

Optimizing Lead Delivery in Indirect Channels

Increase revenue, customer satisfaction and data quality
with MetaLocator Lead Acknowledgement





Problem Statement

Product manufacturers, brand owners and physician networks often rely on a network of 3rd parties to sell, service, install and stock their products. This indirect channel is sometimes the only way the brand owner sells their product and represents their brand to customers. As part of managing a 3rd party network network, the brand owner often provides a facility for the customer to find a representative, such as a dealer locator on their website.

The customer might encounter the dealer locator after clicking on a “Where to Buy” button or in a “Brand X near me” local search on Google or similar search engine. The customer then searches the dealer locator and finds one or more local businesses to engage. The customer then contacts a local representative in the form of an opportunity or lead.

At this point in the customer journey, many brand owners lose visibility into what happens next. After facilitating the connection between the customer and the dealer, brand owners often can’t answer these critical questions:

1. Did the potential customer successfully contact a dealer? Was the inquiry email opened? Was the contact information for the dealer correct?
2. How long did the customer wait for a reply? How responsive is this dealer? Was the lead ignored?
3. Was the customer satisfied by the dealer’s customer service? What rating would the customer give the dealer?
4. Are high-performing dealers rewarded for their work?

*MetaLocator found **20 million** in lost revenue due to ignored lead inquiries for a single customer in 2021 alone.*

As a brand owner, you must know:

1. Who are my most (and least) responsive dealers?
2. What happens to customers who did not get a reply from an inquiry?
3. Which dealers drive the most customer satisfaction?

Once you have this information, your best dealers can be rewarded, and lower-performing dealers can be engaged to find ways to improve.

A dealer locator platform that can’t answer these questions is dangerous to brand owners. When a customer reaches out and the business does not respond, the opportunity is lost, revenue is lost and the brand reputation is damaged at the hands of the dealer.

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Industry Findings

In our experience, we observe the following metrics with Enterprise corporations using traditional locators, prior to leveraging Lead Optimization.

1. Leads are entirely ignored on average between 40% of all inquiries. In global markets the ignored rate can be as high as 65%.
2. Average response time is 12 hours.
3. Average bounce rate is 9%
4. Average inquiries per sender is 1.6, meaning most leads are sent to multiple dealers

The Opportunity

The problem outlined above clearly illustrates an opportunity to capture more business, improve customer satisfaction and create a continuous improvement feedback loop to optimize a dealer network.

Dealer networks are consistently leaving business on the table, leads unanswered and customers unsatisfied, often at a much greater rate than stakeholders suspect. The volume of lost business can be staggering once visualized.

1. Increase the number of qualified leads in your pipeline.
2. Increase revenue by avoiding lost leads
3. Improve customer satisfaction by reducing dealer response time
4. Improving dealer data quality by identifying unresponsive dealers
5. Strengthening dealer relationships by rewarding high performing dealers

How it Works

To solve the problems described above, the following solutions are recommended:

1. **Deliver 100%-trackable lead notifications.** When a customer makes a business inquiry to a dealer, deliver it only as a notification of a new lead that, when acknowledged, reveals the lead details. Only after the lead notification is acknowledged can the lead be followed-up with. This is far superior to “open rates” which are unreliable due to privacy tools built into modern email clients.

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- 2. Receive notification of un-acknowledged leads.** If a lead notification goes unacknowledged, the clock is ticking on servicing that customer. At this point, depending on your business, you can re-assign that lead to another dealer automatically, or to a lead management contact. The lead manager can follow-up with the original dealer and use the opportunity to correct bad contact information. Alternatively, the lead can be automatically re-assigned using a variety of strategies such as round-robin, blast, or load balanced distribution.
- 3. Follow-up with the lead.** Send an automated follow-up survey to the lead after a configurable delay which measures the satisfaction of the customer. A simple 5-star rating question, delivered via email allows the user to simply click a star without replying or opening an arduous form. After clicking the in-email star rating choice, prompt the user to complete an optional comment with their review. This captures the quantitative feedback in one click, while allowing motivated customers to easily add comments.
- 4. Build an internal dealer score.** What can't be measured can't be managed. Introducing a simple method of measurement is critical to improving your dealer network. Based on factors including response time, customer satisfaction, total leads, and ignored leads, a single weighted score can be calculated to effectively rank your dealers by performance. Use this data internally to reward your high-performing dealers and to correct, train, or cull your lower-performing dealers. It is not imperative to reveal this number to the dealers, but it is imperative to understand how well they perform.
- 5. Build the dealer score into your locator.** The dealer locator can leverage this ranking data to promote higher-performing dealers. For example, if the user searches for dealers within 10 miles of their zip code, the locator can push results with a higher rank higher in the list while still respecting the customer's choice of distance. It can also help with sorting territory overlaps. If two dealers service the same territory, the higher performing dealer can be presented first.
- 6. Let your dealers know that these factors matter.** Send your dealers a quarterly performance report that describes the various benefits of being in your dealer network. Include the total number of phone calls, emails, profile views and searches. This "gamification" uses performance data to dynamically enhance a dealer's profile. Engaged dealers will seek to respond faster, knowing that response time factors into the amount of business they receive.
- 7. Let dealers decide which reviews appear publicly.** Each review in MetaLocator is, by default, not shown to the general public. When the review is created, it generates an email notification to the dealer which includes an option to publish the review on their locator profile. This method gives the dealer a sense of control over their profile and provides an opportunity to engage the dealer.

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