



## THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO MAKING SUCCESSFUL OUTBOUND CALLS

Your dealership is constantly making sure each inbound call gets connected and each customer call is properly handled. Though you're Owning the Phone, you might be missing one key piece: outbound calling.

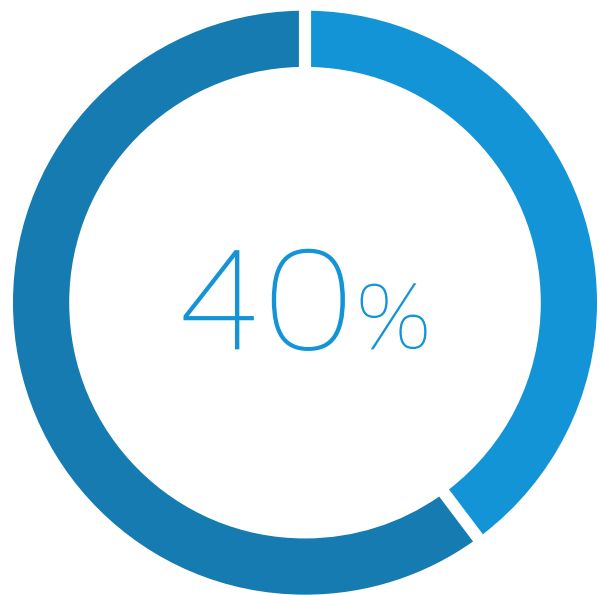
Most dealerships neglect outbound phone calls simply because they're so focused and honed in on handling inbound calls well. However, the most successful businesses aren't doing one or the other - they're concentrating on both. They're pursuing them constantly, and why? Because reaching out to customers is important and incredibly beneficial to a dealership.

Setting aside a little extra time for calling customers back goes a long way. Think about a time you called a dealership and at the end of your conversation, they promised to follow up with you. Chances are, they didn't reach back out. But think about a time when a dealership did call you back. You not only were happy that the employee kept his or her word, but you probably thought more highly of the dealership. The next time you need a car or service appointment, you'll turn to the dealership that called you back.



This holds true for the majority of customers. In fact, **4 in 10 Americans say they're willing to spend more with companies they believe provide excellent customer service.**<sup>1</sup>

If following up with customers is so valuable, why aren't more dealerships catching on? For most, it stems from fear. Picking up the phone to call someone is scary! There's a lot of vulnerability when you're speaking with someone on the phone. You can't edit what you're saying like you can in an email. But like anything worthwhile, it takes time and effort. The more customers you and your employees follow up with, the better those outbound conversations will be.



<sup>1</sup>American Express Survey

To help get you started on the right foot, we've come up with an easy-to-follow guide to help you make the most successful outbound calls.



## PRACTICE YOUR INTRODUCTION

Before you even get on the phone with a prospect, make sure you have an idea of what you're going to say. There's a lot of anxiety involved in making phone calls. Knowing what you're going to say will not only put you at ease, but also help the conversation start out smoothly. Have a couple options and practice both until you feel confident and comfortable.

*"Hi [customer's name], my name is Joe Smith. I'm calling from ABC Dealership and I saw we missed your call yesterday. I'm so sorry we weren't able to get to the phone. Is there any way we can still help you with X, Y and Z?"*

*"Hi [customer's name], my name is Joe Smith calling from ABC Dealership. I saw we missed your call yesterday, and I'm so sorry about that. We would love to help you with X, Y and Z if that's possible."*



## HAVE THE CUSTOMER'S INFORMATION IN FRONT OF YOU

This might seem like a no brainer, but you'd be surprised at how often this crucial step is forgotten. Did the prospect leave a voicemail and you're following up? Great! Make sure you have notes on what was said on that voicemail so you can reference it when he or she picks up. If the person is in your dealerships' database or CRM, make sure you have their customer profile pulled up. It's a simple step, but when you address a customer by name, it adds a personal touch that helps set your dealership apart.



## TIMING IS EVERYTHING

If a prospect called and was promised a follow up, or the call was missed completely, take note of what time he or she initially called. Chances are they called you at a time that best fits his or her schedule. This information gives you an idea of when they're available and most likely to pick up. Plus, knowing what time they called will save you from having to make numerous calls.



## "SMILE WHEN YOU DIAL"

This is one of the cheesiest lines related to making phone calls. You've heard it before and probably rolled your eyes. However cheesy it may be, there's a lot of truth to this saying. When you smile, it conveys happiness, and **there's psychological proof that when you smile while talking to someone, you can actually lift the person's mood you're talking to.**<sup>2</sup>

"What if I'm not in a good mood?" you ask. Fake it. Even if you aren't having the best day, put a smile on your face while talking to customers. Doing so can trick your brain into thinking you're happy. A study done by Psychological Science found that **people smiling had reduced stress levels while partaking in stressful activities, regardless if the smile was forced or genuine.**<sup>3</sup> So smiling will not only elevate your mood, but the conversation will overall be better because all parties are happy.



## ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

The whole point of reaching out to a prospect is to either help them with something you're already aware of, or to find out what they need help with. Asking the right questions

<sup>2</sup>Psychology Today

<sup>3</sup>The Atlantic

will help you figure it out in an efficient manner. If you're following up with someone who left a voicemail or who you've previously spoken to, you can start out by confirming what you may already know.

*"You were interested in learning more about getting your car serviced, correct?"*

*"You mentioned in your voicemail you would like to see what times we have available for an appointment. Is this still something you're interested in?"*

Asking these questions will show the customer you were paying attention to what he or she said and that you're truly interested in helping them.

What if you're talking to a prospect who isn't sure what they want? This is going to be a good opportunity to ask "this or that" questions. These types of questions will help you narrow down what he or she is interested in and give you better insight on how to help.



### END THE CALL ON A GOOD NOTE

No matter how the phone call went, always end on a positive note. After all, **70% of buying experiences are based on how the customer feels they are being treated.**<sup>4</sup>

Some people like to end the conversation by recapping what was said during the call. This ensures each concern was addressed and vetted. If it wasn't, this gives you the perfect opportunity to do so before hanging up.

*"To recap, you'd like to come in see the new Toyota Camry? Is this correct?"*

Once the information is confirmed, move on to tie up all loose ends.

*"Is there anything else I can help you with before*

<sup>4</sup>McKinsey



*we get off the phone?"*

Make sure to leave the customer with your name and a way to contact you in case any additional questions arise.

*"Sally Sue, I'd like to give you my email address and direct line in case you have any questions that may come up in the future."*

Finally, don't forget to thank the customer for calling, or for his or her business. Although it may seem like a silly thing to be reminded of, a sincere thank you goes a long way.

*"Thank you so much for calling, we appreciate your business!"*