



New Auto Dealership Study Reveals Active Listening Over the Phone Directly Increases Customer Visits and Sales

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SEATTLE--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jun. 28, 2019-- Marchex (NASDAQ: [MCHX](#)), a leading conversational analytics company that connects the voice of the customer to your business, today released a new [report](#) that analyzed 6,200 sales conversations during January from auto dealerships across the United States. The study identified key behaviors that successful auto salespeople use in calls.

The data found that top-performing salespeople actively listened to callers 179 percent more often than bottom performers – a practice that leads to more visits to dealerships and ultimately more sales.

Top performers, defined in the report as the top 25 percent of salespeople, relied on active listening techniques, such as repeating and clarifying information. According to the study, top performers then used that information to provide callers more relevant recommendations.

As the final installment of a three-part series on call handling at auto dealerships, this study benchmarked the specific goals of the salespeople relative to the outcomes of their conversations, which was to get inbound callers to schedule an appointment to either look at a car or take a test drive.

The findings showed that top sales performers:

- Requested the caller's name 163 percent more often than bottom performers.
- Provided their direct contact information to callers 40 percent more often than bottom performers – and got the caller's contact information, as well.
- Said 'please' and 'thank you' 99 percent of the time, while lower performers used these phrases 89 percent of the time.
- Laughed on more than half of their calls, which kept the calls positive and helped relax the caller.

"Active listening is the key to building meaningful connections with prospective car buyers over the phone," said Matt Muilenburg, Head of Automotive at Marchex. "The data shows that taking the time to listen and create these high-value experiences increases customer visits to dealerships and ultimately leads to more sales. This is especially critical today when dealer visits are at an all-time low."

The report also found that asking about the caller's needs and preferences leads to more successful outcomes. **Top performers asked callers about their needs 57 percent more often than lower-performing salespeople.** Top performers often asked questions that actively engaged callers about their preferences, such as "Did you need third row seating?" and "Are you wanting leather seats?".

Such questions help guide sales conversations and provide the caller with more comprehensive information, the report found.

"Understanding and empathy drive sales," added Muilenburg. "This data helps dealers understand how to deliver empathy at critical moments and capture the interests of the customer over the phone."

For more information, including tips on how to create a successful sales call during each point of the conversation, go to <https://pages.marchex.com/marchex-auto-oem-call-handling-study-2019.html>.

About Marchex

Marchex understands that the best customers are those who call your company – they convert faster, buy more, and churn less. Marchex provides solutions that help companies drive more calls, understand what happens on those calls, and convert more of those callers into customers. Our actionable intelligence strengthens the connection between companies and their customers, bridging the physical and digital world, to help brands maximize their marketing investments and operating efficiencies to acquire the best customers.

Please visit the [Marchex blog](#) or @marchex on Twitter (Twitter.com/Marchex) to learn more.

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