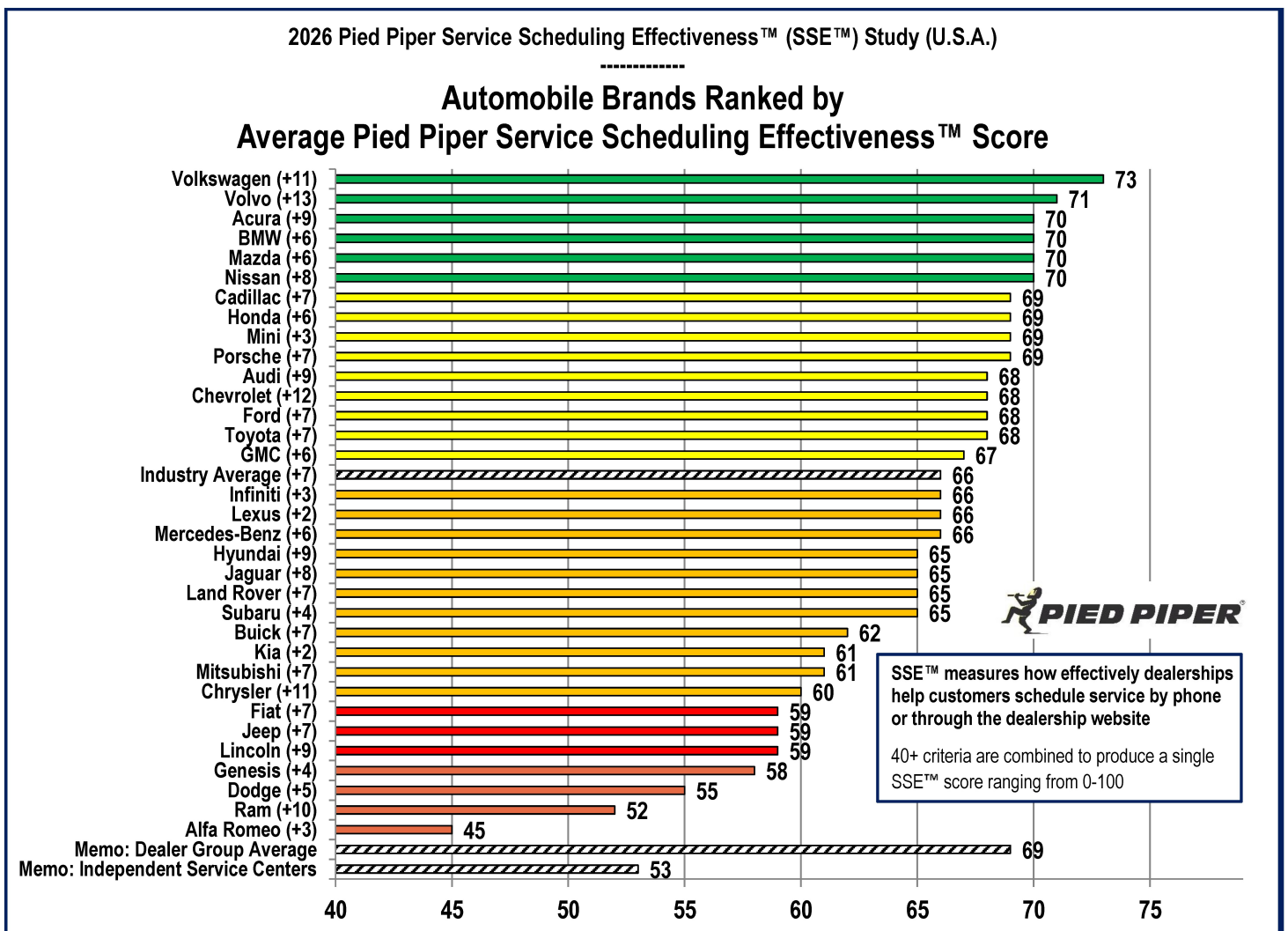




VOLKSWAGEN RANKED HIGHEST IN 2026 AUTO INDUSTRY SERVICE SCHEDULING EFFECTIVENESS™ STUDY

- *Second annual Pied Piper study measured how effectively auto dealerships schedule service by website and telephone*
- *Volkswagen ranked highest overall and for telephone scheduling; Volvo ranked highest for website scheduling; Overall industry improved substantially*
- *AI improved routine scheduling but often breaks down with complex requests and handoffs*
- *Independent service centers outperformed dealerships on key scheduling measures*

AUSTIN, TEXAS, USA – September 14th, 2026 – Volkswagen was the highest ranked brand in Pied Piper's 2026 Service Scheduling Effectiveness™ (SSE™) Auto Industry Study, which compared the average customer experiences when scheduling service through dealership websites and by telephone. Volvo ranked second overall, followed by a four-way tie between Acura, BMW, Mazda, and Nissan. All six brands averaged SSE scores of 70 or higher on a 100-point scale.



Why Measure Both Website and Phone Service Scheduling Effectiveness?

Customers expect scheduling vehicle service to be quick and straightforward, and with 70% to 80% of dealership operating profit coming from aftersales operations, an advantage in the service scheduling process can have a significant impact on overall profitability.

Approximately two-thirds of service customers still prefer to schedule appointments by telephone, while online scheduling continues to grow. Customers also often choose the phone for more complex service needs and online scheduling for routine maintenance.

“Top-performing brands and dealers remove friction,” said Cameron O’Hagan, Pied Piper’s Vice President of Metrics and Analytics. “When instead a dealership makes the process difficult, customers have plenty of alternatives, and losing the appointment today can mean losing that customer for the long term.”

Second Annual Auto SSET™ Study – Industry Improves Significantly from 2025

2026 marks the second year of the Service Scheduling Effectiveness™ (SSET™) Auto Industry Study, and overall results improved substantially. Every brand improved its overall SSE score, with the industry average increasing 7 points and five brands improving by more than 10 points: Volvo, Chevrolet, Volkswagen, Chrysler and RAM.

- **Major Improvements in Website Scheduling** – Website scheduling showed the largest year-over-year improvement, with the industry average increasing 12 points. One brand declined, only by 2 points, while four brands improved by more than 15 points.

Improvements were widespread across key website scheduling measures. Technical problems with service schedulers fell nearly in half, from 9% of the time to 5%. Appointment availability within one week improved by 7 percentage points, follow-up confirmation by both email and text increased by 14 points, and the ability for customers to cancel and/or modify appointments improved by 7 points.

- **Moderate Improvement in Telephone Scheduling** – Telephone scheduling improved more modestly, with the industry average increasing 3 points. Eight brands declined from last year, while seven brands improved by more than 5 points.

Industrywide, dealerships improved several key telephone behaviors: offering to set an appointment increased by 3 percentage points, the average wait for the earliest available appointment shortened by half a day, and proactively asking whether customers had additional service needs increased by 2 points.

Service Scheduling Effectiveness™ – Key Findings for 2026:

Scheduling by Website:

- **Volvo Ranked Highest for Website** – Volvo dealerships led the industry in the website scheduling portion of the study, with an average service website score of 79 out of 100. Volvo dealer websites were the most consistent overall, with the highest rates of successfully scheduling appointments online and allowing customers to cancel or modify appointments.

- **Wide Variation by Brand** – Providing online service scheduling does not guarantee consistent success. Website scheduling failure rates varied dramatically by brand, ranging from less than 1% of the time to 31% of the time, compared to 5% industrywide. The most common barriers were website errors, calendars that failed to load correctly, and inflexible information requirements such as requiring a VIN that prevented customers from immediately scheduling.
- **Email and Text Confirmations Remain Inconsistent** – Service inquiries submitted through dealer websites received an appointment confirmation by both email and text only 59% of the time on average. Email was more common, received by 87% of customers, compared with only 63% receiving a text confirmation.

Scheduling by Telephone:

- **Volkswagen Ranked Highest for Telephone** – Volkswagen dealerships led the industry with an average service telephone score of 69 out of 100, eight points higher than the industry average. Volkswagen dealers had the second highest rate of setting appointments (91% of the time on average) and experiencing half as many issues preventing communication compared to the industry (4% vs. 7% of the time on average).
- **Wide Brand Variability** – Industrywide, 16% of callers were unable to schedule an appointment by phone. For five brands, that rate exceeded 25%, while three brands held it below 10%. The most common barriers were endless hold, phone-tree or AI loops, transfers to voicemail, and inflexible information requirements.

AI Improves Service Scheduling, but Invisible Handoffs Still Fail Customers

AI often handled routine service inquiries quickly and effectively, improving responsiveness for simple scheduling tasks. Performance often breaks down, however, when more complex requests require human assistance or when customer information must pass between dealership systems.

In the study, Pied Piper found that roughly one in three attempted AI-to-human transfers failed, sending customers to voicemail, disconnecting them, or leaving them on endless hold. The typical AI-to-human failure occurred an average of one and a half minutes into the interaction, after the customer had already invested time in the call or chat.

“AI is raising the baseline,” said O’Hagan. “The challenge is what happens around the AI, when information needs to move between dealership systems or when a customer needs a person to take over. Those breakdowns are often invisible unless the entire customer interaction is measured independently.”

Independent Service Centers Outperform Dealerships on Key Telephone Scheduling Measures

The study also evaluated four major independent service center brands: Midas, Pep Boys, Firestone, and Meineke. On average, independent service centers outperformed dealerships on key telephone scheduling measures, while website scheduling performance was mixed:

- **Better Telephone Experience:** Independent service centers delivered a “Mission Excellent” service call 39% of the time, compared with 27% for the average dealership.
- **Fewer Outright Website Scheduling Failures:** Web customers experienced “Mission Failure,” meaning an issue that prevented them from scheduling an appointment, just 2% of the time at independent service centers compared with 5% for the average dealership, although independents scored lower overall for the complete website scheduling experience.

- **Faster Telephone Response:** Customers reached a service advisor in 38 seconds, compared with 66 seconds for the average dealership.
- **Earlier Appointments:** The earliest available appointment when calling an independent service center was just 1.3 days away, less than half the 2.9-day wait at the average dealership.

"Dealerships risk losing service customers to independent service centers if their scheduling experience is poor," said O'Hagan. "Independents have built their reputation on speed and convenience, and dissatisfied customers who switch are unlikely to return once lost."

2026 Auto Brands Compared:

- **Service Website: "Successfully Scheduled Appointment Less Than One Week Out"** - How often did customers of a brand's dealerships successfully schedule a service appointment online that was less than one week out?
 - **More than 95% (<5% failure rate)** of the time on average: Acura, Honda, Mini, Mercedes-Benz, Mitsubishi
 - **Less than 80% (>20% failure rate)** of the time on average: Hyundai, Lincoln, Genesis, Alfa Romeo
- **Service Website: "Received a Confirmation Email or Text"** - How often did the brand's dealerships send a service confirmation email and/or text?
 - **More than 75%** of the time on average: Mazda, Volvo, Nissan
 - **Less than 40%** of the time on average: Dodge, Porsche, Ram, Alfa Romeo
- **Service Website: "Easy to Cancel or Modify Appointment"** - How often did the brand's dealerships provide a clear way to cancel or modify an appointment by website, email, and/or text?
 - **More than 90%** of the time on average: Volvo, Porsche, Acura, Cadillac, Mini, Volkswagen
 - **Less than 75%** of the time on average: Dodge, Ram, Jeep, Fiat, Alfa Romeo
- **Service Telephone: "Answered Call Promptly"** - How often did customers of the brand's dealerships have their call answered promptly, within 3 rings?
 - **More than 80%** of the time on average: Land Rover, Porsche, Volkswagen
 - **Less than 65%** of the time on average: Lincoln, Infiniti, Chrysler, Genesis
- **Service Telephone: "Set an Appointment"** - How often when calling a brand's dealerships was the customer offered an appointment for a specific date and time?
 - **More than 90%** of the time on average: Porsche, Volkswagen, Toyota
 - **Less than 75%** of the time on average: Genesis, Dodge, Ram, Lincoln, Alfa Romeo
- **Service Telephone: "Average Days Out"** - What was the brand's dealerships' average number of days out until the earliest available appointment?
 - **Less than 2 days** on average: Land Rover, Honda, MINI, Lexus
 - **More than 5 days** on average: Ram, Lincoln, Genesis

How Was This Study Conducted?

Pied Piper submitted a total of 6,538 service requests, evaluating a representative sample of 33 U.S. automobile brands and four prominent independent service center brands. Over 40 weighted measurements impacting service revenue and customer loyalty were used to evaluate the telephone and website service scheduling experience at each dealership. The resulting Service Scheduling Effectiveness™ (SSE™) score ranges from 0-100, with each brand's overall SSE score reflecting the average overall performance of its dealerships or service centers.

About Pied Piper Management Company, LLC

Austin, Texas-based Pied Piper continuously measures and monitors how effectively retailers handle customer interactions across phone, web, chat, text and email, immediately alerting local managers when opportunities fall through the cracks. Manufacturers, franchisors, dealer groups, and franchise operators use Pied Piper to uncover missed or mishandled customer interactions, as well as technical failures that would otherwise remain invisible, helping individual locations turn more customer opportunities into revenue. The company also publishes annual industry benchmarking studies ranking brand performance and highlighting both top performers and gaps across industries.

“Traditional dashboards and mystery shopping can be misleading, are often ignored, and may not reveal missed opportunities until weeks or months later,” said O’Hagan. “SSE provides continuous measurement and monitoring of what service customers are actually experiencing at client retailers, with immediate alerts to local managers only when a missed opportunity occurs.”

Other recent Pied Piper PSI® industry studies include:

- 2026 Service Scheduling Effectiveness™ (SSE™) Auto Dealer Group Industry Study (MileOne Autogroup ranked first)
- 2026 Lead Handling Effectiveness™ (LHE™) Home Services Industry Study (Neighborly Brands' Precision Garage Door Service ranked first)
- 2026 Internet Lead Effectiveness® (ILE®) Auto Dealer Group Industry Study (Napleton Automotive Group ranked first)
- 2025 Dealership Facility Look-Alike Index™ Auto Brand Industry Study (Chevrolet brand ranked first for dealership consistency)

Learn more, request a presentation of full industry study results, or request ongoing PSI® measurement and reporting at www.piedpiperpsi.com.

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**Pied Piper Prospect Satisfaction Index® (PSI®)
Automobile Brands (USA)
Service Scheduling Effectiveness™ (SSE™) 2026 Results**

Brand / Industry	Service Scheduling Effectiveness™ (SSE™) Overall Score	SSE™ Service Website Score Portion	SSE™ Service Telephone Score Portion
Volkswagen	73	77	69
Volvo	71	79	62
Acura	70	76	63
BMW	70	75	65
Mazda	70	76	64
Nissan	70	77	62
Cadillac	69	76	61
Honda	69	73	65
Mini	69	78	60
Porsche	69	69	68
Audi	68	75	60
Chevrolet	68	72	63
Ford	68	74	61
Toyota	68	72	64
GMC	67	70	63
Infiniti	66	74	57
Lexus	66	69	63
Mercedes-Benz	66	74	58
Hyundai	65	71	58
Jaguar	65	68	62
Land Rover	65	67	62
Subaru	65	68	62
Buick	62	64	60
Kia	61	65	57
Mitsubishi	61	65	57
Chrysler	60	66	53
Fiat	59	61	56
Jeep	59	62	55
Lincoln	59	68	49
Genesis	58	68	47
Dodge	55	59	50
Ram	52	55	48
Alfa Romeo	45	41	49
Total Auto Industry Average	66	71	61
Dealer Group Average	69	74	63
Independent Service Center Avg	53	35	70

Source: 2026 Pied Piper PSI® Service Scheduling Effectiveness™ Study (USA) - Scale 0 to 100

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Pied Piper Prospect Satisfaction Index® (PSI®)
Automobile Brand (USA) 2026 Service Scheduling Effectiveness™ (SSE™)
Average Service Website Experiences

Brand / Industry	SSE™ Service Website Score Portion	Customer was able to schedule an appointment on the website for a specific date and time	Average number of days out until the earliest available appointment	Customer received a follow- up confirmation by both email and text	The online scheduler provided a clear way to cancel or modify the appointment after it was made
Volvo	79	100%	4.7	73%	95%
Mini	78	98%	1.3	69%	90%
Nissan	77	97%	1.7	70%	89%
Volkswagen	77	95%	1.7	67%	90%
Acura	76	99%	1.2	65%	92%
Cadillac	76	96%	2.5	69%	91%
Mazda	76	95%	2.5	75%	89%
Audi	75	95%	2.0	65%	85%
BMW	75	97%	1.8	65%	89%
Ford	74	96%	1.6	62%	86%
Infiniti	74	95%	1.1	68%	82%
Mercedes-Benz	74	96%	0.9	60%	88%
Honda	73	98%	0.8	61%	83%
Chevrolet	72	98%	2.5	59%	87%
Toyota	72	95%	1.5	58%	87%
Hyundai	71	93%	3.7	65%	87%
GMC	70	92%	1.6	61%	82%
Lexus	69	94%	0.9	55%	83%
Porsche	69	98%	2.4	35%	93%
Genesis	68	98%	5.7	67%	80%
Jaguar	68	96%	2.6	59%	80%
Lincoln	68	88%	3.2	64%	77%
Subaru	68	95%	1.8	56%	79%
Land Rover	67	92%	1.7	56%	81%
Chrysler	66	95%	2.7	51%	80%
Kia	65	91%	2.6	60%	67%
Mitsubishi	65	96%	1.3	43%	79%
Buick	64	89%	1.9	57%	77%
Jeep	62	97%	2.7	44%	71%
Fiat	61	97%	2.3	50%	67%
Dodge	59	95%	1.5	39%	74%
Ram	55	92%	2.0	32%	72%
Alfa Romeo	41	69%	0.9	29%	50%
Total Auto Industry Average	71	95%	2.0	59%	83%
Dealer Group Average	74	97%	1.6	63%	87%
Independent Service Center Avg	35	98%	0.4	6%	36%

Source: 2026 Pied Piper PSI® Service Scheduling Effectiveness™ Study (USA) - Scale 0 to 100

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Pied Piper Prospect Satisfaction Index® (PSI®)
Automobile Brand (USA) 2026 Service Scheduling Effectiveness™ (SSE™)
Average Service Telephone Experiences

Brand / Industry	SSE™ Service Telephone Score Portion	Customer was offered to set an appointment for a specific date and time	Number of days out until the earliest available appointment	Customer reached service associate within 1 minute	Negative: An issue prevented communication (placed on hold indefinitely, straight to voicemail, etc.)
Volkswagen	69	91%	2.6	64%	4%
Porsche	68	92%	2.3	51%	4%
BMW	65	88%	1.8	48%	4%
Honda	65	88%	1.5	50%	6%
Mazda	64	86%	3.1	61%	9%
Toyota	64	90%	1.9	51%	4%
Acura	63	81%	1.8	59%	8%
Chevrolet	63	86%	3.0	52%	7%
GMC	63	86%	2.7	61%	6%
Lexus	63	86%	1.6	48%	8%
Jaguar	62	87%	3.4	54%	3%
Land Rover	62	83%	1.4	67%	0%
Nissan	62	85%	3.1	57%	11%
Subaru	62	84%	2.1	55%	10%
Volvo	62	85%	3.9	54%	5%
Cadillac	61	86%	3.0	58%	3%
Ford	61	86%	2.9	50%	5%
Audi	60	81%	2.7	45%	10%
Buick	60	83%	3.5	50%	7%
MINI	60	82%	1.5	50%	10%
Hyundai	58	82%	4.3	52%	8%
Mercedes-Benz	58	80%	1.8	46%	9%
Infiniti	57	79%	1.9	45%	17%
Kia	57	81%	4.1	50%	11%
Mitsubishi	57	81%	2.5	68%	6%
Fiat	56	75%	4.2	78%	8%
Jeep	55	79%	4.2	53%	10%
Chrysler	53	75%	3.8	46%	13%
Dodge	50	69%	2.8	62%	12%
Alfa Romeo	49	65%	4.5	67%	12%
Lincoln	49	68%	6.6	44%	12%
Ram	48	69%	5	65%	16%
Genesis	47	71%	7.0	50%	13%
Total Auto Industry Average	61	84%	2.9	54%	7%
Dealer Group Average	63	88%	2.5	48%	7%
Independent Service Center Avg	70	91%	1.3	82%	3%

Source: 2026 Pied Piper PSI® Service Scheduling Effectiveness™ Study (USA) - Scale 0 to 100

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**Pied Piper Prospect Satisfaction Index® (PSI®)
Independent Service Centers (USA)
Service Scheduling Effectiveness™ (SSE™) 2026 Results**

Brand / Industry	Service Scheduling Effectiveness™ (SSE™) Overall Score	SSE™ Service Website Score Portion	SSE™ Service Telephone Score Portion
Pep Boys	56	41	71
Midas	53	31	75
Meineke	52	37	66
Firestone	50	33	66
Independent Service Center Avg	53	35	70
Dealer Group Average	69	74	63
Total Auto Industry Average	66	71	61

Source: 2026 Pied Piper PSI® Service Scheduling Effectiveness™ Study (USA) - Scale 0 to 100

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