

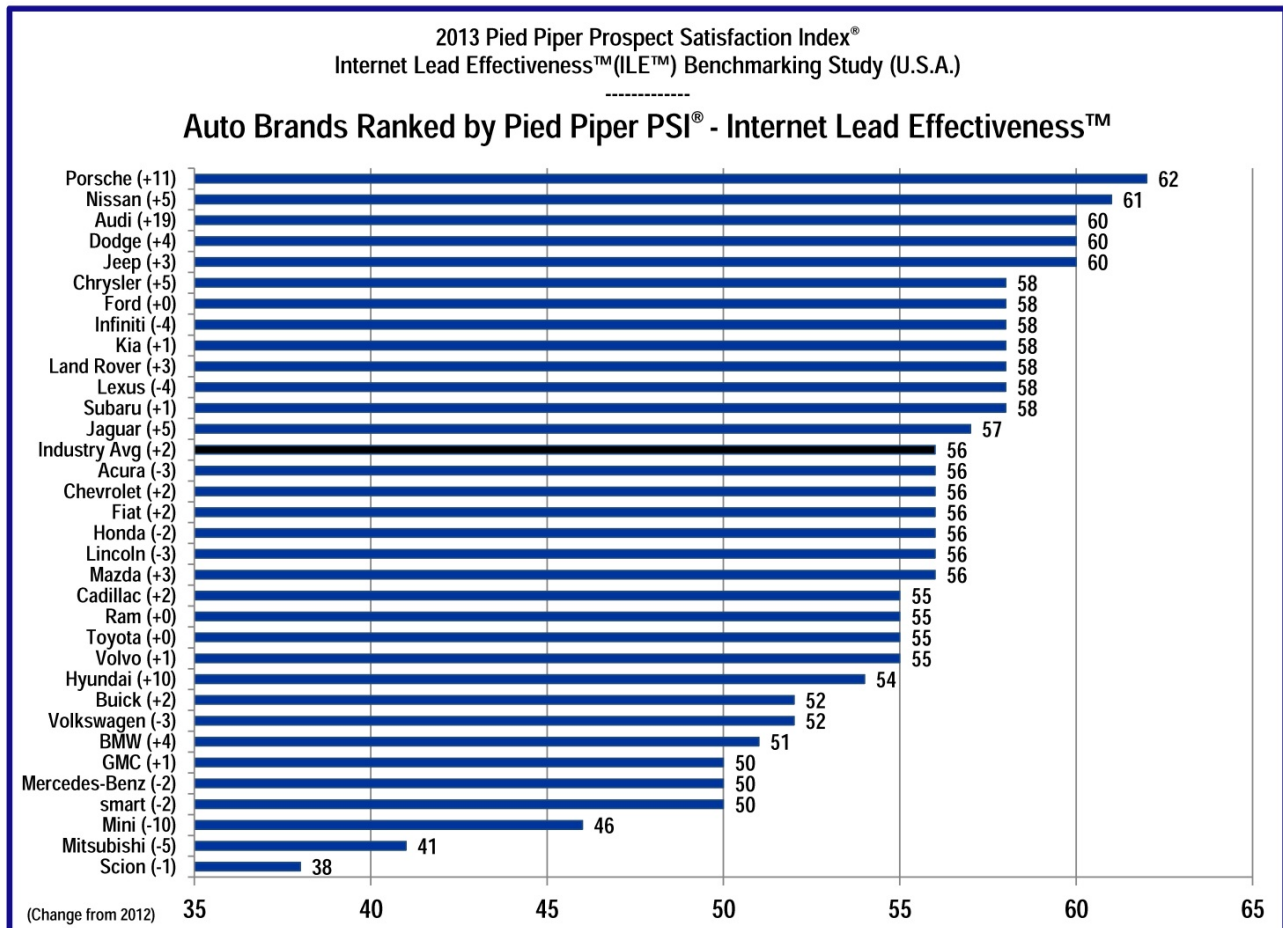


PORSCHE & NISSAN DEALERSHIPS TOP RANKED FOR RESPONSE TO CUSTOMER INTERNET INQUIRIES REPORTS PIED PIPER PSI®

- **Strong improvement pushes Audi, Dodge, Jeep, Chrysler toward the top**
- **Plenty of room for further improvement industry-wide: Nearly one-in-four customer internet inquiries still unanswered after 24 hours**

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA – *March 11, 2013* – Porsche and Nissan dealerships ranked highest in the 2013 Pied Piper PSI® Internet Lead Effectiveness™ (ILE™) Study, which measured how auto dealerships respond to customer inquiries received over the internet. Study rankings by brand were determined by the patent-pending Pied Piper PSI process, which ties “mystery shopping” measurement and scoring to actual industry sales success.

Industry-wide performance continued to improve, with 30 of 33 brands scoring above the industry average from two years ago; and 24 of 33 brands scoring above last year’s industry average. The study showed that salespeople responded to customer internet inquiries within 30 minutes nearly half the time (48%). In contrast, two years ago it took a full hour to receive the same percentage of salesperson responses. However, there remains plenty of room for improvement. Nearly one-in-four of today’s customer internet inquiries remain unanswered after 24 hours; unchanged from last year.



Audi, Porsche and Hyundai dealerships showed the most improvement from the previous year. Nissan, as well as Chrysler Group LLC brands Dodge, Jeep and Chrysler, recorded the second year in a row of solid gains, which pushed Nissan, Dodge and Jeep into the top five of the rankings.

“Dealership performance handling internet leads can be invisible from dealership management, or even worse, hidden behind misleading data,” said Fran O’Hagan, President and CEO of Pied Piper Management Company LLC. “Shining a light on actual performance is the first step.” Since there is so much room for improvement industry-wide, manufacturer attention can pay-off with substantial progress. For example, Chrysler Group’s recent efforts have successfully pushed Dodge, Jeep and Chrysler’s PSI-ILE rankings from 27th, 30th and 29th in 2011 to 3rd, 3rd and 6th in 2013.

CRM system-generated “auto responders” are used by most dealerships today to generate an automated reply to initial customer inquiries as well as automated contact throughout the follow-up cycle. Today the first response to a customer internet inquiry is an auto response 79% of the time, a personal response 14% of the time, and no response of any type 7% of the time.

The manner in which auto responders are used varies substantially by brand. For example, some brands encourage dealerships to auto generate an immediate dealership response, and then follow-up with an automated salesperson email too, while others encourage a personal salesperson response to address specific questions. Mini, Volvo and BMW salespeople were twice as likely to reply with an answer to specific customer questions as salespeople from Lincoln, Kia or Land Rover dealerships. Most dealerships encourage salespeople to attempt to follow-up by telephone if customers provide a phone number. Salespeople from Ford, Nissan, Honda, Toyota and Mercedes-Benz dealerships all attempted to follow-up by telephone at least 60% of the time. Salespeople from Lexus, GMC, Volkswagen and Land Rover dealerships were least likely to attempt to follow-up by telephone.

On average, the auto industry has substantially improved how customer internet inquiries are handled. For example, in 2011 customers on average received no response of any type—not even an auto response—12% of the time, compared to only 7% of the time in 2013. In 2011 customers received not just a response, but an answer to their specific question within 24 hours only 19% of the time, compared to 44% of the time in 2013. Salespeople attempted to follow-up by telephone 48% of the time in 2011, compared to 56% of the time in 2013. However, salespeople in 2013 attempted to make a dealership visit appointment only 16% of the time on average, compared to 23% of the time in 2011.

The study also measured 37 different combinations of dealership replies relying on automated and/or personal responses. The most common type of response—happening 54% of the time—was a “simple” auto response informing the customer that someone will be in touch soon. 20% of the time this simple auto response was followed by another simple auto response, typically an email template from a salesperson, while 15% of the time the first simple auto response was followed by a personal response. The process followed by the highest scoring dealerships included a “rich” auto response introducing the dealership, followed by a personal response from a salesperson. Dealerships following this approach on average achieved a PSI-ILE score of 71, which is substantially higher than any current brand average. In contrast, dealerships that sent only a single auto response and nothing else averaged a PSI-ILE score of 26, while dealerships relying only on one personal response averaged a PSI-ILE score of 62.

The 2013 Pied Piper PSI® Internet Lead Effectiveness™(ILE™) Benchmarking Study (U.S.A.) was conducted between April 2012 and March 2013 by submitting internet inquiries to a sample of 11,353 dealerships nationwide representing all major brands. Examples of other recent Pied Piper PSI studies are the 2012 Pied Piper PSI U.S. Auto Industry Study and 2012 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 monthly PSI “mystery shop” evaluations—in-person, internet or telephone—as tools 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 a ten year old Monterey, California, company that develops and runs sales and service programs to maximize the performance of dealer networks. Go to www.piedpipermc.com.

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