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THE CONVERSION GAP

Why leads are quietly quitting your store.

Session Speakers



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Year Of The Human

CON
26



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The Harris Poll

Harris Insights & Analytics LLC, A Stagwell Company





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The Harris Poll

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Auto- Buying Public

Sample Size:

n=3,012

Field Dates:

January 5 – January 28, 2026

Auto Buyers

- US residents
- Age 18+
- Own/lease a vehicle OR plan to purchase/lease in the next 12 months



US Dealers

n=252

January 5 – February 4, 2026

Dealers

- US residents
- Work at OEM dealership
- Title of Sales Manager, General Manager, or Principal/VP/Owner
- Employed full-time

Today's auto buyer journey is **longer**, more **demanding**, and more **selective**.

Key shifts in how consumers shop over the past year



44%

are **spending more time** researching before contacting a dealer



31%

are **more focused on value and price** than brand loyalty



25%

are **more likely to buy a car fully online**



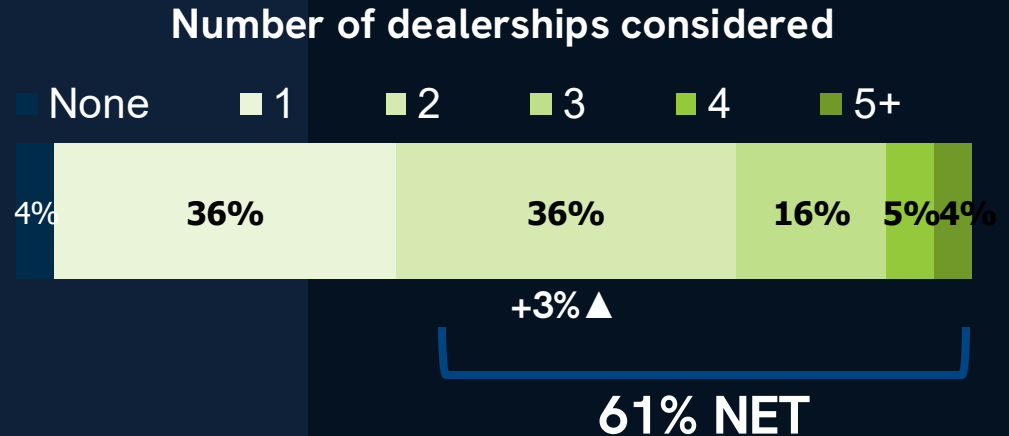
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On average, auto buyers consider 2.5 brands when making a purchase and are visiting more dealerships in the process.



The market
is getting
tighter and
more
challenging



Sales volume is down

Lead volume is flat

Defection is more
important than ever





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Defection =
when a CRM lead
buys elsewhere.

The *purest signal* of your process and
marketing gaps.

On average

21% of CRM

leads defect

200 defections per
month =

100 hours of
wasted follow-up

The Conversion Gap



Source: Urban Science Online Auto-Buyer (3,012) and Dealer (252) Studies, January 2025.



 The Harris Poll
Harris Insights & Analytics LLC, A Stagwell Company

72%

Dealers are highly confident that their sales process converts leads effectively

BUT...

67%

say closing a lead/sale is a lot more difficult today compared to one year ago



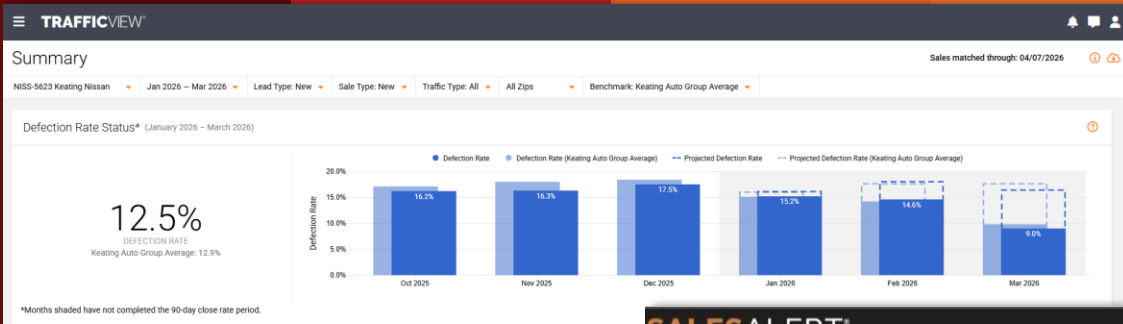


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Conversion is the new battleground



DEALERS NEED DEFECTION INTELLIGENCE



Lost Sales to Defections* (January 2026 - March 2026)

222 LOST SALES

Top Opportunities

Source	Fresh Up
Requested Model	Pathfinder
Last Salesperson	Davidson, Susan
Geography	77304 - Conroe

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SALESALERT SALES ALERT DETAIL
SALES ALERT - 8

SalesAlert

Hometown Demo Dealer

Days Back: 90 | Sales Person: (Select All), Charlie ... | Zip: | Sale Date: | Search

Sale Date	Sale Type	Sales Person	Last Name	First Name	Email	Phone	Zip	Lead Date	Lead Type	Requested Model	Lead Source	Defection Type
12/31/2022	New	Harry Potter	Malfoy	Draco	dracomalfoy@gmail.com	313-127-4118	13524	11/27/2022 06:20	New	Rav4	Dealers WebSite	Comp Dealer Sale - Same Brand
12/29/2022	New	Harry Potter	McGonagall	Minerva	minervamcgonagall@gmail.com	313-904-1658	97544	12/21/2022 09:14	New	CR-V	Phone Up	Comp Dealer Sale - Comp OEM
12/28/2022	New	Hermione Granger	Black	Sirius	siriusblack@gmail.com	313-780-8197	48167	12/08/2022 11:39	New	Camry	Referral	Comp Dealer Sale - Comp OEM
12/28/2022	New	Rubeus Hagrid	Skeeter	Rita	ritasketeer@gmail.com	313-657-5736	54784	10/29/2022 03:36	New	Rogue	Repeat Customer	Comp Dealer Sale - Comp OEM
12/26/2022	New	Ginny Weasley	Longbottom	Neville	nevillelongbottom@gmail.com	313-534-3276	48156	11/04/2022 20:14	New	Grand Cherokee	Service Dept	Comp Dealer Sale - Comp OEM
12/25/2022	New	Hermione Granger	Lockhart	Gilderoy	gilderoylockhart@gmail.com	313-411-9815	48156	12/25/2022 14:03	New	Highlander	Autolist	Comp Dealer Sale - Same Brand
12/25/2022	New	Hermione Granger	Delacour	Fleur	fleurdelacour@gmail.com	313-288-7354	48167	12/24/2022 08:43	New	Civic	AutoTrader.com	Comp Dealer Sale - Comp OEM
12/25/2022	New	Molly Weasley	Fudge	Cornelius	corneliusfudge@gmail.com	313-165-4894	13588	12/20/2022 10:02	Used	Tacoma	Cargurus	Comp Dealer Sale - Same Brand
12/25/2022	New	Charlie Weasley	Filch	Argus	argusfilch@gmail.com	313-942-2433	65844	12/20/2022 08:16	Used	Corolla	Carfax, Inc	Comp Dealer Sale - Comp OEM
					viktorkunil@mail.com							Crmin Dealer Sale -

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Info We've processed your leads for the last 90 days and found 15 leads that have recently bought from a competitor

WITHOUT DEFECTION ANALYSIS



Days to Sale

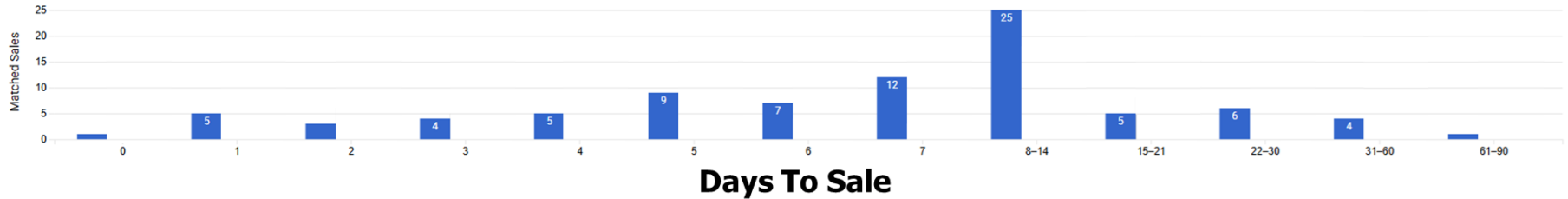
TRAFFICVIEW



Days to Sale (January 2026 - March 2026)



Sold by Dealer



Sold by Dealer

WITH DEFLECTION ANALYSIS

Days to Sale

TRAFFICVIEW

Days to Sale (January 2026 – March 2026)



Sold by Dealer

Sold by Other Same OEM Dealer

Sold by Competitive OEM Dealer



**Now I can see
the defection.**

Why did it happen?

Key friction points hinder conversion:

38% Lack of real-time lost sales insights

29% Ineffective tools/CRM

34% Inconsistent follow-up

28% Role clarity issues

32% Lack of timely insights for real-time training

Source: Urban Science Online Auto-Buyer (3,012) and Dealer (252) Studies, January 2025.

Dealers want deeper behavioral insights:

74%

Dealers are **not fully satisfied** knowing when a lead defects

44%
+12% YOY

More dealers are struggling to understand **why leads defect**

84%

Dealers want visibility into both **brand loyalty** and **cross-shopping behavior**



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The voice of the defector

Don't guess why customers leave, just ask them

Survey says..... #1 cause of defections?



PRICE?

COMMUNICATION?

IN-STORE EXPERIENCE?

INVENTORY?

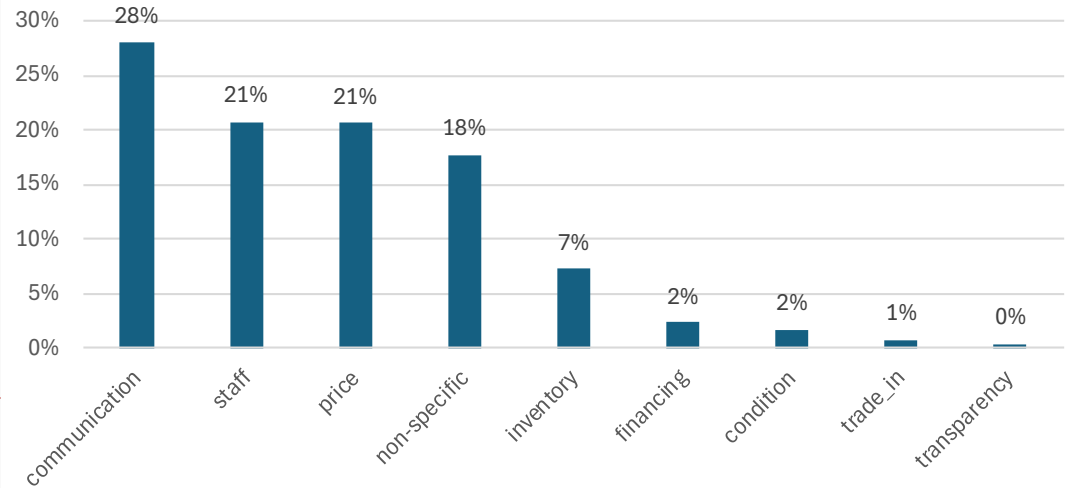


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Price is NOT the top driver

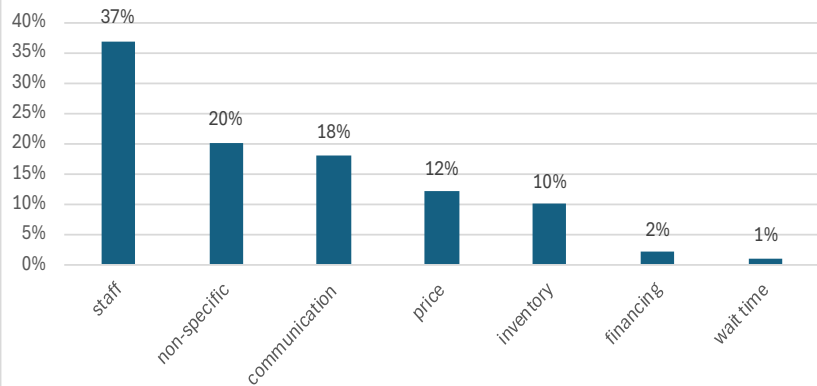
It's Communication!

Percent of Defection Surveys



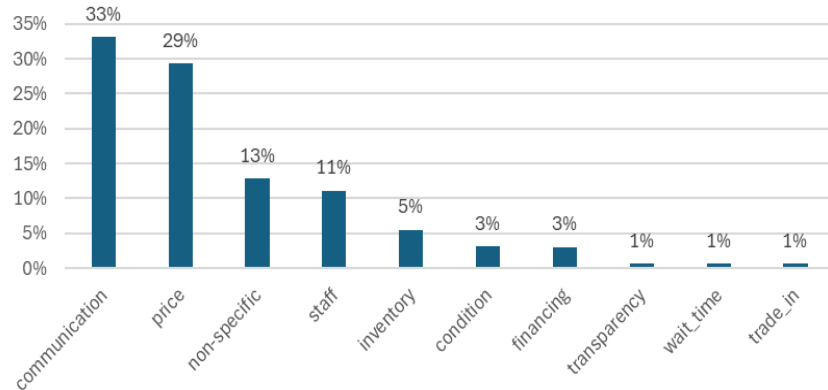
Promoters vs. Detractors

Promoters



1. Staff
2. Non-specific
3. Communication
4. Price

Detractors



1. Communication
2. Price
3. Non-specific
4. Staff

The stores that win
combine technology
with the human
connection.



JARROD KILWAY

VP of Digital Operations
Casa Automotive Group

Defection intelligence gives you the full story



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- 1** Don't waste your Human Capital chasing dead leads
- 2** Uncover if you have a marketing problem or a conversion problem
- 3** Leverage defection insights to improve coaching

FIX FOLLOW-UP GAPS

Most defections happen due to process breakdowns

Understand where you're losing - by model, lead source, geography

Diagnose your patterns and process breakdowns

Uncover if you have a **marketing problem** or a **conversion problem**

Don't look at cost per sale - look at cost per opportunity

Deploy AI lifecycle model to capture service opportunity

The power
isn't the
insight, it's the
people &
the process.



Real-time **surveys** deploy to
lost leads

Defection insight **meeting**
lead by eComm director

Empower tailored, insightful
1:1 **salesperson training**



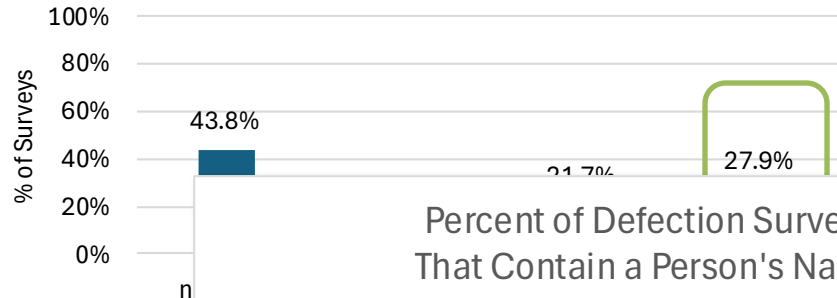


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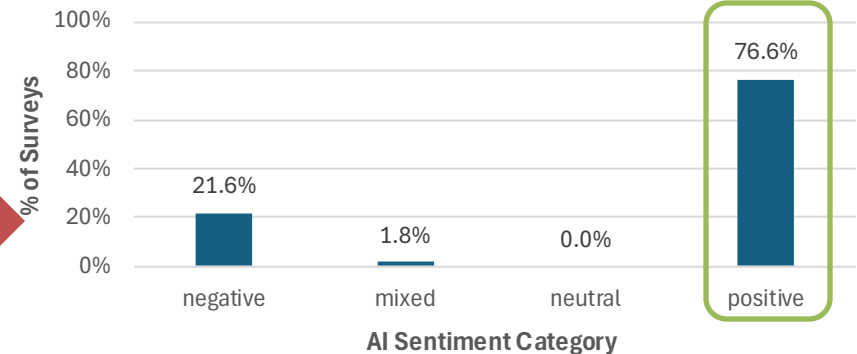
Empower your people to be great.

People really make the difference.
These customers will return.

Percent of Defection Surveys Overall



Percent of Defection Surveys That Contain a Person's Name

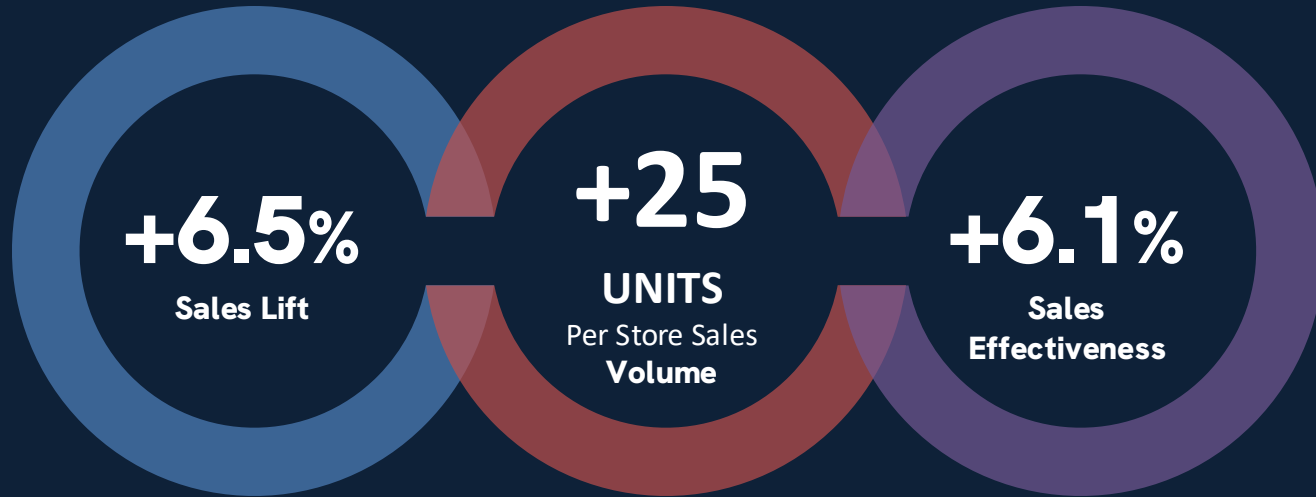


**Your people are
the conversion
engine.**



Consistency changes everything

Highly engaged SalesAlert dealers
supercharge their sales





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**You can't fix what
you can't see.**



Tom Kondrat

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