

# AutoIMS News

SUMMER 2013

## AASC Team Longevity Attributed to Great People, Balance, and Interesting Work

AASC, the proud parent of AutoIMS, is rapidly approaching its 16th anniversary of successful service to the auto remarketing industry. The same goes for a number of AASC's employees who continue to break corporate America's trend of shortening tenure.

We asked seven team members who have over 10 years of service with AASC each to share the reasons that make them stay, and we think the answers could be helpful to any business. Here are some of the highlights:

### *Thinking outside the paycheck – what keeps you interested and excited about working at AASC?*

- Awesome coworkers, great humor, and friendships
- The responsibility to stay ahead of the technology curve
- Wearing many hats, each with unique responsibilities
- Being part of the automotive industry
- Strong-held belief in the value of AutoIMS
- Getting things done, and quickly
- Balance, and feeling comfortable taking vacation

### *How do you achieve balance between life and work?*

- Spending time with family (including the furry ones)
- Organization, keeping a strict calendar
- World travel. Recent destinations include Ireland, India, Australia, New Zealand, Italy and more
- Volunteering in the community
- Reading, fishing, and taking in the beauty of the world

Noticeably absent from any list of positive attributes about working at AASC is, "an easy, fun commute." Though AASC HQ is centrally located in Atlanta's Perimeter section, our team

is spread out across the metro area. Still, even when the traffic odds are against them, getting here doesn't dampen the enthusiasm they bring to their work each and every day.

AASC would like to express gratitude to all of our employees, especially the long-timers. The company's success is largely founded on your commitment.

### What's Inside?

CR Writing

Contest!

AutoIMS Cloud

Annalee Elliott



"We were implementing virtual machines before most people had heard of the cloud. When our clients' regulatory environment began to change, tighten, & increase in complexity, we reinvented our networks to meet or exceed emerging standards."

-Don Stephens (Mgr. Network Security, 12 years)



"I enjoy getting to know our customers. I am typically the first point of contact for clients, actions and many of our vendors. I take the time to get to know their business first, then set up the demos, work out the contracts and setup. It's a very gratifying process because there are so many great people in this industry."

-Keely Smith (Director, Business Development, 11 years)



"My wife and I are certified scuba divers and we recently did our first sky dive from 14000 ft. Between 90 feet under the water and 14,000 feet in the sky, we are still trying to achieve the right balance at sea level."

-Venkat Krishnamoorthy (CIO, 11 years)



"The work we do impacts other peoples' lives. Cars give people independence. Car data provides power to both buyers and sellers. We're always trying to improve our processes, and continue Don's legacy."

-Shannon Meadows (Manager of Design and UX, 15 years)



"Work/life balance is easy to achieve here. An appreciation for a work/life balance is at the core of our corporate culture. This attitude started with Don Meadows, and has continued as long as the company has been in business. It is a precious commodity in today's business environment."

-Maureen Berry (Office Manager, 14 years)



"The world is beautiful. We hope that we can take two, long vacations and visit one foreign country per year. My manager has never rejected my vacation request."

-Joyce Li (Senior Software Developer, 12 years)



"Although it seems like I have to commute to the office from Florida every day, the people are worth it."

-Dianne Chin (Senior Java Architect, 12 years)

## Manheim Atlanta: Condition Report Writing Expedition

In May, Asst. GM Todd Mathis greeted Steve Whitney, Venkat Krishnamoorthy, and Vicki Schibi from AutoIMS to Manheim Atlanta. Their mission? To observe the condition report (CR) writing process first hand, and gain a greater understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by auctions in writing a modern CR. Todd shared that Manheim Atlanta's 200+ acres, surrounded by Atlanta thoroughfares, can marshal 10,000 to 12,000 vehicles on any given day. Inventory was high, and the hustle bustle of sale day was palpable as our crew made their way to the haven of the CR building - an enclosed, air conditioned, well-lit space, allowing CR's to be written comfortably indoors, and avoid delays from inclement weather.

The crew was introduced to Willie Muldrow, a Level 4 Master Trainer in Manheim Atlanta's CR department. He presented a Panasonic CF 19 "brick" used to write CRs. It is a Tuff Book and keeps true to its name. Using the brick, CR writers identify the VIN, make, model, year, color, mileage, and then select vehicle options. Equipment and options must be cataloged carefully, as items like seat heaters and navigation systems can greatly impact the value of a vehicle in the lane.

Oftentimes consignors simply don't know what options are present. At least 8 standard, digital pictures are uploaded at the time the CR is being written. Detailed line item damages are entered. A damage calculation program calculates time and cost to repair a damage item. Damage photos are taken for items that may amount to over \$200. Vehicles are also assessed carefully for frame damage. If frame damage goes undiscovered or unannounced, the cost of the mistake will come back to the auction.

Previous repairs are also a major concern. CR writers look for tape lines, turned bolts, soldered areas, and replaced panels, all which raise red flags. Paint thickness is measured, as is

The screenshot displays the AutoIMS software interface. On the left, a large image shows a red sedan. Below it are smaller thumbnail images of the car from different angles. On the right, a 'Tabbed Vehicle Summary' window is open, showing various fields for vehicle information. Below the summary is a table of equipment and options.

Equipment		
Cloth Interior	Roof	Hard Top
Bench	Drive Type	Front Wheel Drive
No	Rear Defroster	No
Yes	Tilt	Yes
AM/FM CD	Airbag	Dual Air Bags
Yes	# Seats	0
Air Conditioning	LF Tires - 10/32 inch	RF Tires - 10/32 inch

AutoIMS tabbed vehicle summary with CR info.

tire tread depth. When the CR is finished, Manheim's ECR (Electronic Condition Report) program provides an "auto-grade" for the vehicle. Grades range from 0 to 5, yet very few vehicles are graded below 1.9.

Having (gratefully) walked a mile in the shoes of a Manheim CR writer, Steve took the opportunity to demonstrate the AutoIMS LiveCRwriter Mobile product on his Android phone. Willie was impressed and mentioned he had been talking to his team about incorporating use of either an Android or iPad. Also, Willie enjoyed seeing his just-written CR information appear in near-real time on [www.autoims.com](http://www.autoims.com), gaining even more appreciation for the time and accuracy sensitivities of our mutual consignor clients.

A very successful trip to the auction concluded with a few minutes in the auction lanes before thanking our hosts Todd Mathis, Mark Robinson, and Willie Muldrow, followed by the journey back to AASC World HQ where ideas from trips like this one turn into enhanced products and services for you.



Vicki Schibi and Steve Whitney walk the lot at Manheim.

## AutoIMS and the Cloud - A Technology Bellweather?

The AutoIMS technology team continuously monitors the horizon for technology bellweathers, especially those innovations that have the potential to keep client costs low and the dependability of AutoIMS high. Among many tech frontiers, one we are studying closely is the cloud.

Cloud computing has indeed transitioned from technology jargon to everyday mention in the business world. Earlier this year, our technology leaders attended the Amazon Web Services (AWS) Summit Series in New York to learn more about the maturity of cloud services. Cloud computing is now being harnessed by name-plate companies in every vertical industry, including those where data security and availability is of paramount importance like financial services, healthcare, communications and media, and even the government.

The beauty of the cloud is the scalability and affordability of computing resources now available. Cloud computing customers have the option to pay only for the computing power they use. Companies can now focus fewer resources on buying and upgrading costly IT equipment, and more resources on their core business.

While there are a variety of companies with cloud service offerings, Amazon has led the way in this space and offers a mature, stable, and well-regarded global cloud environment. At the time of this writing, AWS is located in 8 geographical



So what is “the cloud”? In a nutshell, cloud computing lets companies harness large-scale computing power and infrastructure over the internet without having to make large capital expenditures on equipment.

regions. Each region offers multiple ‘Availability Zones’, which are distinct data centers providing AWS services. Availability Zones are isolated from each other to prevent outages and failures from spreading between Zones.

Since its infancy, the security of cloud computing has been closely scrutinized by security experts (including our own), and rightfully so. Even though cloud technologies have been around for a while, the last several years have brought great advances in cloud security. Identity access management, encryption, extensive logging and monitoring, and private cloud models have all evolved to allow for a secure and viable cloud environment.

The demand for data-intensive services in the auto remarketing industry is increasing every day. Real time communications, improved data analytics, extended data storage, increasing numbers of vehicle images, and other factors are driving up the volumes of data to be managed for auto portfolios. With that kind of forecast, AutoIMS is looking closely at how best to incorporate cloud technology into its umbrella of services.

We would love to hear about your cloud experiences. According to AutoIMS CIO, Venkat Krishnamoorthy, “The sky is the limit when it comes to cloud computing!” Drop us an email: [tech-speak@autoims.com](mailto:tech-speak@autoims.com).

## Fixing What’s Broken (and a Contest!)

A recent look at the AutoIMS database revealed some insight about what repairs are most commonly performed at auction. The top 5 most common repairs (in no particular order) are:

- Left Front Door
- Rear Bumper Cover
- Right Rear Door
- Front Bumper Cover
- Windshield

Want to win some AutoIMS goodies? See if you can rank these repairs in order of most to least common. To play, visit: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/repaircontest>.

## Dashboard



In early June, all of our members were granted access to the new AutoIMS Dashboard - an updated home page designed to provide more useful information for all members when they log in to the system. So far, the Dashboard is an initial success! It’s also inspired a number of fantastic ideas, and the next generation is already in development. Would you like to share some ideas? Simply send an email to: [customer.service@autoims.com](mailto:customer.service@autoims.com); we’re listening!

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Thanks!



## Toyota Financial Services' Annalee Elliott

Annalee Elliott is the Remarketing Project and Vendor Administrator for Toyota Financial Services (TFS). Along with establishing and maintaining relationships with external business partners, she integrates their services into the TFS Remarketing framework. "There are multiple initiatives running at any given time," says Annalee, "and I track and coordinate efforts between TFS and vendors, as well as between different vendors."

In her current position for a year and a half, she was in the Accounting and Treasury parts of Toyota for 22 years. Remarketing was a big adjustment in both subject matter and perspective. Annalee brings problem-solving techniques acquired in implementing accounting systems to the wide variety of projects and people in the industry.

The rise in used vehicle inventory means finding creative and innovative ways to handle that inventory. TFS uses technology and their technology partners to automate and streamline processes. "Our goal is to get accurate, pertinent information into the hands of our dealers so that they can get the cars they need," says Annalee. "We use the data about our business to develop analysis to improve our logistics and refine our pricing."

AutoIMS has worked with TFS for many years. Annalee recognizes the value of AutoIMS' ability to gather disparate data from multiple sources and convert it into a single, consistent

format. "Whenever we come across a new challenge in regards to data," says Annalee, "one of the first considerations is: can we do it in AutoIMS?"



Toyota Financial Services

Saving time and money is important to TFS and essential in the current economy. AutoIMS answers challenges from TFS with multiple options to solve them, along with the pros and cons of each and suggestions on how to reduce implementation costs while still meeting their needs.

Outside of work, Annalee is a big science fiction fan. "One of my all-time favorites is Ender's Game, by Orson Scott Card. As far as movies go, I am really enjoying all the comic-book derivatives that have been coming out the past few years - Iron Man, Thor, Avengers, etc." Annalee has achieved a bit of her own superhero status around AutoIMS, becoming more than just a great client, but also a friend.