

NEWS: DEALER/GM NEWS

MARCH 5, 2024

# How Auto Dealerships Rank By Website Response Rate

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Infiniti came out on top in a recent survey of responsiveness to customer internet leads coming through dealership websites.

The survey— [2024 Pied Piper PSI® Internet Lead Effectiveness® \(ILE\) Study](#)—measured responsiveness to customer internet leads coming through dealership websites. Following Infiniti were Volkswagen, Cadillac, Subaru, and Polestar.

The study is based on Pied Piper's mystery-shopper customer inquiries through the individual websites of 3,957 dealerships, asking a specific 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, telephone, and text message over the next 24 hours.

## **Dodge, Genesis, Honda, Kia Scores Improve**

Industry average performance increased four points to a score of 62, the highest average score measured during the fourteen years Pied Piper has tracked dealer response to website customer inquiries.

Brands with the greatest improvement were Dodge, Genesis, Honda, Kia, and Infiniti, all of whom improved

their scores more than six points since last year's study.

Infiniti improved their ILE score by seven points over the previous year to achieve the highest average ILE score for an automotive brand measured to date, with a score of 76. Compared to last year, Infiniti mirrored similar improvements seen industry wide but with wider margins of improvement and higher overall rates of executing positive behaviors. Leading their improvement was an increase in the rate of responding by phone call to website customers, which Infiniti dealerships increased from 50% of the time on average last year to 82% of the time this year.

### **Chevrolet, Acura, Hyundai, Rivian Decline**

The performance of seven brands declined: Chevrolet, Acura, Hyundai, Jaguar, Cadillac, Fiat, and Rivian.

Fran O'Hagan, Pied Piper's CEO, noted dealerships this year were more likely to respond to online customer inquiries by phone call or text message than in previous years. While the rate of answering a web customer's question by email remained flat compared to last year, the quality of emails sent improved year over year. The improvements included attempts to set an appointment, providing additional information, or suggesting next steps.

In addition, compared to last year's measurements, dealerships this year were more likely to reach out to their customers by both email and phone, or by both text message and phone.

"Top performing dealerships reach out to a customer using multiple paths, then when the customer responds, they follow-up using the same path chosen by the customer," said O'Hagan. "Otherwise too many customers are missed since they don't see emails or texts, or don't answer phone calls."

### **Study Results**

Among the revelations of the study:

- Polestar, Infiniti, and Porsche over 65 percent of the time responded with an email a website customer's inquiry; conversely, Buick, Ford, Tesla, and Lucid responded less than 45 percent of the time;
- Volkswagen, Land Rover, Mercedes-Benz, Alpha Romeo, Jeep, Nissan, and Ram responded with a text more than 40 percent while Tesla, Polestar, Fiat, Lucid, and Rivian answered less than 10 percent;
- By phone, Infiniti, Genesis, Ford, Honda, and Subaru dealerships respond by phone call 75 percent of the time. Dealerships for Tesla, Fiat, Lucid, and Rivian called less than half the time; and
- When it came to answering in multiple ways, Infiniti, Volkswagen, and Volvo did this more than 60 percent of the time while Mitsubishi, Fiat, Tesla, Lucid, and Rivian were below 35 percent.

Pied Piper officials found the key to driving improvement in website response and in turn higher sales is showing dealers what their website customers are really experiencing – which is often a surprise.

"2024 is a more challenging business environment for car dealers, and many have responded by improving their interaction with online customers," said O'Hagan.

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