



Leith Acura Concierge Team

# BUILDING DEEPER RELATIONSHIPS

*One Key: Creating Concierge Teams*

Utilizing the word **“TEAM”** as an acronym—**Together Everyone Achieves More**—is a concept that is alive and well at Leith Acura in Cary, North Carolina.

They were one of the first dealers to embrace the Concierge Experience and, soon after starting the Initiative, General Manager, John Angilello, developed the Concierge Team concept.

“When we started with the Concierge Experience, we wanted to do things that would move our dealership to the next level,” said John Angilello. “So when Acura started the 2012 Acura SummerTest Drive program, we asked ourselves

these questions: Who will the client contact—service or sales? How will we handle the clients when they come into the dealership? How can we get the clients from service to sales?”

So Concierge Teams began as a process improvement by developing procedures that would help re-introduce service clients to the Sales Department. Then, once implemented, the concept grew and expanded.



General Manager,  
John Angilello



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At the heart of the Concierge Experience is engagement—and at Leith Acura, their goal is to please clients. So the Concierge Team concept was a perfect fit—it got their associates to work together to achieve more, and it also provided their clients with a team of “go-to” associates that they could call if they had a question or a concern.

In addition, the Concierge Team concept truly supports the Leith Acura Mission Statement:

*“Leith Acura has become the name you can trust, by delivering personalized service in a family environment. We will meet your transportation needs with an informed and attentive staff committed to exceeding our client’s expectations with honesty and integrity. This is our Promise to you.”*

#### **Building the Actual Concierge Teams**

John started by creating a buddy system: He paired up his sales staff. That way, if one person was busy or not working that day, their “buddy”

could handle any client concerns. Then John rounded out the team by including a Service Advisor, so each Concierge Team would consist of two Sales Associates and one Service Advisor.

“Our goal is to maintain integrity in a tough economy,” added John. “We realize that there are fewer people shopping for cars, so when we get someone in the dealership and they end up as our client, we want to take care of them so they continue coming back to us.”

By embracing that belief—to provide the highest level of service—John then made the Concierge Teams an integral part of every sale. For example, the sales side of the Concierge Team conducts the new or pre-owned delivery, then walks the client to the Service Department to introduce them to the other member of the team, who then reviews the Service Department operation.





This team approach encourages a comfortable and friendly invitation to allow Leith Acura to serve the ongoing automotive needs of their clients. And this process draws on the strengths of the team members to fully inform each client of their vehicle's capabilities while offering a team of associates who are available for anything the client needs, when they need it. In addition, the teams understand how to identify service clients who might be interested in upgrading from their current vehicle into something new (or newer) and introduce them to their sales teammates.

Leith Acura has four teams and has provided team members with clearly defined descriptions of their team roles and management expectations. When the teams are successful in their collaboration, they are recognized and rewarded by management.

In the first two months after creating the Concierge Teams, John says that eight sales were a direct result of the initiative: three in the first month, five in the second. "And to help 'motivate' our Service Advisors, when they 'walk' a service client up to the Sales Department and that client buys a vehicle, they receive a \$50 bonus."

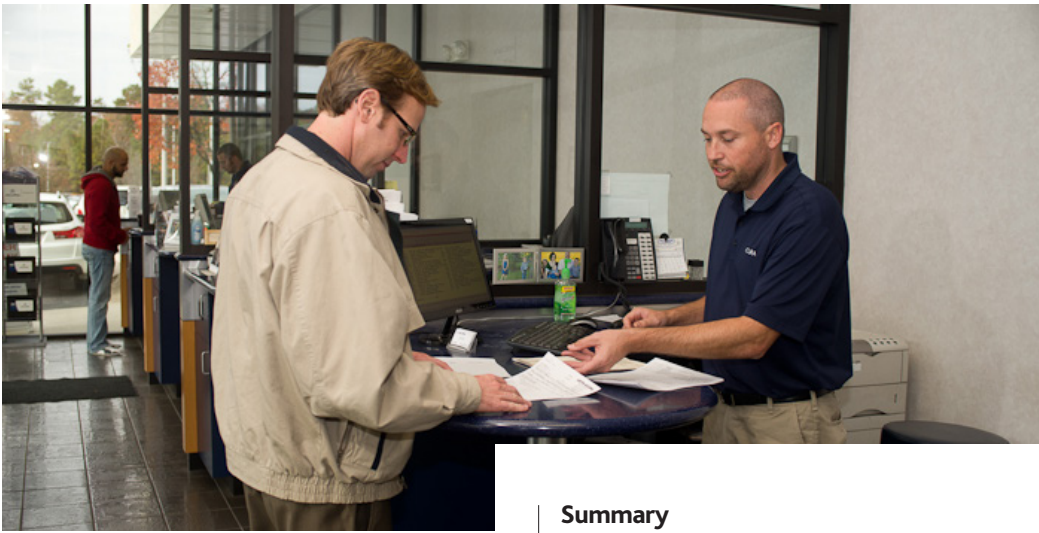
Instead of expecting teamwork and hoping that it happens, Leith Acura's dealership team is deliberate in their structure, expectations and recognition so that this has become a part of their culture.

### **Sales Expectations**

Here are the responsibilities of the sales team members:

- Introduce clients to their sales partner, which gives the client two points of contact in the Sales Department.
- Introduce clients to their Service Advisor team member during the delivery process.
- Assist the service team member with the active delivery of loaners in the service drive.
- Check Repair Order pre-writes the night before to identify clients who will be visiting the next day.
- Facilitate the appointment setting process with the Service Advisors for the Acura Summer Test Drive promotion (this was during the promotion period).

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### Service Expectations

Here are the responsibilities of the service team members:

- When introduced to a new client during the delivery, review the Service Department information with the client.
- Enlist the help of a Concierge Team member to actively deliver loaner cars in the service drive.
- Facilitate the appointment-setting process for a test drive with their Sales Associate teammate for the Acura Summer Test Drive promotion.
- Introduce service clients to Concierge Team members if the client may have an interest in a new (or newer) vehicle.

### Service Advisor Delivery Script

To make it easier for the Service Advisors to know what to say, John came up with an easy-to-remember script that includes the following:

- Congratulate the client enthusiastically.
- Review the hours of operation for the Service Department.
- Review the appointment-setting process.
- Share the drop-off procedure and location.
- Discuss the shuttle service.
- Show the client the location of the night drop box and review the process.

### Summary

“The Concierge Teams are all about service—providing our clients with the best service possible and letting them know there are people who they can call at our dealership that care,” said John. “I consider it planting seeds—demonstrating to our clients that, ‘I’m your guy, I want to get to know you, and I want to earn the right to get your business.’ Our clients know we care and know who they can call for help.”

Leith Acura is a 2011 Dealer of Distinction and they have excellent client retention—plus they also have exceptional associate retention. Most staff members have been with the dealership for more than five years and John is coming up on his 20th anniversary. “Our associates are happy and engaged, and that makes it a natural for them to engage our clients. We’re a small, close-knit family.”

What’s in the future? John added, “We’re lucky in that our entire dealership is all in one building and virtually any department is within 12 steps. So I’ve talked to my Technicians and I’m considering adding a Master Technician to each of the Concierge Teams. That way, our clients meet someone else on the team and if ever the client has a technical question, that team member will provide the answer.”

It’s thinking like that that has helped Leith Acura succeed for 27 years while consistently ranking in the top 25% in regard to dealership profitability. That’s a pretty impressive statistic and a testament to a hard-working team.

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