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DEALER NEWS

Pied Piper Ranks Dealer Service Telephone Effectiveness

By Staff Writer ⓘ September 10, 2024

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Al Serra Buick GMC located in the Al Serra Auto Plaza, Grand Blanc, Michigan.

Serra Automotive was ranked first out of 20 auto dealer groups in Pied Piper's 2024 PSI Service Telephone Effectiveness (STE) Study, which measured the efficiency and quality of service telephone calls from a customer's objective of quickly and easily setting up a service appointment. Following Serra Automotive in the rankings were Napleton Automotive Group, Berkshire Hathaway Automotive and Group 1 Automotive.

"Successful service departments value customer loyalty, and a customer's attempt to schedule service is the first interaction that fosters this loyalty," said Fran O'Hagan, Pied Piper CEO. "Customers who encounter challenges when scheduling service may choose to go to a different dealership or independent repair shop, or they may decide to replace their vehicle as well as their dealership."

The 2024 Pied Piper PSI-STE Auto Dealer Group Study (U.S.A.) was conducted between January 2024 and July 2024 by phoning the service departments at every dealership location owned by each of the twenty dealer groups studied. STE scores range from 0 to 100 and are calculated from a mix of individually weighted measurements that



support the customer’s mission of quickly speaking with a service representative who can schedule a service appointment within a reasonable amount of time. Sixty-two percent of the total score is determined by efficiency measurements, while 38 percent of the total score is determined by quality measurements, where dealerships provide a proactively helpful experience that goes above and beyond the customer’s basic expectations.

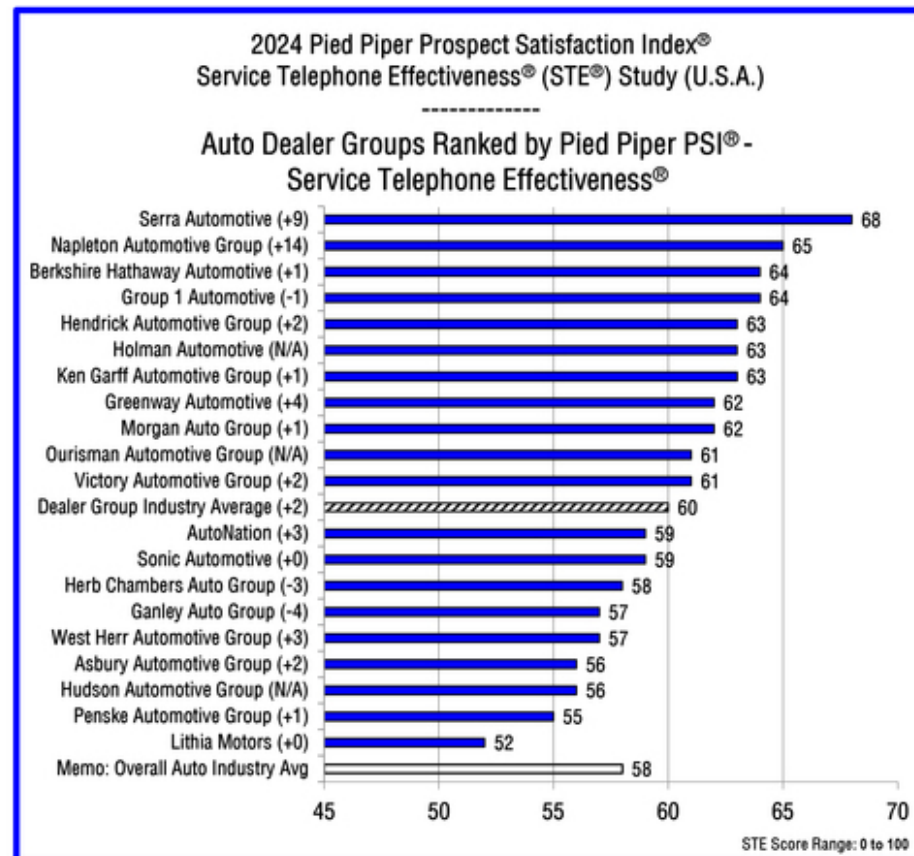


Joe Serra and son Matt.

The 2024 dealer group industry average STE score was 60, an increase of two points from last year. The average time for service customers to reach a service advisor dropped from 82 seconds in 2023 to 57 seconds in 2024, and service appointments averaged 4 days out, one day sooner on average than last year.

Not all measurements improved. “Mission Failure,” where a service customer hung up the phone having failed to schedule an appointment (for reasons such as no response, endless hold, lost in phone tree, no availability, etc.), increased from 11 percent of the time to 13 percent of the time.

Serra Automotive scored the highest out of all dealer groups included in the study, with a score of 68, up nine points vs last year. Serra had the second highest rate of “Mission Acceptable” service calls (reached a service advisor within one minute and scheduled an appointment less than one week



Source: 2024 Pied Piper Auto Dealer Group Industry Service Telephone Effectiveness Study (USA)

out), 76 percent of the time on average, compared to the industry average of 53 percent of the time. At the same time, Serra had the lowest rate of “Mission Failure” calls, occurring less than one percent of the time, while the industry averaged 13 percent of the time.

Serra also had the lowest average number of seconds to reach a service advisor at 31 seconds, versus the industry’s overall average time of 57 seconds. The overall industry had customers placed on hold over two minutes at a rate of 13 percent of the time while at the same time no Serra Automotive callers were placed on hold over two minutes. Lastly, Serra automotive dealerships averaged three days out for a service appointment, less than the industry average rate of four days out.



Napleton Lincoln in Glenview, IL.

The dealer group with the greatest improvement was Napleton Automotive Group, which achieved a 14-point increase in average STE score compared to last year, and achieved a study ranking of second, compared to finishing last in the 2023 rankings.

Compared to the overall auto industry, the large dealer groups measured in the study performed two points better, with an average score of 60 vs the 2024 overall auto industry average score of 58. Thirteen of the 20 dealer groups scored above the 2024 overall auto industry average score, while only five of the 33 automotive brands scored higher than the 2024 dealer group industry score.