

# Arbour Volkswagen overcomes a communications crisis with disaster recovery expertise from Bell

When a snowstorm and major fire disrupted the communication systems at Arbour Volkswagen's facilities in Laval, Québec, the dealership was facing a customer service disaster. Working with Bell, the busy auto retailer was able to get a temporary system up and running and transition to a new infrastructure while allowing Arbour to conduct its business as usual.

## About Arbour Volkswagen

Founded in 1952 in Laval, Québec, Arbour Volkswagen is ranked as one of the largest Volkswagen dealerships in the province. The family-owned company offers new and used vehicles, as well as after-sales service. Since its inception, Arbour has continued to expand. Today the company has 68 employees who are committed to providing prompt, reliable and uninterrupted service to a loyal following of customers.

"Bell was not only quick to respond to our emergency, they also offered the business continuity expertise we needed to help us transition to a new system without any disruptions."

– Hélène Ducharme, Controller  
Arbour Volkswagen

## The challenge: picking up the pieces

When Laval was hit by one of the worst snowstorms in March 2007, it caused significant challenges for Arbour Volkswagen. The storm had triggered a fire in the electrical system on the second floor which quickly spread and destroyed the locations that housed the company's telecommunication and computer systems. As a result, all communications were lost.

As a company that puts customer service first, it was critical that Arbour Volkswagen re-establish its

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) infrastructure as quickly as possible to ensure uninterrupted customer service and sales operations. It was a tense situation according to Sales Manager Stéphanie Arbour. "Quality service had to be maintained, as well as the motivation and enthusiasm of employees. We had to keep up our sales momentum but that's hard to do when you have to worry about the reliability of your information and communication tools. It's even harder when they are not operational at all."

## The solution: a management plan for disaster recovery

The next business day after the fire, Arbour Controller Hélène Ducharme contacted the company's Bell representative to handle its emergency communication planning needs. By 4:00 pm that same day, Bell had established a temporary communications system that provided staff with fully operational voice and data capabilities.

"I was really impressed and delighted by the speed of the intervention and the competence and efficiency demonstrated by Bell in terms of its emergency services, the account representative, and the technicians who were dispatched to the site," says Ducharme. "They approached everything courteously, calmly and efficiently."



Once the temporary setup was complete, the Bell account representative immediately began examining Arbour's current and future communications requirements. He also worked with the insurers to discuss the situation resulting from the fire and provided the necessary technical explanations to speed claims processing. "The fact that our account representative helped me respond to the insurers lessened some of the difficulties and made life easier for me," says Ducharme.

The account representative and the team of technicians continued to provide practical ideas and recommendations. Because car dealerships operate with many divisions, the team understood Arbour's specific business challenges and delivered a solution tailored to its needs. The decision was made to go with a new Business Communications Manager (BCM) telecommunications system that combines telephony, computing and mobility.

### **Bell: the value of partnerships in business continuity planning**

"At the end of the whole experience, I learned how important it is in such a situation to have a true business partner," says Ducharme. "The Bell team of professionals and technicians served as experienced project managers who knew our field of business and who were familiar with our operational needs."

Now that the crisis is over, and reconstruction of the facility has begun, the Bell account representative continues to perform the necessary follow-ups to ensure that Arbour keeps on top of its business continuity – including data backup and storage. "We have learned some very important lessons from this experience," says Ducharme. "We greatly appreciate what Bell has done for us and will continue to work with them in future."

**Need:** To re-establish voice and data communications following a catastrophic event

**Solution:** Business Continuity solutions from Bell

**Results:**

- Restored communications within hours of system failure
- A new and fully integrated telephony, computing and mobility solution to meet present and future needs
- A business continuity roadmap for the future

**For more information contact your Bell representative or Bell Certified Partner.**

