

# Cracks and Racks

## Rocket U2's UniVerse Platform Helps Cracks and Racks Streamline Back Office Operations and Increase Customer Face Time

Based in Colorado, Cracks and Racks began in 1996 as a one-person windshield repair business. It has since evolved into a specialty rack retailer and complete auto glass center. With a reputation for knowledge and reliability, Cracks and Racks sells over 5,000 products online and at its bricks-and-mortar location, including bike racks, ski racks, cargo racks, water sports racks and a full line of automotive aftermarket accessories. The company also performs rack installation, auto glass repairs and replacements.

### Time Spent on Back-End Operations Limited Small Business's Customer Engagement.

How does a company with four employees manage both a retail operation with over 7,000 products and a busy, multi-bay service center? Cracks and Racks, an Aspen, Colorado-based company, faces this challenge every day as it sells car racks and accessories to an international customer base while also repairing and replacing auto glass at its small shop. Because the company tries to ensure repair/replace appointments within 48 hours, and must also manage its large inventory, Cracks and Racks was experiencing a time squeeze. So founder and owner Scott Vold turned to a real-time data management solution built by Digital Business Controls on Rocket U2's UniVerse platform.

"I was using a system meant for the auto glass industry to also manage my point of sale needs," Vold recalls. "It was too cumbersome to operate and we outgrew it."

The auto glass industry has a database with tens of thousands of parts - in fact, every car model has a specific set of specifications, including glass and moldings - which requires a look-up for each window replacement job. And for his rack business, Vold tries to maintain a steady inventory of approximately eight units per product, which means he needs to manage his physical inventory to replenish each product. He also has to manage the seasonal fluctuation in consumer demand for ski racks, cargo racks, water sports racks, and bike racks. Realizing that he could no longer run a niche retail business with software that was built exclusively for the autoglass industry, Vold needed to find a solution that could communicate with the centralized auto glass industry database and insurance company systems, but was also scalable enough to manage his growing racks store.

### Cracks and Racks Aspen, Colorado

Cracks and Racks uses a data management solution, built by Digital Business Controls on Rocket U2's UniVerse platform, for transaction processing, updating prices, inventory management, bookkeeping, and scheduling of service appointments. The solution has saved nearly one man-hour per day and has allowed the company's employees to increase the time they can spend with customers.

“The challenge was to find a system that could handle a robust point-of-sale system for our racks and accessories business as well as the scheduling and invoicing we need to do in order to run the installation, repair and replace side of our business,” Vold said. “It all had to work very seamlessly from entering various types of data onto a spreadsheet, uploading it and then using the data to help us run every part of our business in a centralized way.”

## Dual Retail/Service Focus Requires Scalable Point-of-Sale Functionality and Interoperability with Third-Party Databases.

Vold researched a number of retail-focused solutions, but none could integrate with the auto glass database and insurance company platforms. With the solution built on Rocket U2’s UniVerse platform, he found a product that meets all of his needs. It offers the ability to use Excel to enter and upload manufacturer data, UPC codes, product descriptions and price changes, integrate physical and online storefront management, provide real-time notification when a product’s stock falls to an established pre-order point, and enable P/L and cash flow management through Quickbooks, including daily reporting on cost-of-goods sold. On the window repair and replacement side of the business, the software allows the Cracks and Racks team to interface directly with insurance companies so it can verify coverage and transmit invoices. Finally, the team can use the software to schedule installation and repair appointments based on repair bay and technician availability.

## Streamlined Data Management, Scheduling and Bookkeeping Saves Time and Money.

Between inventory management, accounting, parts matching, invoicing and scheduling, Vold estimates that the Rocket U2-based solution is saving Cracks and Racks at least one man-hour per day, which is significant for a four-person company trying to sell product units and provide quick turnaround service.

“Our precision is so much better with this software than with our old software,” Vold says. “We were paying a bookkeeper to reconcile discrepancies, which we no longer need to do because there is less likelihood for an error, and end-of-month reconciliation is faster than it ever was. Just the reporting features alone save us 30 minutes a day from our previous system. I can close out a day in two minutes rather than 30 -- that’s huge.”

Vold added: “Getting manufacturers’ product data and UPC codes into the system is a piece of cake. It’s instant. And if I have a price change, I can just enter it and upload it from my spreadsheet.”

## Software Built for Growth.

With its reputation for knowledgeable service and reliability, its expansive product line, and its location where there is high demand for car racks and auto glass maintenance, Cracks and Racks is poised to keep growing. But Vold doesn’t worry about whether his data and operational management software is up to the task. “We see the ability to scale this software well beyond what we even see our company doing at this point,” he says.

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Scott Vold  
Owner  
Cracks and Racks