

EXCLUSIVE: CDG DEALER OUTLOOK SURVEY (AI EDITION) RESULTS ARE HERE

 Anna del Villar & Car Dealership Guy

Raw dealer insights, straight from source...

THE BREAKDOWN
Jun 25, 2025

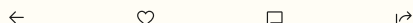


THE BREAKDOWN

Presented by:

mia

Hey everyone. Each week, we deliver 2 concise, must-read recaps of the **Car Dealership Guy Podcast**—packed with the top 10 lessons learned from each episode.



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TODAY'S BIG STORY

Forget the headlines about robots selling cars or voice assistants running the store. What's actually happening inside dealerships when it comes to using artificial intelligence (AI) is far more nuanced and far more telling.

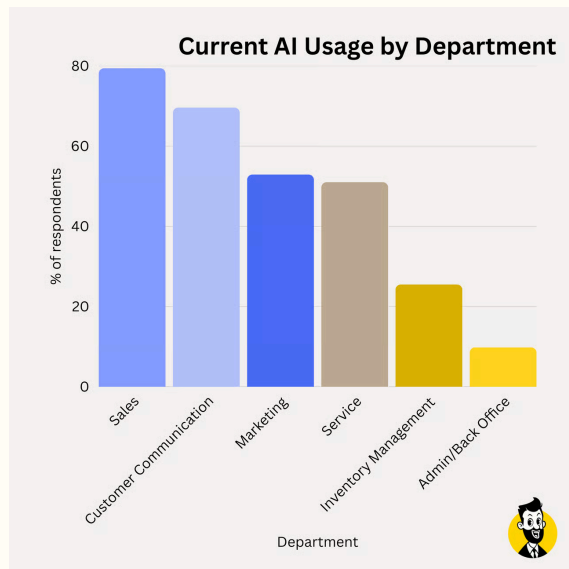
And after digging into the results of our recent Dealer Outlook Survey, there are three insights that hint at how this next wave of dealership innovation will unfold...

INSIGHT #1

Service AI adoption is lower than expected despite signs it's driving real efficiency.

One stat from this survey jumped out and surprised me. **Just 51% of dealers are using AI in their service departments**, even though it ranks as the second-most impactful tool for operational efficiency.

But in sales, AI adoption is up to 79%, driven by mature tools like lead scoring and email automation.



CDG Dealer Outlook Survey: AI Edition

And it likely boils down to how easily sales-driven AI tools connect with CRM workflows and support processes dealers already understand.

However, service is a different story.

Voice-powered scheduling, repair prediction, and automated service updates rely on newer tech and deeper integrations. They're harder to implement, and they're **still clunky in many stores**. But for the ones who've figured it out, the upside is real.

20.6% of dealers say service tools were their most impactful AI investment, right behind sales automation. That tracks with what early adopters are telling us: service AI tightens up operations, reduces advisor workload, frees up tech hours, and improves customer communication.

This made me think of something **Kerri Wise, CMO of Lotlinx** said on a recent episode of *Daily Dealer Live*: "Earlier

the bruises to show for it because they're the first to come to market and try new things, but they are absolutely ahead of the curve because they start to learn and refine in terms of process and strategy."

The lesson: Service AI delivers when it's implemented right. The tech isn't perfect yet, but dealers who start now will be operating on a different level by the time everyone else catches up.

A quick word from our partner:

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INSIGHT #2

Dealers are sticking with AI tools even when the payoff isn't showing up yet.

One of the strongest signals from the survey is just how few dealers are pulling the plug on AI tools. A staggering **66.7%** haven't dropped a single tool in the past 12 months.

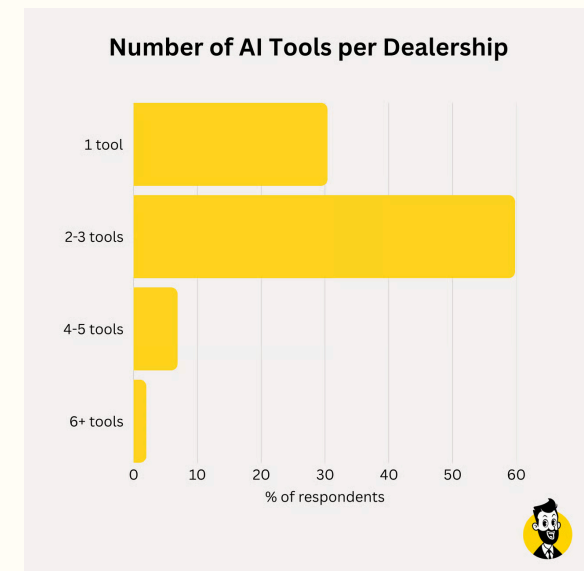
That's not typical for a new tech category.

And here's where it gets more interesting: nearly one-third of dealers (**31.4%**) say they haven't seen any measurable impact yet.

But instead of bailing, they're staying the course.

This tells us a lot. Dealers are treating AI like a long-term bet, not a short-term performance play. The low defection rate shows they're operating on conviction and patience—knowing implementation takes time.

They're also not rushing in. **Most dealers are rolling out 1–3 tools**, and experimenting as they go.



CDG Dealer Outlook Survey: AI Edition

Brian Benstock of Paragon Honda captures the mindset: "Start small, integrate it slowly within your team, get your team used to working with it, and then expand into areas."

building muscle.

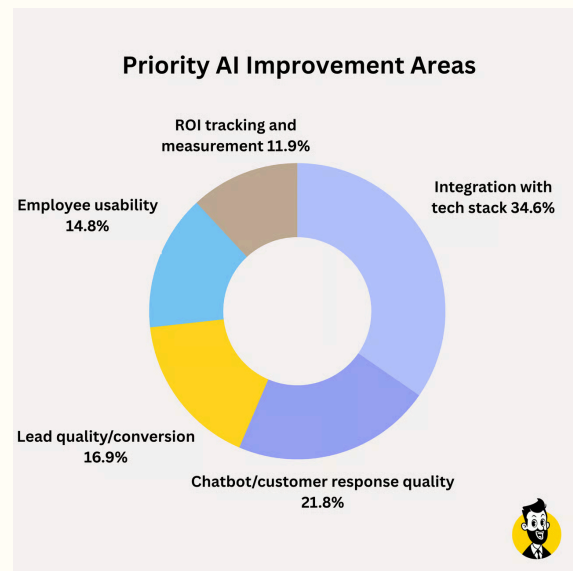
INSIGHT #3

Integration, not interest, is what's slowing everything down.

Ask dealers what's holding back their AI rollout, and the answer isn't budget, culture, or even ROI. It's infrastructure.

36.3% cite "data integration or tech stack issues" as the top barrier to expanding AI. That's more than any other obstacle by a wide margin.

It's the same story when you ask what they most want to improve: **"Integration with DMS or CRM" tops the list at 34.6%**, nearly double the next category.



That's how AI is slowing down AI adoption.

The lesson: Dealers are ready to go deeper with AI if the tools can meet them halfway without duct-taping multiple systems together.

Bottom line: The window to experiment with AI is still open.

Dealers who successfully implement well-integrated AI tools now will have a real edge (operationally and strategically) over those waiting around for perfect solutions. And the ones who figure out how to integrate, iterate, and scale AI within their workflows won't just be ahead—they'll be the ones setting the curve.

Where is AI actually making a difference in your world (at the dealership or beyond)? Hit Reply and let me know.

Missed yesterday's episode of Daily Dealer Live?



Shahani on Nissan Strategy, White Plains on Honda Sales, Ozark Chevy on EVs

Presented by: [TransUnion](#)

Today's featured guests:

Vinay Shahani, Senior vice president, U.S. Marketing and Sales at Nissan USA

Jason Graciano, General Manager at White Plains Honda

Nate Brandt, General Manager at Ozark Chevrolet

[Catch up here](#)

This week on the



Cracking the code on scalable customer care in the car business

Shout out to [Mia](#) for making this episode possible!

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Behind the curtain—winning strategies from 29 dealerships (and the mistakes to avoid)

Shout out to [Impel](#), [OPENLANE](#), and [Nomad Content Studio](#) for making this episode possible!

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AUTOMOTIVE JOBS

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- **Ron Marhofer Auto Family:** [Chevrolet General Manager](#) (Ohio)
- **Sterling Heights DCJR:** [Controller / Office Manager](#) (Michigan)
- **Sid Dillon:** [Fleet Sales Representative](#) (Nebraska)

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[👍👍👍 It was just ok, but nothing special](#)

[👎 Waste of time, you can do better](#)

Thanks for reading, everyone.

— CDG

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