



# *the* CRISP Quarterly

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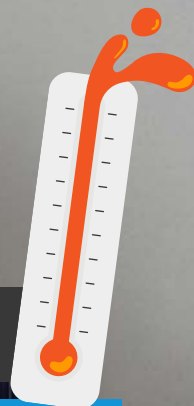
**JOHNNY ACHI**  
*Vice President of Marketing*

**CAVENDER AUTO GROUP**

**TURNING UP**

**THE HEAT**

*AND REALIZING A 200% INCREASE  
IN YEAR-TO-YEAR PERFORMANCE*

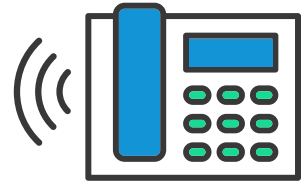


# WHAT IS CRISP?

& WHY IS THIS CALLED THE CRISP QUARTERLY?

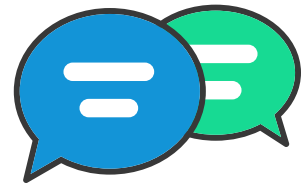
**G**ood question, reader. CRISP is our methodology that's been helping dealers like you for almost a decade. Connect more callers, Request and Invite more prospects into the dealership, Set more appointments, and Pursue more stranded leads. It's the most simple, yet effective technique dealers use to quickly see a boost in overall sales and service performance. We often talk about CRISP when it comes to the sales department, but it's just as important in service. Connecting callers to someone who can help is part of the entire customer service experience and has a significant impact on CSI. Additionally, we highly recommend Requesting the caller come in for an Inspection rather than stopping at a price quote over the phone.

You'll learn how our dealers are implementing the CRISP methodology in their service departments to amplify CSI and connect with more customers. Johnny Achi with the Cavender Auto Group shares how the group saw a 200% year-over-year increase in revenue, and how Curtis Rost, Volkswagen of Downtown LA, is ensuring every customer has an excellent service experience. Hope you enjoy!



## CONNECT

Connect each caller quickly to a qualified agent



## REQUEST & INVITE

Request and Invite the caller into the dealership for a test drive or vehicle inspection



## SET

Set a firm appointment with a specific date and time



## PURSUE

Pursue new leads & rescue missed opportunities

# MISSION CRITICAL:

## YOUR CUSTOMER'S SERVICE EXPERIENCE

BY STEPHANIE REYNOLDS

The Service Director at  
Volkswagen of Downtown  
Los Angeles' in-the-moment  
mindset creates lifelong  
customers



**CURTIS ROST**  
Service Director

On average, service and parts departments generate 55-60% of a dealership's gross profit.<sup>1</sup> A well-oiled service department is crucial for customer retention and generating loyalty with customers who come back time after time. An essential piece of the equation is a dedicated manager to keep it running smoothly and as efficiently as possible.

The service bay isn't a new scene for Curtis Rost. A veteran in the arena for over thirty years, Rost has been a firsthand witness to the evolution of fixed operations — from starting as a car washer to now the Service Director at Volkswagen of Downtown LA. Despite communication methods evolving, one thing has stayed consistent at every operational level: the impact of providing an excellent customer experience.

## READY, SET, ENGAGE

Rost is an active participant in the customer reception process to ensure every customer is personally greeted and assisted. He shares, "I stay engaged. I'm a big believer in energy. The more

<sup>1</sup> Popely, R. (2021, February 8). Dealerships can boost key fixed absorption metric to survive and thrive. Automotive News. <https://www.autonews.com/fixed-ops-journal/dealerships-can-boost-key-fixed-absorption-metric-survive-and-thrive>.



energy you put into something, the better results you're going to get. People recognize when you're trying your best and they appreciate it."

Rost is a firm advocate that you cannot manage what you do not measure, but he goes further by taking action to positively affect the performance of the team. ***Simply telling the advisors to be better is not a catalyst for change unless there are processes in place to hold them accountable.***

He's often found alongside his team in the drive and believes in leading by example. "Engagement with my staff and customers sends the right message of

how important this business is to me," Rost shares. "The more the clients and your team see you, it communicates you're invested in the success of your team and dealership, and ultimately, gets their buy-in."

## THE PHONE

While texting is a growing form of customer communication, many consumers today still favor phone contact for an immediate solution. Rost favors the phone because his team can make a better personal connection by speaking directly to a customer than over email or text. In



fact, national data shows caller retention is 28% higher with phone leads versus internet leads.<sup>2</sup> The phone is a direct way to build connections one-to-one with customers and build brand loyalty. So it's with obvious reasoning that Rost places a high value on a well-handled phone call, with the first step being to make sure every call is connected.

Every phone call represents revenue. By ensuring customers do not hit the black hole of voicemail, Volkswagen of Downtown LA utilizes a custom phone

bridge to optimize routing and get the customer connected faster, whether it be to sales or service. When a customer calls in to schedule a service appointment, a round robin system increases the likelihood an agent answers the phone by ringing to all available BDC agents at the dealership. For whatever reason the call isn't answered within 30 seconds, available advisors are notified until the call routes directly to Rost to ensure the customer is captured and helped.

Rost sees call volume reports as a

## VOLKSWAGEN OF DOWNTOWN LA'S 3 SAFETY NETS

THE DEALERSHIP'S ROUTING PROCESS INCLUDES...



<sup>2</sup> Frey, A. (2020, December 8). Thanks for Calling. Please Hold. Digital Dealer. <https://www.digitaldealer.com/latest-news/thanks-for-calling-please-hold/>.

valuable tool to optimize a smaller team. Even if you're operating lean, connecting every caller should be the highest priority. Call volume reporting data allows Rost to know which days and hours receive the highest volume of inbound call traffic. As a result, he effectively manages his staff's schedules to ensure the phones are well-staffed at their busiest hours.

Due to state-sanctioned social distancing measures, Rost leverages call recordings to hear his BDC team without having to

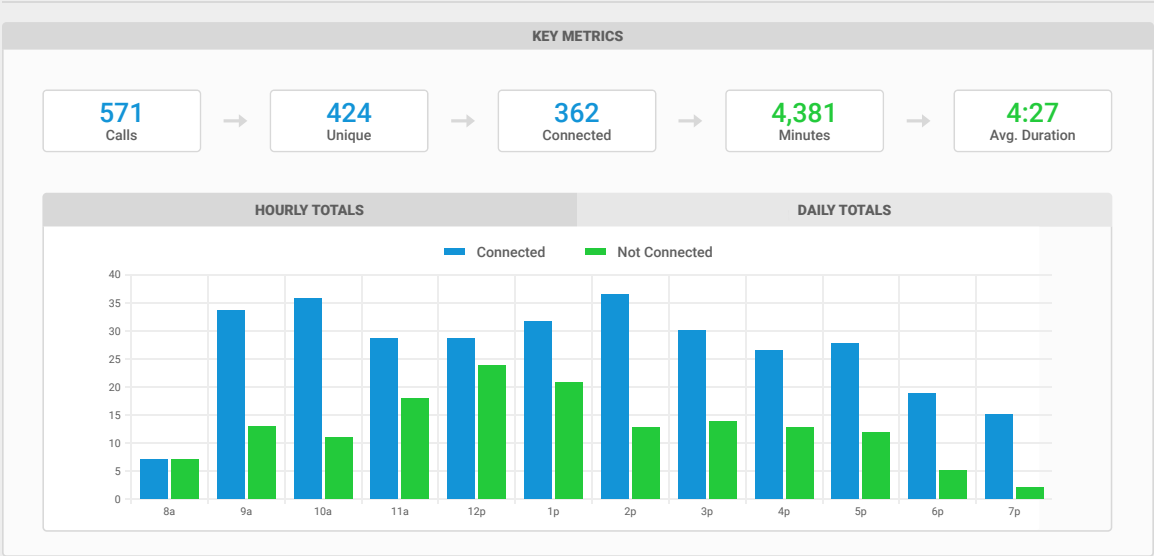
be in the same room. As a father of three, his years of sports coaching translate to his management approach. He's a big believer in positive reinforcement and coaching in the moment for best results. The call recordings allow him to provide feedback on specific calls necessary to improve the agent's phone skills on future calls.

Awareness of pitch and tone can improve your success on the phone. For many customers, scheduling a service

*Rost utilizes the Tracking Line Summary Report to see trends in connection and times of peak inbound traffic.*



Tracking Line Summary








appointment is a stressful or dreaded task. Answering the phone in a welcoming and friendly manner immediately sets the tone of the conversation and can alleviate any anxiety the caller might be feeling. And, believe it or not, a smile speaks volumes and positively improves tone and customer perception.

Rost cannot overstate the impact on a customer's experience when he personally reaches out to a customer. Nothing can be more frustrating for a customer than to hit voicemail or get left on hold before giving up. Rost utilizes [missed opportunity alerts](#). When a customer doesn't connect, he immediately receives an email with the call detail including the customer's contact information. He reviews the opportunity and forwards the customer's information to the BDC to prioritize calling back. Often, he personally calls back the customer. Rost emphasizes the positive effect this has on the customer. Following up to answer a customer's questions or concerns, or further educate on recommended services — especially by a manager — has a lasting impact on the customer and quickly alleviates any prior frustration.

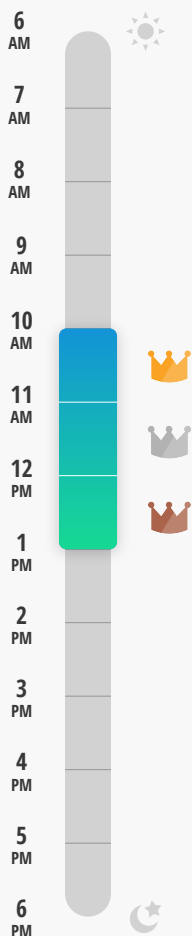
Technology provides dealers excellent insight into the health of their business, but a top-performing manager leverages

## 2020 INBOUND CALL VOLUME TRENDS

### TOP 3 DAYS OF THE WEEK

MON	TUE	WED
		

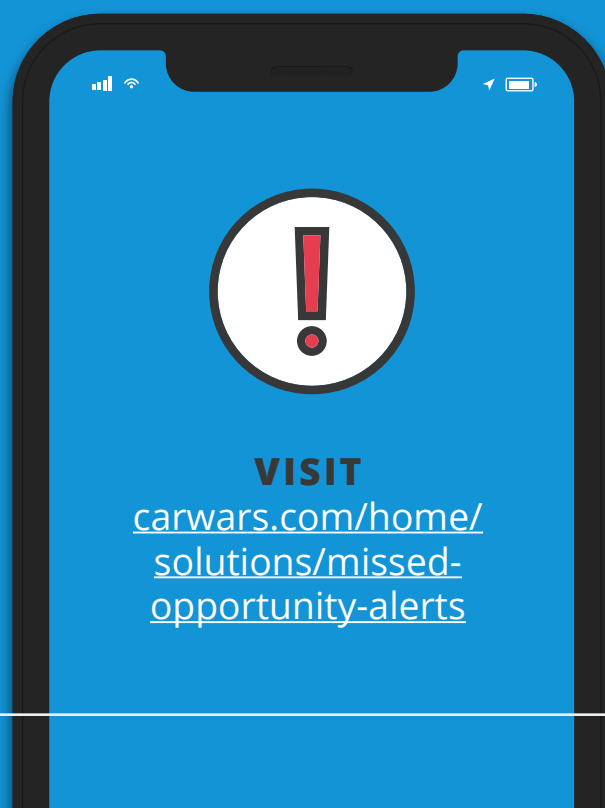
### TOP 3 HOURS OF THE DAY



\*Car Wars call data.

the data and proactively gets out from behind the desk and works directly with the fixed ops team daily. Rost shares, "You don't have to be perfect, but a customer can see when you're doing everything you can to help them, and a vast majority of the time they appreciate it." The outcome of a transparent experience is a loyal customer who knows your dealership is the best choice when making the decision where to service and purchase his or her next vehicle, or refer a friend looking for the same.

INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT  
*MISSED OPPORTUNITY ALERTS?*







# DOMINATE THE PHONE IN SERVICE

Car Wars helps service departments provide an optimal customer experience, book more repair orders, and gain actionable insight into the phone lines.



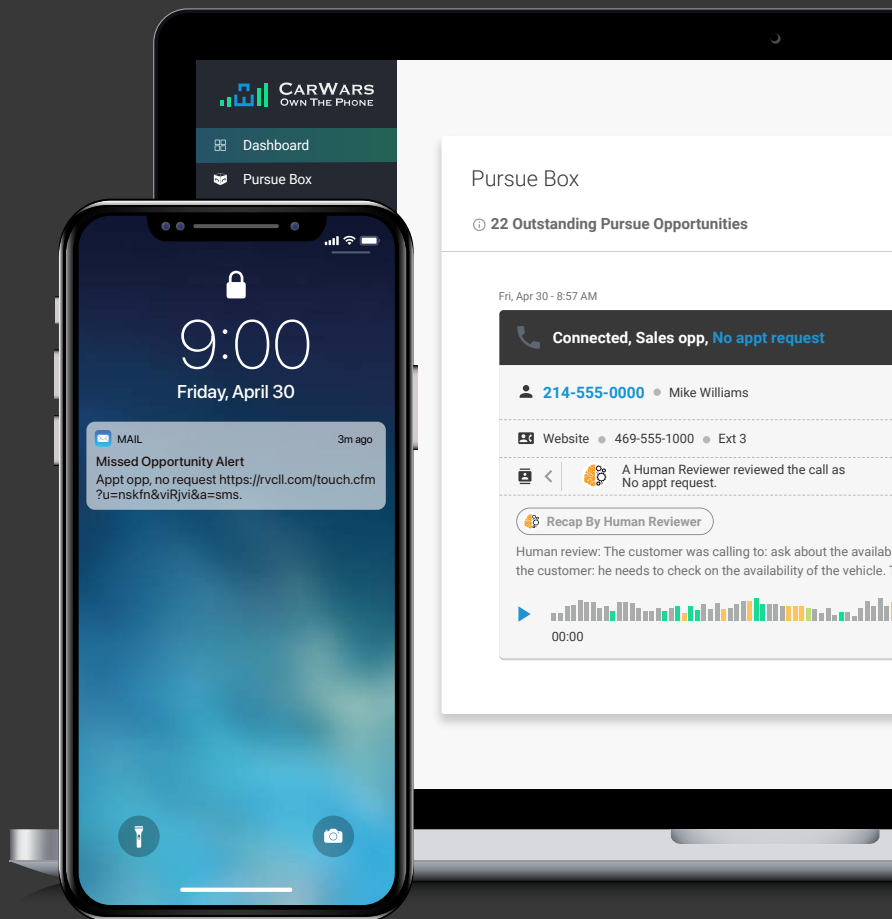
## GET FULL TRANSPARENCY ON EVERY SINGLE CALL

Every inbound and outbound call is reviewed by a human so you know what is happening on your phone lines and where your staff is falling short.



## SALVAGE MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

Receive text and email alerts to actively rescue an opportunity before it's too late!



**GET A DEMO TODAY!**

[carwars.com/home/service](https://carwars.com/home/service) | 833-551-1628

BECOMING CRISP



# COMBATING "SPAM LIKELY" ON OUTBOUND CALLS

## Here's What We Know and What *You* Can Do

Spam calls were a dominant theme for 2020 — a troubling, growing trend continuing this year. As spam and call fraud activity surge nationally to alarming levels, Car Wars is staying at the forefront of best practices to

help combat outbound calls being mistakenly marked as "spam." As our knowledge of spam unfolds, we're developing techniques to help improve the success of our clients' outbound calls and helping them reach customers.

## WHAT IS OUTBOUND SPAM?

“Spam” or “spam likely” is an approach that’s increasingly used by phone manufacturers, carriers, and third-party apps to protect consumers from “known” spam phone numbers. If a phone number is detected as spam, the phone displays “spam” or “spam likely” or possibly silences the call all together. As a business, heightened sensitivity to inbound calls affects the success of your outbound calls.

## WHAT’S THE LOGIC BEHIND THE “SPAM” OR “SPAM LIKELY” DENOTATION?

The logic and experience varies from provider to provider, so there’s no perfect answer to how “spam likely” detection works. We do know extreme call volume seems to trigger numbers being listed as spam, as do consumers reporting a phone number as spam. While consumers are now more protected from actual spam, legitimate businesses making legitimate outbound calls to their customers and prospects are negatively impacted. The more your dealership is pounding the phones trying to sell cars, the more likely you are to get flagged as spam to your customers.





However, just like you can't stop picking up the dealership phone, you also can't stop calling your customers — it's how you stay profitable as a business.

## **WHY DOES IT SEEM LIKE "SPAM LIKELY" DENOTATIONS HAVE BECOME MORE PREVALENT?**

There's growing pressure on both phone carriers and government entities to curb this troublesome surge of calls. With the introduction of "spam likely," consumers are more likely to be alerted of and protected from potential scammers. However, no good deed goes unpunished; the more strict these regulations are on flagging phone numbers, the more likely your dealership's phone numbers will be incorrectly marked as spam.

## **WHO IS AFFECTED BY OUTBOUND SPAM?**

Many legitimate businesses are at risk and negatively impacted. If you notice your phone number is showing up as "spam likely" to your customers, you can't just call the FCC and request your



number be unflagged. Instead, the best thing you can do is implement steps to avoid being flagged as spam and lessen the overall impact on your dealership. To meet these needs, Car Wars proactively implements solutions for its clients to combat outbound spam during customer outreach and keep your outbound phone processes running smoothly.





# THE OUTBOUND GUIDE TO COMBATING SPAM



## REFRESH YOUR OUTBOUND CALLER ID

There's a huge benefit to having a call tracking number appear as your caller ID to customers when receiving a call from your dealership. Consistently updating your outbound caller ID reduces the risk of being flagged by providers for high call volume, while still allowing returned calls to be routed directly to your dealership. Car Wars offers unlimited tracking lines and refreshes to its clients. Fortunately, swapping out the number with a new line is easy.



## REGISTER YOUR OUTBOUND CALLER IDS WITH DESIGNATED PHONE CARRIERS

The risk of detection can be slightly reduced when your dealership's outbound caller ID numbers are registered with designated phone carriers. In doing so, your lines are registered as a legitimate business and verified as coming from the proper source. [Car Wars' Support Team](#) can register your lines with your dealership's correct information.



## UTILIZE A UNIQUE TRACKING LINE PER AGENT

Using a single outbound caller ID for all of the dealership's outbound calls significantly increases the risk of being flagged due to high daily call volume being associated with a single number. An individual line for each agent allows him or her a unique tracked and recorded phone number to give customers which rings back directly to the agent. Furthermore, text-enabled agent lines give dealers another channel of communication to customers.



## INCLUDE THE OUTBOUND PHONE NUMBER IN EMAIL COMMUNICATION

Add the dealership's outbound caller ID or unique agent's line in templated customer emails allowing phone operating systems to identify the number as a recognized contact. The agent's contact information will display on the customer's caller ID, for example: "Maybe: Tom Jones."

Car Wars is constantly implementing new methods to ensure dealerships are able to seamlessly connect with their customers and reduce the likelihood of outbound calls being marked as spam.

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR HELP, CONTACT [CAR WARS SUPPORT](#).**

Visit [carwars.com/support](https://carwars.com/support) or call 214-446-7867

# THE PERFECT STEAK

BY STEPHANIE REYNOLDS

Anyone can grill a steak. The logistics are simple: a steak and a fire. However, achieving the perfect steak is something else entirely. A bragging right of its own and a feat not achieved by all. The same can be said about selling a car. Supposedly anyone can do it. However, the differentiator for a high-performing dealership and a perfect steak is not quite the same. According to Johnny Achi, the difference is in the details.

"80% of restaurants don't make it. The 20% who do survive, do very well." He continues, "Like a chef grilling the

TAKE IT FROM THE PROS



**JOHNNY ACHI**  
Vice President of Marketing

perfect steak, it's that little extra bit of attention to detail in the process that makes all the difference. It can make it or break it. Without metrics or having a way of measuring what you're doing wrong and how you can get better, you might as well shut down. You're not going to be profitable."

The 20% who beat the odds aren't just lucky. They all have a few similarities in common: high attention to detail, great management, and accountability at every level. The same can be said for high-performing dealerships — like Cavender Auto Group — who under

great management and sticking to the fundamentals are not only surviving, but thriving.

Johnny Achi understands measuring every aspect of the business is pivotal to having a fair shot in a competitive market. Without insight, you are operating blind to where the dealership is leaking revenue and accountability is non-existent. Within one year of being with the Cavender Automotive Group, Achi earned the trust of the group by implementing tools and metrics to track activity and foster a culture of accountability, resulting in a **200% increase in year-to-year performance**.

Although Vice President of Marketing is Johnny Achi's official title with Cavender Automotive, a 5-top group in San Antonio, his responsibilities extend far beyond marketing. A man of many hats, Achi is involved in every aspect of the operations — from personally interviewing, hiring, onboarding, and training every employee, to inventory management, website pricing, and team meetings.

**His most recent project:**  
**launching an in-house BDC to**  
**prioritize their service calls.**

Achi could rightfully be considered the group's Master General Manager, so it could be surprising to learn his start in automotive began in 2014 after 20 years in the engineering world. However, his engineering background provides a unique edge to his approach to managing a dealership. Specifically, his appreciation for technology and the rise of artificial intelligent (A.I.) tools to get a leg up on the competition.

## **WHAT YOU CANNOT MEASURE, YOU CANNOT IMPROVE.**

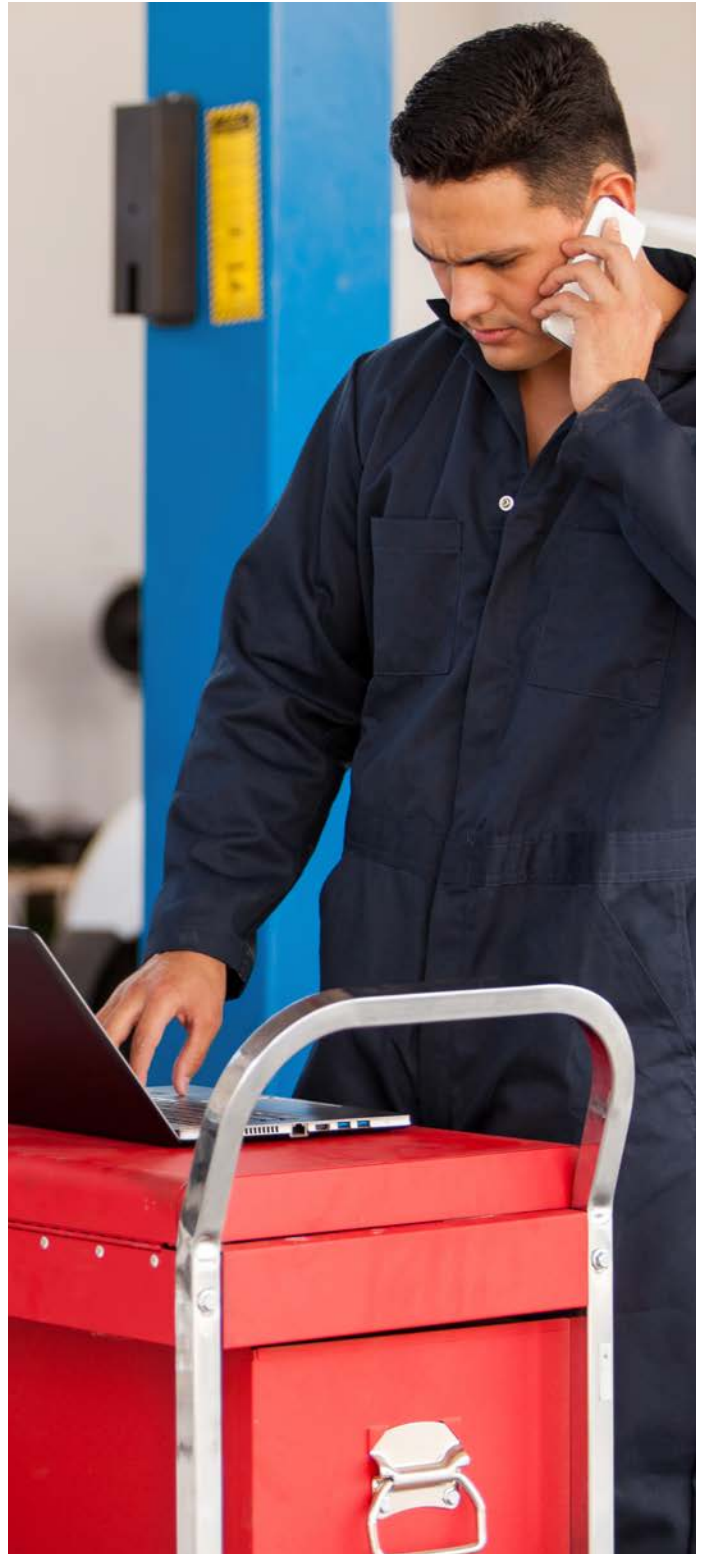
When Achi joined the Cavender group at the start of 2020, he prioritized implementing A.I. software in the dealership's processes to pinpoint exactly where they needed to improve on the phone. "If you're relying on an old-school way of doing business, you'll never grow. You've got to be ahead of the curve to prevent getting left behind," Achi warns.

Previously, the store had no way of monitoring what was happening on their phones in sales or service. Without insight, there was no accountability for how agents were handling customer calls or how third-party vendors were performing.

Once the tools were placed to measure phone activity, Achi was able to better evaluate the success of outside vendors. This is when the decision was made to move to an in-house solution to handle incoming service calls. An in-house BDC allows for complete control of how service calls are handled and, ultimately, better insight. As Achi emphasizes, ***what you cannot measure, you cannot improve.***

The service department represents a huge opportunity for more revenue, and investing in their BDC will deliver great ROI for Cavender Automotive. According to national averages, fixed operations have contributed to an increase of inbound prospect and appointment calls, and makes up about 75% of all prospect calls to dealerships today. However, 66% of service advisors fail to ask the customer for an appointment.\* Prioritizing their service calls with a dedicated BDC center, Cavender Automotive can dedicate the necessary training on phone skills and more successfully convert callers into appointments.

Their investment has proven successful thus far with a record day of booking over 450 service appointments.





An A.I. tool Achi's team leverages is [Voice Recognition](#) to automatically claim and assign agents' calls based on their unique voice melodies to track each individual agent's phone performance. Individual reporting gives insight for managers and agents to know exactly how the agent is doing at each pivotal metric of phone handling performance.



One metric Achi found of the utmost importance is the appointment request. Not inviting in a customer on a sales or service opportunity call is unforgivable. In fact, Achi declares it **criminal**, "If you're in the car business answering phones and an opportunity presents itself and isn't invited in, to me, you're in the wrong business and taking money away from


the store and other employees who could have handled that phone call."


Although not punishable by the law, not requesting the appointment or service inspection on a call is a crime in Achi's eyes and grounds to be taken off from handling new leads until additional training occurs. "There isn't equal opportunity. This isn't a democracy." Achi continues, "This is about a business we are all going to earn from. **We need to make sure the best of the best, our A-Team, is on the phone. It's the bread and butter, and accountability is one of the most important parts.**"


The group trains agents to handle a call "cradle to grave," meaning they must first





Fri, Apr 30 - 8:57 AM  *Criminal offense!* Williamstown Honda

 Service Opportunity, **Appointment Not Requested**  **Bryce Kent**  
51% Talk Time

 **214-555-0000** • Mike Williams [CUSTOMER INFO](#) [OPEN IN CRM](#)

 Website • 469-555-1000 • Ext 3

 <  A Human Reviewer reviewed the call as Appointment Not Requested. >

     
00:00 01:08

successfully connect the caller and then look for a revenue opportunity. A great phone handler will find an appointment opportunity on any call. If a customer is calling the dealership, he or she is in the market for a new vehicle or needing to schedule a service appointment. They just need to be invited in.

However, mistakes do happen and opportunities do slip through the

cracks. The dealership leverages [missed opportunity alerts](#) to ensure these opportunities do not get away. Often after receiving a text alert on his cell, Achi tracks down the agent in the store and asks why they didn't request the appointment — an effective tactic to remind the agent the importance of requesting the appointment. Awareness of calls being monitored has significantly improved the culture at the



dealership and improved their phone conversation.

Improvement wouldn't be possible without complete buy-in. Achi points out, any report or software is useless if only one person looks at it. Complete buy-in from the very top down to the agent who knows his or her calls are being monitored is necessary. To create accountability and responsibility at a store level, the managers of the five stores meet weekly to review their own store's Car Wars CRISP Report. Together, they review how every store is doing, **connecting** every caller, **requesting** the sales or service appointment on every call, **setting** a firm date and time, and how they're **pursuing** customers with outbound calls. Each manager presents their store's performance data and must come prepared to explain any deviation from the prior week.

Achi's introduction to the group and implementing call monitoring has produced tremendous results. **Collectively, the group had a 200% year-over-year increase in revenue with one store having a 300% improvement.**

Achi attributes tracking their calls to a vital part of their success. "All of our processes have come from identifying







the problems we can improve upon, and Car Wars plays a huge role in it,” Achi explains. “It took less than two months for everyone to be bought in. That’s when managers started believing in it and they started holding people accountable, and the process and performance improved.”

This is just the beginning. Achi undoubtedly projects 2021 is going to be an even bigger year for the group. Now that they’ve implemented the technology and tools for success, they’re digging in further into the data and driving change. Achi may be the “new kid” in automotive but he’s hitting it at a running pace.



Is your dealership or group achieving positive results with data already at your fingertips? Share your story with us at [content@carwars.com](mailto:content@carwars.com)!





# CONNECT MORE CALLERS, BOOK MORE APPOINTMENTS.

The experience provided on the phone dictates whether a customer chooses to service his or her vehicle with you or the dealership down the street. Improve your customer experience and connection by utilizing a Warm Transfer Process on service calls!

## Prioritizing your routing will result in...

- *More callers getting helped*
- *More scheduled appointments*
- *CSI score jump!*

## HOW TO WARM TRANSFER

1

### SET EXPECTATIONS

Tell the customer you will place him on a brief hold to ensure the advisor is available.

→ **Three Ring Rule:** *Don't keep the customer on hold too long. If no one answers the phone after three rings, take the customer off hold.*

2

### HOW CAN I HELP?

If the advisor is not available, ask the customer how you can assist.

3

### SEND TO A MANAGER

If you are unable to help the customer, offer to connect him or her to a manager.

4

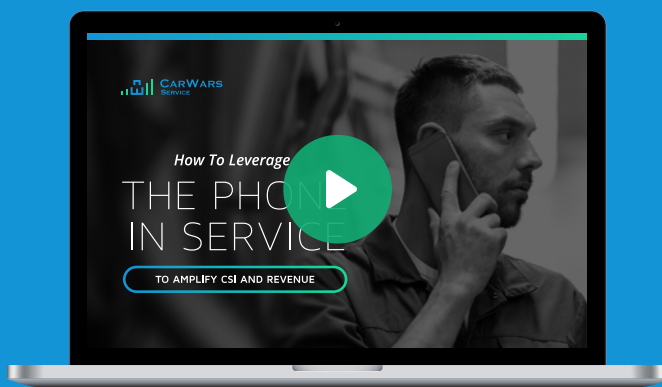
### TAKE A MESSAGE

If you are unable to connect with a manager, after three rings, take down the customer's name, number and the reason that they called.

5

### FOLLOW UP

Thank the caller and assure that he/she will be followed up with.



For additional phone handling best practices in your service department, watch the on-demand webinar, [How to Leverage the Phone in Service to Amplify CSI and Revenue.](#)

### WATCH NOW:

[carwars.com/home/a/service-webinar](http://carwars.com/home/a/service-webinar)