

# Elevating Dealership Performance with Mystery Shopping

## The Ultimate Guide for the Automotive Industry

The automotive landscape is evolving rapidly, driven by changing consumer expectations and technological advancements. Today's buyers aren't just walking into dealerships; they are shopping online and expecting a seamless blend of digital and in-person experiences.

The trend is clear: customers overwhelmingly prefer an omnichannel approach to car buying, combining the convenience of online tools with the reassurance of in-dealership interactions.

This shift demands that automotive dealerships align every touchpoint, ensuring that both online and in-person experiences deliver the same level of service, consistency, and care.



### Mystery Shopping: A Key Towards Consistent Customer Experiences

Mystery shopping offers a unique solution for automotive brands seeking to assess and enhance their customer experience across all channels. With trained mystery shoppers providing objective, actionable feedback, dealerships gain a complete picture of their customers' actual buying journey.

**Mystery shopping is not about what your customers want or expect. It's about what your customers get.**

Unlike traditional customer satisfaction surveys or feedback forms, mystery shopping provides an unbiased and objective view of what customers truly encounter. By observing the real interactions that drive customer satisfaction—like the test drive or the sales negotiation—mystery shoppers provide actionable insights that can directly influence business strategy, ultimately driving sales, boosting loyalty, and setting new standards for service excellence.

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# Evaluating “Moments of Truth” with Mystery Shopping

Mystery shopping focuses on evaluating critical moments that define the customer experience. These moments of truth occur at various stages of the vehicle buying process, each providing valuable insights into how well your brand delivers its promises.

## Omnichannel Contact

The first point of contact—whether it’s a phone call, email, online inquiry, social media DM, or chat—sets the stage for the entire customer journey. Mystery shoppers assess the responsiveness, consistency, and quality of communication across every channel, making sure your brand message stays aligned and impactful, no matter where the conversation starts.

## Needs Discovery & Sales Presentation

Making a great first impression in the showroom is crucial. Mystery shoppers evaluate how your sales staff uncovers customer needs and presents solutions. This assessment reveals how your team applies corporate guidelines in real-world scenarios, pinpointing both strengths and areas for improvement in the sales process.

## Test Drive

The test drive is an important element of the decision-making process. Mystery shoppers can provide a detailed review of how the test drive experience is managed... or whether a test drive is offered at all. Mystery shopping can help you ensure that your customers do not leave the dealership before they experience the vehicle's feel, comfort, performance, and features.

## Negotiation

The negotiation phase can truly make or break a sale. Mystery shoppers assess the transparency, professionalism, and effectiveness of your negotiation process. They scrutinize details such as the use of formal paperwork for quotes, ensuring your brand stands out for its professionalism rather than relying on makeshift solutions, like handwritten notes.

## Follow-up

Turning a sale into a lasting relationship hinges on effective follow-up. Mystery shoppers evaluate the quality and timeliness of follow-up communications across all channels—whether it’s email, phone, or text message. They ensure that customers continue to feel valued and engaged long after the initial sales interaction is complete.

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# Elevating your Mystery Shopping Program

To maximize the benefits of your mystery shopping program, a suite of complementary solutions designed to provide a comprehensive view of your dealership's performance and competitive positioning is available. These additional services work alongside mystery shopping to ensure that every aspect of your customer experience is optimized for success.

## After-Sales Service Mystery Shopping

The customer journey doesn't end with the sale. We can tailor mystery shopping programs to evaluate your service department's performance, including the quality of repairs and overall service experience. This ensures that your brand maintains excellence even after the initial transaction, enhancing customer satisfaction and long-term relationships.

## Competitor Mystery Shopping

Staying ahead in a competitive market requires a clear understanding of how your dealership measures up against others. Our mystery shopping services extend to competitor analysis, providing valuable insights into what your customers experience when they visit the competition. By benchmarking your performance against competitors, you can identify areas for improvement and discover unique opportunities to set your brand apart.

## Brand Standard Audits

Consistency across multiple locations can be a challenge, but maintaining brand standards is essential for your dealership's reputation. Trained auditors can conduct thorough brand standard audits to verify adherence to corporate guidelines. From pricing accuracy to visual merchandising and safety protocols, brand standard audits help ensure that every location upholds your brand's promises, protecting and enhancing your reputation across all touchpoints.

## Electric Vehicle (EV) Mystery Shopping

An EV Mystery Shopping program evaluates your dealership's readiness to engage and educate EV buyers. Mystery shoppers assess the knowledge and expertise of your sales team regarding EV features, charging infrastructure, and other requirements, ensuring that your staff is prepared to guide customers through the EV buying journey with confidence and accuracy.

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# Choosing the Right Mystery Shopping Partner

Premier Service is a leader in mystery shopping for the automotive industry, known for our expertise, reliability, and commitment to excellence. We understand the unique challenges of the automotive market and have developed specialized programs that cater to every facet of the customer's journey.

**Here is what we recommend considering when choosing your mystery shopping partner:**

## Industry Experience & Expertise

Look for a provider with a proven track record in the automotive industry. An experienced provider will understand the nuances of car sales and after-sales service. They will be able to tailor their mystery shopping programs to address your specific needs and objectives.

## Trained & Credible Mystery Shoppers

Ensure that your mystery shopping provider uses well-trained mystery shoppers who are also screened to match your brand and clientele. Mystery shoppers should be skilled at evaluating various aspects of the customer journey and delivering detailed and objective feedback that reflects genuine customer experiences.

## Actionable & Accessible Reporting

Choose a partner that delivers comprehensive, easy-to-understand reports with actionable recommendations. The report should also be accessible to all stakeholders so that everyone involved can easily engage with and act upon the findings.

## Support & Collaboration

Look for a provider that offers dedicated support and is willing to collaborate closely with you. A responsive and engaged partner can help ensure your mystery shopping program is effective and delivers the insights you need to succeed.

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**With mystery shopping, your dealership can stand out in the market.  
Let's explore how our expertise can benefit your dealership.**



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