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FIXEDOPS

Magazine

A 50 YEAR PARTNER BEYOND PRODUCTS

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LITTLE WINS ADD UP TO BIG REVENUES



BDC Best Practices for Building Loyal Customers

Legendary football coach Vince Lombardi's quotes on winning stand the test of time. Taken from the gridiron of the NFL and into the business arena, the challenge is to transform these inspiring words into every customer interaction. Consistent execution matters. Not only does winning feel good, dealerships can win over consumers and reap impressive revenues with efficient and effective call center teams.

With more than 1 in 4 vehicles affected by a dangerous recall, there is a Call Center Services Team that has an abundance of opportunities to connect leery owners to an authorized dealer who can attend to the repairs. While the repairs come at no cost to the vehicle owner, the process of securing a service appointment is more strenuous than what most would anticipate.

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BEST PRACTICES SHARED

The company works with OEMs and franchised dealerships to locate these vehicles and their owners, orchestrating all the data, technology and communications to reach consumers who may not even be aware of the impending danger. All inquiries and requests to schedule service are funneled into a centralized call center, where data is collected and processes improved. Those

best practices are being shared with the dealership community. Although this is a very specialized Call Center, the BDC aspects remain. Therefore, those best practices are also being shared here as well for the benefit of captive and virtual BDCs who might be interested.

"We're fielding thousands of calls daily from consumers who don't quite know what to do and, admittedly, are a bit annoyed to have to attend to a recall," explains the Call



Center Services Product Manager. “Truth is, most consumers would rather avoid car repairs, a trip to the dealership and a dangerous recall. They want to speak with a live person, not a bot, who can immediately make decisions. Every dealership in the nation is fielding similar calls and facing similar consumer resistance, albeit in much smaller numbers. We’re continually evaluating processes and analyzing conversations to see if we can improve the consumer experience, and we noticed an uptick when we allowed our agents to be more human. This is what led to the creation of the WINS program.”

WHAT IS THE “WINS” PROGRAM?

WINS is a program introduced by the Call Center Services team to systematically catalog successful conversations agents have with consumers. A “WIN” is any conversation that demonstrates the ability to properly service consumers, defining success in both conventional and unconventional ways.

For example, tracking effectiveness in the BDC typically hinges on scheduled appointments. The call data being extracted here tells a bigger story about the customer experience. Consumers are also paying attention to how they are being treated, something that goes beyond appointment-setting. This requires looking a layer deeper where BDC leaders can analyze consumer interactions to find and create wins that could lead to future transactions.

- Did the BDC agent overcome an objection or turn a negative perception into a positive one?
- Were any special needs or services addressed?
- Did leadership reward a BDC agent for rescuing an opportunity that was headed in the wrong direction?

It is not always about meeting consumer expectations, but rather about surpassing them. Customer service authority Tom Peters coined phrases like “uncommon courtesy” and “the search for excellence” to champion a



heightened level of customer care. The Call Center Services Product Manager takes note and rewards agents for the elevated service. Yes! He rewards even those who did not necessarily result in a scheduled appointment.

“You’re expected to make the successful repair, so that’s not enough differentiation to drive customer loyalty,” clarifies Glaser, the Call Center Services Product Manager. “Dealerships, especially as they consolidate under larger corporate banners, need to be seen as part of their communities, and that starts by having a personable BDC. We look for opportunities to connect to the community in every conversation. If someone offers a personal anecdote or joke, we respond in kind, building rapport. If someone refuses our service, we still take the time to respond positively. We call these ‘Positive Rejections’ and they are designed to leave a consumer with a positive feeling of the dealership in the hopes of winning their future business.”

CREATE YOUR OWN “WINS”!

- **Track and Reward:** Fostering a culture of exceptional service begins with tracking and rewarding the full range of interactions your team has with consumers.
- **Tailor Your Program:** Every team can be trained. By communicating, showcasing and rewarding best

practices, you can teach your BDC agents how to navigate difficult conversations while finding opportunities within them!

- **Personalize Your Interactions:** Make sure every agent understands the nature of the call and the impact on the customer, replying to every point raised so the caller feels heard. This is especially important with a dangerous safety recall or with costly repairs.
- **Pick Up the Phone:** Your dealership can’t help if you don’t pick up the phone or return calls. Even worse, you leave a perception that your dealership doesn’t care.
- **Be Prepared and Informed:** Consumers want to speak with knowledgeable and friendly dealership staff who can understand the situation and help.
- **The Golden Rule:** How would you want a family member or loved one to be treated by a dealership? Every member of your staff should exercise patience, compassion and empathy. The right agents will appreciate this empowerment.
- **Big Outcomes Take Time:** Sometimes the big payoff happens over time with careful thought put into changing processes, especially those we’re deeply invested in. Culture doesn’t happen overnight. There’s great value in building that human connection.



INVEST IN YOUR CUSTOMER SERVICE PROGRAM

Investing in your customer service program is not about being perfect, but rather, it is about being more human. Embrace the opportunities to learn and improve by empowering your team to speak as trusted advisors and being compassionate to their community. By doing so, you will see higher rates of success across the board and the tangential benefit of keeping quality agents longer.

The challenges are many, beginning with customer attrition. As customer acquisition costs rise, there is a premium on retaining those you have managed to nurture for the long haul. If you are not looking for ways to enhance your offering, know that another dealer is working to win them over. For the moment, independent repair shops that took a hit during the pandemic have been slow to recover. Know that they will likely re-emerge under new management to put a pinch on dealer profits.

Let us also remember our dealership staff. There is no mistaking the value of a great technician. The same can

be said of our most talented BDC agents, service advisors and other support staff. Lombardi didn't say it, but I have heard that if you take care of your employees, they will take care of your customers. I believe it.



Sean Reyes oversees all marketing efforts at Recall Masters as Chief Marketing Officer. Recall Masters is the leading provider of automotive recall data, technology and communications. The company is dedicated to helping auto-

makers and their dealers expedite the repair of recalled vehicles and make the roadways safer for everyone. Greater recall awareness and proactive recall management helps automakers protect their brand and build trusting relationships between the automotive industry and consumers. Recall Masters is a privately-held company based in Laguna Hills, CA. For more information, please visit www.recallmasters.com.