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THE #1 SALES-IMPROVEMENT MAGAZINE FOR THE AUTOMOTIVE PROFESSIONAL

**Let Today's
Customers
Be Tomorrow's
Good News.**

**Your Next Sale
Can Either Come
From The One
You Just Delivered
.....Or Not.**

**What's In
Your Delivery?**

PLUS!

Get Paid Like a Professional

**The Customer Participative
Walk Around**

November 2004

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**James E. Yerage
King of Delivery!**

What Does Delivery Mean To Your Dealership?

HOW ABOUT YOUR SALES CONSULTANTS? MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOUR CUSTOMERS?

There are many ways the industry and dealerships across our country have recognized the importance of delivery. One of the most successful keys is looking at the delivery as the beginning, not the end, of the buying process. Your next sale can either be coming from the one you just delivered – or not.

It's a known fact that your customers are happiest when they are taking possession of their new vehicle, and not while they are going through the buying process and F&I – despite even the best efforts of professionals in our industry to make the buying process as rewarding as it can be.

With that in mind, let's accept the fact that the best time to reward your customers and preserve and/or create relationships with them is when they are the happiest. Make the last impression a lasting one. So ask yourself: what's in your delivery that makes the dollars your customers spend with you their first, and not their last?

Whether your dealership has sales consultants or delivery teams doing the delivery on its behalf, this final experience is key to your dealership's bottom line.

Done correctly, the relationship started from an enhanced delivery can help you get to your next sale. The customer you just delivered will influence someone else to buy within the next 60-90 days—so why not make sure their delivery experience is one that will encourage referrals. And how does all this affect your sales consultants?

Good question. If you want to discover the answer, make copies of the Sales Consultant Personal Exercise on page 18 and distribute to your sales consultants to complete.

WHAT DOES A SUCCESSFUL (AND PROFITABLE) DELIVERY LOOK LIKE?

There are five main aspects to a successful delivery:

1. Consistency
2. Dynamic Delivery Area
3. Setting the Stage
4. Customer Transition
5. Actual Delivery

CONSISTENT DELIVERY

The first rule that your dealership should adopt is to make deliveries consistent. Create a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) that works like a checklist to make sure all customers go through the same process.

CREATE A DYNAMIC DELIVERY AREA

Dedicate an area in your dealership strictly for customers to take delivery of their vehicle, whether new or previously owned. Make it an area everyone at your dealership can see. Create a spectacle large enough so that people traveling by the dealership will notice and witness it. If there's a dealership across the street or next door, let their customers see the excitement that takes place at your dealership. In other words, put on a performance. As a testament to how important this is, several manufacturers and dealers across the country have designed new dealerships or remodeled existing ones to include an indoor/outdoor delivery area that is dedicated only for that purpose, and will provide a successful delivery regardless of weather, season, or time of day.

You want the customers to feel like they are driving their new vehicle off of the showroom floor, even if they're not, so roll out the red carpet – literally. Continue the enhancements with painted asphalt or indoor-outdoor carpet, plants, decorations, scenic backdrops, and the like and if your customers are taking delivery at night, make sure it's lit up!

SET THE STAGE FOR DELIVERY

Parking. Sometimes the simple things make all the difference. That's why the

PDI or Get-Ready department plays such a key role in helping to create a lasting impression. For example, when they pull the newly-cleaned vehicles up, I highly recommend having them back the vehicles into the delivery area on a slight angle – setup like you're going to take a picture of it. This provides the buyer with a full visual of their new purchase from the moment they set eyes on it. Since the vehicle is backed in on an angle, the driver doesn't have to look over their shoulder or backup to exit the dealership; instead, they have a smooth, safe departure, as if they were driving off the showroom floor. This moment is sure to stay in their minds for a long time to come.

CUSTOMER TRANSITION

Very important and often unknown or ignored is the act of transitioning the customer out of the buying process and into the ownership of their vehicle before they leave. The customer should be made to feel as though the decision they made to purchase from you in the first place was the right one.

When the financing process is over, it makes sense that F&I personnel start the transition by shifting the conversation to the customer's anticipation of receiving their new vehicle, proudly walking them out of their office and turning the customer over to the sales consultant or delivery team. This is very important to the customer, as they can see firsthand that every department cares about establishing a lasting relationship with them, and that they appreciate the fact that each valued customer is parting with their hard earned money in order to make their purchase. There should be no reason why F&I personnel doesn't have the time to do this, as anyone who is waiting for their turn in the office will benefit from the positive mind-set it creates.

Keep in mind that the customer not only made a commitment to buy from you, but in many cases also exceeded the maximum that they set out to spend, making a commitment to do so for several years.

ACTUAL DELIVERY

Connect. You are now at the most important stage in the buying process. This is your opportunity to thank your customers in as many ways as possible. That's why I suggest making it a celebration—make them feel good about the decision they made to buy from you.

Your goal is to continue to transition your customers out of the buying process and into the ownership of their new vehicle. Let your customers feel like you truly enjoy being there.

When you employ this philosophy, your sales consultants and delivery teams will learn important demographic information about the customer that you are normally unable to obtain during the buying process. And once that friendship is established between you and the customer, you now own not only the opportunities that exist with that customer, but also with their family, friends, and associates. Keep in mind that there is an average of 2.7 vehicles in every household in North America—and you just delivered one of them. Also, the more meaningful the friendship and the more rewarding the delivery is, the more receptive customers will be to receive any follow-up calls from your dealership after delivery.

Passion and enthusiasm. Each and every delivery should be carried out with passion, enthusiasm, and sincerity. Always leave them wanting to come back for more.

Never let a customer feel as if they've come to the dealership for the first time.

When a customer knows their way around the dealership, they are more comfortable coming back for service and parts. Before the customer leaves the dealership, familiarize them with the dealership, especially the location of the service and parts departments. If possible, introduce them to a Service Manager, and if not available, introduce them to a Service Writer. Don't let the customer leave without one of their business cards. If it's after business hours, you should still show them the locations of the service and parts departments. It's a great idea to create a business card display with all the Service Writers' business cards, so that this information is easily accessible to you at all times, even after hours. Be sure to follow-up the

next day with the Service Writer by giving them the name of the customer that took delivery after hours and let them know you gave the customer their card. Don't forget to have the Service Writer call the customer the next day.

BENEFITS OF A DELIVERY DEPARTMENT

There are dealerships of all sizes across the country that have implemented delivery teams and even entire delivery departments to execute the delivery on behalf of the sales consultant and the dealership as a whole. They have a variety of important reasons for making this decision, including:

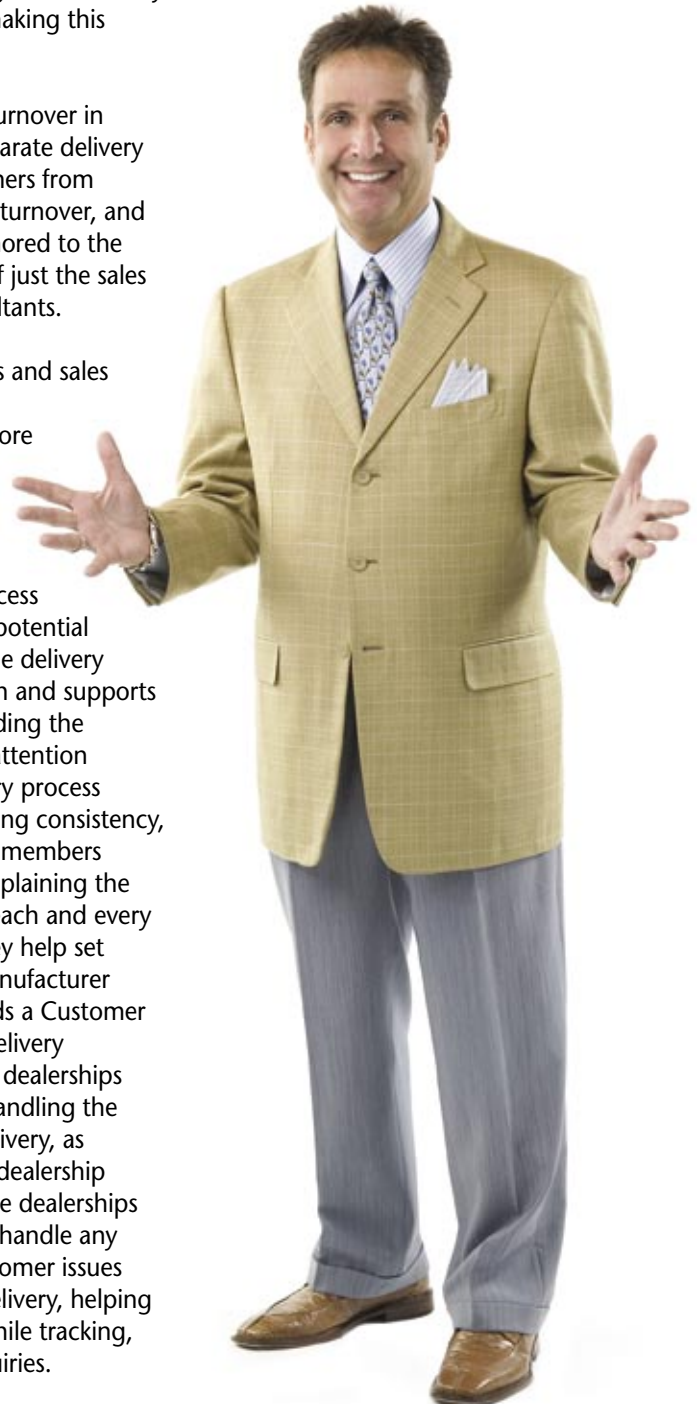
1. The possibility of high turnover in the sales department. Separate delivery personnel keep the customers from noticing sales department turnover, and makes customers feel anchored to the entire dealership instead of just the sales department or sales consultants.
2. For top sales consultants and sales consultants with the good fortune of working with more than one customer at a time, they are able to avoid the awkwardness created when a delivery comes up while in the process of working with a second potential customer. This is where the delivery team/department comes in and supports the sales consultant, providing the customer with undivided attention without cutting the delivery process short. In addition to creating consistency, it also allows trained team members to do a thorough job of explaining the equipment and warranty each and every time. Most important, they help set the stage for when the manufacturer contacts them and/or sends a Customer Satisfaction Survey. The delivery department can also assist dealerships and sales consultants by handling the first follow-up call after delivery, as well as any other calls the dealership requires to be made. Some dealerships also have this department handle any problem resolution or customer issues that may come up after delivery, helping to maintain consistency while tracking, solving, and resolving inquiries.

3. Sales consultants will never again have to feel guilty about turning their back on a customer on the verge of making a purchase because they need to complete the buying process with a previous customer.

4. Sales consultants can stay focused on what they do best: selling.

5. This ensures each and every customer gets a chance to visit the service and parts department before leaving the dealership, which translates into repeat future business.

Continued on next page



For those dealerships with delivery departments, sales consultants can still be part of the process by being paged to the delivery area. Even if the sales consultant is with another customer, they can still momentarily excuse themselves long enough to be part of this process. They can even invite their current prospect along in order to give them something to look forward to. The more people in your dealership that can be involved at delivery, the better it will be. That's impact. That's a lasting impression. That's what your delivery should be.

If CSI scores are important to you, and they should be, then don't settle for having to buy customer satisfaction—start delivering it! Give customers a delivery that they won't forget, while keeping in mind that customer satisfaction doesn't come with customers when they arrive at your dealership—rather, customer satisfaction must be earned by you and maintained by you, not a third party.

PLEDGE TO CUSTOMER DELIVERY

Another great suggestion is to have a member of your management team, preferably the owner/dealer if accessible, take a minute to walk out, thank the customer, and shake their hand. If customers are taking delivery during the day, there's a great chance that they are going back to work afterwards, where their co-workers will see and hear about their new purchase. I promise that the customer will tell them all about the lasting impression your dealership left on them, both because of the delivery experience and because they had the good fortune of meeting the manager/owner. Even if they are going straight home, they will still share their experience with their family, neighbors, and friends.

To learn more about your deliveries, install a remote camera in the delivery area and a monitor in the sales office or sales tower, allowing managers and/or owners to see deliveries taking place all day long. More importantly, it provides the management/owner with the opportunity to know when to go out, say thank you to the customer, and shake their hand.

When done correctly, you create such a satisfied customer and leave such a lasting impression that they actually end up going to work for you as your best advertising agents. That's smart marketing. With that in mind, seek out companies that provide services to help you enhance the experience your customers have when taking possession of their new vehicles, which in turn helps to further promote you and your dealership. And if you find yourself wanting to cut costs, just make sure you don't cut your customer out of the big picture. And for those of you who already recognize the importance of delivery and have done something about it, on behalf of your customers—thank you.

I've had the good fortune of being part of the auto industry for over 35 years in many capacities, but the one that sticks with me most is when I was on the asphalt working everyday to get to delivery. It was then that I learned the importance of doing something rewarding for my customers at just the right moment—at delivery. With that in mind, I started a campaign to help dealerships and their sales consultants understand why delivery is the most important part of the buying process and should be only the beginning—not merely the end.

In closing I would like to thank every one of you for what you do every day to keep the industry we both share and love alive and well.

God bless, good selling, and remember – **JUST BE THERE!**

James E. Yerage, *King of Delivery*

To contact Cal-Pro Inc. or Mr. Yerage regarding delivery area design and training, please visit www.calproinc.com, send an email to jyerage@autosuccess.biz or call 1.800.854.7095.

**SALES CONSULTANT
PERSONAL EXERCISE**

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

A satisfied customer represents generations of sales opportunities. Knowing that there are 2.7 vehicles per household find out just how much your customers mean to you by simply following this exercise:

If you average: _____ cars per month each year for 5 years, that would represent your total number of new customers: _____ x 12 mos. = _____ x 5 yrs. = _____

Each household from these: _____ customers has an additional 1.7 vehicles: _____ x 1.7 = _____ additional sales opportunities.

Of the: _____ that you sold 60% of them are now 24-60 months old: _____ x 60% = _____ immediate sales opportunities.

If each customer were a satisfied customer because of proper customer delivery, and they gave you just 1 referral with 2.7 vehicles in that household: _____ x 2.7 = _____ referral sales opportunities.

_____ + _____ + _____ + _____ = _____ additional sales opportunities.

**THAT'S WHAT'S IN
IT FOR YOU!**

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YOUR CUSTOMER'S DELIVERY IS A CLEAR REFLECTION ON YOU AND YOUR DEALERSHIP.

WHAT DOES A SUCCESSFUL (AND PROFITABLE) DELIVERY LOOK LIKE?

One of the most successful keys is looking at the delivery as the beginning, not the end of the buying process. Done correctly, the relationship started from an enhanced delivery can help you get to your next sale. There are five main aspects to a successful and profitable delivery: Consistency, Dynamic Delivery Area, Setting the Stage, Customer Transition, and Actual Delivery. This final experience is key to your dealership's bottom line. Let Cal-Pro help you enhance your current delivery methods with our Silent Salesman System. Call us at 800.854.7095, visit our website www.calproinc.com or email Mr. Yerage at jyerage@autosuccess.biz for more information.

