



Study Rates Auto Service Leaders

UCN STAFF WRITER | DEALER | 16 JULY 2026



Critical Shifts:

- **The Profit Engine at Risk:** With fixed operations driving **70% to 80% of a dealer group's operating profit**, service scheduling is a critical bottleneck for overall dealership profitability. Making scheduling difficult risks losing customers to independent shops.
- **Independents Outperforming Dealers:** Major independent service brands (Midas, Pep Boys, Firestone, Meineke) are beating franchised dealer groups on speed and reliability. Independents connect customers to an advisor twice as fast (38 seconds vs. 73 seconds) and offer appointments much sooner (1.3 days vs. 2.5 days).
- **The "Mission Failure" Rate:** Customers experience scheduling failures (dropped calls, dead ends, or friction) 12% of the time at major dealer groups, compared to just 5% of the time at independent service centers.
- **Phone vs. Digital Split:** Roughly two-thirds of service customers still prefer the telephone for complex repair needs, while online scheduling is growing as the preferred, fast option for routine maintenance like oil changes.
- **Top Performers:** MileOne Autogroup ranked highest in the study for removing customer friction, followed closely by Group 1 Automotive, Berkshire Hathaway Automotive, Napleton, Bergstrom, and Hendrick.

MileOne Autogroup ranked highest in Pied Piper's new 2026 Service Scheduling Effectiveness (SSE) Auto Dealer Group Study, the first study to measure how effectively dealerships from the 31 largest U.S. dealer groups helped customers schedule service through both telephone and dealer websites. Following MileOne were Group 1 Automotive, Berkshire Hathaway Automotive, Napleton Automotive Group, Bergstrom Automotive and Hendrick Automotive Group.

Customers increasingly expect scheduling vehicle service to be as easy as their best phone or online customer experiences in other industries. Dealer groups that make service scheduling fast and effortless gain a competitive advantage, while those that create friction risk losing customers to independent service centers. With 70% to 80% of dealer group operating profit coming from aftersales operations, that advantage can have a significant impact on overall profitability.

"The difference is that top-performing dealer groups remove friction," said Cameron O'Hagan, Pied Piper's vice president of metrics and analytics. "Customers get where they need to go quickly, schedule service with less effort, and know exactly what happens next. Lower-performing groups not only make scheduling harder, they fail customers far more often."

Approximately two-thirds of service customers still prefer to schedule appointments by telephone, although online scheduling continues to grow each year. Each channel serves a different purpose: customers often choose the phone for more complex service needs, while online scheduling offers a faster, more convenient option for routine maintenance such as oil changes and factory-recommended service. Identifying and eliminating the obstacles customers encounter, whether by phone or online, can improve customer satisfaction, strengthen retention, and increase service revenue.

The top six dealer groups' average SSE scores in the study were all above 75, while the four lowest performing dealer groups scored in the 50s or lower.

The study also evaluated four major independent service center brands, Midas, Pep Boys, Firestone, and Meineke. On average, these locations outperformed dealer groups in several key service scheduling measures.

- **Higher-quality phone experience:** Independent service centers delivered a "Mission Excellent" service call 39% of the time on average, compared with 29% on average for the dealer groups.
- **Fewer scheduling failures:** Customers experienced "Mission Failure" just 5% of the time on average, versus 12% on average for the dealer groups.
- **Faster service:** Customers reached a service advisor in 38 seconds on average, compared with 73 seconds on average for the dealer groups, and were offered earlier appointments (1.3 days versus 2.5 days).

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