



LEAD RESPONSE ANALYSIS

COMPREHENSIVE, IMMEDIATE RESPONSE
10%

EMAIL
20%

VOICE
60%

SMS
100%

VIDEO
0%

TOTAL OVERALL SCORE
38%

TOP IMMEDIATE RESPONSE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Discuss price
- 2 Mention a trade
- 3 Send an email and video response within one hour

TOP EMAIL RESPONSE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Invite customer in for a test drive

Lead Response Analysis Case Study

How 74% of Dealers Missed the Mark When Responding to Leads

Dealer Performance Summary

74% (1,917 dealers) failed 1 or more of the 3 assessments

Dealer sample size of 2,594 during 3-month period

Lead Response Analyses (LRA) are mystery shops aimed at helping dealerships and OEMs uncover gaps in sales training, product knowledge and dealership lead response processes. This initiative assessed dealerships within a six-month period to identify opportunities for dealerships to provide a better customer experience, improve their lead management, and close more deals.

Overview

Prompt and accurate responses to customer inquiries are crucial in today's competitive environment. This initiative aimed to identify shortcomings in the existing lead response efforts of dealerships and develop recommendations to empower staff to manage inquiries more effectively.



The Situation

Brand Representation, Customer Experience and EV Sales

The OEM client faced a challenge in maintaining consistent brand representation and delivering a high-quality customer experience across its dealership network. As EV adoption accelerates, dealerships often lack the training and tools to communicate EV-specific value propositions, resulting in missed opportunities and loss of customer trust. This disconnect not only undermines the OEM's brand promise but also erodes customer trust at a pivotal moment in the purchase journey. The OEM risks losing market share in a segment where consumer expectations are rapidly evolving.

The OEM client needed a report that would help them form an approach that could help the dealer body improve their lead handling efforts to enhance customer experience for EV prospects and sell more EVs.



Solution

The OEM client partnered with Maritz to launch a digital mystery shopping initiative aimed at delivering Lead Response Analyses to dealerships nationwide each month. Conducted monthly over a six-month period, the analysis focused on electric vehicle (EV) inquiries—specifically questions related to charging, vehicle range and OEM-specific EV incentives.

While the program included over 3,000 dealers, the data in this case study is pulled from a subset of 2,594 dealers based on availability of completed dealer analyses.

- Dealers evaluated: 2,594 per month
- Focus: Electric vehicle sales
- Time period: 3 months
- Area assessed: Lead response

A comprehensive analysis program was implemented, featuring:

Lead Response Analyses

This project involved a detailed evaluation of each dealership of immediate and short-term outreach efforts across communication channels in response to an online inquiry:

- Email
- Phone/Voicemail
- Text/SMS

Responses were tracked and monitored over a 48-hour period.

Program Support

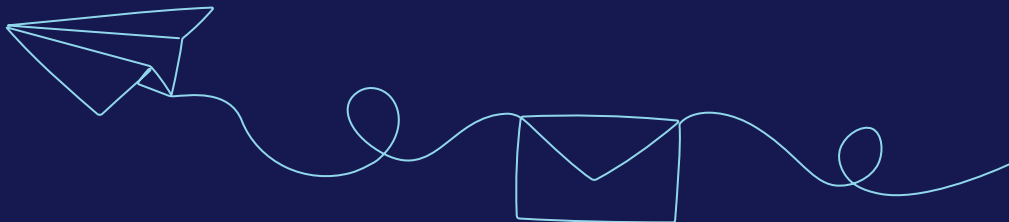
Hosted a live webinar, led by a seasoned sales coach, which provided participants with a detailed walkthrough of the assessment process. Attendees also received a clear pass/fail guide that answered questions about how to succeed and to support their success.

Retailer & OEM Dashboards

A benchmarking tool to track Lead Response Analyses and overall performance, encouraging continuous improvement.

Insights & Analysis to OEM Stakeholders

Analysis of trends and recommendations based on the data was provided to the OEM client to identify where their dealerships needed the most support and introduced action items for the dealers to improve.



Results

During the 3 months, 3 pass/fail analyses were conducted based on whether the dealership could answer an EV-related question submitted on their website form.

The data showed that **74% (1,917 dealers) failed 1 or more of the 3 assessments.**

The full data for the pass/fails of the 2,594 dealerships is below:

- Failed all 3 LRAs: 19.58% (508 dealers)
- Failed 2 of 3 LRAs: 14.96% (388 dealers)
- Failed 1 of 3 LRAs: 39.36% (1,021 dealers)
- Passed all 3 LRAs: 26.10% (677 dealers)

Program Brings Dealer Improvement Results

After receiving 3 months of assessments, improvements in the overall score increased by **37%**.

- **Improved Response Times:** A noticeable decrease in lead response delays.
- **Enhanced Customer Interaction:** Staff became more effective in addressing inquiries, leading to better customer satisfaction.
- **Operational Efficiency:** Reported streamlined processes contributed to a more organized and effective lead management system.

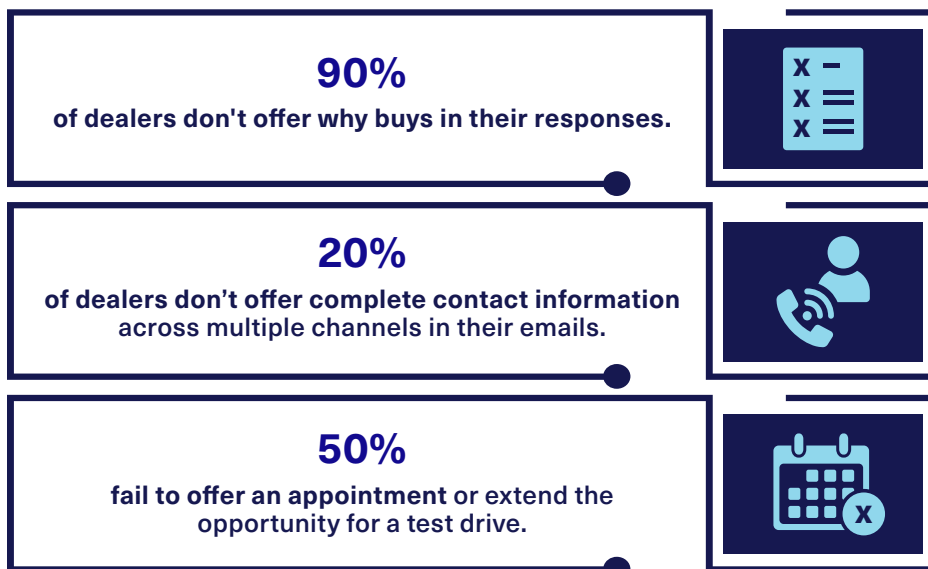
The initiative demonstrated that a structured, data-driven approach to improving lead response can significantly enhance customer engagement and operational efficiency. In this case study specifically, the dealers increased in performance due to receiving clear, actionable data with opportunities for improvement identified.

Insights

An analysis was conducted and provided to the OEM client to help inform areas for improvement. It provided additional details and data on how dealers responded to the mystery shop and identified several key issues at the dealerships that were keeping them from passing their Lead Response Analyses:



In addition to evaluating the query questions, our team also found that, in general:



Lessons Learned and Best Practices

The Big 3 Inhibitors to Success— and How to Overcome Them

Our analysis revealed three critical areas where failing shops struggled, directly impacting sales and customer satisfaction:

1. Inefficient Processes

Without standardized response times or escalation protocols, leads often go cold before engagement. This hurts both sales and customer trust.

Solution: Refine and test dealership processes. Streamlined workflows and clear protocols ensure timely, consistent and effective lead handling across all channels.

2. Inadequate Training

Staff lacking product knowledge and communication skills deliver vague or incorrect responses, leading to missed opportunities - especially with newer products like EVs.

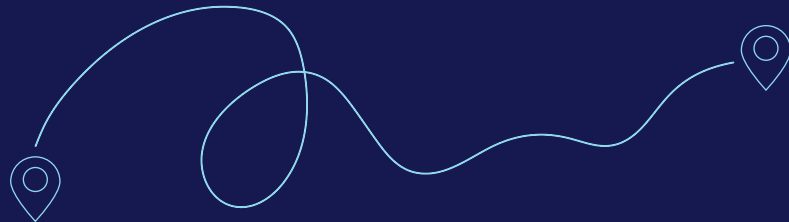
Solution: Prioritize your people. Ongoing training and regular process reviews are essential to maintain high performance and adapt to evolving customer needs.

3. Technology Issues

Outdated or poorly integrated systems cause missed or duplicated leads. Misaligned automation and fragmented CRM data create inefficiencies.

Solution: Manage your technology. Optimized system integrations and proper configuration significantly improve response efficiency and data accuracy. Addressing these inhibitors is key to unlocking growth potential. Shops that invest in people, processes and technology see stronger lead conversion, improved EV sales and higher customer satisfaction.





Dealer Action Plan

Some insights were gleaned from the data that were shared as action items for the OEM client to address with their dealerships, including the following:



Increase Visibility into Staff Performance

Many dealerships lack real-time insight into how their teams are performing—making it hard to recognize top talent, coach underperformers or make informed decisions.

Dealers should implement tools and processes that surface individual and team-level metrics across sales activity, customer engagement, and follow-up effectiveness to drive accountability and productivity.



Improve CRM Utilization and Processes

CRM systems are often underused or misconfigured, leading to fragmented customer data and inconsistent follow-up. Sales reps struggle with manual entry and disconnected tools, which slows response times and hurts the customer experience. **Dealers need to streamline CRM workflows, automate key tasks, and ensure systems are properly integrated to support efficient, consistent engagement.**



EV Sales Training

As EV demand grows, many dealerships are falling behind due to limited product knowledge and lack of confidence in handling EV-specific inquiries. This leads to missed opportunities and erodes customer trust.

Dealers must invest in targeted EV training to equip sales teams with the knowledge and tools needed to educate buyers and convert interest into sales.

Maritz Has the Expertise to Help

Maritz applies a proven, data-driven approach to improving dealership performance—delivering solutions that help OEMs and dealers succeed.

Lead Response Analysis (LRA)

Our proprietary LRAs uncover gaps in sales training, product knowledge and lead handling processes through real-world mystery shops. These insights help OEMs and dealers:

- Identify breakdowns in communication across email, voicemail and SMS.
- Benchmark performance across dealer networks.
- Pinpoint missed opportunities in EV sales and customer engagement.

Training & Coaching

Our coaching programs are designed to address individual challenges and elevate overall dealership performance. OEMs choose our training to help their dealerships make the most of their CRMs and existing efforts:

- Make every salesperson their best salesperson with skills training.
- Close more leads and make more sales with opportunity identification.
- Implement strategies to correct underutilized or misconfigured CRM systems and tools.
- Improve sales team performance by reducing response times, maximizing direct leads and increasing closing rates.
- Surface actionable metrics to track and elevate individual and team efforts.
- Improve customer experience and CSI scores.
- Enhance loyalty and retention of clients.

Next Steps

Do your dealerships have the same issues identified in this study? Are you seeing missed opportunities in EV sales, underperforming close rates or poor customer engagement?

Maritz can help dealerships be the best they can be, from profit to customer experience, driving loyalty and retention. From uncovering performance gaps to delivering targeted coaching and CRM optimization, our solutions are built to drive results

Ready to take the next step? Visit [Maritz.com/Auto](https://www.maritz.com/Auto) to explore how we can support your dealerships' growth or connect with your Maritz representative to get started today.

