software package for their dealerships.



The Car IT application uses TRIO's report generator, RAPGEN, as a print tool by means of SCALL(s). RAPGEN allows a developer to set up

Audev demonstrated modules of its GUI dealership package at Automechanika 2000, one of Europe's largest automotive industry conferences.



his or her own parameters to hide the start screen and to create his or her own look for output by simply clicking and dragging objects. So, Car IT users see only the Car IT application, but RAPGEN is running behind the scenes to send output to a print queue for screen, printer or file output. The power of Visual PRO/5 and the command line call of RAPGEN makes integration simple. Car IT also uses TRIO's intelligent query tool, IQ. IQ allows a developer powerful SQL access to data without additional programming.

The application will run in UNIX or Microsoft Windows NT environments and have both Visual PRO/5 and TRIO loaded on the system clients. The Visual PRO/5 environment allows Audev to scale the application to any size site installation. The design is forward-thinking to utilize BBJ™ functionality in the future. While the first release of Car IT will be in Visual PRO/5, Wimco says there is a lot of interest in implementing Car IT as a distributed application. Both large- and small-sized dealerships want to be able run the application from a centralized system and pay for the time they use the application.

Taking the Show on the Road

In September, Audev showed demonstrations of several modules at the Automechanika 2000 exhibition in Frankfurt, Germany. The car show, one of the largest in Europe, alternates in successive years to show new car models and new car technologies, equipment and accessories. This year, over 3,900 exhibitors from 61 countries showcased their car technologies, equipment and accessories, and more than 150,000 trade visitors from 175 countries came to see what the industry has to offer. Audev had the chance to survey its competition and came away pleased. With multilingual and multiple car make and model capabilities, Car IT is far ahead of the competition.



"We have some work to do and we feel a lot of stress everyday now," Wimco says. "But we also feel very confident about the application and its market potential."