

## DealerRater Enhances Salesperson Connect, Features Employee Profiles on Cars.com

*New research underscores the importance of salespeople reviews for both dealers and consumers*

WALTHAM, Mass., March 21, 2018 /PRNewswire/ -- DealerRater, the world's leading dealer review website, announced today an enhancement to [Salesperson Connect](#)™ that makes it possible for shoppers to review comprehensive profiles of a dealer's salespeople, such as their biographies and the 25 most recent reviews, as well as email salespersons directly from the Cars.com site before they arrive at the dealership.

According to DealerRater, shoppers who use Salesperson Connect to choose a salesperson based on their reviews have an 89 percent higher closing rate, and their time to close improves by 15 percent.<sup>1</sup> In addition, according to a new DealerRater study of customer reviews, the personal performance of a dealership's employees, including its salespeople, is crucial to a dealer earning a 5-star review from customers.<sup>2</sup>

"A great customer review does more than improve a dealer's reputation -- positive reviews improve a dealer's bottom line," said Jamie Oldershaw, general manager of DealerRater. "Our research also shows that consumers notice when a dealer's staff takes care of a customer from initial contact online, through the purchase process and well into the service relationship."

The new DealerRater study, "[What Makes a Five-Star Dealership Review?](#)" indicates a dealer's employees make or break its brand. Together with Cars.com's Data & Analytics team, DealerRater undertook the largest audit of car dealer reviews to date to identify shopper pain points and shed light on the aspects of the customer-dealer experience that can draw motivated customers into the showroom. Using natural language processing (NLP), a sub-set of AI, the companies analyzed 1.4 million consumer reviews of dealerships and salespeople to uncover key themes that drive positive reviews.

The research found that car buyers consider the following two factors as most important to inspiring a 5-star review:

- **VIP experience from a dealer's people.** More than 41 percent of reviews single out the ability of a dealer's employees to provide a great customer experience as vital. A superior *buying* experience is important, but more critical to consumers is great service overall, including an excellent fixed ops department.<sup>2</sup>
- **Personable pros on the show floor.** More than 19 percent of reviews prove that an approachable, knowledgeable and professional staff is important. Being "friendly" and "having a sense of humor" are frequent themes in positive reviews.<sup>2</sup>

The latest enhancement to Salesperson Connect, which features Employee Profile Pages on Cars.com, creates a more personalized shopping experience for consumers and makes it easy for them to connect with dealer personnel who provide a great customer experience. Consumers will be able to read reviews and background information on each employee and select who they wish to work with well before they arrive on the lot. The upgrades also allow consumers to connect with individual employees via email.

"We know car shoppers crave more information about salespeople and want to form a connection with them before heading to the dealership," said Oldershaw. "This connection is what makes tools like Salesperson Connect so valuable for these businesses as the information available at a shopper's fingertips can help establish an early bond and build trust."

To learn more about Salesperson Connect, visit DealerRater in booth #4802C at NADA Show 2018 in Las Vegas from March 23-25.

### **ABOUT DEALERRATER**

Founded in 2002, [DealerRater](#)®, a [Cars.com](#)™ (NYSE:CARS) company, is the world's leading car dealer review website that connects consumers with the right person at the right dealership. With a reachable audience of more than 31 million consumers monthly, the site offers 4 million sales and service reviews across 41,000 U.S. and Canadian dealerships, including a network of more than 5,600 Certified Dealers. By offering a product suite that allows qualified dealerships to manage their reputations and achieve higher SEO rankings, DealerRater supports new customer connections by growing online presence.

<sup>1</sup> Metrics from 39 DealerRater Customers, July 12-December 31, 2017

<sup>2</sup> Cars.com, "Review Usefulness and Recency," November 2016

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For further information: Christine Spinelli, [cspinelli@cars.com](mailto:cspinelli@cars.com), 312.508.6727

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