

Success Story



The Customer-First strategy that helped them become
Central Atlantic's No.1 Customer-Retention Dealer

Building profitable, long-term relationships with customers is difficult but that is exactly what Steve Smeltzer and the team at Jones Junction Auto group are doing. Their winning formula is growing gross profits by driving repeat business and generating more opportunities from the same number of phone calls.

Several years ago, when car sales were at an all-time high and virtually every other dealer in the country was focused on marketing and moving metal, Steve Smeltzer, the group's president and the leadership team for Jones Junction Auto Group made the bold decision to make customer relationships the key to their long-term growth.

"It's simple", says Smeltzer, "we don't have customers. We have clients. We believe every relationship has a lifetime value of \$500,000 so we focus on creating an environment that makes it easy for our clients to buy more, service more and refer more."

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Jones Junction

The results of this strategy have been amazing. In addition to maintaining profitability through the recession, all 8 Jones Junction dealerships now rank in the top 3 in their zone for volume. Seventy percent of vehicle sales now come from repeat customers and 99 percent of the 1,200 customers they deliver every month are being absorbed into the service department. Gross profits and CSI are also at record highs. So much so that OEMs are taking notice. Jones Junction Toyota is number one in customer retention for the Central Atlantic Region and Chrysler executives were so impressed that they personally visited the dealership to present Jones Junction with the coveted "Chrysler Premier Dealership" award.

"The key to our success was combining our "customer-first" culture with a call-management strategy that allowed us to get control of our incoming and outgoing communications", says Smeltzer. "We can have the best intentions in the world but we are never going to get prospects into the dealership if we don't handle them properly on the phones."

Interestingly, the challenges Jones Junction was having before implementing their call-management strategy were very similar to the struggles many dealerships continue to wrestle with on a daily basis. According to a recent study that monitored over two million sales and service calls in 2012, 39 percent of all incoming calls are missed. Fifty percent of sales calls that do connect end without being asked for an appointment, or contact information. Sadly, most managers are completely unaware of what is happening.

"This information was difficult for me to see at first," says Smeltzer, "but I knew this was a big opportunity for us. We chose a company that monitors 100 percent of our sales and service calls and gives us the ability to respond in real-time when a call is not handled correctly. This allows us to reengage with our clients before the relationship is damaged and adjust the behavior of our employees so that it does not cost us future business. This has significantly increased the quality of our phone interactions, which results in more appointments, more in-store opportunities, more transactions and higher gross profits."

In addition to the alerts they receive when something needs correction, Jones Junction Auto Group also receives real-time business intelligence that allows them to see what they are doing right. This combination of fixing what's broken and duplicating what's right has had



Kerla Guleserian, BDC Manager, and Steve Smeltzer, President, of Jones Junction Auto Group

a significant, positive impact on the way calls are managed. Compared with other dealerships, Jones Junction sets 27 percent more sales appointments, 44 percent more service appointments and 42 percent more parts appointments than competitive dealerships.

Here's how their process works:

First, every incoming call is monitored from start to finish. If anything occurs during the call that needs to be addressed, managers receive an alert on their mobile app or a text message on their mobile phone. After the call is terminated, a call summary is created that includes an overview of everything that was discussed during the conversation. This summary is then delivered into the CRM system along with all of the customer's contact information, the vehicle the prospect is interested in, the vehicle the prospect is currently driving and a link to the recorded conversation.

Jones Junction uses a centralized call center that monitors the appointment lead for every store and manages outbound calls. This call center also has a dedicated team that monitors call activity via a live dashboard and is responsible for responding to alerts and reconnecting with clients who got lost in the phone tree, hung up while on hold, got disconnected, or have been accidentally misdialed. As a result of this process, those calling a Jones Junction store are 2 times more likely to speak with a live person than customers calling a competitive dealership.

All dealership managers are equipped with a mobile app and a web-based dashboard that gives them real-time



visibility into all of the dealership's call activity, how each rep is handling their calls, the number of appointments being set, and how alerts are being addressed.

Smeltzer also receives weekly and monthly Enterprise Reports, by franchise, that enable him to not only quickly spot areas that require more attention, but also maintain a healthy competition among the Jones Junction GMs by acknowledging those with the best results.

Finally, Jones Junction Auto Group meets regularly with their call-

management company to constantly refine their processes. "We have conference calls every two weeks with CallRevu (the company that provides Jones Junction's call-management services) to review our progress and get insights on how we can improve," says Smeltzer. "The ongoing training we receive from them is a big part of our success."

A wise person once said that we will ultimately rise or fall to level of our relationships. This is certainly true for Steve Smeltzer and the team at Jones Junction Auto Group who are reaping the rewards from their "customer-

first" strategy. Their commitment to their customers and their dedication to their call-management strategy is allowing them to get more appointments from the same number of calls and get more gross profit from the same number of customers but, most importantly, it is allowing them to offer superior customer service as part of their competitive advantage.

In Bel Air, Maryland, car buyers have many choices regarding where they spend their automotive dollars. However, many of them are voting for Jones Junction in the way that matters most - with their loyalty.



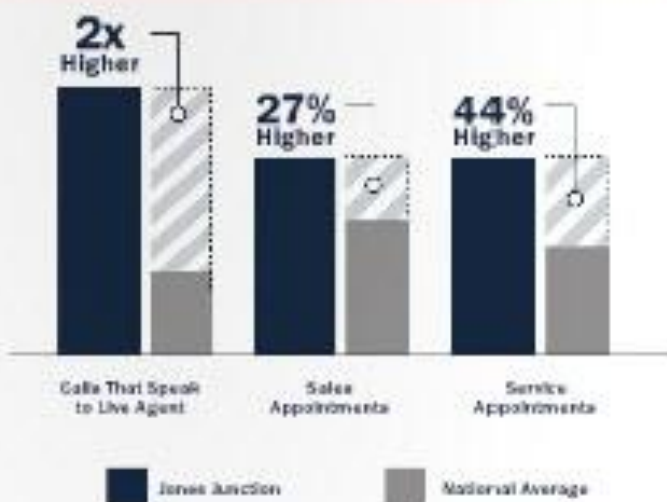
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JONES JUNCTION

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PRESIDENT
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IN A NUTSHELL

The Customer-First strategy that helped them become Central Atlantic's No.1 Customer-Retention Dealer

- Implemented a "Just Say Yes" program that empowers employees to be problem solvers and requires them to check with their managers before saying no to a customer.
- Implemented a call monitoring service that protects customer relationships by monitoring 100% of sales and service calls and sending real-time text and mobile alerts to his management team when a call has been missed or mishandled.
- Assigned a dedicated team to monitor alerts and call activity via a live dashboard and reconnect with clients who become lost in the phone system, hang up while on hold, are disconnected or who have been mishandled.
- Partnered with the company that pioneered call monitoring for the automotive industry, www.CallRevu.com, to receive daily, weekly and monthly updates and receive bi-weekly input on how they can improve their results.