

Piper then evaluated how the dealerships responded by email, telephone and text message over the next 24 hours. Twenty different measurements generate dealership Internet Lead Effectiveness® (ILE®) scores, which range from zero to 100. 13% of dealerships nationwide scored above 80, demonstrating an effective website-response process, while 21% of dealerships scored below 40, struggling to respond effectively to their website customers.

Industrywide, the largest changes over the past year were the following:

- More Use of Dealer Text Messages – A 23% increase
- Fewer “No Response of Any Type” – Now only 3% of the time
- More Emailed Answers to Questions – A 14% increase
- More Personal Emails Sent Quickly (<1 hour) – A 22% increase
- Fewer Poor (<40) ILE scores – A 37% decrease

The most basic measurement is whether a customer received an email, text message or phone call of any type in response to their question, and 97% of the time on average customers received a response of some type within 24 hours. A more meaningful measurement is whether the customer received an email or text message answering their question within 24 hours. Porsche, Jaguar and MINI dealerships were the most likely to email or text an answer to the customer’s question within 24 hours, more than 60% of the time on average. There is still much variability with how texting is used by brands and dealerships. For example, Subaru and Acura dealers on average texted an answer to the customer’s question more than 10% of the time, but dealers for thirteen different brands texted answers to their customers less than one percent of the time.

Response to customer web inquiries varies by brand and dealership, and the following are examples of performance variation by brand:

- How often did the brand’s dealerships phone the customer within one hour?
 - More than 63% of the time on average: Genesis, Nissan, Cadillac, Lincoln, Subaru
 - Less than 45% of the time on average: Jaguar, Porsche, Volvo, Buick, Fiat
- How often did the brand’s dealerships send a personal email response within one hour?
 - More than 63% of the time on average: Lincoln, MINI, Jaguar, Toyota, Honda
 - Less than 45% of the time on average: Chevrolet, Buick, GMC
- For dealerships that offered live chat, how often did they respond to customers within 30 seconds?
 - More than 70% of the time on average: Porsche, Nissan, GMC, MINI
 - Less than 50% of the time on average: Genesis, Fiat, Alfa Romeo
- How often did the brand’s dealerships send a text message to the customer?
 - More than 60% of the time on average: Ford, Subaru, Ram, Kia
 - Less than 25% of the time on average: Porsche, MINI, Genesis, Land Rover

Pied Piper also tracks dealer web-response performance by website provider. For common website providers, average dealer performance in the 2020 study was as follows:

Dealer Response by Web Provider - % Yes of Each Web Provider’s ILE Evaluations

	CDK	Dealer Inspire	Dealer.com	Dealeron
Emailed Answer to Question	40%	48%	45%	48%
Phoned Customer	68%	62%	68%	73%
Texted Customer	41%	38%	40%	47%
No Response to Customer	4%	4%	3%	2%

2020 marks the tenth year that Pied Piper has measured and reported dealer website response for all auto brands. Ten years ago, the smart phone was brand new and most dealerships considered “internet” to be a separate department. Contrast that to today, and nearly all of today’s customers first use their phone to shop before ever visiting a dealership in person. “Today we all agree that website customers are critical to success,” said Fran

O'Hagan, President & CEO of Pied Piper, "We also still find plenty of variation in dealership behaviors and see that dealers who master this part of the business far outsell those who do not."

PSI® Internet Lead Effectiveness® (ILE®) Benchmarking Studies have been conducted annually since 2011. The 2020 Pied Piper PSI-ILE Benchmarking Study (U.S.A. Auto) was conducted between July 2019 and January 2020 by submitting customer internet inquiries directly to a sample of 5,063 dealerships nationwide representing all major brands. Examples of other recent Pied Piper PSI studies are the 2019 "PSI for EVs" U.S. Auto Industry Study (Tesla brand was ranked first for selling in-person), and 2019 PSI-ILE U.S. Motorcycle/UTV Industry Study (Harley-Davidson brand was ranked first). 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—in-person, internet or telephone—as tools to measure and improve the sales effectiveness of their dealerships. For more information about the Pied Piper Prospect Satisfaction Index, and the fact-based PSI process, go to www.piedpiperpsi.com.

About Pied Piper Management Company, LLC

Founded in 2003, Pied Piper Management Company, LLC is a Monterey, California, USA company that helps brands & manufacturers improve the performance of their retail networks. Go to www.piedpipermc.com.

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