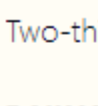


VW DEALERS LEAD INDUSTRY IN SERVICE SCHEDULING EFFECTIVENESS





Richard Greene

Two-thirds of customers still prefer scheduling via phone. (3 min. read)

DAILY NEWS

Sep 13, 2026

Volkswagen dealers collectively were the most effective in scheduling service appointments for their customers via the phone or websites, but the entire industry showed improvement in the past year.

Leading off: In its **2026 Service Scheduling Effectiveness** auto industry study, **Pied Piper** submitted 6,538 service requests at 33 U.S. auto brands and four of the industry's top independent service center brands.

- Using 40 different measurements evaluating how customers could schedule via the telephone or online, brands and service centers were scored 0 to 100.
- In the second year of the study, Pied Piper noted the industry average improved by 7 points, with five brands seeing their scores improve by 10 points.

"The bulk of the improvement came from better performance scheduling service via the dealer website, and a large piece of that improvement was fewer technology failures – cut by half from happening 9% of the time to happening only 5% of the time," said Pied Piper CEO **Fran O'Hagan**. "That's still an issue for one customer out of 20, but better than one out of 10. Telephone behavior improved overall too, but that improvement was mixed."

VW sets standard: Volkswagen finished atop the rankings with 73 points, with the best performance among brands on handling phone requests, which remains the preference of two-thirds of service customers.

- Volkswagen set an appointment 91% of the time on the phone and only 4% of the time had an issue with communication with a customer.
- Volvo finished second in the overall rankings and had the top website score, with customers being able to schedule an appointment for a specific time 100% of the time and followed up with a confirmation email and text 73% of the time.

Mainstream brands above average: The average score for the industry was 66.

- Toyota, Ford, GMC, and Chevrolet finished between 67 and 68.
- Dodge, Ram, and Alfa Romeo were at the bottom of the cumulative rankings.

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Behind service centers: The four independent service centers—Pep Boys, Midas, Meineke, and Firestone—had four of the five industry best scores for scheduling via the phone and answered the phone in 38 seconds as opposed to 66 for the dealership.

- Conversely, those service centers scored less than half of the industry average for website performance.
- The independent service centers did, however, offer an appointment in 1.3 days compared to dealerships' average of 2.9 days.

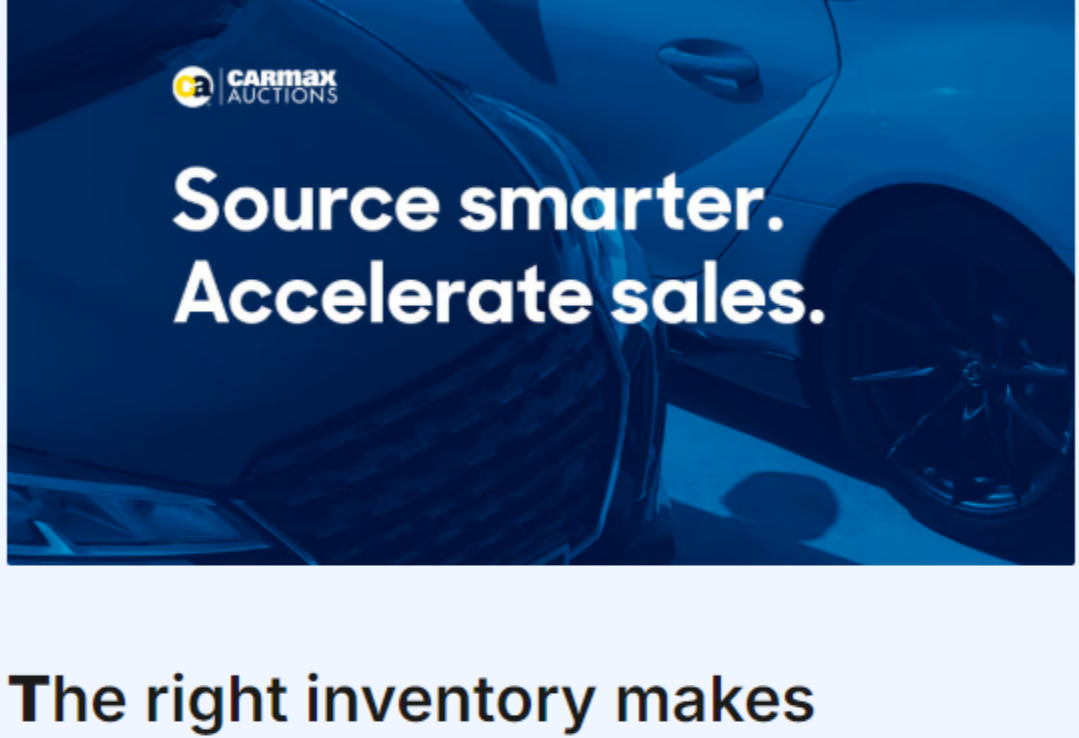
O'Hagan noted that friction in the scheduling process risks dealers losing customers.

"When we speak with execs from the large dealer groups, they are relentlessly focused on keeping the owners of 3-4-5-year-old cars that are going out of warranty," he said. "The alternative is, make it hard for them and you lose them—and their revenues— forever."

Bottom line: Dealers made progress in their scheduling effectiveness, but there's still room for improvement to retain customers. O'Hagan notes that streamlining efforts and monitoring results will drive improvement.

"Your people, AI, and internal systems have to work together, and unless you're measuring and tracking the end results, the only ones aware of your failures may be your customers," O'Hagan said.

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