

AUTOMOTIVE

Lexus tops list of customer satisfaction for luxury dealership services: J.D. Power

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2018 Lexus LS

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Luxury automotive manufacturers have the ability to increase returning loyal customers by implementing a form of text message updates when servicing vehicles.

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A new report from J.D. Power shows that 55 percent of consumers said they would definitely return when contacted through phone calls from personnel regarding service on their vehicles. However that percentage increases to 67 when customers are able to receive text updates on their vehicle service.

"Premium automotive customers continue to voice strong preferences for technology as part of the retail auto service process," said Chris Sutton, vice president of automotive retail at J.D. Power. "They expect to be able to schedule online, receive service updates through text, and they respond better when service personnel use tablets to facilitate the service process.

"Dealers have done well at executing a quality process completing work done right, respecting the customer's time, and delivering the vehicle washed and on time," he said. "Premium customers are responding well to premium touches valet service, loaner vehicles, car washes."

Customer satisfaction opinions of owners and lessees of 1-to 5-year-old vehicles at franchised dealer or independent service facility are used for the report.

Quality service

Lexus was the top performing luxury auto brand in terms of customer satisfaction with a score of 874 on a 1,000-point scale. Audi follows closely with a score of 869, above Lincoln with 868, Porsche at 867 and Cadillac with 865.



Audi's Vegas campaign

A dealership's service department can make or break consumer loyalty and satisfaction, according to J.D. Power's previous report.

The survey of approximately 8,500 United Kingdom consumers found that 78 percent of those who said they were highly satisfied with their service experience said that they were certain they would be buying or leasing from the same dealership again. Overall, customer satisfaction with their dealership service centers within the first three years of ownership averaged 761 among premium makers, the same score as 2015 ([see more](#)).

Since 2015, customers are becoming more interested in text message communication for their service updates. Throughout all generations and categories, there has been a 3 to 6 percent increase in interest.

However, only 3 percent of those surveyed claimed to have received text message updates from service. Luxury automotive brands are leaving potential in driving loyalty and repeat visits on the table.

The use of tablets and other technology on-site and for scheduling is also helpful in gaining customer satisfaction points. Brands are becoming more comfortable with this technology, with a 7 percent increase in automotive manufacturers implementing tablet usage with service and a 4 percent increase in those with online scheduling.



Bentley dealership

In general, customer service satisfaction is up from 800 to 813 points. Service quality saw the most improvement, garnering 805 points compared to 779 points in 2015.

However, other categories such as service advisor, service initiation, service facility and vehicle pick-up all saw increases in satisfaction as well.

Service amenities

While non-dealership service sees higher customer satisfaction rates when it comes to timeliness, the margin is not much. Non-dealerships beat out dealerships only by 0.06 points on a 10-point scale.

For attributes, dealerships beat out non-dealerships by far with qualities such as cleanliness and comfortable waiting areas.

U.S.-based Lincoln Motor Company appealed to the affluent with the 2017 Lincoln Continental by upgrading its service capabilities.

Lincoln mailed out print pamphlets to announce that orders for the vehicle are being accepted and has introduced a Black Label Experience that appealed to more affluent consumers. The Ford-owned brand is working to reposition itself and appeal more directly to affluent consumers, competing with brands such as Audi and Mercedes ([see](#)

more).

"The surprise is that premium brand manufacturers and dealers have invested in facility actions, including enhanced facility amenities," Mr. Sutton said. "However, customer satisfaction isn't increasing in this area, indicating that customer expectations are changing and becoming more discerning."

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