

GoTo

Connect

Real Dealers. Real Wins.

How four automotive dealerships transformed the customer experience with GoTo Connect for Automotive.



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What every dealership leader needs to know

How much revenue slips away every time a customer call goes unanswered?

What changes when one platform replaces every disconnected tool your team manages?

Can your phone system answer every call, 24/7 — even when you're short-staffed?

Four real dealers found the answers. Here are their stories.

The phone is still your most important salesperson.



You know the drill. A customer calls about a vehicle. They want it now. They're ready. And then... they're on hold. Or worse, their call drops. Or they get bounced between departments. Or they call after hours and no one picks up.

By the time they hang up, they've already started Googling your competitor.

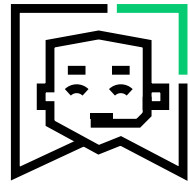
As a dealership leader, you're accountable for everything: OEM franchise performance, CSI scores, gross margins, employee retention and more. The pressure is real and it never lets up. But here's the thing most dealership leaders don't immediately see: a huge percentage of their revenue is quietly slipping away through missed calls, disconnected communication systems, and phone experiences that feel stuck in 2005.

GoTo Connect for Automotive was built specifically for this problem and it's the only all-in-one communications platform built for modern, growth-oriented car dealerships[AI1.1]. Not a generic communication platform with automotive features bolted on, the only purpose-built platform that understands the pace of a service drive, the complexity of a multi-franchise group, and the expectation of every customer who calls your store.

This eBook tells the stories of four real dealerships and what happened **when they finally fixed the one thing holding their customer experience back.**

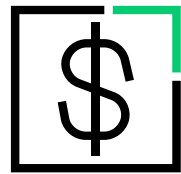
These aren't case studies written for an analyst's checklist. They're the stories of dealer principals and IT managers and communications directors who were solving the same problems you are.

The results speak for themselves.



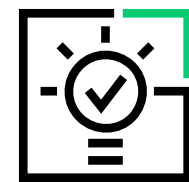
25%

Call volume reduction at Bob Johnson Imports with AI Receptionist



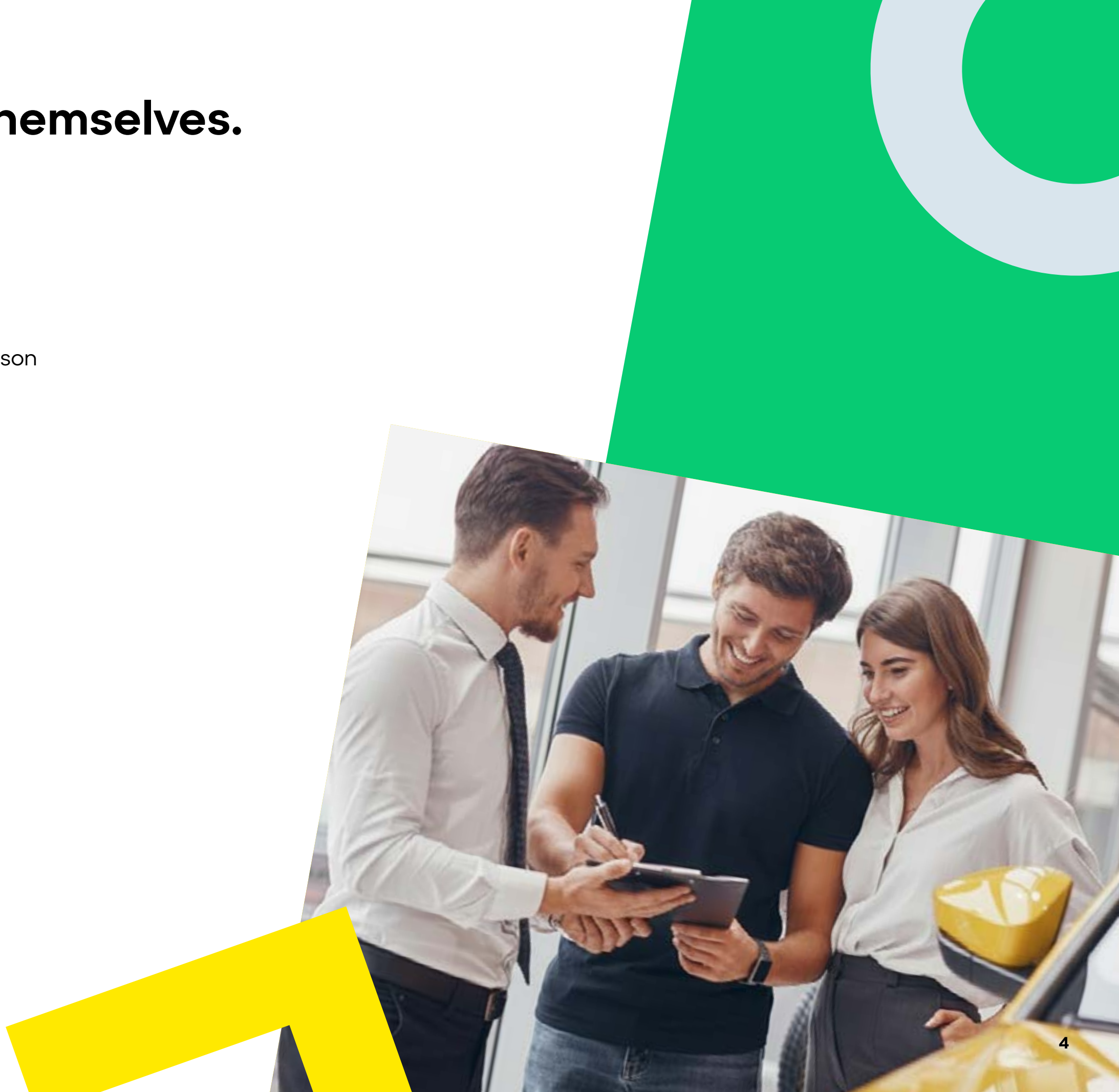
82%

Reduction in unanswered finance calls



90%

Time savings managing call queues at Larry H. Miller Dealerships





GoTo's reporting tools helped Ewing Automotive slash unanswered finance calls from **85% to 15% in weeks**. Their service team now handles 12,000+ calls a month with a rapid 13-second average answer time, boosted by real-time dashboards that keep performance on track."

Bob Calabrese
Client Relations Director
Ewing Automotive

EWING
AUTOMOTIVE GROUP



1 The calls you're missing right now



The problem every busy dealership has

Michaela Hill has a clear-eyed view of her dealership's biggest vulnerability. As Marketing Communications Director at Rick Hill Imports, a Tennessee dealership that's built its reputation on personal, attentive service, she knew exactly what kept slipping through the cracks: the phone calls that came in when every service advisor was already with someone.

It didn't matter how many people were on the phones. There were always missed calls. In a service department where every call is a potential appointment, potentially hundreds of dollars in labor and parts, missed calls meant missed revenue, every single day.

“We used to have complaints, a lot of people saying we never answer the phone, specifically service department related, because they're always flooded with calls.” *Michaela said.*

Rick Hill Imports Case Study • <https://www.goto.com/resources/case-study-rick-hill-imports>



The Solution: an AI receptionist that never clocks out

GoTo Connect for Automotive's AI Receptionist with scheduling capabilities designed specifically for automotive dealerships, offered a straightforward resolution. The AI Receptionist integrates directly with Xtime, transferring appointment records seamlessly into the dealership management system (DMS), so nothing is ever lost. It answers every call, handles common questions, and books service appointments in natural conversational language, whether the call comes in at 9 am on a Tuesday or 10 pm on a Sunday.

The impact was immediate and profound, transforming their operations and allowing them to serve every customer opportunity around the clock.

"It gives us a safety net...that's the best way to put it. It's necessary because it's just simply not possible to catch every single phone call that comes in. So the AI Receptionist allows us that flexibility. If we miss something, it's going to be cradled in that bucket of the AI tool."

Michaela Hill
Marketing Communications Director
Rick Hill Imports

What changed?




The transformation wasn't just operational, it changed the culture of the service department. Service advisors could now be fully present with the customer in front of them, knowing that every incoming call was being handled. Overflow was caught. Appointments were booked. No lead was left behind.

For Rick Hill Imports, GoTo Connect's AI Receptionist wasn't a replacement for their people, it was the reinforcement their people always needed. And once it was in place, it became impossible to imagine the dealership without it.

THE RICK HILL IMPORT LESSON

You can't hire your way out of missed calls. Staffing the service phone lines will always have a ceiling, but GoTo Connect's AI Receptionist removes that ceiling.

**Every call answered. Every appointment captured.
Every customer served, even when your team can't get to the phone.**



2 One system to replace seven



The patchwork problem

Todd Hawkins, IT Manager at BMW of Murray, wasn't looking for a new phone system. His dealership, the exclusive BMW dealer across two Utah locations, serving Salt Lake City, Bountiful, and Pleasant Grove, still had 18 months left on its existing contract.

But the system was exhausting. Every feature carried additional costs. Reporting required a separate subscription. Call recording was another vendor. Texting customers? Yet another tool. And the underlying platform itself? Unreliable. Updates that broke more than they fixed. Changes so time-consuming that looking up a single call could take weeks.

“New updates and releases felt like one step forward and two steps back, we would get a release that would break more than it fixed, then have to wait another six months for the vendor to release a patch,” *Todd explained*. **“Something as simple as looking up a call could take weeks, and pulling reports was equally tedious and time-consuming... mind-bogglingly, painfully slow.”**

Making things worse: because the system was billed per user, only the IT team had admin access. When managers wanted reports, they had to route everything through IT, creating a bottleneck that slowed decisions across the dealership.

The demo that changed everything

Todd requested a GoTo Connect demo mostly out of professional curiosity, just to stay informed. He wasn't planning to act on it for over a year. Then he saw the product.

"I did the demo, and it blew my socks off," he said. "I was amazed at the ease of use and seeing what we could do with the reporting and phone tree visualization."

He demoed it for his managers. They agreed to switch immediately, 18 months early, even absorbing the cost of exiting the previous contract.

"Unifying everything into one solution has been amazing. Texting, faxing, recording, and reporting from one central location is a huge upside. I was able to cancel 6 or 7 different products once we made the switch."

Todd Hawkins
IT Manager
BMW of Murray

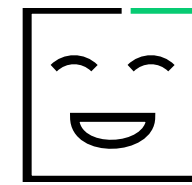
The one-touch sales model, finally supported



BMW of Murray runs a “one-touch” sales philosophy: every customer has a single advisor who handles their experience from initial interest through purchase. GoTo Connect made that promise possible to actually keep

“With GoTo Connect, it means that when a customer has questions, they don’t inadvertently get handed off to an insurance rep or a warranty advisor; they speak directly to their advisor,” Todd said.

Veteran salespeople could finally port their long-standing personal numbers into the system, preserving decades of customer relationships without a single lost contact. Sales staff could text, call, and follow up entirely through the GoTo app, without juggling multiple tools or using personal phones.



6-7

Separate vendor products cancelled after switching to GoTo Connect



<1 mo

Time for IT staff to master full GoTo Connect administration

IT freed. Management empowered.



The impact on IT was immediate. Within a month, the two-person team knew how to do “anything and everything” in GoTo Connect. More importantly, they no longer needed to. Service managers, sales managers, and shop forepersons could now pull their own reports and review call recordings independently with no outside vendors, tickets and enterprise-level complexity or cost.

“It takes so much pressure and time off of our IT group and enables the management team to go in and hold people accountable. It’s been transformative,” *Todd said.*

THE BMW OF MURRAY LESSON

Every separate product your team manages is a drag on their time and attention.

When one platform handles calls, texts, faxes, recordings, and reporting and when managers can access it themselves, IT stops being a bottleneck and starts being a strategic asset.

3 Take care of the customer

Built on a simple promise

Larry H. Miller opened his first dealership in Murray, Utah in 1979. His operating philosophy was as simple as it was powerful: “Take care of the customer.” That phrase became the backbone of everything and eventually, the standard against which a 50+ location, seven-state dealership group measured every decision.

So, when the phone system started failing that standard, action was inevitable.

The old system wasn't built for growth. It was rigid where the business needed flexibility. It required heavy expertise to manage. And it created the worst possible experience for the most important moment: when a customer called and needed help.

Larry H. Miller Dealerships Case Study • <https://www.goto.com/resources/case-study-larry-h-miller-dealerships>



The customer on hold



Daniel Matthey, IT Lead and Co-Manager of GoTo Connect at Larry H. Miller Dealerships, describes what life was like under the old system: customers waiting in silence, with no indication of where they were in the queue, no way to leave a callback, no sense that the dealership valued their time.

Now, customers on hold hear customized music. They receive announcements about expected wait times. They can choose to leave a voicemail or transfer to the front desk. They feel taken care of even before anyone picks up.

“An exceptional customer experience was something we lacked with our old phone system,” *Daniel said.* With GoTo Connect’s drag-and-drop Dial Plan Editor, that changed immediately.

“GoTo Connect made setting up users to work remotely so easy. It enabled us to allow users to work from home and keep our lights on. It’s really amazing.”

Daniel Matthey
IT Lead and Co-Manager of GoTo Connect
Larry H. Miller Dealerships

A partner, not just a vendor

Michael Dalley, Infrastructure and Operations Manager, points to something that set GoTo apart from other platforms Larry H. Miller evaluated: the willingness to adapt.

“What we heard with other providers was, ‘That’s how our system works,’ and we would reply with, ‘Well that doesn’t work for us.’

With GoTo Connect, they’ll work with us on our requests. That’s been really helpful to us as we continue to grow,” *Michael said.*

That partnership also showed up in implementation speed. Setting up a call queue in GoTo Connect takes about 2 minutes for an admin versus 20 minutes in their previous system. Across dozens of rooftops, those time savings add up quickly. IT teams can configure and manage locations themselves, make same-day changes when business needs shift, and eliminate many of the vendor dependencies that traditionally slow operations down.



90%

Reduction in call queue setup time
vs. previous phone system



When the world went remote



The true test of a communications platform isn't in normal conditions, it's in the ones you didn't plan for. When Larry H. Miller Dealerships needed to shift staff to remote work, GoTo Connect made it seamless.

“Despite the pandemic, we had a great year, and so much of that is attributed to GoTo Connect because we couldn't be face-to-face,” *Michael said.* The infrastructure held. The customer calls kept getting answered. The business kept moving.

THE LARRY H. MILLER LESSON

Your phone system is either reinforcing your brand promise or quietly undermining it.

For Larry H. Miller, ‘Take care of the customer’ couldn't happen with a system that made customers feel ignored. The right platform doesn't just answer calls it communicates your values before a single word is spoken.

4 Sixty percent gone. Zero drop in service

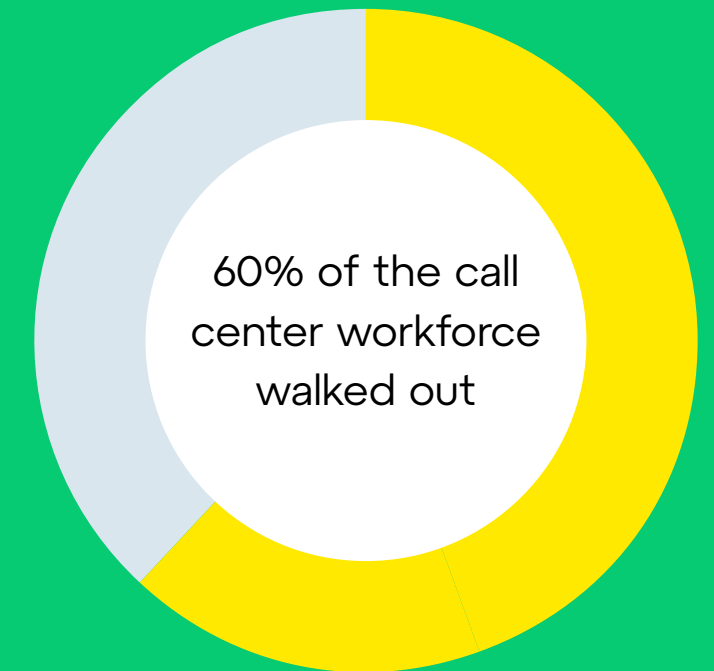


The crisis no one planned for

Bob Johnson Imports, the flagship imports division of the expansive Bob Johnson Automotive Group, operates nine new vehicle franchises plus used car, service, and parts departments. It's a serious operation, one that runs two dedicated call centers, one for sales and one for service.

Then came the staffing crisis. When both call centers were forced back to in-office work, the attrition was staggering: 60% of the call center workforce walked out. Almost overnight, the team went from fully staffed to severely depleted, with the same volume of customer calls still coming in.

The easy answer was to rehire. But that takes time, costs money, and still leaves you vulnerable the next time the world changes.



Dave Greenly, Director of eCommerce at Bob Johnson Imports, had a different idea.

Automation as the answer

Bob Johnson Imports had already identified that their legacy phone system wasn't meeting their needs.

“Our previous phone system was not very user-friendly from the administrative point of view, it was also not very friendly at all from the user standpoint,” Dave said.

The move to GoTo Connect Contact Center and its AI Receptionist wasn't just a technology upgrade, it was a strategic pivot. Rather than continuously replacing lost staff and rebuilding call center operations, Bob Johnson Imports used AI to create a modern, always-on Business Development Center (BDC). The result was a more resilient customer engagement engine capable of delivering consistent experiences even as staffing challenges persisted.

GoTo Connect's AI Receptionist answers every call instantly, routes callers by department or individual based on voice requests, and handles the routine questions that previously consumed agent time. For a nine-location franchise group, the consistency that's hard to achieve with a rotating human staff, AI delivered by default.

“With this technology, I now have a virtual receptionist. It answers instantly and gets our customers where they need to go.”

Dave Greenly
eCommerce Director
Bob Johnson Imports

The numbers tell the story

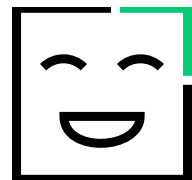


The results at Bob Johnson Imports weren't modest, **they were transformational:**



25%

Reduction in call center volume through AI automation



100%

Instant answer rate across all nine franchise locations

Zero customer complaints. Every call answered immediately. Remaining agents freed to focus on the high-value conversations that actually move deals forward and retain customers. And 24/7 availability across all locations, something that would have been impossible to staff for at any reasonable cost.

The VinSolutions CRM integration meant that every call, conversation, and customer touchpoint was automatically logged, tracked, and connected to the broader customer record. This eliminated gaps in the customer journey, ensured every interaction was captured, and gave teams the visibility they needed to deliver a more consistent customer experience.

“With GoTo Connect’s AI Receptionist, Bob Johnson Imports reduced call center volume by 25%, no drop in service and huge time savings for our team,” Dave said.

A blueprint for the industry

What Bob Johnson Imports demonstrated isn't just a recovery story, it's a proof of concept for the future of dealership communications.

The dealerships that will outperform their competitors over the next decade won't necessarily be the ones with the most staff. They'll be the ones who use technology to make every customer interaction faster, smarter, and more consistent.

THE BOB JOHNSON IMPORTS LESSON

Staffing is a variable. Customer expectations are not.

The dealerships that thrive are the ones who build communication systems resilient enough to deliver a consistent experience regardless of what's happening internally. AI doesn't replace your people, it protects their capacity.

5 What every dealership leader needs to know

Four dealerships. One lesson.



Across four very different automotive businesses, a family-owned luxury import dealer in Utah, a multi-generational Tennessee dealership, a massive multi-state group, and a nine-franchise imports division, a single pattern emerges.

None of these dealerships were failing because of bad people. They weren't failing because of weak inventory or poor locations or lack of effort. They were losing revenue, customers, and staff capacity because their communications infrastructure had become invisible: taken for granted until it started costing them.

The invisible tax on your business

Every missed call is a tax. Every customer bounced between departments is a tax. Every appointment not booked because it came in after hours is a tax. Every hour your service manager spends waiting for IT to pull a report is a tax.

Most Dealer Principals don't see this tax as a line item. It doesn't show up on the P&L labeled "communications failure." But it's there in the CSI scores, in the closing ratios, in the customer retention numbers, and in the quiet frustration of your best advisors who are being pulled in too many directions at once.

"An exceptional customer experience was something we lacked with our old phone system. **GoTo Connect has allowed us to give customers a greatly improved experience.**"

Daniel Matthey, IT Lead
Larry H. Miller Dealerships

Beyond improving call handling, GoTo Connect for Automotive helped Bob Johnson Imports turn every customer conversation into actionable data. With AI-powered analytics, dealership leaders gained real-time visibility into call sentiment, customer intent, and emerging service issues.

Proactive alerts surfaced high-risk interactions and high-value opportunities as they happened, enabling teams to intervene quickly, protect revenue, and safeguard CSI scores before small issues became larger problems. Instead of relying on historical reports to understand what went wrong, the dealership could act in the moment to improve outcomes across the customer journey.

What changes when you fix it



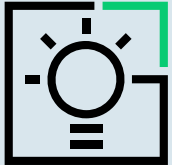
When Rick Hill Imports added AI Receptionist, service advisors stopped being interrupted mid-consultation.

When BMW of Murray switched to GoTo Connect, seven vendor relationships became one. When Larry H. Miller Dealerships upgraded their hold experience, customers started actually waiting, because the experience was worth waiting for.

When Bob Johnson Imports automated their call center, 60% staff attrition became a non-event.

These aren't incremental improvements. They're transformations. And they all started with the same decision: to stop treating communications as a cost center and start treating it as a competitive advantage.

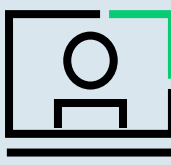
The only purpose-built communication platform for dealerships. Trusted by automotive groups nationwide.



AI Receptionist with 24/7 scheduling, integrated with Xtime



CRM + DMS integrations (Tekion, VinSolutions, and more)



Call recording, analytics, and real-time reporting



Unified calling, texting, and faxing from one number



Mobile app for advisors on the lot or on the move



Contact center capabilities for BDC teams (AI Quality Management and more)

The dealership leaders who read this far

If you've made it to this page, you're someone who cares deeply about the customer experience and you're always looking for the edge that separates good from great. You already know that the cars are not the differentiator, every dealership in your market sells the same brands. The differentiator is the experience.

GoTo Connect for Automotive is trusted by dealerships from single-location independents to multi-franchise groups. The platform has been built alongside automotive operators who understand what it takes to win in this industry, and it shows in every feature, every integration, and every customer interaction it enables.

**GoTo is not new to this space.
And neither are the results.**



Ready to see what GoTo Connect for Automotive can do for your dealership?

GoTo Connect for Automotive.



Book a free demo

Or visit GoTo.com/automotive