VETTX scales its business with modernized software engineering and product enhancement

VETTX
https://www.vettx.com
Headquarters: Chico CA, USA

EXIT83 partnered with VETTX to reinvent how the company does software engineering. Together they implemented an agile approach to development, migrated the company's databases to Azure, and revamped the entire platform experience. Now, VETTX has a product that is saving money, setting sales records, and is primed to scale.

Implementing agile processes and redesigning their product gave VETTX:

Increased sales of 42% YoY
from Q1 2022 to Q1 2023

Decreased expenses of 22% YoY
from Q1 2022 to Q1 2023

Accelerated growth
with a more robust and reliable platform that gives VETTX the ability to grow its user base.

Greater client satisfaction
through the creation of a more modern, intuitive, and stable user experience.

Early success and rapid growth create an urgent need to modernize

In 2019 when Nicholas Patterson was working at his family's car dealership in Oregon, the for-sale-by-owner market was increasingly moving to Craigslist, Facebook, and other online marketplaces. While buying inventory through these platforms was profitable, it was difficult for car dealers to track vehicles and stay organized.

This presented an opportunity that soon led Patterson to create VETTX: a software platform that enables car dealers to find used vehicles from private sellers. After the software discovers vehicles that meet the dealer's criteria, the VETTX booking team gathers information and obtains evaluations on the vehicle, then keeps information organized as the dealer completes the purchase.

A small team at VETTX built and maintained the software and as their user base grew, so did their technical issues. A poorly structured database, along with outdated technologies and development concepts, led to slow response times and inaccurate information being gathered and displayed on the platform. VETTX's team also lacked established practices for quality assurance during the development cycle. This meant new features were slow to roll out, and when they did reach customers, they were often buggy.

These issues, combined with a lack of automation, made the software expensive to maintain. Plus, an outdated user experience that required considerable training and onboarding—along with the reliability and performance issues—was causing existing customers to leave the platform.

VETTX knew they needed to build a higher-quality product that could create trust with external and internal stakeholders. Customers needed a more stable product with an improved user experience, and the company's confidence to grow the customer base and expand into new markets.

"The idea was there: to help dealers tap into the private seller market in a streamlined way," said Patterson, the CEO and Co-founder of VETTX. "But we needed to execute from the software side of things and were hitting the limits of what we could do in that area."

Transformation, from the engineering process through to the user experience

VETTX engaged EXIT83 to make their software more robust and compliant with modern standards for privacy and security, while remediating a patchwork of legacy database software.

Patterson is a self-proclaimed "car guy", not a technology expert—and he felt a little out of his element from the start.

"The software space can be a lonely, scary place when that isn't your area of expertise," he said. "But as entrepreneurs themselves, EXIT83 understood where I was coming from. That gave me the confidence to trust them as we made some extremely difficult decisions together."

Drawing on the breadth of skills and experience across the team, EXIT83 identified three primary end goals for VETTX to achieve:
1. Improve platform stability and performance to in turn increase user satisfaction and customer retention.
2. Make the delivery of new features more efficient to enhance the quality of the platform and give users more control of their experiences.
3. Restructure the development process to simultaneously improve the scalability and reliability of the platform while reducing the costs of maintaining an on-premises setup.

With these goals in mind, the EXIT83 team created a holistic plan to solve for VETTX's software and business challenges.

To improve performance and stability, the team fixed bugs and removed unnecessary features and functionality. They integrated new technologies such as React.js to improve response times, enhance the look and feel of the platform, and move away from a legacy unstructured PHP code base.

On the delivery side, EXIT83 introduced agile approaches that allowed VETTX to innovate faster. These processes were used to revamp the entire website and introduce a much-improved user interface. They also ensured that new features were developed to be reusable for future projects.

And as part of restructuring the platform development, EXIT83 recommended that VETTX move its data, services, and website to the Azure cloud. Azure could enhance outcomes across all three goals, helping VETTX speed delivery and achieve scale and resilience. It also has built-in tools to facilitate the restructuring and a

The EXIT83 team brought:
- Agile processes
- Product design
- Full-stack development
- UX/UI
- Azure migration
- Database migration

"If it wasn't for EXIT83, I don't know if we would've made it. The idea was there, but we needed to execute—and EXIT83 enabled us to do just that."

"The software evolved more in four months working with EXIT83 than it had in the four years prior."

"At EXIT83, they're pros at what they do. They understand what

microservices architecture that boosted maintainability, scalability, and reliability.

"A database migration is something clients don't see and it's not a cheap decision to make, which makes it a tough call when you're having a churn problem," Patterson said. "But that's where EXIT83 pulled through."

Achieving a strong new foundation for scaling the business

With agile development processes, a secure and reliable back end, and a host of new features, the platform is poised to scale and is already driving record-breaking growth: VETTX saw its highest monthly sales ever in February 2023—a historically quiet (and short) month. For Patterson and team, that's just the beginning.

This foundation has made it much faster to bring improvements and new features to market. "The software evolved more in four months working with EXIT83 than it had in the four years prior," Patterson said.

VETTX's internal team is confident in ramping up sales efforts thanks to a more robust platform that includes contingency plans for any software issues that may arise. This led to a front-row booth at the 2023 National Independent Automobile Dealers Association (NIADA) Convention & Expo, next to major players like CarMax and Cox Automotive. "We wouldn't have done that if it wasn't for the confidence we have in where the software is today," Patterson said.
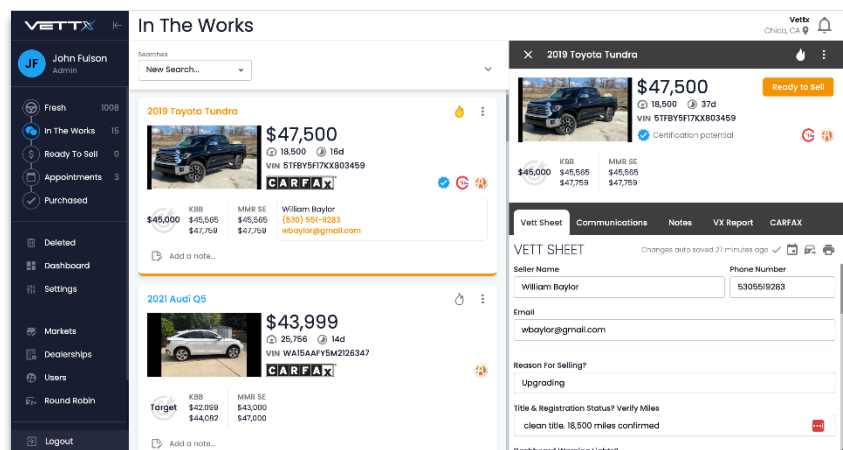
Example updated VETTX user interface.

"I look at it like we're building a skyscraper," he said. "EXIT83 has helped us get to floor one, and now we're ready to go higher: expanding to marketplaces outside beyond automotive. We can do that with the foundation that EXIT83 has built for us. It's a big difference from what we had before, and you know—if it wasn't for EXIT83, I don't know if VETTX would've made it."

Full-stack development and agile processes are positioning VETTX for rapid growth because their software is secure, reliable, and flexible to users' needs.

How can custom technologies enable your business to support growth? Where can you drive efficiencies to respond faster to market needs and deliver the solutions customers want?

Contact the EXIT83 team to start innovating together.
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