

DEALER OPS

Study Ranks Groups on Service Calls

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Pied Piper CEO Fran O'Hagan, right, presents the winning trophy to Mike Jones, SVP Aftersales for Group 1.

IMAGE: Pied Piper

Some big auto dealer groups don't pass the grade when it comes to service department phone calls

with consumers, a new report shows.

Pied Piper ranked the 17 biggest U.S. auto groups on the efficiency and quality of consumer phone calls to their service departments to schedule appointments.

It ranked Group 1 Automotive tops in its performance on that measure. Berkshire Hathaway came in second, followed by Ken Garff Automotive Group in third place.

The results point up the importance of the first step in the service process in retaining customers.

“Customers who find scheduling a service appointment difficult vote with their feet by moving to another dealership or independent shop, or postponing service,” said Pied Piper CEO Fran O’Hagan. “The auto industry has long focused on the experience of customers who bring their vehicle in for service, but what really happens leading up to the appointment?”

Pied Piper conducted the study between January and May, calling all of the more than 1,700 dealerships represented by the top groups. Callers posed as service customers trying to schedule appointments. The study considered nearly 40 data points to arrive at the rankings through the lens of how quickly and efficiently scheduling an appointment was for the caller.

Sixty-two percent of scores, which range from zero to 100, centered on efficiency considerations, the rest on quality ones.

Just 13% of the collective dealerships scored higher than 80, and 20% scored lower than 40, meaning the calls didn’t easily offer an appointment and/or drove the customer away, Pied Piper said.

Comparatively, 27% of top-ranked Group 1’s dealerships scored higher than 80.

When the collective dealerships were ranked by brands with 35 or more stores, the highest-ranking were Acura, Lexus and Toyota. Drilling down to efficiency only, Lexus, Honda, Toyota and Acura scored highest.