



# NEWS

May 2001

## **Star Parts Update**

### **Star Parts Pilot Program Status**

Star Parts is now piloting in over 250 dealerships throughout the US and Canada.

### **Product /Operations Stabilization Phase**

We are now entering the Product / Operations Stabilization phase of the project. During this phase we will assess the product for stability in preparation for the production rollout of Star Parts.

As with any new system / application there are always the 'bugs' that need to be worked out and Star Parts is no exception. We are working daily to process your feedback in order to build an application that will help you to specify parts more accurately and improve your customer service.

### **Thank You!**

We would like to thank all the dealerships that are participating in the pilot program. Your input and feedback is invaluable in helping us to build a system that meets your current as well as future needs.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

In an effort to keep you updated on the development of Star Parts and to provide you with the latest information, this edition of Star Parts provides answers to your most frequently asked questions.

- ***If I am on the pilot program can I replace my current Parts Catalog with Star Parts?***

While piloting Star Parts, we are recommending not to replace your current parts catalog. The reason being is that during the pilot phase we are working daily to improve the data, fix 'bugs', increase stability and refine the application itself. There are times during the pilot phase that we will bring the application down to test improvements or fix problems. During these times you will need to refer to your current parts catalog or use your current back up solution.

- ***What is the current status of the Star Parts project?***

Star Parts is entering the Product / Operations Readiness Assessment phase. At the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Q, we will review the stability of the application, performance and dealer feedback to decide if the product is ready for production.

- ***I sent an email to the Star Parts team and I received a message that my email was rejected what happened?***

DaimlerChrysler has a firewall in place that will reject any email messages that are sent through Hotmail, Juno or Yahoo account(s). If you have an Internet Service Provider you can obtain another type of an account thru your provider

- ***The application seems to be a little slow. Are you working on the performance?***



We are aware of your concerns and yes we are making every effort to fine-tune the application to make it run faster. We have a new release of the application that is scheduled to be implemented in May. With this new release you should see some improvement in the speed of the application. We are also working on other performance tuning measures to help increase the speed of the application. The performance tuning of Star Parts is an on-going task. We will continue our efforts to make changes and roll them out to the pilot dealers for evaluation.

- ***How is the VIN-filtering working? Does Star Parts VIN-filter on all makes and model years?***

VIN-filtering is brand new and evolving. We have data experts focused fulltime on maximizing the opportunity. Mopar Catalog information has never been “cut” in this way before, so there are opportunities to progressively enhance.

What’s coming to our pilots?

Timing

- Interior trim color filtering

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- Selective exterior trim color filtering for e.g. fascias

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The highest level of VIN-filtering opportunity exists on 1997 vehicles and forward – potentially down to the sales and trim code levels, etc. Model years 1996 and prior will filter at the make, model year, and engine and transmission code levels.

- ***Why can’t I just download Star Parts to a Server in my dealership rather than have to connect thru the Internet each day?***

Star Parts is not a stand alone PC application, it was designed to be a true client-server application. When you logon to Star Parts each day you are only loading a portion of the application to your PC, the remainder of the application as well as the databases reside on the Star Parts centralized server(s). In order to provide all dealerships with concurrent data and application updates on a weekly basis, we need to maintain the data and the application on our centralized servers.

- ***Once Star Parts goes into production, if the Star Parts system or my Internet Service goes down what do I use for a back-up?***

Currently, paper and microfiche are available. We also plan to offer an additional simple parts specifying tool on CD or DVD for this use.

- ***What do I need to do to prepare my dealership for Star Parts?***

In December of 2000, the DCX dealer technology group mailed a Dealer Infrastructure manual to the US dealers. This document describes a common vision and the guidelines for building an Internet-ready dealership Infrastructure to run Star Parts and all other Customer Connect applications. For questions regarding the dealership Infrastructure please call the Support hotline at 1-800-374-4040, select options 1- 6.

- ***What hardware and Operating system do I need to run Star Parts?***

Star Parts is a Windows-based application and will operate on standard PC hardware. Choosing the hardware to run Star Parts in the dealership is the responsibility of each individual dealer. DaimlerChrysler has contracted with IBM to offer a PC that meets the established **MINIMUM** configuration to run all Customer Connect applications like Star Parts. Each dealer is free to choose



any computer they like; provided it meets the minimum requirements to run Star Parts as outlined below. If you require equipment at this time and are interested in the Customer Connect equipment please call 1-800-374-4040.

The feedback we are receiving from the pilot dealers is that they are upgrading the speed from the 500 MHz that we have listed, they are upgrading the Memory (RAM) to 256 MB and the Video card to 16 MB SVGA on their PC's. They are telling us that this has helped increase the performance of the application.

Listed below are the **MINIMUM** hardware specifications to run StarParts:

<b>Processor:</b>	Pentium III	<b>Speed:</b>	500 MHz
<b>Memory (RAM)</b>	128 MB	<b>Hard Drive:</b>	13.5 GB
<b>DVD Drive:</b>	6X IBM	<b>Network Adapter:</b>	10/100 MB
<b>Sound:</b>	Sound Blaster 3D	<b>Video:</b>	8 MB SVGA
<b>Monitor:</b>	17 inch with 1024 X 768	<b>Speakers:</b>	Yes
<b>Modem:</b>	56Kb	<b>Printer:</b>	Hewlett Packard 6Mp/equivalent
<b>Operating System:</b> Windows NT or Windows 2000 Professional			

• ***Will Star Parts run on Windows 95 or Windows 98?***

Star Parts **WILL NOT** run on Windows 95, Windows 98 or Windows (ME). Star Parts was developed to work with the functionality built into Windows NT and Windows 2000 Professional.

• ***Should I upgrade from the minimum hardware specifications listed above?***

You are free to upgrade any of the items on the hardware specification list. When making your final decision you may want to consider the future needs of your dealership. We are hearing from some of the pilot dealers that they are upgrading the Speed and the Memory (RAM); this has given them some increased benefit on the performance of the application.

• ***Why do I need a 13.5 GB Hard Drive when the application itself doesn't use that much space?***

Although Star Parts does not use all 13.5 Gigabytes on the hard drive the specifications have been defined with the capacity to run all the Customer Connect applications as well as run the software for your in house dealer management system on this PC.

• ***What type of an Internet connection do I need to run Star Parts?***

Star Parts is a windows-based web application, it requires a Public Internet Access method. The access methods are described for you in the Dealer Infrastructure manual. Questions regarding information published in this manual can be answered by calling the DCX Support hotline at 1-800-374-4040 options 1- 6 or the manual can be viewed on the StarParts website. One note to remember is that ***Star Parts will not run fast enough on a dial-up phone modem***, it requires a high speed Internet connection.

- ***When do you plan on rolling out Star Parts?***

Volume Deployment is planned to begin late in the 3rd Qtr 2001 and run through 2003. Star Parts Deployment will be a gradual roll-out depending on dealership readiness. The initial roll-out will start with the US and Canadian dealers.

- ***What is the Star Parts Roll-Out Schedule?***

- **4<sup>th</sup> Qtr 2000 thru 1<sup>st</sup> Qtr 2001** - Pilot / Pre-Volume Production Launch of at least 100 Dealerships
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr 2001** - Product / Operations Readiness Assessment
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Qtr 2001 thru 2003** - Star Parts Deployment will be gradual per the following items:
  - ✓ Product Readiness Assessment results
  - ✓ Dealer Internet readiness
  - ✓ Dealer EPC Contract expiration
  - ✓ Star Parts roll-out plan

- ***Will Star Parts interface with my current Dealer Management System?***

The Star Parts team is currently working with the Dealer Service Providers to ensure that they are providing you with an interface between Star Parts and your dealer management system. It is the dealer's responsibility to contact your Dealer Service provider to establish a connection between Star Parts and your in house dealer management system.

- ***Is there a monthly fee for Star Parts?***

There is not a separate monthly for fee Star Parts. Star Parts is one of 13 Customer Connect applications that are being charged as part of the dealer technology charge.

- ***What kind of training will be provided on Star Parts?***

In order to support the global dealership organization we have developed and are continuing to enhance a computer-based, self-study course that must be completed prior to accessing the Star Parts system. For easy access and for your convenience, the Star Parts EPC team has put the self-study course on the Star Parts website.

- ***Where can I get more information about Star Parts?***

You will receive the Star Parts Newsletter on a regular basis for updates on development progress, training, and roll-out issues. Additional information on accessory catalogs, training, Star Parts updates and News can be obtained by visiting our Star Parts website at:

<http://starnetworkc.extra.daimlerchrysler.com>