

NEWSROOM[Press Releases](#)[Features](#)[Today's Headlines](#)[Public Service
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Acura dealerships ranked highest in the newly released 2007 Pied Piper Prospect Satisfaction Index(SM) Auto Industry Study, an industry-first study that measures how consumers are treated when shopping for a new car, SUV or truck. The independent study evaluated and benchmarked shopping experiences at 1,592 dealerships nationwide, representing all major brands. (Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/pmh/20070716/CLM021>) Following Acura were Land Rover, Saturn, Jaguar, Volkswagen, Nissan, and nineteen other brands at or above the industry average. Twelve brands finished below industry average.

Acura dealers were ranked consistently among the top brands for most of the 50+ sales process aspects evaluated by the study, and ranked first for giving prospects compelling reasons to buy from their specific dealership. Other brands led the industry in different areas. For example, Land Rover salespeople were most likely to provide a "walk-around" showcasing product features and benefits, and were also most likely to offer a brochure.

Saturn salespeople were most likely to offer a test drive, and to provide compelling reasons to buy now. Jaguar salespeople were most likely to mention financing options. Lexus salespeople nearly always – 98% of the time – asked for contact information. BMW salespeople were most likely to appear responsible for setting the sales price themselves.

"Pied Piper PSI results show that it is possible for automobile salespeople to effectively ask for the sale without seeming either overbearing or ambivalent," said Fran O'Hagan, President of Pied Piper Management Co., LLC. Long a subject of criticism, many auto manufacturers and dealers have substantially improved the effectiveness of their sales processes. For example, salespeople offered a test drive 89% of the time, asked for contact information 83% of the time, asked for the sale 75% of the time, and offered a brochure 66% of the time. Since the study figures are averages across brands, opportunity abounds for performance improvement at individual dealerships. One area of opportunity is the fact that salespeople provided compelling reasons to buy from their specific dealership only 51% of the time.

Pied Piper PSI studies have been conducted in other industries too. Harley-Davidson was ranked first in the 2007 Pied Piper PSI(SM) Motorcycle Industry Study, and Monaco was ranked first in the 2007 Pied Piper PSI(SM) RV Industry Study (Class A). A comparison of dealership performance across auto, motorcycle and RV industries shows substantial differences. For example, auto salespeople are most likely to ask for the sale, set up a future appointment or ask for contact information. Motorcycle salespeople are most likely to conduct "walk-around" showcasing product features, involve prospects with visual aids, and appear primarily responsible for setting the price. RV salespeople are most likely to determine a prospect's price range, to give compelling reasons to buy from their specific dealership, and to discuss product features unique from the competition.

"Most businesses carefully track sales and take care of existing customers," O'Hagan said, "but 75% to 90% of motor-vehicle shoppers don't buy the same day they visit a retail location, so maximizing prospect satisfaction is an important key for turning those shoppers into tomorrow's buyers."

The 2007 Pied Piper Prospect Satisfaction Index(SM) Auto Industry Study was conducted between April 2007 and June 2007 using anonymous shopper evaluations at 1,592 dealerships located throughout the U.S., representing approximately one in fourteen of all U.S. light vehicle dealership locations. For more information about the Pied Piper Prospect Satisfaction Index SM, and the patent-pending Pied Piper PSI process, go to <http://www.piedpiperpsi.com>.