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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR GROWTH-MINDED SERVICE MANAGERS

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"It gives us a 'WOW' factor with service customers"

Mercedes dealership boosts CSI, efficiency with online 'concierge' service

Parts & service manager Geoff Meeker says he's improved CSI, customer attitudes, and sped up the checkout process at his Mercedes-Benz of Buckhead, GA since adding an automated welcoming and messaging service in October.

"I can't recommend it highly enough," Geoff tells us. His customers love it because, whether they've been last at the dealership two months or two years ago, his service advisors "know" they are coming and greet them by name when they arrive. "It gives us a WOW factor with service and sales customers," Geoff says.

Mercedes-Benz of Buckhead has been utilizing MyDealerLot's Service Drive Concierge (SDC) since the fall of 2008 with great success and has decided to expand the implementation to track the Smart Car brand. Mercedes-Benz of Buckhead is also planning on expanding the capability of the system through service bay and car wash completion tracking using SDC's RFID technology.

Technology has come a long way

"This technology has matured considerably and is capable of providing a number of key benefits from the automatic scanning of customer and loaner vehicles as they pull into the drive. We can use the data obtained from SDC for a variety of important analytics," said Geoff.

Perhaps the biggest, most positive impact has come at vehicle checkout time, Geoff reports. "It

saves a lot of time for loaner cars and returns," he says. Using the system, his service advisors literally know a car is pulling in to his dealership as it reaches the parking lot.

He doesn't have hard numbers yet, but Geoff also thinks the system is making his customers more aware of appointment times – even if they miss them. "I've had several customers tell me they saw on the wall that they were late for their appointment and really appreciated how we took them anyway," Geoff says. That's also been reflected in some CSI reports he's gotten.

RFID tracking

Retail vehicle inventory is sold with the RFID tag already installed for future customer identification and messaging. Two fifty inch ceiling suspended plasma monitors provide automated personalized welcoming in conjunction with automated internal messaging of the customer's arrival. Recently, the store presented the SDC implementation to their Dealer 20 group as the stores' 'best idea.'

"What really makes SDC valuable is how it touches so many groups within the dealership: customers, service advisors, cashiers, porters

and even salespeople. Salespeople now know the instant their customer has pulled into the service drive allowing for a new touch point – which in our store has translated into additional vehicle sales," said Geoff.

"For dealerships that put a premium on service excellence and creating new sales opportunities, SDC makes a great deal of sense – even in this tough economic climate. The system is priced very attractively and allows a dealership to be using our RFID solution in the service drive typically within thirty days," said MyDealerLot President George Cresto.

Geoff says he pays a few thousand for each "reader" that can in turn pick up frequencies at four different location using antenna. "It pays for itself almost immediately in new car sales," Geoff notes. He adds that it makes it much easier for his sales and service departments to work together more effectively, which is often a problem at many dealerships.

"Using this system, there's no excuse now for service and sales not to work together," Geoff says. ♦

For more information, go to www.mydealerlot.com or call 1-888-MDL-RFID (1-888-635-7343).