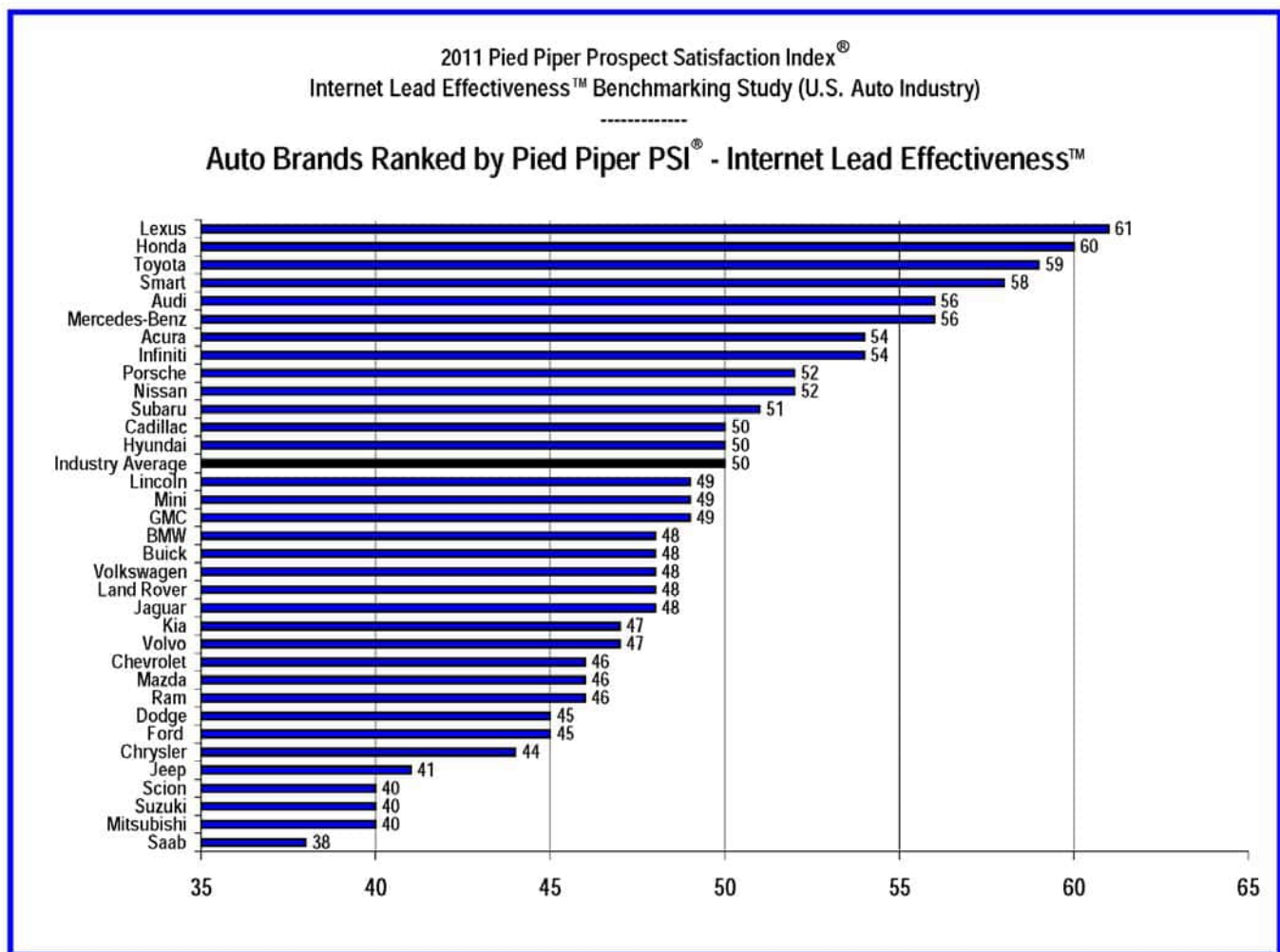


LEXUS, HONDA AND TOYOTA DEALERSHIPS MOST RESPONSIVE TO CUSTOMER INTERNET INQUIRIES REPORTS PIED PIPER PROSPECT SATISFACTION INDEX[®]

Industrywide: 36% of customer internet inquiries remain unanswered after 24 hours

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA – March 14, 2011 – Lexus, Honda and Toyota dealerships ranked highest in a newly released Pied Piper Prospect Satisfaction Index[®] (PSI[®]) Internet Lead Effectiveness[™] Benchmarking Study to measure dealership responsiveness to customer inquiries over the internet. The study measured average dealership performance for all major U.S. automotive brands, showing a wide variety in performance by brand. Pied Piper conducted the study as an independent benchmarking service to its Internet Lead Effectiveness clients, who receive monthly internet “mystery shops” to measure and improve dealership response to internet inquiries.

Internet Lead Effectiveness rankings by brand are determined by the patent-pending Pied Piper PSI process, which ties “mystery shopping” measurement and scoring to actual industry sales success. Nineteen different Internet Lead Effectiveness questions generate composite scores for Timeliness of Response, Dealership and Salesperson Identification, Quality of Communication and Forwarding the Sale.



Eight out of ten of today's car shoppers visit a web site before visiting a dealership. Dealerships have responded to the continual increase in internet shoppers by adopting dealership customer relationship management (CRM) systems. Today most dealerships use a CRM system which features automated lead responses to generate an immediate pre-chosen email response to a customer inquiry. Some CRM systems go a step further and automatically customize the message based upon text responses within the customer inquiry. However, while the CRM systems are clearly beneficial when used to introduce the dealership, it is not unusual today for dealership personnel to rely primarily or even solely on the automated response, which often does not adequately answer a customer's specific inquiries.

As recently as three years ago, only six in ten dealership internet inquiries were answered in any way within 24 hours. In comparison, today dealerships respond within 24 hours nine times out of ten, but often with an automated, impersonal response. However, despite the increase in responses driven by automated CRM systems, today a customer's specific question is answered within 24 hours only 64% of the time. Or in other words, 36% of today's internet inquiries remain unanswered after 24 hours.

"A dealer principal would never accept this sort of poor performance in traditional dealership activities," said Fran O'Hagan, President and CEO of Pied Piper Management Company LLC. "Imagine ignoring 36% of sales customers who walk through the door, or ignoring 36% of customers who bring their car in for service." A reason cited for this disparity in performance is that a dealership's internet response performance is often invisible to dealership management, which is why Pied Piper offers internet mystery shopping to shine a light on dealership performance.

O'Hagan noted, "We find dramatically different industrywide results for Pied Piper internet mystery shops when compared to in-person mystery shops. When we break-out the auto industry average results into simple letter grades, we find that 64% of in-person mystery shops are either "A" or "B" performances, while only 16% earn a "D" or "F." In comparison, only 17% of internet mystery shops earn an "A" or "B" grade, while 60% perform at a "D" or "F" level."

A rough rule of thumb for today's industry average internet response performance is a third, a third and a third: dealerships on average answer customer internet inquiries within 30 minutes one-third of the time, answer in greater than 30 minutes but less than 24 hours a third of the time, and fail to provide any answer a third of the time. However, some brands perform much better than others. The following is a sample of brand measurements provided by the Study:

Answered specific customer question within 24 hours:

Best: Answered specific customer questions within 24 hours at least 70% of the time: Mini, Smart, Audi, Toyota, Mercedes-Benz, Acura, Hyundai, Buick, Subaru, GMC.

Worst: Answered specific customer questions within 24 hours less than 40% of the time: Scion, Saab, Suzuki, Mitsubishi, Chrysler, Jeep, Chevrolet, Ford, Kia.

Answered specific customer question within 30 minutes:

Best: Answered specific customer questions within 30 minutes at least 50% of the time: Lexus, Toyota, Mercedes-Benz, Audi, Smart.

Worst: Answered specific customer questions within 30 minutes less than 30% of the time: Mini, Mitsubishi, Saab, Suzuki, GMC, Porsche, Scion, Jaguar, Subaru.

Provided a requested price quote:

Best: Provided a requested price quote (of any kind) at least 40% of the time: Honda, Acura, Chevrolet, Infiniti.

Worst: Provided a requested price quote (of any kind) less than 10% of the time: Mini, Jeep, Smart, BMW.

Attempted to contact by telephone:

Best: Attempted to contact by telephone at least 60% of the time: Infiniti, Honda, Toyota, Mercedes-Benz.

Worst: Attempted to contact by telephone less than 30% of the time: Chrysler, Ram, Dodge, Jeep.

Attempted to set up an appointment to visit the dealership:

Best: Attempted to set up an appointment to visit the dealership at least 30% of the time: Honda, Smart, Acura, Toyota, Mercedes-Benz, Lexus, BMW.

Worst: Attempted to set up an appointment to visit the dealership less than 15% of the time: Mazda, Chrysler, Jeep, Mini, Ford, Audi, Buick.

Provided compelling reasons to buy from their specific dealership:

Best: Provided compelling reasons to buy from their specific dealership at least 30% of the time: Honda, Lexus, Infiniti, Subaru, Mercedes-Benz.

Worst: Provided compelling reasons to buy from their specific dealership less than 15% of the time: Dodge, Jeep, Mitsubishi, Ford, Chrysler, Scion.

The 2011 Pied Piper PSI Internet Lead Response Benchmarking Study (U.S. Auto Industry) was conducted between September 2010 and March 2011 by submitting internet inquiries to a sample of 2,816 dealerships nationwide representing all major brands. Examples of other recent Pied Piper PSI studies are the 2010 Pied Piper PSI U.S. Auto Industry Study and 2010 Pied Piper PSI U.S. Motorcycle Industry Study, both of which measured in-dealership, in-person sales effectiveness. Complete Pied Piper PSI industry study results are provided to vehicle manufacturers and national dealer groups. Manufacturers, national dealer groups and individual dealerships also order PSI evaluations as a tool to improve the sales effectiveness of their dealerships. For more information about the Pied Piper Prospect Satisfaction Index, and the patent-pending PSI process, go to www.piedpiperpsi.com.

About Pied Piper Management Company, LLC

Pied Piper Management Company, LLC is an eight year old Monterey, California company that develops and runs sales and marketing programs to maximize the performance of dealer networks. Go to www.piedpipermc.com.

This press release is provided for editorial use only, and information contained in this release may not be used for advertising or otherwise promoting brands mentioned in this release without specific, written permission from Pied Piper Management Co., LLC.

###