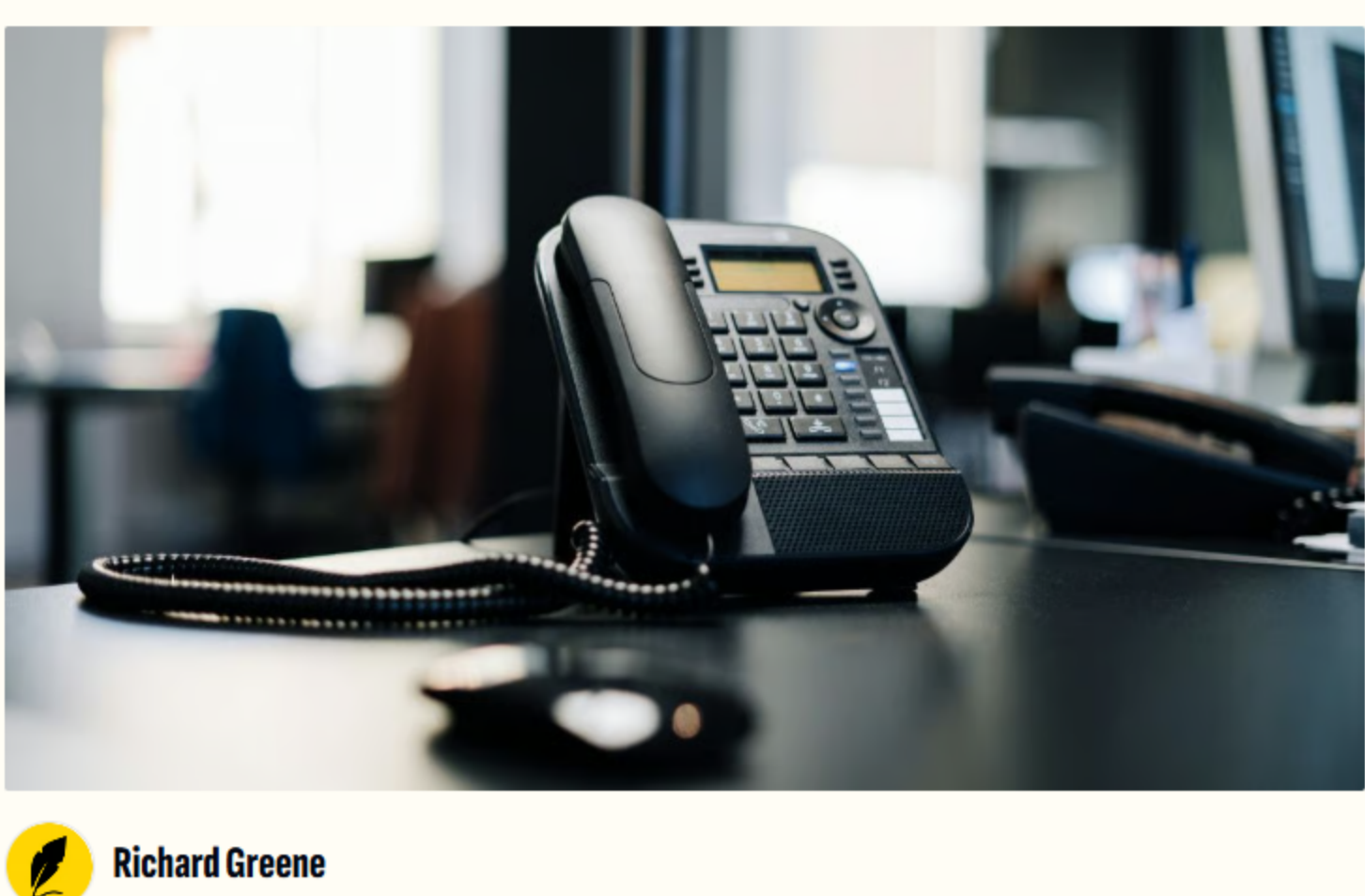
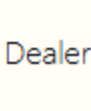


NAPLETON AUTO GROUP OUTCLASSES FIELD ON INTERNET LEAD RESPONSE RATE



 **Richard Greene**

Dealer tops Pied Piper study for fifth straight year. (3 min. read)

DAILY NEWS

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For **Napleton Auto Group**, following up on leads with a phone call is essential. The dealership group led its peers with a 97% rate of following up on customer inquiries with a phone call during **Pied Piper's** Prospect Satisfaction Index and Internet Lead Effectiveness Behavior, and captured the top overall score for a fifth straight year.

Zooming in: Napleton has not only scored the best among dealerships but has also improved its score each year.

“We have maintained our position by treating internet lead response as an operational discipline, not just a marketing function. Our teams focus on continuous education, clear expectations, and trusting the processes that have proven to work,” said **Preston Stewart**, Napleton’s National Variable Operations Director and Compliance Director.

“The difference is not one tool or one tactic; it is the daily commitment from our BDC teams, sales teams, managers, and leadership to respond quickly, answer the customer’s actual question, and move the opportunity forward.”

For context: The Pied Piper PSI on Internet Lead Effectiveness compared the response behaviors of 31 large auto dealer groups when receiving sales leads through their dealership websites. Pied Piper submitted more than 2,400 customer inquiries and measured responses on 20 measurements. Dealerships were scored between 0 and 100 based on the combined measurements.

Napleton, which has dealerships in Illinois, Minnesota, Florida, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Indiana, finished just ahead of Berkshire Hathaway Automotive, Jeff Wyler Automotive Family, MileOne Autogroup, and LaFontaine Automotive Group.

Fran O’Hagan, CEO of Pied Piper, pointed out that the average of the 31 dealers in the study was 74, which matched Napleton’s score in 2022. Napleton’s score has since improved to 93.

“No question that the typical sales web customer receives a quicker and more thorough response today than they did 5 years ago. Today, those customers receive what we consider a ‘perfect’ response 56% of the time on average, compared to only 25% of the time 5 years ago. That’s an impressive improvement, but the top-performing dealer groups are on a whole different level. Top-scoring Napleton provides ‘perfect’ responses 92% of the time on average.”

Fran O’Hagan, CEO of Pied Piper

O’Hagan attributes the improvement to dealers’ attention to detail and to their understanding that increasing web response rates leads to better close rates.

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AI use: AI automation has also helped, but also exposed some weaknesses when customers need an additional response from staff.

“AI help is not ‘set it and forget it.’ No question that its use can improve the average performance, but good old-fashioned humans need to be ready to step in when the AI limits are reached,” O’Hagan said.

What the best are doing: Since the first study in 2022, Napleton has continued to fine-tune its process. According to this year’s results, nine out of 10 of their customers receive an email, text, or phone call within 30 minutes.

87% of their internet leads receive a phone call within 15 minutes. 80% of Napleton’s responses include an offer to schedule an appointment for a specific time and date.

“The biggest improvements have come from tightening the communication loop between our BDC and sales teams. We focus heavily on real-time feedback, daily review of results, and quick intervention when a store or team member falls out of process,” Stewart said.

“We also train relentlessly on what a complete response looks like: answering the customer’s specific question, providing helpful information, making a timely phone call, using text where appropriate, and asking for a clear appointment. The goal is not just to respond; it is to create confidence and make it easy for the customer to take the next step.”

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