

Still April 11/05 p 7

By Henry Bury

THE INTELLIGENCER

Peter Smith's move into his new General Motors dealership location off Highway 62 is already paying dividends.

"Things went so smoothly (last) Monday with our new system here that we even sold five new and used vehicles. I wanted to sell a couple on that first day because you're not as organized on the first day of a major move. But I exceeded my expectations."

Smith said last Monday's opening day is a sign of many good things to come for his new location on five acres of property at 42 Town Centre Dr., directly across from the Bob Clute GM dealership and next door to Belleville Hyundai.

"We have already noticed a lot more traffic coming into the new lot, just people driving by along Highway 62 or those on the way home from playing bingo," he said.

Sunday was a good example, he said. While Smith was busy installing computers, he said he counted at least 250 people who drove through the lot to check out his stock.

Peter Smith Chev Olds Cadillac Ltd. had been operating at its former Station Street location since early 2004 after Smith purchased the franchise from Randy Knight with the intention of someday relocating the operation north of Highway 401.

There was an auction sale April 2, at the former Station Street site.

"Boyd Sullivan did an excellent job with the auction because we sold 97 per cent of what we put on the auction block," Smith said.

All nine hoists were sold, as well as a variety of furniture and some small machinery.

Staff spent the past weekend moving all 250 new and used vehicles from the downtown location to the new Highway 62 dealership.

"Our new building opened Monday morning for service. Everything was ready and operational ... the only problem was not getting our high speed Internet and fax lines installed until Wednesday," Smith said.

Smith is proud of his new dealership.

"The new dealership is the most modern state-of-the-art facility in Eastern Ontario," he said, "right from the in-floor heat in the service repair area to the two-storey all-glass showroom."

The 21,000-square-foot building boasts a nine-car indoor showroom, 14 bays for mechanical repairs with all new hoists and repair equipment, a two-lane indoor service drive-through service reception and a customer's lounge complete with a flat screen television and electric fireplace.

Smith will also be opening his new Belleville Carstar Collision centre at the former Hadley Equipment building at 104 Mineral Rd. one block north of Wal-Mart April 11.

"This 10,000-square-foot building has been totally renovated and holds one of the best collision repair centres in the province," he said.

Smith said he's buoyed by the public response to his new location.

"We are experiencing more traffic and a larger opportunity to display our vehicles and provide the consumer with a modern and convenient facility that they would expect in today's environment."