

Case Study

Automotive



Customer

The largest auto sales complex in a Midwestern state

Challenge

Engaging and nurturing an increasing volume of Internet leads

Conversica Solution

Sales conversion management featuring ongoing lead engagement and real-time lead nurturing

Conversica Alias

Kathy, Customer Service Representative

Conversica Assists

- US\$130 million in assisted gross revenue
- 5,328 total assisted sales
- 47,808 total leads worked
- 50 percent engagement rate

Auto dealership doubles monthly sales from Internet leads with Conversica

This large dealership group in the Midwest has grown from a small Chevrolet dealership to become the largest auto sales complex in its state. Encompassing several rooftops, the auto sales complex is a premier destination for purchasing Buick, Cadillac, Chevrolet, Chrysler, Dodge, GMC, Honda, Jeep, Kia, Ram, Subaru and Volkswagen brands. It is part of one of the top 10 privately-held retail automotive groups in the nation. This auto group operates in seven states and employs more than 1,400 people. The network includes more than 30 dealerships and represents more than 40 automotive franchises.

By focusing on serving the complete automotive needs of its customers, this auto sales complex has earned a reputation for excellent customer service. However, the management team knew that it could always do better, especially in meeting the challenge of engaging and nurturing a new generation of sales prospects using the Internet channel. The dealership's website was generating around 1,000 Internet leads per month, which was far more than its multiple sales teams could handle effectively while still taking care of phone-in and walk-in customers. There was the perception among the sales team that Internet leads were not as qualified as customers walking the forecourt, so many of the Internet leads fell through the cracks.

"I knew we had to do something to help our sales people give Internet leads the attention they needed and give them a better way to manage those leads," says the manager of Internet operations and sales. "I saw a demo of Conversica at the Digital Dealer convention and knew that this was exactly what we needed to automate responses to Internet leads. And I would no longer need to hire additional staff to do this."

The Conversica solution

Conversica was integrated with the dealership's existing Reynolds and Reynolds customer relationship management (CRM) system. Management decided to call Conversica's virtual persona Customer Service Representative, Kathy. Salespeople who consistently close more

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Manager of Internet operations and sales



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than 12 percent will mention Kathy in their emails to customers to let them know that 'she' will be following up with them.

"It took a little adjustment, but now our sales teams are serious about embracing Kathy as a 'real' personal assistant," says the manager of Internet operations and sales.

"If I hear someone say that Kathy is not a real person, I remind them that Kathy is real enough to work 24/7 to follow up on potentially hot Internet leads they would otherwise miss out on. So they must include Kathy in their lead management process."

The Conversica sales conversion management platform assists the auto sales teams 24/7 to:

- Create automated, two-way email-based communication with prospects using a human persona
- Determine the prospect's intent in real-time by interpreting text in the email response
- Alert the salesperson to contact qualified leads who indicate intention to buy now
- Follow up after the salesperson's initial contact

While the manager of Internet operations and sales can look into the Reynolds and Reynolds CRM system's activity tab to see the cadence of the emails, the sales teams never need to access Conversica's dashboard or learn a new password. "Conversica is integrated so that I am the only one who ever needs to go into Conversica's dashboard," he says. "The sales people can stay comfortable and consistent with the familiar CRM they have always used, but still get the advantage of Conversica's assistance."

On the management side, the manager of Internet operations and sales uses the dashboard feature in Conversica to gather analytics that help him make better decisions on how to effectively manage the dealership's five distinct brand managers and sales teams.

"I use our CRM to track my closing ratios and my sales, and use Conversica to identify if the prospect's needs are being met," he says. "This data helps me decide how to assign leads, and gives me an overview of how the different management teams are doing across all of our rooftops. Conversica's dashboard analytics are key for me in working more effectively with our brand managers and sales people alike."

Conversica assists

Since implementing Conversica to help sales better manage leads in the virtual showroom, the auto sales complex has increased its sales closing rate for Internet leads from 6 percent to 12 percent – a 50 percent engagement rate. This improvement has come even as the volume of Internet leads has increased over time from 1,000 to nearly 2,500 per month.



"Since we started using Conversica, our sales team has nearly doubled our monthly sales from Internet leads," he says.

"Conversica was able to open our eyes to what we needed to do and our brand managers and their teams are taking

full advantage of what Conversica can do for them. That's been the right combination for success."

In addition, Conversica has helped the dealership's sales team recognize the value of Internet leads and give them the same level of customer attention as they give to walk-in customers. Even in their roles as Internet salespeople, the sales teams are still out on the floor spending time with walk-in customers. However, when a Conversica alert comes in, they can graciously excuse themselves to follow up with the Internet customer who has shown intent to buy now. The dealership's philosophy is to treat the leads that Conversica has nurtured no differently than walk-in customers.

"We are known for excellence in customer service and Conversica has helped us take it to the next level," says the manager of Internet operations and sales. "Our sales teams love Conversica because it helps them manage their time more effectively and close more Internet leads."

On the business side, Conversica does the work of at least three people, so I don't need to hire additional staff to engage and nurture Internet leads," he continues. "Most of all, our dealership is able to generate significant revenue through Internet leads since each one can be contacted, engaged, and nurtured without taxing the resources of our sales teams."

For more information

See for yourself how Conversica is revolutionizing sales conversion management. To learn more call +1 (888) 778 1004, email sales@conversica.com or visit www.conversica.com to set up a product demonstration.

About Conversica

Conversica is the only provider of sales conversion management software for marketing, inside sales and sales organizations. Presented as a customized online persona, Conversica engages and nurtures leads through natural email exchanges until the lead converts into an opportunity or opts out. Conversica is used by more than 7,500 sales representatives worldwide and has assisted in the creation of more than US\$7.6 billion in sales revenue.

Founded in 2007, Conversica is now a portfolio company of Kennet Partners and is headquartered in Foster City, California. To learn more, visit www.conversica.com and follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Google+](#), [YouTube](#), and @myconversica on [Twitter](#).