



Win Customers Through Mobile Notifications

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April 30, 2019—[Earlier this year](#), Spireon introduced the [My Dealer](#) feature for its Kahu app—the first connected car solution designed specifically for dealerships. The My Dealer feature is a customer retention module that allows dealers to easily target and engage customers post sale, creating ongoing revenue opportunities.

Key features of the My Dealer module that enable increased revenue and customer loyalty are:

- **Mobile convenience**—simplifying maintenance reminders and service scheduling through mobile notifications can jumpstart the most profitable phase of the dealer-customer relationship
- **Personalized offers**—by creating more effective messages and promotions based on accurate vehicle mileage and other customer data, conversions will increase
- **Brand visibility**—with customized dealership imagery and contact information added to the My Dealer module, customers will keep the dealership top of mind for service and other needs. The Kahu consumer app is used 12 times per month on average, creating regular brand exposure for dealers.
- **Quick and easy scheduling**—click-to-schedule and click-to-call functionality within the Kahu app streamlines appointment setting

Sunil Marolia, VP of product management for Spireon, and Carla Fitzgerald, chief marketing officer for Spireon, share how the My Dealer function can help drive success in fixed operations with *FIXED*.

The Benefits

My Dealer allows dealers to provide their own branding and allow customers the ability to book and call the dealership right from their mobile device, which has streamlined the service process. Right now, it's very fragmented, explains Marolia.

For example, customers right now get direct mailers for service coupons. Those are generally thrown somewhere—often in the trash—and when it’s time for a service, the customer either can’t find or forgets about the mailer. With My Dealer, notifications for service come through the home screen and are delivered when the vehicle actually needs to be serviced, creating personalization that consumers want.

“It’s personalized—meaning we can integrate content to that consumer,” Marolia explains of the notifications that are sent to customers through the My Dealer feature. “They’re all [the messages] actionable. They can call the dealer or book the service right there. It drives a better experience and drives retention up.”

A mobile experience is what today’s consumer wants, explains Marolia and Fitzgerald.

“Mail and email just end up as noise,” Marolia says. “Mobile is very personalized in general. Personalized and relevant messaging triggers a reaction. It can’t be too frequent and it needs to be personalized.”

My Dealer allows dealerships to customize notifications based on vehicle—for example, a vehicle that needs an oil change at 5,000 miles will get a notification when that vehicle is approaching that threshold.

“It doesn’t matter what industry you’re in, if you’re relying on a random sample of radio and mailers, you’re not going to get responded to by the customer,” Fitzgerald says. “I know. When I drive by Starbucks, it prompts me to come in for my favorite drink. Our consumers are conditioned to that level of convenience as well as wanting suppliers that know them.”

Years ago, dealership were able to get to know people in the neighborhood through face-to-face communication, that’s just not the case anymore, Fitzgerald says. Customers don’t want to do the work. They want to come in only when they need to and receive care that shows that the business knows who they are and what they need.

“By providing data from vehicles and delivering that information through mobile, it [My Dealer] is welcoming dealers to this decade,” Fitzgerald says.

Personalized Messaging

Campaigns through My Dealer are all customized and allow dealers to reach customers on many different levels. The most common campaign for fixed operations would be for recommended service intervals. Messages are sent out with the customers name, vehicle model and make, and the service that is needed. From there, the consumer just has to click to make an appointment.

“They can customize the header and the messaging so they don’t have to create it for each individual customer,” Marolia says. “They can set that campaign to trigger at a

certain mileage—50,000 for example. They can filter campaigns by year, make and model, so for example, they're not sending oil change campaigns to EVs. Once that campaign is set and launched, from that point forward, it's automated."

The feature doesn't just have to be used for service reminders, it can also do recall notices and even be used to set up campaigns around community events—like encouraging customers to drop items off for Toys for Tots.

"We design out solution not just to be a replace for an oil change postcard, but create new types of engagement models," Fitzgerald says.

Getting Customers to Sign Up

The My Dealer app is already pre-installed on vehicles, customers just have to make the decision whether or not they want to enable it.

Marolia says the key to selling the feature, which benefits the customer as well as the dealer, is to start selling the feature upfront with the vehicle rather than at the end as an add-on. For example, the salesperson should show the customer that they're locating the vehicle through the app before they even get in the vehicle. That way, when the customer gets to the F&I department and is debating on whether or not to purchase it, they're not stone cold in their knowledge of it.

Marolia also says many dealers offer it as a bundle deal, as it's benefits dealers so much when it comes to retention. Offering one year for free can also be a good way to get customers hooked on the service and ensure that they'll come back in at least one or two more times. The app has been very successful, and not just with new vehicle customers.

"Dealers are telling us that they're adding it on cars that they didn't even sell," Fitzgerald says. "Customers are coming in saying that their brother or friend wants to add it to their vehicle."

The app has 4.7 stars and around 3,000 reviews.

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