

Database Memorandum Paper

In 1999 I started a new position as a Corporate Warranty Manager for Freightliner Trucks in Savannah, GA. We had three



dealerships across three states to manage. The warranty program was a disaster and had over \$500,000 on its warranty receivables. Parts were not being returned, parts were lost, and there was no follow through on tracking the failed warranty part with the repair order and the warranty claim. I

knew we had to create a database of some kind to track warranty parts.

I started with Microsoft Access and created fields identifying critical information needed to manage a warranty claim. This was the repair order, the failed part(s) name, and the part number. The warranty claim number would come later. Every warranty repair part that was stored in two semi-trailers was inventoried and entered into the database. They were then sorted and stored by the last number of the repair order. It took me three days to complete this.



Once the database was created and validated, we requested a warranty resubmission period for outdated claims. It was granted covering a one year period. Prior to opening a resubmission claim, we were now able to check the database to see if we even had the original part. As new warranty repairs were being done, the Parts Specialist collected the failed warranty part from the Service Technician and entered it into the database. Service Managers were now able to locate missing failed warranty parts immediately after a repair, rather than weeks later after a claim was processed.

Improvements to this process would be if we could incorporate scanners into the database. The failed warranty part is already part of the inventory system within the in-house business system. Getting that information scanned into the warranty parts database would save time and limit inaccurate manual entries.



Another company I worked for as a Corporate Warranty had a much more advanced business ERP system. A field on the parts screen was updated to reflect warranty part returns before the repair order was even closed. The only disadvantages we faced were human error. As long as you have human interaction, there will always be room for error. Attention to detail is key. Rather than having to enter numbers, a field is checked to verify part return. The employee entering the information verified it with their employee number. Follow-up and holding people accountable also helped correct many of our warranty issues.