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## **Napleton Tops Study in Responding to Internet Leads**

By: James Hickey, Managing Editor, DigitalDealer.com • Photos by: Adobe/Jeff Bergen/peopleimages.com

For a third year in a row, the [Napleton Auto Group](#) dealerships topped in response to following internet leads.

The [2024 Pied Piper PSI Internet Lead Effectiveness \(ILE\) Study](#) measured responsiveness to internet leads coming through dealer websites among 18 of the largest auto dealer groups. Following Napleton were [Berkshire Hathaway](#), [Herb Chambers](#), [Ken Garff](#), and [Ken Ganley](#) dealer groups.

Dealer groups with the greatest improvement were Ganley, [Serra Automotive Inc.](#) and Berkshire. Meanwhile, the performance of [Hendrick Automotive Group](#), [Penske Automotive Group](#), [Morgan Auto Group](#), and [Victory Automotive Group](#) declined three or more points from last year's scores.



## Study Metrics

Pied Piper submitted mystery-shopper customer inquiries to the dealerships owned by each of the 18 dealer groups, inquiring about a vehicle in inventory, and providing a unique 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, combining over 20 different measurements to create a total score ranging between 0 and 100.

In this year's study, 42 percent of dealerships scored above 80, providing a quick and thorough personal response, while 18% scored below 40, failing to personally respond to their website customers. Napleton outperformed the industry average, with 84 percent of their dealerships scoring over 80, and only 6% scoring less than 40.

## Industry Improvement

The dealer group industry average ILE score rose to 66 this year, a one-point improvement over the past year. The most notable improvements were dealers responding quicker to online customers by phone call, as well as increased use of multiple communication channels (phone, email, text) to respond to a customer.

Napleton Automotive Group stood out for their attempts to schedule an appointment and answering more questions by text message.

"Top performing dealerships focus on their behaviors, but they also carefully track what their website customers are really experiencing – which is often a surprise," said Fran O'Hagan, CEO of Pied Piper in a press statement. "Without this step, dealership reports can encourage employees to pretend to respond, with automated responses to quickly 'stop the clock,' instead of the personal replies needed by customers."

## How They Fared

Among the overall findings of the study:

- The dealer group industry average on how often they emailed an answer to a website customer's inquiry was 58 percent, with Napleton, Herb Chambers, and Serra Automotive above 75 percent.
- In giving a text answer to an inquiry, the dealer group industry average was 36 percent with top performers cited as Ken Garff, Napleton, and [Holman Automotive](#)
- As for responding with a phone call, 69 percent of group's dealerships respond. Napleton, Berkshire Hathaway, Ken Garff and Ganley responded at an average of more than 85 percent.
- When it came to answering with combination of the three, the dealer group industry average was 51 percent. Those doing this at a more than 70 percent rate were Napleton, Herb Chambers and Ken Garff.
- For speed, the industry average in contacting a perspective buyer in 30 minutes was 34 percent. Exceeding a 50 percent rate were Napleton, Herb Chambers, and Ganley.

Pied Piper PSI's ILE study has been conducted annually since 2011 for the auto industry. This year's study was conducted between August 2023 and February 2024 by submitting 1,535 website inquiries to all of the dealerships owned by eighteen of the largest automotive dealer groups.

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