



# Referral

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**Preeminence**



## Automobile Dealer

**Here an automobile dealer promotes his business by supplying incredible customer service to everybody in the community, not just his customers. By offering extraordinary services for the community he sets his business apart from his competitors. This is what he had to say:**

The luxury car business is a big referral business. We're about 60% new car referral and about 30% used car referral. Just to give you an idea, there are 180 Lexus dealers in the country and we're about number twenty.

First when we deliver a car to a customer we ask them if it's all right if we send letters to their neighbors. We keep crisscross directories and then we send what we call a beautification letter to the neighborhood and ask them if they noticed whether their neighbor got a new car and let them know them where he got it. If they're interested we tell them that we'll be happy to come by and show it to them. All of our salespeople are totally computerized and have a bank of maybe 100 different letters available. We send out about 300 to 400 letters a day, just as normal business.

Secondly, we send a big white thank-you cup to the offices of people who buy. They walk around with this cup that has "thank you" on it, and on the other side it has our name. So people are always asking, "What is the cup?" and we get referrals that way.

Thirdly, after about the third week, we call their offices asking for referrals. By that time the cup and things have hit so they're using those as instigators to pull referrals. We also get and exchange a lot of referrals from other automobile dealers. We say, "If you've got somebody, who asks about a Lexus, send them to us. We're not going to bury your product; we won't say bad things about you. We will just explain the thing." The other salesman who has referred them looks good because he sent them someplace where they've been well taken care of. Everybody's polite and everything is nice so he looks good. We're happy and we do the same exchange with them. We will send somebody over to them, and this way it's very effective. We get a lot of people here.

We find that most people that refer to us just want the people to be taken care of properly. I mean, we do have programs where we pay referral fees, money and all types of things. But most of the people just want the people they refer to be treated well. They want to be proud that they referred them to somebody that's going to take care of them. We've also done things like art shows for the community. We would bring in art galleries, hang three or four hundred pictures, keep them up and invite the community in to something that has nothing to do with cars. We don't allow any selling at that time. What it does is expose





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people that are too intimidated to come in and visit us and people who have never been in to visit us. This way we get people we normally wouldn't see because they come in and enjoy the art. Then people start saying, "What an experience we had there. We should talk to them." We do golf tournaments and we do hospice. Things like that. We're a big hospice supporter. Follow-up is the key as referrals are generated from follow-up. We've had some people we've followed for three years before they buy a car. You know, I have one guy that I personally waited on; he came in at least ten, fifteen times. I mean, we're real good friends now.

