

# AS SEEN IN



FROM THE CORNER OFFICE 

## Drawing a map to a more rewarding customer journey

BY IAN REILLY

In thinking of dealership group best practices to share, I recalled a story from one of my Reynolds' colleagues.

A dealership group was looking for ways to improve its operational effectiveness and its bottom line while simultaneously improving the customer journey in each store.

In trying to identify what the group was doing well and where there was room for improvement, the group's management team mapped out the customer journey within their stores.

Every department manager listed all of the steps for dealing with customers and operating their business. Plus, they identified all of the systems they used daily. They then mapped out the steps and corresponding systems on butcher block paper.

They labeled spots where there were extra key-strokes to re-enter information, missing information between departments and other obstacles that caused unnecessary wait time for customers or frustration for employees.

By the end of the exercise, they had several "Aha!" moments.

First, they recognized the entire customer journey was too cumbersome. The typical sales process for a customer filled up nearly 3.7 meters of paper.

Second, they saw how many third-party systems plugged into the DMS and where limitations in those systems caused gaps in their process or more key-strokes for employees.



Third, they found areas where employee compliance with the group's processes truly made a difference in whether a customer was satisfied or displeased.

To say this exercise was eye opening is an understatement. I encourage you to try the same exercise in your dealership.

As you review your customer

journey map, ask yourself these questions:

What can we do immediately to improve the customer experience with our dealership?

What should we stop doing?

What are we doing well and how can we empower staff to do those things more often?

What behavior do we need to change or eliminate?

Are our retail management platforms built to work together to reduce duplicate data entry, put information at employees' fingertips, and share critical information across departments?

Where can we reduce inefficient processes that waste customers' time or cause friction that prevent them from having a smooth experience?

By creating your own customer journey map, you'll likely have a number of "Aha!" moments for your dealership. You can then use what you learn to create a more rewarding experience for your customers and improve your bottom line. I'd be interested to know your results.

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