If you don’t make your calls, you’re DONE.

JENNIFER CARROLL, TROPHY NISSAN, GSM

WOMEN IN AUTO

SEE PG. 9 FOR FREE SOCKS!
Discover what the BDC Director crafted at Morrie’s Automotive Group on page 10.
If you don’t make your calls, you’re done.

Learn how Jennifer Carroll, Trophy Nissan GSM, uses the phone to perfect the balance of customer service and sales.

By Monica Dziak
Marketing & Biz Development

Everybody knows if you don’t make your phone calls, you’re done,” declares Jennifer Carroll, GSM at Trophy Nissan in Mesquite, TX.
Carroll understands the grit that goes into seeing sales success and uses that tenacity to help everyone who receives a paycheck from Trophy Nissan. There’s no magic sauce to her 21-year success; it’s just pounding the phones and making your dials.

Call them until they buy was Carroll’s mantra: “I called people three times a day until they told me and other people at the dealership to stop calling them.”

“Selling cars was a high for me; it was a thrill,” she tells me, smiling. “I’d just be on top of the world from the sheer interaction with each customer and being able to say I could do it. In any role I’ve ever taken on in my life, it’s always been ‘How can I be the best? I want to be number one,’ I want to prove to everybody I will always be number one.”

That mindset has been her anchor until now. As a GSM—one running an absolute powerhouse comprised of 243 people—it’s no longer about her; it’s about her customers and employees—helping the latter be the best at their job.

But that comes with its own challenges. Particularly, the consistent clash of getting agents to hammer the phones while still maintaining a high customer service standard (i.e.: not bothering people). In an industry hyper-focused on monetary results, it’s Carroll’s duty to help her team achieve that balance.

A TEXAS-SIZED CUSTOMER SERVICE EXPERIENCE

While selling is overwhelmingly the number-one focus for most car dealers, Carroll’s team challenges the status quo by taking time to build relationships with each customer walking through the doors. Carroll knows that to accomplish this, it’s not just about pounding the phones—it requires going a step further and having quality conversations with each prospect.

She tells me if a Nissan is price comparable at three or four different stores, the customer will make an appointment and choose to buy from you when he or she knows you’re genuine, caring and empathetic over the phone.
The same thing goes for Service: Sales may sell the first car, but Service sells the third, fourth and fifth car: “You have our people building relationships over the phone and then customers don’t want to buy from anyone else,” Carroll says. “It’s that trust factor, it’s that commonality, that bond. A lot of people think this is about taking their money, but here, we’re all about relationships. I am one man’s longest female relationship – he’s sixty-years-old and he’s been buying cars from me here for twenty-one years.”

Carroll is strategic with her time and prioritizes relationship building. For her to accomplish such, she looks at the Missed Opportunity Report to view calls that: never connected, had no appointment request and/or were soft appointments. No stranger to the effort that goes into outbound calling, Carroll goes through these leads every single day, either in morning or evening. She combs through the missed calls and business opportunities from the previous day, telling customers on the phone “This is Jennifer with Trophy Nissan, if there’s anything you need, you can reach out to me here,” providing them her direct line and email address for easy follow-up. Not many managers out there take the time for follow-up, but she understands the long-
term positive effect it has on her customer base.

“I love making outbound calls on a recorded line – especially to upset customers to right whatever wrong may have happened,” the Trophy Nissan GSM says.

Word tracks are pivotal; Carroll emphasizes that agents emphatically and responsively engage with callers via proper phone etiquette.

“Ninety percent of the reason callers don’t show for their appointment is because our agents didn’t provide them with a thoughtful response or didn’t follow up with them regarding their appointment,” Carroll says. “So many people want to take the easy route and use a generic phone script or template and it’s just, bleh. It doesn’t connect with the consumer; it’s not tangible; it has no thought process to it; it has no proper response. If you can talk to a customer and create a thoughtful response and have a genuine conversation with someone, he or she is going to buy from you no matter what – phone skills are everything.”

**WHAT GETS MEASURED GETS MANAGED**

Providing a top-notch customer experience is important – what’s difficult is cultivating that excellent and personalized experience while still hitting your sales numbers. To help her team achieve (and exceed) quota, Carroll lives by the Hawthorne Effect: the basic belief that people improve their performance when they know they’re being monitored.

To expedite sales productivity, Carroll is incredibly aware outbound calling lies at the forefront. In fact, she’s set a standard to where every agent must make twenty-five or more daily outbound calls in order to acquire all dealership spiffs.

“If it’s not in the pay plan, it’s just extra,” she explains. “If an agent bills 10 cars, he or she gets 500 phone calls. If you don’t make your 25 calls a day, then you’re out. I had an agent miss 3 phone calls and it cost him $500. Everyone here knows it’s important – it’s non-negotiable. All spiffs are tied to outbound calls.”

Trophy Nissan’s culture of phone
accountability is positively contagious. Once one agent sees another agent is “on the sauce,” as Carroll puts it (AKA seeing their outbound calls pay off), the other agent will make his or her calls, too.

By viewing each agent’s outbound phone stats daily, Carroll can easily enforce motivation and quickly reward individuals who are making at least twenty-five calls per day.

Carroll identifies if and which agents are connecting with customers and requesting firm appointments on outbound calls, as well as any soft appointments she and her team should follow up on. Pinpointing soft appointments results in essentially free money (hello, spiffs) for agents who need some more outbound calls under their belt for the day.

No one at Trophy Nissan is exempt from outbound calling. Carroll expects her fellow managers’ involvement in making confirmation calls on firm appointments that were generated from outbound efforts.

“I’m a firm believer in managerial confirmation calls, one hundred percent,” she says. “Follow up and engage your customers via email with your name and face in it. Heck, if the caller is interested in a Nissan Rogue, send a selfie of you with the car saying you’re looking forward to their appointment at noon – why wouldn’t you do that?”

What gets measured gets managed. Carroll can’t help her people perform well and achieve success if she’s not leading them toward success; she can’t lead them there without monitoring their performance. A culture of phone accountability is everything.

If the caller is interested in a Nissan Rogue, send a selfie of you with the car saying you’re looking forward to his or her appointment at noon – why wouldn’t you do that?

– JENNIFER CARROLL
Enforcing solid phone processes in order to build customer relationships and boost sales has surely proven to be successful. During the month of August, Trophy Nissan has:

1. Maintained a closing percentage that’s up month-over-month
2. Achieved & sustained a Car Wars Pursue score of 100%, double the amount of all Car Wars dealers
3. Made 41,085 outbound calls
4. Improved phone training, ensuring each agent crafts thoughtful responses on every outbound phone call

Jennifer Carroll is the current GSM at Trophy Nissan in Mesquite, TX.

Carroll concludes our talk with, “Everybody knows if you don’t make your phone calls, you’re done.” The Trophy Nissan team surely isn’t done being the gold standard under Carroll’s leadership.

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1The Car Wars Pursue score is calculated by the percentage of outbound live conversations a dealership achieves out of its Pursue Goal (based on best practices and call volume).
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Scan with your camera or QR scanner app

WWW.CARWARS.COM/SWEEPSTAKES

All entrants receive FREE Car Wars socks and one lucky grand prize winner will receive a flat-screen TV and free team breakfast for a month.
What’s the recipe for success? Ask the BDC Director at Morrie’s Automotive Group, Angela Schliinz, and she’ll tell you it consists of three key ingredients: people, process, and accountability – combined, they drive productivity and performance. In the past four years, Schliinz built a centralized BDC from the ground up that now encompasses eleven stores, nineteen departments and thirty agents who handle both Sales and Service calls.

With eighteen years of industry experience, Schliinz understands how crucial the phone is in a car buyer’s journey – especially in the BDC. It’s the dealership’s front-
line and the customer’s first touch point. It’s essential BDC agents are well-trained to tee up appointments and create exceptional caller service. By focusing on the phone, Schliinz overcame the centralized BDC challenges of being off-site and lacking day-to-day interaction with the dealership, managers, and salespeople. By leveraging technology, she cultivated a phone-first culture and perfected a winning recipe for a high-performing centralized BDC, increasing phone sales by 10% and maintaining a closing average of 30% on inbound Sales calls.

INGREDIENT 1

PEOPLE
Every recipe is only as good as the quality of its ingredients. The same can be said with a BDC: it’s only as successful as its agents.

Schliinz knows a centralized BDC’s success heavily relies on knowledgeable, skilled agents answering the phone. There’s more to inbound calls than merely answering and collecting the caller’s information to set the appointment. Building the relationship books that appointment. Schliinz ensures her agents have not only Sales skills but also great phone skills to create a top-notch caller experience – from the first ring all the way to the booked appointment – and long after.

The BDC Director prioritizes agents’ product knowledge and ingrains them in the selling process. Every agent is equipped with an extensive information guide to answer questions that may arise on the call, including specific vehicle and inventory inquiries for every dealership. This guide provides the assurance of consistent customer communication and alignment between the centralized BDC and dealerships. As a result and despite not being on location, the agents confidently answer vehicle-specific questions for every dealership and better assist callers on their buying journey.
The path for success is paved with consistency and the right processes. Schliinz implemented a solid training process with one-on-one coaching sessions and continuous monitoring to set up her team for long-term success.

Schliinz explains her standard, “We’re a ‘phone-first’ dealership. We believe in reaching out to the customer with the phone first before email or any other means of communication. When we can build the relationship and set that appointment during the call, we have less legwork.”

Schliinz sits with every BDC agent bi-weekly, alternating between Sales and Service. During these coaching sessions, Schliinz meets with the agent and his or her direct manager, listening to a chosen call at random; it could be one that resulted in a firm appointment or a missed opportunity. They review the call and discuss where the agent did well or where he or she could make improvements. This ongoing feedback empowers the agent to know exactly how to improve on future calls.

“It’s the biggest part of my job, 100% – listening to calls and coaching them when they didn’t do a good job at setting the appointment or encouraging them to follow the process when they did a great job,” Schliinz says. “The people willing to critique themselves and become better will take what they learn during training sessions and apply it on the next call.”
INGREDIENT 3

ACCOUNTABILITY

Once people and a process are in place, the third piece is accountability. Schliinz’s secret weapon here is technology; she leverages agent performance data and uses it to hold her team accountable.

Schliinz runs regular reports to monitor her staff’s performance and tracks the number of follow-up calls made, appointments set, confirmations, no-shows and sales.

The Enterprise Staff Performance Report helps her monitor the BDC’s activity. This high-level report gives her a “phone activity snapshot” to identify which agents are doing well and who could benefit from additional coaching. The report’s live updates show her which agents are making quality outbound calls and booking appointments on Sales and Service calls.

Schliinz recalls, “Prior to Car Wars, I’d almost guess or just try to listen in and hear where people needed help coaching. Now I can be alerted when a call doesn’t go the way it should have. We’re able to proactively get on the phone with those customers and make sure they’ve been taken care of.”

The data allows her to manage her people and time better, gives her the edge to know exactly who and where to focus her attention, and optimizes her time and the success of Morrie’s Automotive Group.

RESULTS

Schliinz achieved the following results after one year of using Car Wars and her well-crafted recipe for success at the centralized BDC:

- BDC Agents Appointment Rate: 51%
- Sold Vehicles from Inbound Phone Calls: 10% (up)
- Inbound Sales Call Close Rate: 30%
Schliinz emphasizes the results are not without effort: “It proves what can happen when you focus on one area – the phone – and use the data that’s given. It’s truly how you use it. Seeing the percentages is cool, but if you don’t do anything with it, it doesn’t matter. Our group and my people have worked really hard to become better, and it shows,” she says.

Morrie’s Automotive Group is quickly growing, with plans to acquire more dealerships within the next twelve months. Schliinz’s success of the centralized BDC is reflected in the growth of the group.

Schliinz reflects on the accomplishment of the BDC, “It’s not really about me or my successes. It’s about making each of these guys as successful as possible. So, I say people first, process second, accountability third; it’s really the recipe for success.”

Angela Schliinz is the current BDC Director at Morrie’s Automotive Group in Minnetonka, MN.
BECOMING CRISP

THE NUMBERS BEHIND

GENDER-BASED SELLING: FEMALE EDITION

Your female callers have the highest close rate potential – they call in less than males but are more likely to buy.¹ How can you use CRISP to effectively sell to females over the phone?

**FEMALE CALLERS**

**CONNECT**
Call less and are more likely to hang up on hold

**REQUEST/INVITE**
Are more likely to accept appointment invitation

**SET**
Prefer to discuss buying details in person

**PURSUE**
Are eager to buy when they have made decision

**TIPS**
- Connect callers within 30 seconds
- Ask for the appointment *early* and *often* on every call
- Set a firm appointment
  - Firm appts are 3x more likely to show!²
- Reach out to female callers who:
  1. Didn’t connect
  2. Made a soft appt
  3. Declined an appt
  4. Hung up on hold

¹According to NPR, females are responsible for 85% of automotive purchases.
²Based on Car Wars data, firm appointments ensure a 75% show rate.

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No industry is immune to the pressures associated with constant innovation, and automotive is no exception. The BDC, once one of the most cutting-edge additions to a dealership, has remained stagnant in its progress over the last few years. I spoke with industry expert Toni Anne Fardette, founder and CEO of The Billion Dollar Girl, Inc., about her take on the BDC. Prior to starting her own company, Fardette spent 10 years at Atlantic Auto Group serving as the Director of Business Development. Fardette’s years of BDC experience, coupled with her drive for improvement, keep her as an innovative force bringing new insight to old practices within the industry.

Fardette stands by the need for a BDC, but insists it must be reimagined to remain productive. New challenges require a new approach, but this doesn't always mean completely destroying the foundation. “The old way is a department with limited product knowledge where all they have the ability to do is make appointments,”
she elaborated. “That will work for some customers, but with constant advancements in technology and all the different tools that are out there – all the transparency that’s available – I think that requires a different type of mentality.”

Fardette has gone one step further and rebranded the BDC as a CCC, or Customer Concierge Center, to represent this new mentality. “When I think concierge, I think ‘one stop shop.’ You can go to this one person and you can get everything, as opposed to going to various departments,” she said as she reflected on the purpose of the BDC. Concierges have all the information a guest could possibly need – BDC agents must have this same level of knowledge.

Customers today expect a higher level of service and are armed with more knowledge than ever before. Exceeding expectations is the new expectation; BDCs must pivot to fit that role. Agents need to be armed with training to properly serve today’s Internet savvy customers. “We know that 20% of the time, someone is going to push for price or lease payments,” Fardette stated. “The old ‘Well, you have to come in’ isn’t going to work.” With the internet at their disposal, customers will get the information they seek, if not from you, then from someone else.

Although change is needed, at its core, the goal of the BDC remains simple: “Do we want the BDC to sell the car over the phone if they don’t have to? Absolutely not, the goal is still what it was,” she clarifies. “Sell yourself, sell the dealership, sell the appointment, when you can. But when you can’t, you need to be prepared with a backup plan and have training in process.”
The CCC is not a stark departure from the foundation the BDC has laid, rather it is an adaptation to fit today’s customers.

Despite the BDC’s success over the past decade, it’s clear there is still a place for a reimagined version, and Fardette’s CCC is a step in the right direction. By adjusting the mindset of what it needs to accomplish, the CCC can better serve customers by striving to be a “one-stop-shop.” As innovations continue to rock the industry, one thing remains clear: dealers will always need a way to manage their phones.

Toni Anne Fardette has spent more than 18 years in the automotive industry, starting as a receptionist and eventually serving as the Director of Business Development for Atlantic Auto Group. In 2017 she created The Billion Dollar Girl Inc., a full service automotive training, process and consulting company.
01 Change your BDC’s mentality
CCC agents must be trained to handle today’s highly educated customers. Have word tracks and phone scripts in place to deal with price or lease shopper callers.

02 Prepare your agents to do more than just set the appointment – they must set the expectation.
Make sure CCC agents have a solid foundation of product knowledge via the proper training. Consider cross training your CCC agents with sales staff.

03 Confidence is key. You must commit your word tracks and processes to memory.
If you sound like you are reading, the customer will control the call instead of you!

04 A good CCC agent will utilize all contact mediums.
Agents should not only be calling but emailing, video chatting and texting your customers as well.
05 Manage your CCC with measurable metrics.
CCC agents should be averaging a minimum of 120 outbound calls per day with a 10-15% contact ratio and a 50-60% appointment set ratio on contacts.

06 Remember: more than 7 in 10 callers will buy something different than what they originally inquired about.
Train your people not to get stuck when a customer’s desired vehicle is not in stock. Find out what features he or she wants and always invite the caller into the dealership.

07 CCC reps should be trained on how to handle each third-party site your dealership uses.
Consumers today are much more educated with the ability to obtain information from multiple different sources. Have your agents follow along with customers as they discuss Internet listings.
MY QUALIFICATIONS

10 Years Managing The Atlantic Automotive Group, a 1.1 Billion Dollar Dealer Group and Top 10 USA Dealer

- Created customized CRM Processes to handle everything from customer follow up to lead generation
- Managed Millions in Google Ad Spend
- Created a comprehensive Digital Marketing Strategy with Strategic Vendor partnerships to continually insure maximum profit

WHAT I CAN OFFER

Phone Skills Training  Email Etiquette  ROI on 3rd Party Vendors  Online Reputation Management  Process Map Building  Online Video Training

For All Departments

- Review of the CRM Setup
- Text, Chat and Video Email Training
- Vendor Accountability
- Social Media Marketing
- Mystery Shopping
- Software

For individual projecting and forecasting and goals

- Training on all relevant sites: OEM 3rd party and competing dealer sites
- Review of AD Spend
- Recommend Vendors for maximum opportunity for net lift
- Monthly accountability calls with 3rd party vendors, marketing agencies and web providers
- Video Production

For more information, visit www.TheBillionDollarGirl.com or call 631-538-0940.
What Our Top Salesperson Wants You to Know

About Your Dealership

How One Car Wars Salesperson Climbed Her Way to the Top in Automotive Telephony

By Mary Haye, Project Manager

Lauren Zappin (or better known as LZ), Car Wars Director of Channel Sales, is consistently at the top of our sales scoreboard, wins almost every company Yelp award and has taken our partner relationships to another level. She doesn’t let anything stop her from providing dealers with a much-needed business solution: Car Wars. Get to know her a little better from our latest chat together.

Car Wars: You have bit more of a gypsy story than most of the Car Wars team. Let’s talk about that. How did you wind up working here?
**Zappin:** I’ve known Justin Sarnowski, our VP of Product, since I was a kid. I was living in Latin America and he called me up asking for advice on how to expand our reviewer base there. One thing led to another, and I ended getting hired to expand our call reviewer base [Humanatic] worldwide.

**Car Wars:** What led you to switch from recruiting overseas to selling a phone solution?

**Zappin:** I was forced by the hands that be. (But really though.) I think it was after my last – of many – pitches to Reid [our CEO] to completely overhaul one of our processes. He decided I’d be better suited in

**Above:** Zappin interacts with a dealer during an automotive conference in October. Her favorite thing about working with dealership managers is showing them how they can improve their phone processes to see overall business results.
a sales role convincing dealers to alter their phone processes. Moving back to the U.S. for a sales position after living out of the country for six years was pretty tough for me, but it’s like any change in life: you just do it and roll with what life brings you.

Car Wars: It seems like you instantly saw results in automotive sales. You’ve rapidly expanded the largest dealer groups in the U.S. and Canada’s adoption and reliance on Car Wars. You haven’t been in sales super long, but you’ve helped multiply the success of others on your team. What do you think has been the secret to your own success?

Zappin: I think a lot of people are trying to sell a product rather than genuinely trying to solve a problem. Car Wars offers so many intuitive tools that can be used to improve the dealers process. I work with them to get an understanding of how their individual store operates and show them the tools and functionality that will help drive more appointments and accountability. For example, most dealers aren’t going to say “I need Dynamic Customer Recognition” [one of our AI features] because they don’t know what it is or how it connects customers to agents quicker. By working together with these dealers, I show them how making simple changes to their process – combined with staff accountability and enhanced routing features – will improve their sales.

Car Wars: What do you want dealers to know about their own store?

Zappin: Most dealerships really struggle with their connection rate. If they want to see change, they need to start looking at the culture they’ve created with their staff. Oftentimes a dealer’s Connect score is a reflection of the customer-centric culture their staff either has or doesn’t have.

It’s really important to have
staff focus on taking care of all customers, not just ‘their’ customer. Often overlooked, the receptionists can make or break your process. Receptionists (and sales staff) should be familiar with how to search a customer number in CRM/DMS and be focused on connecting that customer to someone at the dealership who can answer his or her question – even if the person he or she is specifically looking for isn’t around. Otherwise, like we see at most dealerships, customers are being transferred to voicemail with very little to no follow up.

Car Wars: What do you like most about working with our customers?

Zappin: To be completely honest, one of my favorite parts is just talking to these guys who have been in the business for so long and hearing all of their hilarious and crazy stories.
What Does it Mean to Own the Phone?

No More Excuses and No More Lost Revenue. We’ve Unleashed Our Offerings So You Can Unleash Your Potential

By Mike Haeg, Vice President of Automotive, Car Wars

Our goal here is simple: help car dealers Own The Phone. Let’s start with a different question though: What does it mean to be “owned by the phone?”

Dealers share a resounding agreement that the phone is both mission critical and leaking revenue. Yes, leads are expensive and precious. Yes, callers often have a poor experience simply getting to a qualified agent. Yes, more firm appointments are critical.

Then the candid insight flows in. Dealers tell us the phone is a pain in the butt. They’re anxious about trying to review every single call. Their to-do list is long and “fix the phones” feels really hard. Every dealer knows the phone is mission critical, but more and more are getting ticked off at the leakage.
Everything we do here at Car Wars is designed to help you fight those feelings and Own The Phone.

That’s why you’ve probably heard a lot about Car Wars Unleashed in the last few months. We’re unleashing everything we’ve got: Sales, Service and Artificial Intelligence to ensure your agents and processes are CRISP.

Being top-notch on the phone doesn’t need to be complicated or time consuming anymore. That’s why we’ve bundled everything we’ve got into one simple package so those expensive leads and valued customers can receive a positive experience when calling your dealership.

By leveraging human reviews, AI and CRISP metrics, our streamlined Car Wars offers:

**VOICE RECOGNITION**

- Find out what happened on every call with agent performance analysis, Voice Recognition and a Call Recap.
**Voice Recognition** eliminates phone code dependency by identifying sales agents’ unique speech melody.

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**AGENT PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS**

- Quickly alert Sales and/or Service managers if a call is mishandled and needs follow up.
- Make phone handling easier with on-screen live calls, DMS data and instant CRM integration.

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**Talk Time data allows agents to adjust speaking frequency and build rapport with customers.**
ON-SCREEN LIVE CALLS

- Help you pursue your best leads with true accountability, thanks to our click to call and outbound performance data.

Dealers use Car Wars for every call, every day. They’re sick of slapping a band-aid on a recurring wound and are finally ready to Own The Phone. This means more leads, more booked appointments and a better customer experience.

A cool by-product? Dealers who Own The Phone sleep better at night.

It’s time to unleash your dealership’s phone potential. Visit carwars.com to get started.
CAR WARS IS UNLEASHED

We’ve bundled everything you need to Own The Phone into one simple package.

Every single inbound and outbound Sales and Service call is reviewed and categorized.

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- Most Qualified Routing
- Relevant Caller Info on Live Calls
- Open in CRM Link on Live Calls
- CDK DMS Dip for Service Info

DO MORE WITH EXISTING OPPORTUNITIES
- Missed Opportunity Alerts
- Caller Sentiment Detection
- Texting
- Sensitive Information Removal
- Keyword Detection and Search

GAIN COMPREHENSIVE INSIGHT
- CRISP Reporting
- Voice Recognition
- Caller Gender Detection
- Foreign Language Translation
- Voicemail Transcription
- Call Recaps

ACTIVELY IMPROVE PHONE PERFORMANCE
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- Daily Agent Stats Report
- Car Wars Edge
- Listen In to Live Calls
- Agent Talk Time Analysis
- Facial Expression Detection

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