

TGM Newsletter



March 2009

You need to Think Customers if you want to “Retain Customers”

Automotive distributors and dealerships continually make the same mistake. They talk about the need to provide quality services, they always say they want to provide a high level of customer satisfaction, but then? ... They don't actually do anything about it, only wonder why their customers go away and never return. Then as a quick fix they try to improve the quality of their facilities and create new processes ... But still they do nothing for the customer, and more important, they do nothing for their own people.

If you want to deliver quality service and have happy customers you need to do something to achieve it. First you have to implement the right system and then it is essential to train your people to make it work. In the case of after-sales it is the Direct Reception System which gives you the tools and the methods to achieve all these key success factors. The most important point is that customers like it because it makes them part of the process of creating their own service quality while contributing to their own satisfaction.

What is Direct Reception?

The term “Direct Reception” is often misunderstood, Direct Reception is not about building expensive service facilities, or knocking a hole in the wall, or building an extension to your existing older facility, it is all about how you ‘Serve your Customers’. Direct Reception is about your People and the way in which they work together as a team to provide service to your customers.

Direct Reception does not need high investment to get started

Today so many Service Consultants just sit in a chair behind a desk looking into a computer screen and don't move, they don't even come into contact with the motor car, and that is wrong. You can easily make one simple correction; Get the Service Consultants out of their chairs and out of the office and around the motor car with the customer. A stand-up desk, telephone and computer terminal close to the vehicle is all they need to begin to be effective. Service Consultants will sell more workshop hours and spare parts at the hoist and around the motor car with the customer than they ever will sitting behind a desk.

Direct Reception is a Profit Centre

While dealers have been busy selling new motor cars they did not think seriously about how to service them and more importantly, how to retain them beyond the end of the warranty period. Today you have a new market situation, you are not selling so many new cars and profits have reduced, so you have to create new and sustainable profit centres. Dealers need to learn how to retain their existing customers much longer as service customers and far beyond the end of the new car warranty in order to survive.

Direct Reception is about Managing the Customer Experience

In today's customer orientated environment it is essential that Service Consultants manage the customer service experience during the period of vehicle ownership right to the end because Service Consultants are in the best position to “retain customers” and eventually lead them into purchasing a new motor car. After-sales must revolve around the customer and Direct Reception helps you achieve this by making the customer part of the after-sales process. When the customer is “a team member”, and totally happy with the quality of service you provide, then you dramatically increase your chances to retain them.

Employ the Right People

You need to employ service minded people who have communication skills and continually train them to provide quality services and this is especially important for your Service Consultants. A key responsibility for Service Consultants is to ‘make customers happy’ and the processes of the Direct Reception System are designed to enhance the quality of service you provide to your customers. It is People who provide service, not Machines and Direct Reception gives Service Consultants the tools they need to provide the quality service which customers expect.

The Direct Reception System is a Process

The Direct Reception System begins from the ‘first telephone contact’ when the customer calls to make a service appointment and continues right up to the ‘customer follow-up’ which takes place after the vehicle has left the dealership. There are many processes and individual steps which combine together make up the Direct Reception System and you are also able to make the customer part of the service process.

TGM Newsletter



Customers actually enjoy and appreciate to be more involved in the process and as a direct result of this enhanced relationship, customers 'trust' the dealer more.

Direct Reception offers many Benefits to Dealers

Increased Profit Opportunity - With active customer consultation around the motor car the Direct Reception when used effectively, will increase sales of workshop repair hours, parts and accessories to your customers. Direct Reception has continually proved to increase the sale of workshop hours, parts and accessories by more than 10%.

Increased Customer Satisfaction - Customers like the direct involvement in the service process and appreciate to be better served by the Service Consultant. Direct Reception also creates increased "trust" in the dealership, leading to higher Customer Satisfaction. If the customer is happy with your People and the services they provide, you increase the likelihood that your customers will return.

Increased Customer Retention - Have you ever considered the "life-time value" of a happy customer who will continually return to your Service Centre. The effect of Quality People who provide Quality Service will increase Customer Retention and Direct Reception can help you to achieve it.

Planning the Future with Direct Reception

The last months demonstrated how being efficient in selling new cars is not enough on its own to secure the future. The future of the automotive dealership is all about who can retain the most customers and today after-sales must not only become a more effective profit centre, but must play a far greater role in retaining customers for the future. Direct Reception will support this goal. You can increase your after-sales profitability with the Direct Reception System and if it is used with the maximum effect you will increase Customer Retention.

Customer Retention will determine your Future

In the end your customers will decide, just like in other service markets around the world. Customers continually return to the dealerships which provide quality service, dealerships who operate a Direct Reception System, dealerships who really do care about their customers, dealerships who employ People who understand and who really want to make the difference, People who continually give just that little bit more than your competition, because they believe in the future.

TGM Abel & Berger International Ukraine Customer Care and Direct Reception training programmes are specifically developed for after-sales personnel and readily available to Importer/Distribution companies and individual dealerships and should you require any further information you are invited to contact our regional director Andrey Petrenko Tel. 00380 44 498 3837, or by e-mail: apetrenko@tgm.kiev.ua. We remain at your disposal to provide any help or assistance you may require. Further information can also be found at our website <http://www.tgm.kiev.ua>

Yours Sincerely

Peter Taylor
Director - International Operations

Andrey Petrenko
Regional Director – TGM Ukraine