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# *the* CRISP Quarterly

AN OFFICIAL CAR WARS PUBLICATION | ISSUE 9



PHIL LONG FORD OF CHAPEL HILLS

BUCKET TEAM REALIZES

# *MORE WITH LESS*



TEXTING  
CHEATSHEET  
INSIDE!

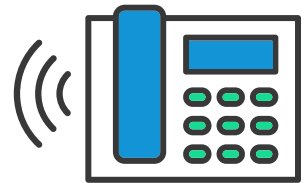
# WHAT IS CRISP?

& 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. **C**onnect more callers, **R**equest and **I**nvide more prospects into the dealership, **S**et more appointments, and **P**ursue more stranded leads. It's the most simple, yet effective technique dealers use to quickly see a boost in overall Sales and Service performance. That's why you'll read a lot about CRISP throughout this magazine. It's our meat and potatoes. The backbone of what we do. The reason we get up in the morning.

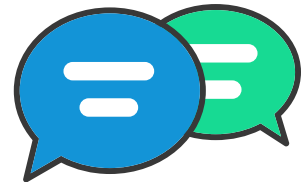
**You'll learn how our dealers are implementing the CRISP methodology at their dealerships to connect more with the customer — particularly by leveraging the phone — to see huge, tangible results.**

**Customized training and shifting towards a different perspective on how a customer is viewed have helped our featured dealer groups — Ford of Chapel Hills and Volkswagen of Downtown LA — succeed. 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



## SET

Set a firm appointment with a specific date and time



## PURSUE

Pursue new leads & rescue missed opportunities

PHIL LONG FORD

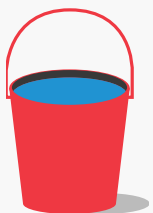
OF CHAPEL HILLS

BUCKET TEAM

# REALIZES MORE WITH LESS

The dealership's unique  
approach to lead management  
yields record-breaking  
successes.

BY STEPHANIE REYNOLDS



“**T**his isn’t an accident.”

Chris Detone, General Manager of Ford of Chapel Hills, reflects on his dealership’s record-breaking year despite a smaller Sales team: “It isn’t an accident. I know the market is good right now but we’re continuing to dig deeper in this time of success. We’re digging deeper now more than we’ve ever dug, and when this levels out and starts to normalize a little, **I know we’re going to continue to grow because we’re getting better.**”

Like most dealers nationwide, the pandemic forced the Colorado Springs-based dealership to shut its doors in April and significantly trim the dealership’s 31-person team to eight. Detone faced an ever-present challenge to do more with less. Without wasting time, he turned his attention to developing the lead management process and dug in. He developed a unique “Bucket Team” to enforce accountability on leads and instilled a “living in the day” mindset in the team. Despite a team one-third the size and amidst a shutdown, the dealership successfully outperformed April 2019 this last April.

## DEALER SPOTLIGHT



Detone, a firm believer in preparation, arrives at the dealership each day by 7:00 AM to set the day's agenda before a non-negotiable manager meeting at 8:30. A well-developed plan is necessary for success. When the dealership was forced to close its doors, he quickly redefined the traffic management process while raising performance standards for the team. Detone designated a "Bucket Team" consisting of five managers including himself, the E-Commerce Director, the Used Car Director, New Car Director, and Finance Director. *Their responsibility?* Ensure every lead is properly sourced, owned, and handled by an agent. Although time-intensive for the managers, Detone emphasizes the benefit, "We've got some 70 years of car experience collectively looking at these leads. The more we know, the more we can help sell that car."

He equates the phone ringing to someone walking into the dealership. When handled correctly, the lead is just as likely to convert. Prior to the shutdown, the Sales team would pull the lowest hanging fruit and selectively choose leads from CRM. Now, every salesperson operates as an "Internet guy" and handles inbound leads. Implementing round-robin routing ensures even distribution of leads among the team.

"This isn't the same store," Detone proudly declares. "Eighteen years of being here, the amount of eyes and accountability on every lead that comes into the dealership is 1000x more. Before, the sales team handled their own leads; if they developed something then they developed something. **Now there's a team who goes in and ensures they are.**"



With the Bucket Team, every lead gets nine touches by a manager beginning the day after the lead comes in. If a lead isn't touched or is mishandled by day two, an email is sent to the sales consultant and their manager with corrective action. Leveraging notes in their CRM, the managers quickly communicate next steps for the agents regarding a particular lead. This helps the agent's mindset of "living in the day" as Detone refers to it. When an agent starts each morning opening up his or her organizer, he or she has a clear plan of action to accomplish that day.

This expectation to stay on top of tasks isn't taken lightly. In fact, there's a weekly review to enforce it. Every Tuesday morning, each sales consultant's overdue tasks are reviewed by a manager. An agent with outstanding tasks of more than two days or poor performance is cut off from receiving

new leads in order to allow him or her to get caught up. This isn't treated as a punishment but as a proactive measure to prevent leads from slipping through the cracks.

Detone shares a recent example, "One of the guys was closing at 3%, so we pulled him out of the lead bucket. He spent the next three days back in the BDC learning the fundamentals and getting back to the basics. He was a glaring outlier with 30 leads for the month at 3% closing when the next lowest agent was at 11%. He's taking it not as a punishment but an opportunity to learn and get caught up. When he's caught up on his past overdue tasks, then he'll be turned back on and back in action."

When the dealership was able to re-expand the team later in the year, this BDC training model was utilized in the new onboarding process. "Do you trust



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)!

me?" Detone asks newly hired agents. "Do this and you'll be successful."

The first 60 days of onboarding are spent in the BDC learning how to respond to a lead, how to answer the phone, which email template to use, and the various tools at the store. Detone shares the success of the three newest agents who completed the bootcamp training, "They're some of the sharpest guys when it comes to answering a phone call, getting on the lead, responding properly, staying on top of tasks. They're in the top five in the store."

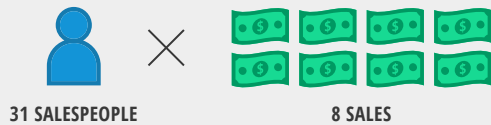
The new process has also positively impacted the store's culture. Adam Kaye, the E-Commerce Director, acknowledges the overall changed behavior is unrecognizable from a year ago.

Kaye identifies the changed behavior, **"They understood we couldn't do the same thing as before. There was a totally different expectation and they quickly conformed with what we were doing. We got a better grip on the store."** The agents operate on the offensive now. They're proactive and take initiative on pursuing leads, and the data reflects the positive change.

"I'm super proud," Detone announces.



## PRE-BUCKET TEAM PROCESS

**248 TOTAL SALES***On Average*

## POST-BUCKET TEAM PROCESS

**308 TOTAL SALES***On Average*

**"Pre-COVID, we were running 31 guys on the floor and averaging about 8 sales per sales consultant. Today, we have 28 salespeople on the floor and are averaging 11."**

Detone and his team have no plans to slow down. By getting granular and developing a culture of accountability, Ford of Chapel Hills is outperforming month after month. This "isn't an accident," but the result of a well-developed process, team buy-in, and a plan for success.

***"Pre-COVID, we were running 31 guys on the floor and averaging about 8 sales per sales consultant. Today, we have 28 salespeople on the floor and are averaging 11."***

**CHRIS DETONE**

*General Manager,  
Ford of Chapel Hills*

**WANT TO HEAR MORE OF THIS STORY?**

Detone shares more keys to his successes in this candid 30-minute Q&A webinar, [\*In the Showroom with Chris Detone.\*](#)

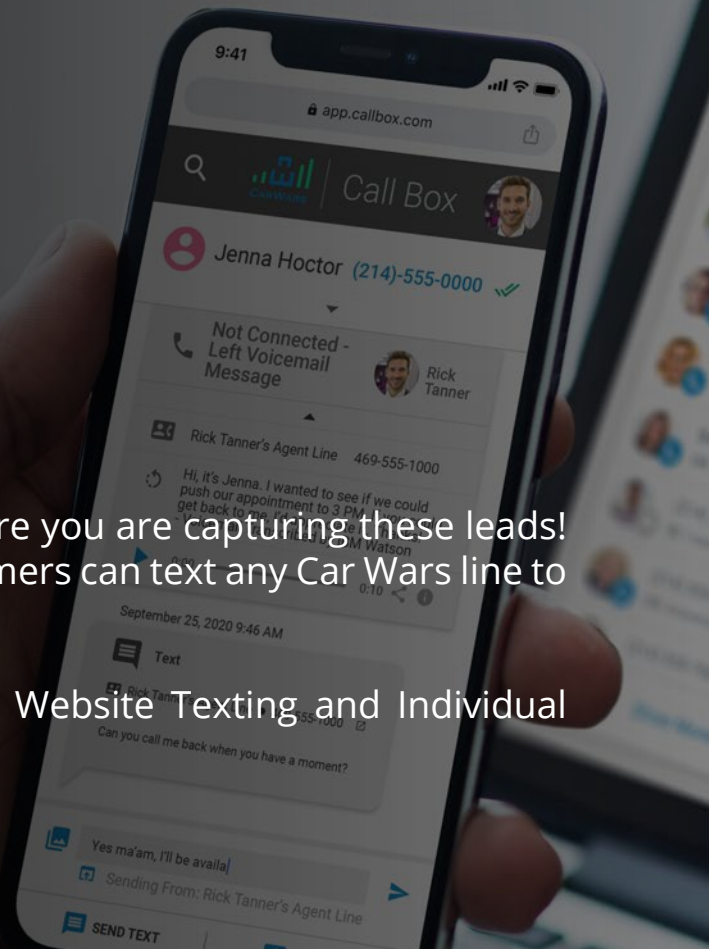


# TEXTING

Customers are texting your lines — make sure you are capturing these leads! With text-enabled Car Wars lines, your customers can text any Car Wars line to instantly connect with your dealership.

The Car Wars Texting add-on also includes Website Texting and Individual Agent Lines.

With the Car Wars Texting add-on:



Customers can text any Car Wars line to instantly connect with the dealership.



Text exchanges are shared to CRM once the text is answered or assigned to an agent.



Individual Agent Lines allow every sales-person to have their own lines to give customers that are tracked, recorded, textable, and ring directly to them.



Outbound click to calls made by agents with Agent Lines will automatically show the caller the right agent line in the outbound caller ID.



Website Texting ties texts on your dynamic website lines to the referring source and campaign that led to them. The Google Analytics integration pushes website texts into Google Analytics as events!

## GET SET UP NOW

Visit [carwars.com/home/solutions/texting](https://carwars.com/home/solutions/texting)

THE CAR WARS PLATFORM CAN SEND TEXTS TO OTHER MESSAGING PLATFORMS YOUR DEALERSHIP USES:

Gubagoo

CarNow

Podium





# TEXTING

## BEST PRACTICES CHECKLIST

Follow these best practices to properly implement and utilize texting at your dealership to connect and build better relationships with customers, streamline your workflow and lead management process, and capture revenue.

### 1

#### IMPLEMENT

☐

Strategically text-enable the right lines:

- OB Caller ID
- Website Number
- Google My Business
- Individual Agent Lines

☐

Don't allow agents to text customers from personal phones—this provides no insight into follow-up and risk agents walking away with your business!

☐

Get customer consent.

### 2

#### CONSOLIDATE & MANAGE

**Integrate and consolidate all customer interactions in a single platform for true insight and better lead management.**

☐

Ensure text exchanges are seamlessly shared to CRM once the text is answered or claimed.

☐

Assign messages to the right agents.

☐

Set up alerts for unclaimed messages to actively follow up with incoming leads.

☐

Hold agents accountable. When training, make sure the team understands unanswered messages impacts CSI!

3

**UTILIZE**

**Do text customers during all parts of their journey.**

☐

Types of Messages you should be sending:

- Appointment Confirmations
- Videos and pictures of interested vehicle (Sales) or problematic discoveries on vehicle inspections (Service)
- Status Updates
- Service & Satisfaction Surveys

4

**OPTIMIZE MANAGEMENT PROCESS & CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE**

**Consider Individual Agent Lines for better insight, easier management, and improved customer experience.**

☐

Set up every salesperson with an individual, text-enabled line to share with customers for direct communication.

To retain business and insight, these lines are tracked and recorded for true accountability and performance. Texts initiated on these lines are automatically assigned, and customers routed directly to the agent on returned outbound click to calls.

**GET SET UP TODAY!**

[carwars.com/home/solutions/individual-agent-lines](http://carwars.com/home/solutions/individual-agent-lines) | 833-339-0618

TAKE IT FROM THE PROS



# POLISHING THE STONE

General Manager of Lithia's Volkswagen of Downtown LA continuously polishes his processes to deliver exceptional customer service and acquire lifelong customers.

BY STEPHANIE REYNOLDS

When asked the first step for better outcomes on the phone, Neal Goldman advises, "You need to have processes to measure and verify what your staff is doing, and then you need to constantly polish the stone and continue to polish that stone to make it as smooth and perfect as you possibly can."

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Goldman is one of the few locals without an interest in the entertainment industry. However, like many other dealers, his introduction to automotive was accidental. Starting as a porter and eventually working his way up to General Manager, Goldman witnessed firsthand the evolution of the automotive industry. Now with more than thirty years of experience in the auto world, he shares his expertise with the Lithia Auto Group as General Manager of Volkswagen of Downtown LA.

Goldman recalls early lessons in his career: "As a service advisor, I learned firsthand on the front lines what customer service should be about and worked very hard to provide the highest level of service for my customers. It rewarded me and the dealerships handsomely because people would come back and often

***“When you deliver excellent service, it’s recognized and appreciated. If somebody decides to go somewhere else, they often see the difference between what you offer and what other people have to offer.”***

**NEAL GOLDMAN**

*General Manager,  
Volkswagen of Downtown LA*

they would wait.” Goldman elaborates, “When you deliver excellent service, it’s recognized and appreciated. If somebody decides to go somewhere else, they often see the difference between what you offer and what other people have to offer.”

Goldman moved his office from the back of the dealership to the front where he oversees all of the customer interactions on the lot, service drive, and showroom. When a problem

arises, he reacts quickly to solve it. He believes taking ownership of these opportunities is critical to the success of any kind of business and something a good leader needs to do.

In his current role as General Manager, Goldman prioritizes exceptional customer service and considers personal responsibility for phone performance to be a critical factor.

**“We may start off with an e-mail or chat — some people may be texting — but more often than not, the phone is involved in some aspect of the customer’s journey.”**

Goldman describes the phone as an extremely powerful instrument for creating lasting customer relationships. Similar to a musical instrument, how the notes are played differentiates a good musician from a great musician. On the phone, a customer relies on the agent’s tone, pitch, and volume as determining factors for why he or she should use your dealership. Employing intentional tactics and being consciously aware of tone, an agent can establish trust with the customer and reinforce why he or she should choose the dealership, which will ultimately lead to more successful outcomes.



When the dealership brought on several new salespeople, phone skills training was delegated between Goldman and the Sales Manager. However, carving out the time to provide thorough training was difficult. In August, Goldman further invested in customer service by bringing in professional Car Wars

trainers to develop agents' skill sets. The Car Wars CRISP Certification Program continuously provides customized, personal call coaching to advance each team member's professional growth.

Success is a team effort, and Goldman takes a top-down approach to his

## BECOME A DIRECTOR OF 1ST IMPRESSIONS

### OPTIMIZE INBOUND CALL ROUTING

Gain insight into phone handling performance and gaps in routing.

### REQUEST THE APPOINTMENT

Request the appointment on every opportunity call. <10% of callers will decline when offered an invitation.\*

### PUSH FOR FIRM APPOINTMENTS

Push for an appointment with a FIRM date and time and confirm prior to appointment. Firm appointments that have been confirmed by a manager ensure a 75% show rate.\*

*\*Based on Car Wars' findings*

### MAKE CUSTOMERS COMFORTABLE

Make customers feel comfortable prior to the visit. Help the caller visualize a stress-free and pleasant appointment by stating dealership location and parking, and what to expect upon arrival. Follow up with a text or email with the same information.

### BE PRESENT & PLEASANT

Ask discovery questions to uncover the customer's needs in order to provide the best recommendations for a vehicle.

### SMILE!

Smiling positively affects vocal tone to sound more friendly and inviting.

### PROVIDE ONGOING FEEDBACK

Review phone performance from the day prior and their progress toward meeting appointment goals.



*Photo:* Neal Goldman,  
General Manager,  
Volkswagen of Downtown LA

leadership style, **“Get out in front; lead by example. Exhibit all the tendencies you want people to embrace. That’s my style.”** For this reason, Goldman also participates in the CRISP training program. His involvement demonstrates to the team that everyone, including veteran salespeople, can learn something new and strengthen their phone handling skills.

Tracking performance is a critical step from a management standpoint to “inspect what you expect.” Goldman says call recordings are invaluable for training and enforcing a culture of phone accountability. Listening to calls allows agents to gain awareness of how they sound and make adjustments. *Does the agent sound friendly, knowledgeable, interested, and upbeat when he or she answers? Is he or she actively listening*

to the customer and asking the right questions to gather information to guide the customer to the best-suited vehicle?

Goldman shares a recent agent's success:

*"He has really caught fire. I listen to his calls and he comes across as somebody who's friendly, eager, and helpful. Consequently, his sales have increased dramatically."*

Car Wars' dedicated training team supports Goldman's commitment to outstanding customer service and equips his team with valuable skills to form long-term relationships with customers. Goldman concludes, **"Be excellent at what you do, always setting the standards and the bar high, leaving no doubt with customers as to why they should choose you rather than anybody else."** Consequently, success follows.



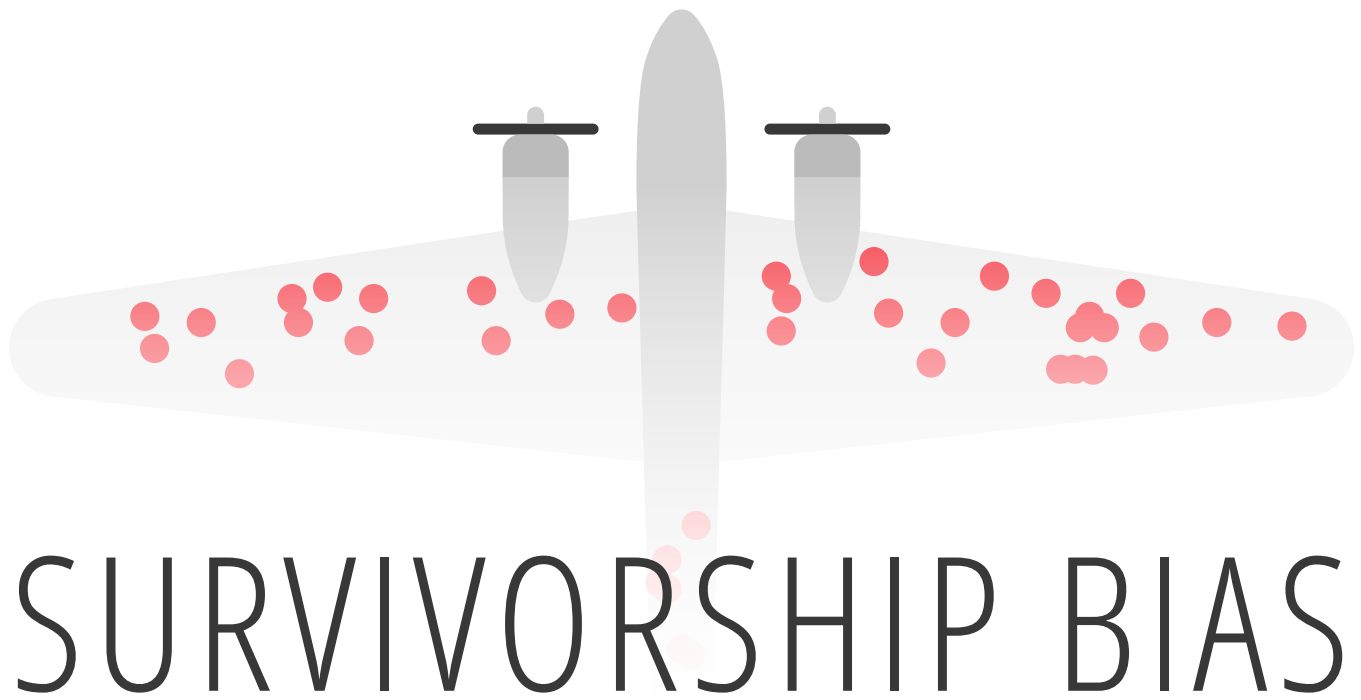
## GET CRISP CERTIFIED!

CRISP Certification is a sales training program that does the work for you, ensuring your team is great on the phone and getting the most out of Car Wars.

### TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CRISP CERTIFICATION PROGRAM:

Visit [carwars.com/home/solutions/crisp-certification](https://carwars.com/home/solutions/crisp-certification).

## BECOMING CRISP



# SURVIVORSHIP BIAS

BY MIKE HAEG

The United States had a challenge in the middle of World War II. Military aircrafts were encountering heavy enemy fire. These planes and pilots were critical for success, so any effort aimed at reducing the number of aircraft being shot down entirely was a worthy cause.

The solution to protect these planes wasn't so simple though. Beef up the planes with more armor and they slow down, making them easier targets. Trim the armor to ramp up speed, however, and the lightweight planes become too fragile.

The obvious approach was to meticulously study *returning* aircraft

and pinpoint where they were shot the most. The engine? Wings? Fuselage? Once you find out where surviving planes took the most fire, it makes sense to just add precious armor there, right?

Enter our hero: genius mathematician, Abraham Wald.





Wald disagreed by noting something obvious: they were studying the wrong planes. Surviving planes showed heavy damage in certain areas, but this merely indicated where aircraft could withstand heavy enemy fire. Why enforce the spots where planes can sustain the damage and survive? Instead, the armor was needed where surviving planes showed less damage. This is where planes were hit that didn't survive.

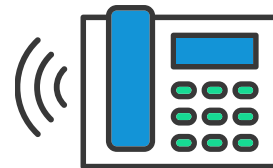
Now that you're an expert in *Survivorship Bias*, consider a typical dealership.

Phone calls are expensive and valuable. You want to convert more calls to appointments, but resources are finite. It seems logical to point your limited time toward reviewing and training on meaty sales calls between a shopper and a salesperson. These legitimate sales opportunities are the most important conversations, right?

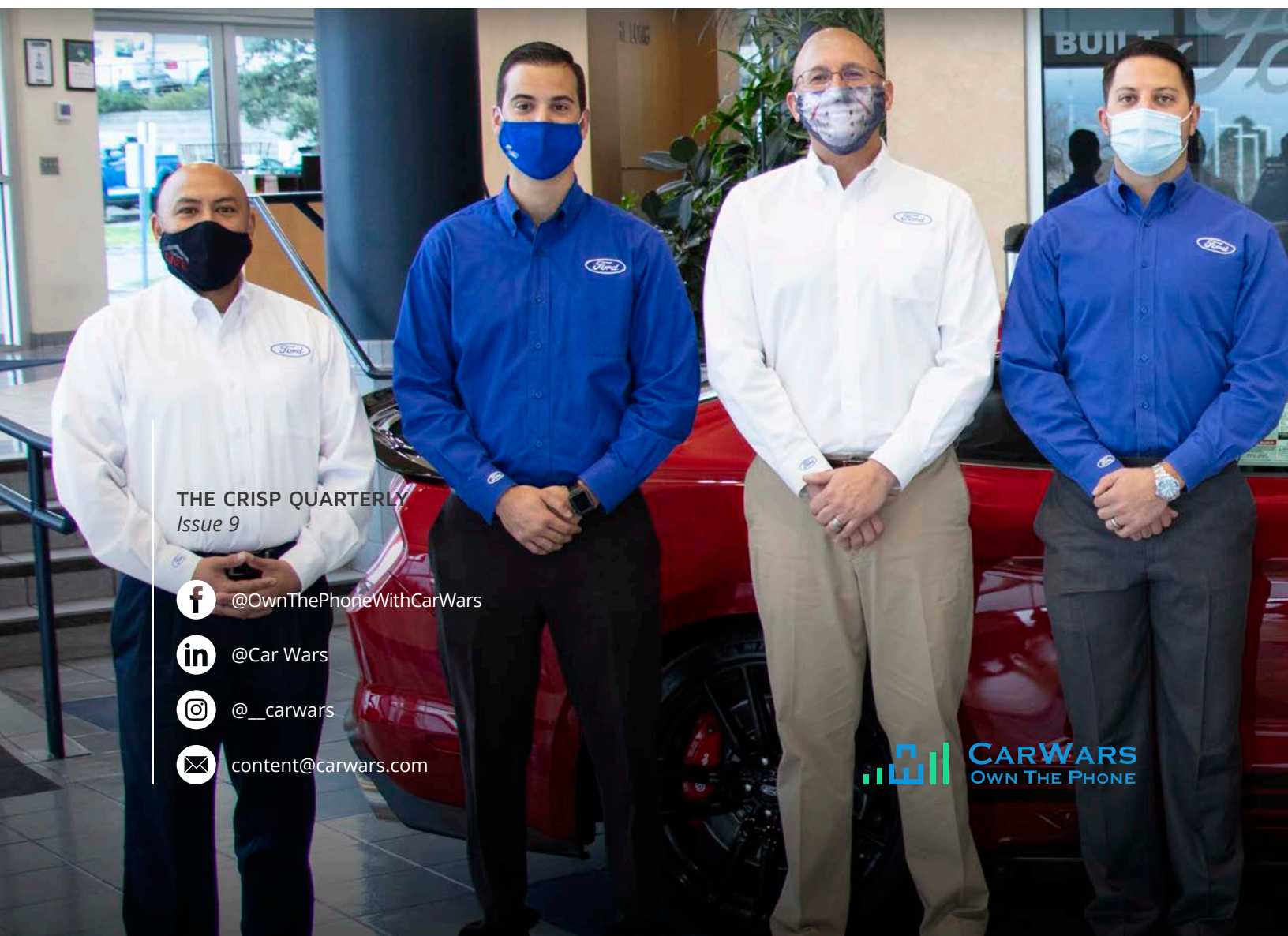
Yes . . . and no. Abraham Wald might offer a different perspective. By only reviewing the calls resulting in actual conversations with shoppers, we're

ignoring phone calls that don't even make it to a qualified salesperson in the first place. We're neglecting customers who go to voicemail, hang up on hold, or politely decline to leave a message. We're ignoring the planes shot down and studying only the planes returning home to survive.

The Car Wars Team geeks out over the C in CRISP — *Connect your callers to someone who can actually help*. A dealership-wide effort to reduce stranded callers will ultimately mean more sales opportunities and better customer experiences.



Try this: the next time you sit down to review appointment opportunity calls, take a few minutes to also review some calls that don't Connect with someone who can help. You might just learn how to help a few more planes make it home safely.



**THE CRISP QUARTERLY**  
*Issue 9*



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