



URBAN SCIENCE®

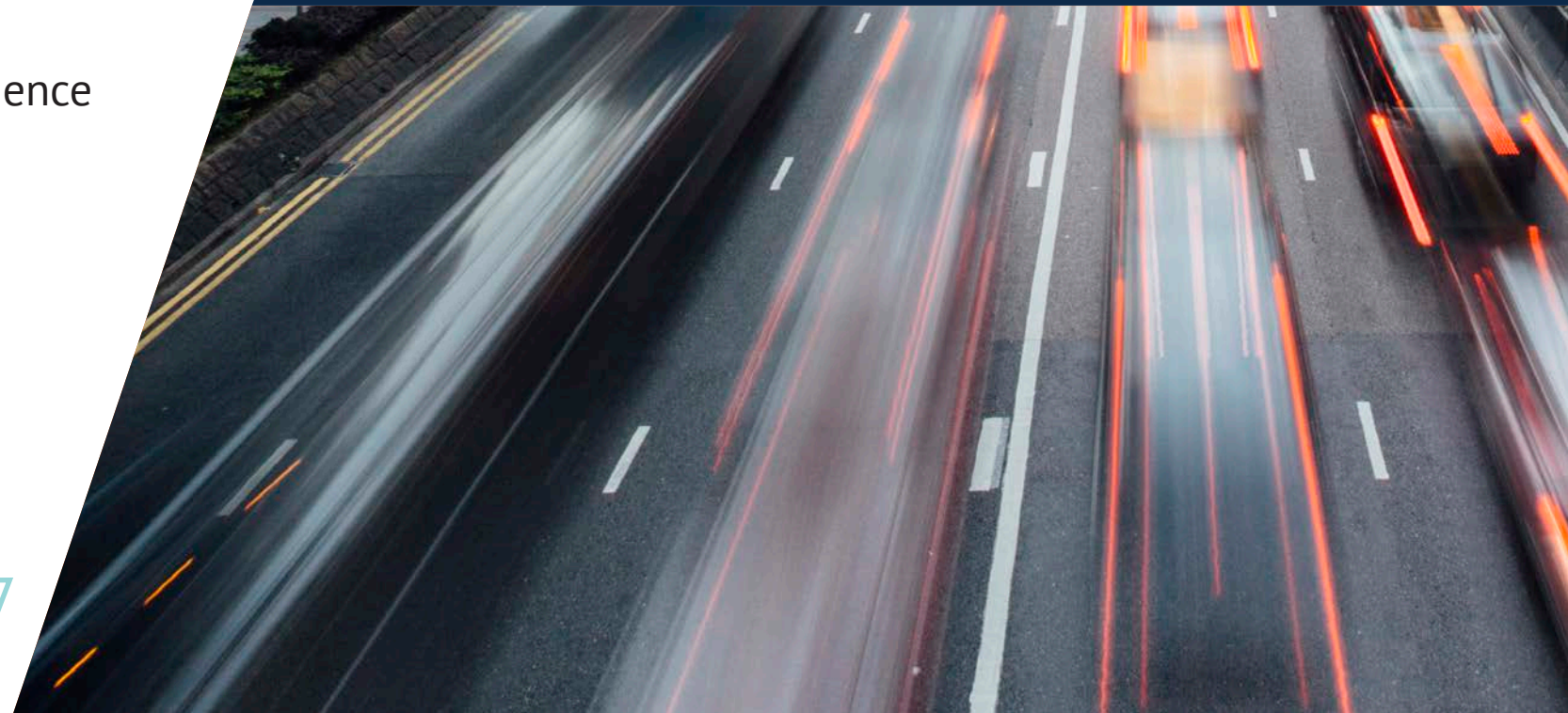
The Intelligence Behind Next-Level Experiences

Applying Defection Insights to Transform the Customer Experience

2025

SALESALERT™

CASE STUDY





The Problem

In the highly competitive automotive industry, delivering a superior customer experience to your leads is paramount to winning their business. Yet, many dealerships don't know where to make process changes that could improve their customers' experiences (i.e., the root problems causing their leads to purchase from their competitors) and struggle with how to earn back their business once they've been lost. Only **32% of dealers reported that they are very satisfied with their ability to know why a lead was lost** in a recent Urban Science study conducted by the Harris Poll*.

Without clear visibility into these patterns, dealers miss opportunities to re-engage lost customers and prevent future defections. Cable Dahmer, a leading midwest dealer group, recognized this as a problem across their dealerships and sought proactive solutions. By leveraging Urban Science daily defection insights to create targeted strategies, they successfully increased their close rates, grew market share and restarted relationships with lost customers; demonstrating that a data-driven approach to customer engagement is the key to long-term dealership success.



Opportunity

Our Survey Shows Service Is Integral to New-Vehicle Sales



44%

of dealers believe a good service department is critical to increasing new vehicle sales*



92%

of consumers stated that past service experience would lead them to choose a dealership over another*

The Importance of Defection Insights

Customer defection isn't just about lost sales - it's a reflection of gaps in the customer experience. Dealerships that lack real-time insights into defections are operating reactively, rather than proactively addressing issues before they escalate. With daily defection data, Cable Dahmer could implement timely, targeted service campaigns creating opportunities for them to rebuild relationships with lost customers leading to higher lifetime value and eliminate process pitfalls that were causing reoccurring defections.

Dealers' Next Steps:

- Win back customers through personalization
- Understand the root causes of defection



The Solution

Winning Back Customers Through Personalization

Step one was to re-engage lost customers through personalized service messaging. Data from Urban Science shows that service-loyal customers are twice as likely to buy their next vehicle from the dealership where they regularly service their cars. Additionally, our survey data shows that 56% of car buyers say that a dealership's service department influences their purchasing decisions, making it an integral strategy for customer loyalty*. By integrating real-time defection data with their Customer Data Platform (CDP) through an API, they automated personalized outreach to defected customers the day after they purchased a car from a competing dealership.



How it Worked:

- 1. Automated Workflow:** A direct API integration between the dealership's defection data and CDP triggered an alert to the print team, ensuring a first-class mailer was sent promptly.
- 2. Immediate Personalized Outreach:** Customers who defected were sent a handwritten direct mail offer for a free oil change within 24 hours of defection.
- 3. Addressing Common Defection Reasons:** The messaging acknowledged key concerns, such as a lack of inventory or a poor service experience, and positioned the dealership as committed to improvement, giving them a chance to win back the customers business in their service lanes.
- 4. Loyalty Incentives:** If customers redeemed the oil change, they received discounts on subsequent service visits, reinforcing loyalty.
- 5. Follow-Up Cadence:** Those who didn't respond entered an automated email sequence designed to gather insights and re-engage them over a three-month period.



The Solution

Understanding the Root Causes of Defection

Beyond the goal of winning back customers, Cable Dahmer sought to address the core issues leading to defections in the first place. By engaging with defected customers through 1:1 phone outreach they gained invaluable insights into dealership shortcomings which provided a roadmap for preventing future defections from occurring (they were also surprised to find that many customers were willing to share their experiences without requiring an incentive). These phone calls uncovered two easily addressable issues in their process:

Salesperson Turnover Disrupts Relationships:

Many customers defected simply because their original salesperson had left, and they were never reassigned to a new contact in the CRM.

Miscommunication on Dealership Locations:

Some customers defected due to confusion about the dealership's location, inadvertently visiting a nearby competing dealership.



Turning Insights into Action

With these insights in hand, the dealership made key operational improvements:

- **Strengthened CRM Processes:** Automated reassignment of customers when a salesperson left ensured that no customer was forgotten.
- **Enhanced Communication:** Clearer directions were added to appointment confirmations to prevent customers from mistakenly visiting the wrong location.
- **Proactive Reputation Management:** A new workflow sent defecting customers an email requesting feedback, allowing the dealership to resolve concerns before they turned into negative reviews.



Results

Elevating Customer Experiences to Strengthen Relationships and Grow Sales

By leveraging real-time defection insights, Cable Dahmer created opportunities to rekindle relationships with lost customers and ultimately earn back their business in the future. The results were undeniable:

The results exceeded expectations. Year over Year Performance improvement showed increases in the following areas:



Close Rate



Bought from Dealer



Market Share



Sales Effectiveness

Higher Win-Back Rates:
Customers who redeemed the free oil change offer were more likely to return for future service visits and vehicle purchases.

Sales Growth:
Addressing CRM gaps and improving communication led to a measurable increase in sales purchased at the dealer.

Stronger Engagement:
The combination of timely direct mail, email follow-ups, and personalized service offers resulted in a higher engagement rate than traditional re-engagement campaigns.

Improved Customer Satisfaction:
Proactively seeking feedback and resolving concerns helped prevent negative reviews and enhanced the dealership's reputation.

The Takeaway: Data-Driven Intervention is the Future

"Since we started using TrafficView and SalesAlert, we've gained incredible insights into our dealership's online traffic and customer interest. The real-time alerts help us stay ahead of opportunities, making it easier to connect with potential buyers at the right moment."

Jeff Vaughn | Chief Marketing Officer
Cable Dahmer Automotive Group

The automotive industry is evolving, and customer expectations are higher than ever. Dealerships that harness defection insights can gain a competitive edge, by implementing informed strategic follow up processes to improve close rates and re-engage lost customers, ultimately enhancing the overall customer experience leading to more sale opportunities. By moving beyond reactive strategies and embracing data-driven engagement, Cable Dahmer not only positioned themselves to win back customers while driving service revenue but also built a foundation for sustained success.

Urban Science as a Solution

Put the power of science on your side.

Since our founding over four decades ago, Urban Science has continued to empower dealers with daily, actionable insights that fuel lead conversions so they can outsell their competition.

Info / Contact:

[Urbanscience.com/dealer](https://urbanscience.com/dealer)

Source:

*Urban Science Online Consumer and Dealer Studies, February 2025. These surveys were conducted by The Harris Poll on behalf of Urban Science among U.S. adults aged 18+ and U.S. automotive dealers

