



# Responding to Website Leads: How Do Dealers Perform?



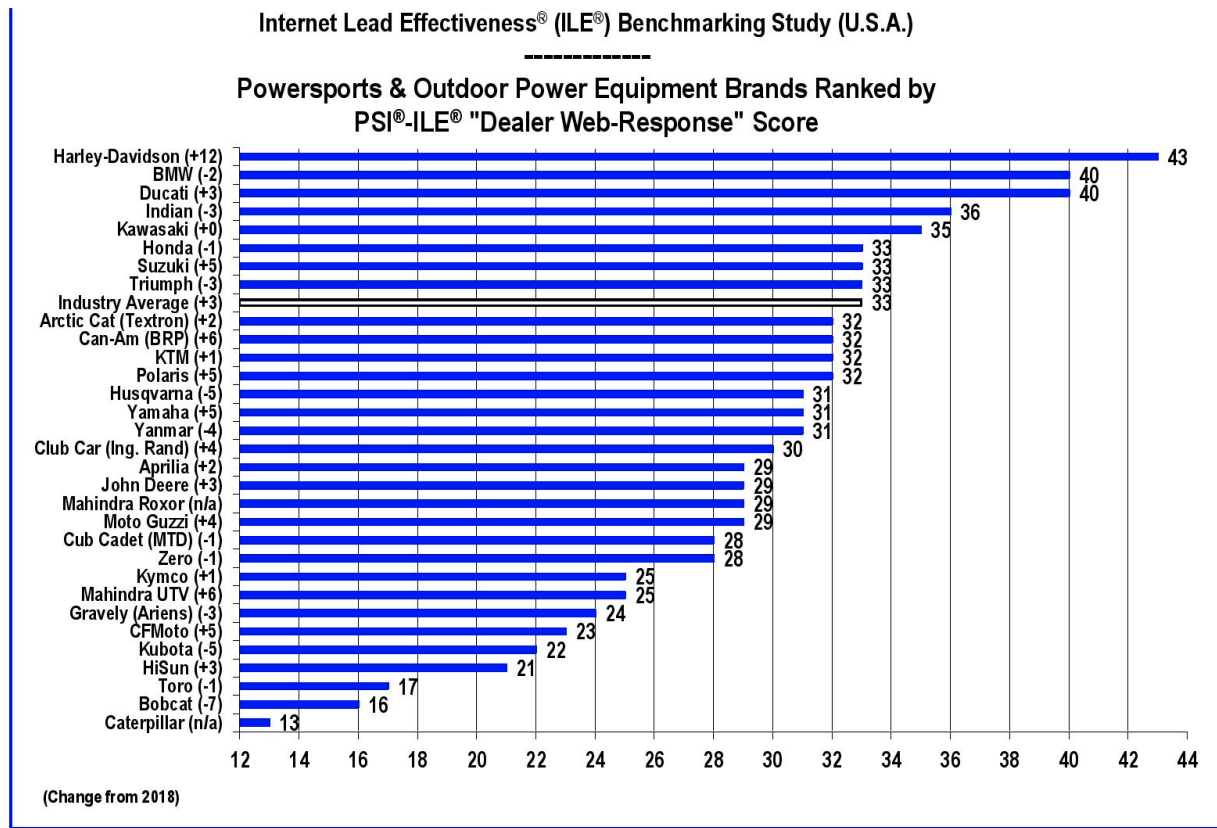
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MONTEREY, Calif. – Harley-Davidson dealerships ranked highest in the 2019 Pied Piper PSI Internet Lead Effectiveness (ILE) Industry Study, which answers the question, “What happens when UTV or motorcycle customers visit a dealer website and inquire about a vehicle?”

OPE dealers scored below the industry average and three rural equipment brands, Bobcat, Kubota and Husqvarna, had the biggest declines compared with the 2018 survey. Among the 32 motorcycle and OPE brands, Mahindra had the largest increase compared with last year. (See the chart below for the complete ranking.)

Scores ranged from zero to 100, with 21% of dealerships nationwide scoring above 60, demonstrating an effective website-response process. The industry average was 33. However, 58% of dealerships scored below 40, struggling to respond effectively to today’s website customers. Customers nationally received a personal reply to their website inquiry within 24 hours only 47% of the time on average.





Source: 2019 Pied Piper PSI-ILE U.S. Powersports + Outdoor Power Equipment Industry Benchmarking Study

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## Responding to Customers

Pied Piper sent customer inquiries through the individual websites of 4,208 dealerships, asking a question about a vehicle in inventory, and providing a customer name, email address and local telephone number. Pied Piper then evaluated how the dealerships responded by email and telephone over the next 24 hours. Twenty different measurements generated a dealership's PSI-ILE score.

The most basic measurement is whether a customer received an email response of any type – even an automated reply – within 24 hours. Industrywide, on average 18% of customers received no email reply of any type. A more meaningful measurement is whether the customer received a personal email response within 24 hours. Ducati and BMW dealerships were the most likely to provide a personal email response within 24 hours, more than 60% of the time on average. In contrast, Bobcat, Toro, Zero, Kubota and HiSun dealerships provided a personal email response within 24 hours less than 35% of the time on average.

The following are some additional examples of performance variation by brand:

### How often did dealerships provide a personal email response within 60 minutes?

- More than 30% of the time: Ducati and BMW
- Less than 15% of the time: Toro, Kubota, Mahindra UTV, Bobcat

### How often did dealerships answer the customer's specific question within 24 hours?

- More than 50% of the time: Ducati and Yanmar
- Less than 20% of the time: Caterpillar, Bobcat, Mahindra Roxor

**How well did dealership reply emails avoid the customer's spam/junk mail folder?**

- Landed in customer spam/junk mail folder less than 5% of the time: Cub Cadet, Bobcat, Club Car, Yanmar
- Landed in customer spam/junk mail folder more than 20% of the time: Aprilia, BMW, Arctic Cat, Kymco

**How often did dealerships attempt to contact the customer by telephone within 24 hours?**

- More than 50% of the time: Harley-Davidson, Yamaha, Can-Am
- Less than 15% of the time: Toro, Cub Cadet, Caterpillar, Kymco, Club Car, Yanmar

**How often did dealership emails include the vehicle's price?**

- More than 45% of the time: Honda, Mahindra Roxor, Arctic Cat, Kawasaki, Moto Guzzi, Triumph
- Less than 10% of the time: Caterpillar, Toro, Club Car, Bobcat, Gravely

“Consider how dramatically retailing has changed over the past 15 years,” said Pied Piper Management Co. LLC President and CEO Fran O’Hagan. “If you wonder where all the traditional customers have gone, look instead for customers attempting to interact through dealer websites. Today, customers visit dealer websites before visiting in person, and today the opportunity for dealers to ‘meet’ first-time customers often happens on-line.”

Brands and dealers find that improving response to website visitors is very much worth the effort. An example comes from another industry, which carefully tracks web-lead close rates for all dealers nationally. They found that dealerships who improved their PSI-ILE performance from scoring a “40” to scoring an “80” also on average generated 50% more retails from the same quantity of web-leads.

The 2019 Pied Piper PSI® Internet Lead Effectiveness (ILE) Powersports & Outdoor Power Equipment Industry Study (U.S.A.) was conducted between September 2018 and March 2019 by submitting customer inquiries directly to the websites of 4,208 dealerships nationwide representing all major brands. Examples of other recent Pied Piper PSI studies are the 2018 Pied Piper PSI (In-Person) U.S. UTV Industry Study, in which BRP’s Can-Am brand was ranked first, the 2018 Pied Piper PSI-ILE (Internet) U.S. Auto Industry Study in which Mercedes-Benz was ranked first, and the 2019 Pied Piper PSI for EVs (In-Person) U.S. Auto Industry Study in which Tesla was ranked first.

Complete Pied Piper PSI industry study results are provided to vehicle manufacturers and national dealer



Tune in May 21 for a *Rural Lifestyle Dealer Podcast* with Fran O'Hagan, president and CEO of Piped Piper Management Co. He'll share strategies for how dealers can improve their response times for website leads.

groups. Manufacturers, national dealer groups and individual dealerships also order PSI “mystery shop” evaluations – internet, telephone, or in-person – as tools to improve the sales effectiveness of their dealerships. For more information about the Pied Piper Prospect Satisfaction Index®, and the proprietary PSI process, go to [www.piedpiperpsi.com](http://www.piedpiperpsi.com).

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