

Case Study

Automotive

Allen Samuels
CHEVROLET BUICK GMC



Customer

Allen Samuels Chevrolet Buick GMC is the only new car franchise in Robertson County, Texas

Challenge

Manage continuous follow-up with customers for service appointments

Conversica Solution

Automotive Service Assistant

Conversica Virtual Persona

Emma

Conversica Assists

- Engaged website service leads in real time
- Encouraged new car buyers to make their first service appointment
- Re-engaged lapsed service customers from acquired dealership
- Assessed customer satisfaction and identified areas for improvement after service appointments

Allen Samuels Chevrolet Buick GMC Enhances Customer Satisfaction Through AI-Based Automotive Service Assistant from Conversica

Allen Samuels Chevrolet Buick GMC, formerly Derek Scott Auto Park, is a full-service dealership located in Hearne, Texas. Allen Samuels' goal is to exceed customers' expectations from test drive to delivery and beyond. They offer both new and used cars, trucks, and SUVs as well as financing, service, and parts.

The company prides itself on creating lifelong relationships with its customers and their families. "Our one-on-one follow-up will take you not just through the sale, but through the entire ownership of the vehicle," says Tracey Hudson, Business Development Center (BDC) Manager at Allen Samuels Chevrolet Buick GMC. "We want to sell and service cars and hold your hand all the way through the process to the next one, and do the same for your children and theirs."

So when the company acquired Derek Scott Auto Park and inherited its customer base in 2016, they wanted to ensure that new customers were satisfied. But with the increase in sales and service volume at the new store, it became increasingly difficult to keep up with customer communications. Prior to Conversica, Hudson "smiled and dialed," emailed, and sent letters, but eventually found it difficult to ensure that each customer customers received attention they deserved.

"80% of the time you're knocking it out of the park, but for the other 20% of the time, you're busy doing other things," Hudson notes about their service communication. "New business is important but retention is huge, because the best advertising is word of mouth. So, if I can make one person happy, what are they going to do? They are going to tell 10 people that Allen Samuels came and picked up their car an hour and a half away."

"Customers will call the store and ask for Emma (Allen Samuels' Conversica AI assistant); that's how real she seems. I'm telling you she's my least expensive and best employee. I never see her but she's very efficient, sending out dozens of emails every day and responding to their answers."

Tracey Hudson
BDC Manager, Allen Samuels Chevrolet Buick GMC

Given the importance of customer satisfaction to the business, Allen Samuels turned to Conversica to extend the productivity of its service team. Their Conversica® automotive service assistant, whom they named Emma, is an AI-based solution for automotive dealerships and their service departments. Emma engages potential service customers in natural, two-way email conversations to get them into the service drive. This automated, yet human-like, engagement with service customers frees up the human service advisors to focus on the day's appointments and ensuring long-lasting relationships between the dealership and their customers.

Customer service that never sleeps

Industry statistics reveal that, with a 72% gross revenue margin, the service center is the most profitable department in a dealership and serves as the focal point for creating lifelong relationships with customers. Moreover, on average 82% of car buyers who service with a dealership will buy their next car from that dealership and consequently, over a lifetime, be worth more than \$500,000 in revenue from car purchases, servicing, and parts. Therefore keeping a customer engaged with the dealership at every stage of ownership is vital to future revenue.

"Unfortunately, as a customer, service is not somewhere you want to be; it's somewhere you have to be, because otherwise you don't have a car," says Hudson. "And it doesn't matter how much you paid for that car – at some point you still have to go to go to the service department.

That's why the service department is ultimately the main focus of the dealership – it's where the money is made."

Keeping this in mind, it's important that vital details about customers don't get mismanaged due to lack of resources. With artificial intelligence for auto service, Conversica delivers valuable information about potential service customers to the service department. When more information can be gained from AI conversations, service advisors are better prepared to engage each customer when, where, and how that person prefers.

"We actually get more responses from Emma's emails because our customers respond better to them than to phone calls," Hudson says. "I think that's because of the flexibility: customers can answer emails whenever they want, whether it's 2:00 in the morning or in the afternoon. You might forget to return a phone call, but with email, you don't."

Always-on customer satisfaction

What customers love about the Conversica automotive assistant is her lack of pushiness, a trait that can otherwise discourage people from engaging. "Emma is not asking for anything other than is this the right phone number, is this the best email for you?" notes Hudson. "She's not asking for a sale, she's just an innocent third party – which gets you a lot further than someone calling and asking, 'Hey, are you ready to service your new car?' That can be a turn off to a lot of people."

Instead, Emma nurtures relationships, conversing with customers over email in a natural, engaging way. So natural that "customers will call the store and ask for Emma; that's how real she seems," says Hudson. "I'm telling you she's my least expensive and best employee. I never see her but she's very efficient, sending and responding to dozens of emails every day."

Emma now can take up Hudson's responsibilities of searching the database for customers who have been serviced in the last six months, downloading a list, uploading the list to the email system, creating and sending an email, tracking follow-up, and answering customers' responses. With the time gained from Emma's help, Hudson can now focus on what's most important – in-store face-to-face interactions with customers.

Final thoughts

"I am amazed at what Conversica has created in terms of the ability to generate perfect emails," Hudson concluded. "Emma will answer based on what the customer's response is – whether it's an OnStar lead, or an alert for a new lead that's coming in, a service lead, a service appointment, or a follow-up – she's asking for vital information that we may not be able to get face-to-face. She never stops working! And the service isn't even expensive for all the benefits that she has brought us. How can you go wrong?"

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 conversica.com to set up a product demonstration.

About Conversica

Conversica is the only provider of lead management software for marketing and sales organizations that leverages artificial intelligence. 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 has engaged in millions of human-like conversations on behalf of thousands of sales representatives.

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