



## Investigating the Root Causes Behind Parts Availability



**Fortos supported one of the world's leading truck manufacturers with a root cause analysis on parts availability. By using a crowdsourcing workshop and hypothesis driven testing, we helped the customer identify which areas to focus their time and resources on to achieve the best results.**

### Customer Challenge

The customer's division in North America sought to improve parts availability at its dealerships so that when its customers came for both planned and unexpected service, there would always be the necessary parts to quickly get the vehicle back on the road.

The customer had also recently made changes to its aftermarket distribution flow and forecasting system. Aftermarket executives were meeting frequently to 'huddle' around the emergent parts availability issues and how to resolve them. They came to Fortos as they realized in order to improve parts availability, they also needed to take a step back and look at the root causes

### Customer Solution

Fortos mapped the key processes impacting parts availability – from procurement to demand forecasting to logistics and to fulfillment. All aftermarket departments were then invited to participate in a process improvement fair and over 200 people attended. Participants could come on their own time, write as many process comments as they wished, and discuss with new and old colleagues.

After the workshop days, Fortos reviewed the comments, grouped them into areas for further investigation, and developed a hypothesis for each area. Then, the list was reviewed with a cross-functional steering group who decided to investigate half of the areas based on their potential impact and whether a taskforce or project teams already existed.

Fortos then tested each hypothesis through data analysis, in person interviews, etc. and returned to the steering committee with firm conclusions and recommendations. For the hypotheses proven true, we created charters to address the issue with proposed sponsors, project managers, timelines, and deliverables.





## Customer Value

Fortos supported the customer with an objective and methodical root cause analysis. The workshop raised a variety of issues – some well-known but others which had not been considered or were thought of as already resolved. Furthermore, the workshop provided a voice to employees in all functions and at all levels. By validating each hypothesis Fortos ensured that only the ones that could be confirmed through facts were brought forward as recommendations. Fortos also helped to set the customer up for success in implementing the recommended changes by drafting charters and identifying project leaders, team members, milestones, and potential benefits.

The result and added value came from Fortos pointing out validated parts availability problems and detailing specific solutions for improvement. The solutions were broad – including new roles, systems changes, performance and data management, etc. – and were split between quick wins and longer term initiatives. Most recommendations were accepted by the steering committee and implemented.

## Customer & Fortos Collaboration

Fortos consultants worked closely with the customer to take key decisions throughout the course of the project – from planning the workshop to selecting investigation areas and to endorsing the recommendations. Given the cross-functional nature of the parts availability topic, Fortos wanted to leverage the ‘wisdom of the crowd’ to identify pain points in the existing processes. Together with the customer, we decided to host the process improvement fair. The project was successful through the input of the cross-functional steering committee and all workshop participants.

### Want to know more?

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### About Fortos

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