

SESSION OBJECTIVE

Using the best practices discussed in this session, increase profitability from fixed operations and create a customer-first culture.

APPROACH

Driving Profits by Building the Customer Experience: Facilitated by AskPatty.com founder Jody DeVere, three expert panelists' shared specific best practices they've personally implemented to achieve success. Follow these specific techniques to turn your service lane into a profit engine:

1. Eliminate distractions for service advisors:

- Practice: Invest in additional service lane personnel, route incoming requests for service to a third party call center, and allow for online appointment scheduling. This eliminates service distractions and improves the customer experience.
- Laurie Gill, Fixed Operations Manager, Dave Gill Chevrolet, Columbus, Ohio
- “Without their phones ringing nonstop and scheduling service appointments, advisors can focus their attention 100 percent on the customers standing directly in front of them. We've also added porters, greeters, a lane manager and additional service advisors to service customers face-to-face. It was a large investment, however, our August YTD customer pay labor sales are up 70 percent. The new process allows us to concentrate on customer needs and present our full line of services. Advisors now maximize each touch point, driving sales and CSI scores in a positive direction.” (Read more about Gill's transformed service lane process in the next WRN LINK at: www.gmwomensretailnetwork.com)

2. Create a meaningful transition from sales to service:

- Practice: Develop a repeatable process to introduce new customers to the service department.
- Rhenea Culp, Customer Retention Manager, GM-North Central Region
- “The initial introduction to the service department sets the tone and often determines a customer's likelihood to return for service. Establishing a best practice for this transition is a dealership must.”

3. Demonstrate customer commitment through accessibility, visibility and working with character:

- Practice: Set the standard for excellence in your dealership by doing business with character, being present and being hands-on.
- Marianne Ballas, Dealer, Ballas Buick GMC, Toledo, Ohio, Women's Dealer Advisor Council North Central Region
- “Through my actions I help build confidence and trust, two critical components of the customer experience. I can't expect a customer to want to do business with my dealership if they don't know me or my principles. My involvement tells a customer they are important and sets an example for every employee in the shop.”

THREE REMINDERS

1. Tuning up your service department is the surest way to power retention and revenue.
2. Increasing service satisfaction among women yields exponential benefits as women became the primary consumers of auto sales and service.
3. Focusing on customers—in the service department, during the sales to service transition and at every level of management—demonstrates a customer's importance to the business. Prioritize the customer in everything you do to personalize the experience. Deeds, not words, make the difference.