



Owner Retention Experience

Dealer Profile • Seelye Wright Kia of Battle Creek

Battle Creek, MI

Glenn Altobelli

Service and Parts Director



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Many fixed operations marketing programs promise the type of results and success that make a Service Director's mouth water. However, when push comes to shove, many fall short. Glenn Altobelli, Service and Parts Director at Seelye Wright Kia of Battle Creek and member of Kia's service advisory forum, knew what he was hoping to gain from the Kia Owner Retention Experience when the dealership enrolled in February 2011. "I needed a service reminder program that worked. I wanted to generate the type of results that I was promised when I signed up, such as the ability to drive service traffic, increase owner loyalty and improve customer pay revenue," Altobelli explains.

Before enrolling in the Kia Owner Retention Experience (KORE), which is powered by OneCommand, Seelye Wright Kia of Battle Creek used various providers and paid nearly \$1,200 per month for its marketing program. Altobelli says, "I had used other programs and I had never seen those work. I was cautiously optimistic when I enrolled in the KORE Program. The most enticing part was the ability to reach customers immediately."

The KORE Program automatically delivers multi-channel communications via voice, email, text and targeted direct mail without requiring any manual work by the dealership's staff. Initially, the email and text communications were most appealing channels for Altobelli, but to his surprise, the voice communications have been the biggest hit. "Overwhelmingly, the voice messages have generated the most positive response. I believe our customers really like and appreciate receiving a phone call when their vehicle is due for service. Whether they answer or receive a voicemail, this channel grabs customers' attention and prompts response," says Altobelli.

For Seelye Wright Kia, the KORE Program is not only bringing customers in to the Service Department, but it's also helping to drive an increase in customer pay revenue. In June, July and August of 2011, customer pay revenue was up 42% - 48% over the previous year. Additionally, Seelye Wright Kia's customer retention is at an astounding 58% and continues to climb each month. It's no wonder why the dealership has been recognized as Service Elite for consecutive years.

"We are located in a tough market in Michigan that was hit hard by the recession. Before the KORE Program, many customers weren't coming in to the Service Department for regular maintenance. Other customers were visiting 10,000 miles past their scheduled service visit.

The biggest improvement since implementing the program is that more customers are now coming in on time for regular maintenance. We want to see those customers because we know they'll immediately think of us if their vehicle needs more major maintenance down the road," Altobelli states. "I see on a daily basis how the maintenance reminders are working."

Seasonal, informative maintenance and holiday-focused multi-channel campaigns are another new addition to the marketing strategy of Seelye Wright Kia. Provided by OneCommand on a monthly basis, these turn-key campaigns are easy to execute, display goodwill in the community and drive service traffic. To coincide with the 10th anniversary of the September 11th attacks, Seelye Wright Kia delivered a simple message honoring the victims. They intentionally didn't include coupons and used the email campaign as a way to let customers know the dealership was remembering the tragedy. Altobelli says many customers called just to say thank you for the email, and that they appreciated how their local Kia dealership honored that unforgettable day.

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In closing, Altobelli bluntly states, "If you aren't using the KORE Program, you're foolish. The cost is minimal, it can be paid for with DAS or RMF funds and the results are astounding. In all my years in this business, I've never seen a program that yields results like this one. For dealers who are enrolled in the Kia Owner Retention Experience and can't say the same things I am, I encourage you to make sure you're using the program as intended. Select your coupons, get all communications firing and listen to the best practices of your Account Manager. If you do it once, your customers will come pouring in and your owner retention will skyrocket."

