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LimoLive24.com: All the Way Live

By Martin Romjue



LimoLive24.com CEO Kurt von Strasser can make a limousine company come alive through a call center in any location.

LAS VEGAS — The Web-based LimoLive24.com succeeds by using advanced technology in ways that help clients save money and survive amid a recession.

The upstart call center service for chauffeured transportation companies has steadily gained market share in less than two years with its menu of services.

LimoLive24.com takes calls and makes reservations, dispatches vehicles, computes bookkeeping and finances, tracks fleets, updates maintenance records, and handles other routine functions of a livery operation. The company can automate processes for clients, keeping accurate, detailed information records that minimize errors.

"All the data is centrally located," said Kurt von Strasser, owner and founder. "By accessing software technology remotely, it allows us to do more than an answering service. It can replace office personnel."

LimoLive24.com started as a pilot program in 2007 with a small niche of clients that used one software program. After about nine months, the test phase expanded into a company with a wider mix of clients.

Software Flexibility

The service now has the ability to work with most limousine software programs, such as Limo Anywhere, LimoWiz, Corporate Car Online, and FastTrak.

"If someone doesn't have the software, they can make a small monthly payment, depending on feature sets needed," von Strasser said. LimoLive24 offers clients either Limo Anywhere or Corporate Car Online as its in-house software service.

Clients can buy packages of different service levels that either use the company's software programs or allow the

company to access the software program of the client.

LimoLive24.com uses a CRM (customer relationship management) driven data system designed for a call center model.

"We use our own database to develop profiles on clients with detailed information," von Strasser said. "We drill down to get more specific, and include links to their websites for fleet information, pricing guides, and packages. When a call comes in, it pops up. We have the client profile on one screen, and the other screen gives us the ability to access the software package."

Repeat Customers, Repeat Agent

Agents are assigned to specific clients so they become familiar with the operator accounts and repeat clients. "They get to know the regular customers, so it's as if we work out of the actual company's office," von Strasser said.

Limo customers do not get the impression that they are reaching a call center, von Strasser said. "We can script it out based on what's on the screen, using different lines for different companies."

Such consistent focus on detail helps overcome skepticism among smaller operators who want to avoid the limits of an impersonal answering service whose employees randomly handle incoming calls.

LimoLive24.com also is ideal for smaller operators who rely mostly on laptop computers and Blackberrys to keep up with their business vitals. "They can be mobile and have all their programs online," he said. "They can log on with an aircard periodically, and get lists of reservations and changes."

LimoLive24.com draws upon the experience of its parent company, Park Avenue Ventures, which consults for companies on security monitoring centers, dispatching centers, and call centers. Park Avenue can design such operations from scratch, start a private venture to form one, or acquire an existing one and improve it.

Down Economy Drives Business

LimoLive24.com mostly has seen growth in a down economy as operators try to save money by outsourcing many of their routine, internal business functions. Hiring a call center to remotely handle those functions via the Internet is much cheaper than staffing an operation with full- and part-time employees in a facility with equipment.

"Now companies are reacting to the drop in revenues and looking to run more efficiently," von Strasser said. "It's driving more people into our doors." Operators tend to be less concerned about employee and support function costs during healthy economic times, von Strasser said. "Now it doesn't make as much financial sense to have as many employees."

LimoLive24.com has seen business double since October 2008. "A third of the people who call in say they need to do things more efficiently, but still cover the phones and treat customers with a personalized level of service," he said. "They can't afford thousands a month for people doing 24/7 phone calling and reservations."

Chief Executive von Strasser estimates LimoLive.com can save the typical operator about 70 cents on the dollar with its service. The typical LimoLive24.com client has about 7 to 20 vehicles, with a sizable segment operating less than seven vehicles.

"Cost effectiveness fades away at 1,000 bookings per month, but beyond that we can handle overflow," he said. Savings at that level might go down to 50 cents on the dollar, he estimated.

LimoLive24.com is expanding into telemarketing services for clients, web-based design services and marketing, and social media content access such as e-mail and live chat that can provide online price quotes.

The Facts

Name: LimoLive24.com

Location: Las Vegas, Nev.

Owners: Park Avenue Ventures of Newport Beach, Calif.

LimoLive24.com CEO: Kurt von Strasser, partner in Park Avenue Ventures

Founded: 2007

Clients: 100

Services: 24/7 call center; limousine operation software functions and services

Employees: about 30

Web site: www.LimoLive24.com

Information: (800) 676-9095; (702) 989-2468

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