

# Expressway to Savings:

## *Keeping Operating Costs Down at an Indiana Auto Dealership.*

One of the fastest growing auto sales and service businesses in the Midwest is the Expressway group of dealerships. The family-owned business includes Dodge, Mitsubishi, Jeep/Chrysler/Dodge, Chevy/Pontiac/Buick/GMC, and Ford/Mercury dealerships, as well as the Credit Connection and Credit Express operations.



After Expressway's owners purchased Mt. Vernon Ford in 2005, a brand new facility – Expressway Auto World – was built on the site. Designed using the “auto mall” concept, two 45,000 square foot buildings (one for Ford, the other for GM) were erected with a 20,000 square foot Credit Express center situated in between. Both the Ford and GM buildings include a state-of-the-art auto service facility.



“Dan brought the AIRnet system to our attention,” says Jerry Maggard, General Manager of Expressway Ford Mercury. “I was impressed with the entire concept – how professional it looks, how easy it is to install and maintain, how cost efficient it is – so we went on Dan’s recommendation.”

AIRnet is Atlas Copco’s innovative, modular compressed air piping system. The piping is constructed from robust, lightweight aluminum tube. Components are conveniently affixed to walls and ceilings using AIRnet’s extensive range of engineered polymer fittings. The system includes assembly tools that cover the full spectrum of installation options.

“The AIRnet system is great for building new systems or for extending existing piping systems,” according to Kent Reddington, Air Division Manager for Evapar. “The aluminum pipe is finished in blue powder coat to comply with today’s industrial compressed air system standards. The look is neat, clean and professional, and it’s designed for quick and easy installation. If you can use a tape measure, you can install AIRnet.”

For the installation at Expressway’s new auto mall, Dan assisted two members of Expressway’s maintenance crew to get the job started at the Ford shop. In just a few hours, the maintenance crew took over. They finished the Ford shop installation and then did the complete installation at the GM shop. No problems were encountered on either installation.

Expressway is a long-time customer of Evapar, an Indiana-based distributor of equipment and systems for compressed air, electric power generation, and industrial gas and diesel engines. Dan Baldwin, Sales Representative with Evapar’s Air Division, worked with Expressway to specify and supply the compressed air production and distribution systems for the new Ford and GM service facilities.





Expressway's AIRnet system provides air for pneumatic tools in the service department and in the lube center. Oil-fired heaters are used in the service areas and the AIRnet system supports those systems as well.

Once the Ford and GM dealership buildings were up and running, Evapar also provided a compressed air system for the main detail shop at the Credit Express building. Eight work stations provide compressed air for technicians doing automotive detailing.



### Cost Efficiencies

An important benefit of Atlas Copco's AIRnet system is minimizing the cost of compressed air. The smooth, low friction inner surface of the aluminum pipe maintains a minimum pressure drop throughout the air distribution system. This allows compressors to work at lower operating pressures, reducing power consumption and operating costs.

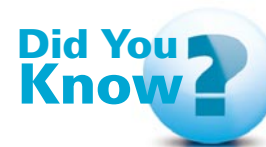
"Air that has been compressed has already incurred cost, so unnecessary pressure drops and leaks are throwing money away," according to Kent Reddington, Air Division Manager at Evapar. "AIRnet minimizes that problem. Compared to a conventional piping system, there's less pressure drop across the AIRnet system, so less energy is consumed in compressing air."

Reddington explains that Atlas Copco Variable Speed Drive (VSD) compressors are a good complement to the AIRnet system. "VSD com-

pressors continuously match the production of compressed air to the demand, so the compressor is always operating as efficiently as possible. A VSD compressor lends itself well to the AIRnet system because the operating efficiencies go hand-in-hand."

Expressway's Ford and GM facilities each have their own energy-efficient Atlas Copco GA7VSDFF tank mount compressed air system with a VSD compressor. Distribution of compressed air in each facility is via approximately 1000 feet of AIRnet piping with a 25mm main header and 20mm drops at workstations.

The non-corrosive properties of AIRnet piping also help to maintain a constant air quality from the compressor to the pneumatic equipment. "System cleanliness protects downstream equipment from contamination," says Reddington, "which further improves reliability and lowers operating costs."



Atlas Copco is one of the Global 100 Most Sustainable Corporations for the fourth consecutive year.

"Overall, we have found our AIRnet system to be very cost-efficient," Jerry explains. "It looks very sophisticated and expensive, but compared in cost to the quotes we got for other types of air distribution systems, AIRnet wins hands down. If the need arises to replace an existing system for replacement or remodeling in one of our dealerships, we'll go with AIRnet again."

AIRnet's aluminum piping is ideal for use with inert gases, such as nitrogen. That makes the system particularly well suited for use in automotive service centers, where nitrogen is rapidly becoming the choice for tire fill.

Jerry says that Expressway is currently evaluating the business opportunity for nitrogen tire fill in the new Ford and GM facilities. "We know nitrogen is used to fill tires in racing, and sometimes when we swap inventory with other dealers those vehicles have nitrogen in the tires. We have a study going, and I think nitrogen tire fill may work well for us."

With two AIRnet systems up and running successfully, Jerry is confident in recommending AIRnet to anyone installing a new compressed air distribution system or upgrading an existing system. "The performance is great and for looks, there's no contest," he says. "Customers are always asking, 'What's that?' When we tell folks what it is, it kind of blows their mind."



### AIRnet Technical Data

*Working Pressure: up to 13 bar*

*Working temperature: -20°C to +70°C (-4°F to +158°F)*

*Lowest allowable dewpoint: -70°C (-94°F)*

*Extruded aluminum pipe complies with EN755.2 – ED755.8 – EN573.3*

*Blue color (RAL 5012) complies with most industrial compressed air color standards*

*Compatible with all compressor oils*

*Nominal pipe sizes 20mm to 80mm (½ inch to 4½ inch)*

For more information about The Expressway Group please visit:

[www.expresswayfordmercury.com/](http://www.expresswayfordmercury.com/)