

Lead Follow-Up, Conversion and Customer Satisfaction Evidence at An Indian Automobile Dealership: An Applied Descriptive Case Study of Kundan Hyundai

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Abstract—Dealerships invest heavily in generating enquiries, yet conversion depends on how those enquiries are handled afterwards. This applied, descriptive single-company case study examines lead follow-up and conversion at Kundan Hyundai, a Hyundai dealership in Pune, India, during an on-the-job training placement from 15 May to 15 July 2026. The student researcher compiled a convenience sample of 75 anonymised leads from the dealership's lead tracker, collected responses to a five-statement questionnaire from 12 sales and business development staff, and obtained 50 usable responses from car owners and prospective buyers through an online form. Analysis relied on frequencies, percentages and cross-tabulation. Of the 75 leads, 26 (34.7%) reached a confirmed booking. Conversion declined from 60% among leads contacted within 30 minutes to 17% among those first contacted after 24 hours, and rose from 20% to 53% as follow-up attempts increased from one or two to six or more. Leads followed up by call plus message converted more often (43%) than call-only leads (26%). Only four of 12 staff reported weekly review of ageing leads. These associations are consistent with response speed, persistence and channel mix mattering, but the sample is small, non-random and not independently audited, so causal claims are not supported.

Index Terms—lead management; lead follow-up; conversion; customer satisfaction; automobile retail; India; AIDA; personal selling

I. INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH GAP

Buying a car is a high-involvement decision that unfolds over weeks or months. Buyers now gather information from search engines, review sites and social platforms before they contact a dealer, and they move across several touchpoints along the way (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). For a dealership, an enquiry is therefore a perishable asset: the buyer's

interest is genuine but contested, and a slow or inconsistent reply gives competitors time to answer first. Practitioner evidence on online sales leads points the same way, reporting that firms were often slow to respond and that qualification chances fell as delay lengthened (Oldroyd et al., 2011), although that work did not concern vehicles or India.

This paper reports an applied case study drawn from an on-the-job training (OJT) placement at Kundan Hyundai, an authorised dealership of Hyundai Motor India Limited serving the Pune region. The placement ran from 15 May to 15 July 2026, roughly nine weeks, and covered floor duty, tele-calling, lead management and the booking-to-delivery process. The study asks how quickly, how often and through which channels leads were contacted, and how these practices relate to the share of leads reaching a confirmed booking. Customer satisfaction, the second concept in the original report title, is treated more modestly, for reasons explained later. Together, the three data sources allow a descriptive but multi-angle view of one dealership's day-to-day lead handling practice.

Research gap.

The literature reviewed below is strong on conceptual frameworks, notably expectation–disconfirmation, relationship marketing and customer journeys, but offers little fine-grained description of follow-up behaviour inside one dealership's lead pipeline. The sources consulted here treat response speed mostly in online-lead settings outside automobile retail, and satisfaction research typically measures attitudes separately from lead outcomes. No study placing lead-level follow-up records beside staff-reported practice in an Indian passenger-car dealership was found in the sources consulted. That statement reflects a non-

systematic search and is not a claim of novelty; a formal database search should precede any such claim. The contribution is deliberately narrow: a transparent, small-scale description of one dealership's practice, with explicit caveats, that can generate hypotheses for larger and better-controlled tests.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Satisfaction theory. Oliver (1980) framed satisfaction as the result of comparing expectations with perceived performance, so a prompt and informed reply to an enquiry can set expectations that later stages must meet. Parasuraman et al. (1988) identified reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles as dimensions of perceived service quality; responsiveness maps directly onto how quickly and persistently a dealership engages a lead. In a dealership, such dimensions are experienced concretely: whether the phone is answered, whether promises to call back are kept, and whether the salesperson appears informed. Anderson and Sullivan (1993) linked satisfaction to repurchase intentions at firm level, which supports tracking it as a forward indicator. Reichheld (2003) proposed willingness to recommend as a single growth predictor, but Keiningham et al. (2007) failed to replicate its claimed superiority over other satisfaction measures, so recommendation items are best treated as one indicator among several.

Relationships, trust and journeys. Morgan and Hunt (1994) placed trust and commitment at the centre of relationship marketing, an idea relevant to why referral enquiries, which arrive with borrowed trust, may behave differently from impersonal ones. Payne and Frow (2005) argued that customer relationship management requires integrated channels and performance assessment rather than isolated tools. Lemon and Verhoef (2016) described the customer journey as pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase stages spanning many touchpoints, which implies that follow-up quality early in the journey shapes later experience.

Process models. AIDA, a hierarchy-of-effects model describing movement from attention to interest, desire and action, is widely used but has been critiqued, including for its assumptions about sequence (Barry &

Howard, 1990). It serves here as a heuristic, not a causal model: lead generation corresponds to attention, first contact and qualification to interest, product presentation and test drives to desire, and booking to action. The marketing funnel similarly depicts attrition from enquiry to delivery. The personal selling process, traditionally running from prospecting through approach, presentation, objection handling and closing to follow-up, was revisited by Moncrief and Marshall (2005) to reflect relationship-oriented selling; follow-up remains a stage in its own right.

Synthesis. Together these sources suggest three testable expectations for a dealership: faster first contact, more persistent follow-up and multi-channel contact should each be associated with higher conversion, while trust-based lead sources should outperform impersonal ones. These expectations guide the analysis but do not prove it. Each expectation is stated as an association because the available evidence cannot isolate cause from selection.

III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Following the report, the study pursues four objectives: (1) to assess current lead follow-up at Kundan Hyundai; (2) to examine how response speed, follow-up frequency and channel mix relate to conversion; (3) to identify factors associated with conversion of leads into confirmed bookings; and (4) to propose practical improvements to follow-up practice. Three hypotheses operationalise Objective 2: H1, faster first response is associated with higher conversion; H2, more follow-up attempts are associated with higher conversion; H3, multi-channel follow-up is associated with higher conversion than single-channel follow-up. Because no inferential tests were reported, the hypotheses are judged descriptively, as directional patterns.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Design. The study is an applied, descriptive, cross-sectional case study of one dealership with a correlational element that compares conversion rates across groups of leads. It is not an experiment: no variable was manipulated and no comparison group was assigned. Case-study designs suit such questions because they allow detailed description of a bounded setting, although they limit generalisation.

Setting. Data were gathered during the OJT (15 May–15 July 2026), organised in four fortnights: induction and product training; walk-in handling and tele-calling; booking-to-delivery observation; and independent customer handling and outreach.

Data sources. First, 75 leads were drawn by convenience (judgmental) sampling from the dealership's lead tracker, from a frame of walk-in, outbound tele-calling, digital or website, and referral enquiries logged between 31 May and 15 July 2026. Each lead was classified by first-response time (under 30 minutes, 30 minutes to 2 hours, 2 to 24 hours, over 24 hours), number of follow-up attempts (one or two, three to five, six or more), channel mix (call only; call plus SMS or WhatsApp) and source. The outcome was a confirmed booking; the report does not describe how undecided leads were treated. A sample of entries was cross-checked against the dealership's booking register; the figures nevertheless remain researcher-compiled and have not been independently audited. Second, five statements on follow-up practice, rated on a five-point agreement scale, were completed by 12 sales and business development staff. Third, an online survey of car owners and prospective buyers, launched in late June, yielded 50 usable responses on purchase

factors and dealership experience; its recruitment procedure is not documented.

Analysis. Frequencies, percentages and cross-tabulations were produced in a spreadsheet. The original report also mentions a rank-correlation check, but because it used a handful of grouped brackets, its coefficients are not interpreted here. No significance tests were reported or are added. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number except the overall rate; counts are given wherever available.

Ethics. Customer names and telephone numbers were excluded, leads carry anonymised identifiers, and staff responses are reported only in aggregate. No dealership-identifiable records were shared externally; data served academic purposes only.

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table 1 shows conversion by each follow-up dimension. Figures come from the researcher-compiled lead records unless stated otherwise. Overall, 26 of 75 sampled leads (34.7%) became confirmed bookings, which provides the baseline against which the group rates should be read.

Table 1. *Conversion to confirmed booking by follow-up dimension (n = 75 leads; researcher-compiled, not independently audited)*

Dimension	Category	Leads	Booked	Conversion
First-response time	Under 30 minutes	15	9	60%
	30 minutes–2 hours	20	8	40%
	2–24 hours	22	6	27%
	More than 24 hours	18	3	17%
Follow-up attempts	1–2	30	6	20%
	3–5	28	11	39%
	6 or more	17	9	53%
Channel mix	Call only	38	10	26%
	Call plus SMS/WhatsApp	37	16	43%
Lead source	Walk-in	22	9	41%
	Tele-calling (outbound)	25	8	32%
	Digital/website	18	4	22%
	Referral	10	5	50%
All sampled leads		75	26	34.7%

Note. Each dimension partitions the same 75 leads. Percentages are rounded. Source: OJT report lead-tracker analysis (Tables 7.4–7.8).

Process profile. Follow-up was uneven. Only 15 of 75 leads (20%) received a first response within 30 minutes, whereas 18 (24%) waited more than 24 hours.

Forty percent received one or two attempts and 23% received six or more.

Response speed. Conversion fell steadily as first contact was delayed, from 60% (9 of 15) to 17% (3 of 18), which supports H1 as a directional pattern. The gradient is monotonic across all four brackets, with each slower bracket converting less than the one before it.

Persistence and channels. Conversion rose from 20% to 39% to 53% across attempt bands, consistent with H2.

Call-plus-message follow-up converted at 43% against 26% for call-only follow-up, consistent with H3, though each group holds fewer than 40 leads. The six-or-more group is the smallest (17 leads), so its 53% rests on nine bookings.

Combined pattern. In the report's cross-tabulation, leads contacted within 30 minutes and given six or more attempts converted at 71% ($n = 7$), while leads contacted after 24 hours and given one or two attempts converted at 8% ($n = 13$). Cell sizes are tiny, and the full grid contains inconsistent counts, so only these extremes are quoted.

Source. Referral (50%) and walk-in (41%) leads converted more often than outbound tele-calling (32%) and digital (22%) leads. The tele-calling and digital groups held 25 and 18 leads respectively, and the referral group only 10, so single bookings shift these rates noticeably.

Staff practice. Of 12 staff, seven (58%) reported replying within 30 minutes, eight (67%) using more than one channel, six (50%) making five or more attempts, five (42%) using CRM reminders and four (33%) reviewing ageing leads weekly. Staff were therefore most likely to report channel variety and least likely to report formal review.

Customer survey. Among 50 respondents, safety (mean 4.20) and brand trust (4.06) were the highest-rated purchase factors, followed by technology (3.94) and price (3.74); dealer experience scored 3.26 and advertising and endorsement 2.88. From the report's cross-tabulation of dealership experience against repurchase intention, 19 of 27 respondents who agreed or strongly agreed that experience met expectations also indicated they would repurchase the brand, compared with 1 of 17 neutral respondents and none of 6 who disagreed (calculated here from the report's counts). The survey is not linked to the lead records, so it cannot show how follow-up affects satisfaction. The survey sample is young, with 60% under 25 and 40% students, which limits its representativeness of car buyers.

VI. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

The pattern in Table 1 is consistent with the view that early contact and repeated contact matter for lead conversion, echoing practitioner evidence on response delay (Oldroyd et al., 2011) and the responsiveness dimension of service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1988). In AIDA terms, leads contacted quickly may still be at the interest stage, when a salesperson can build desire through product explanation, whereas delayed leads may already have looked elsewhere. The funnel data cover only the step from enquiry to booking, so attrition at other stages remains unobserved.

Causal reading requires caution. Fast contact may have gone to warmer leads, for example walk-ins or referrals that staff prioritised, and the source results suggest intent differs by origin. Attempt counts were recorded after outcomes were known, which complicates interpretation: a lead that books early stops receiving calls, while an undecided lead accumulates them. The analysis controlled for neither source, model, price band nor customer intent.

Lead quality, trust and value. Higher referral conversion fits Morgan and Hunt's (1994) account of trust and implies that lead quality is partly set by origin. The weaker digital result suggests these enquiries, often from comparison shoppers, may need faster and more tailored contact; the report links this to competition from other dealerships, though no competitor behaviour was measured. Survey

respondents rated safety and brand trust above price, which suggests that reassurance and value-for-money talk may matter as much as price alone. Value objections were not coded in the lead data, so their role is unmeasured.

Staff practice. Two-thirds of staff reported multi-channel follow-up, yet only a third reported weekly review of ageing leads, pointing to a consistency gap more than an awareness gap. Self-reports may overstate compliance: 58% of staff said they reply within 30 minutes, whereas 20% of sampled leads were contacted that quickly, although the units differ.

Satisfaction. The experience–repurchase association is plausible under Oliver (1980) and Anderson and Sullivan (1993), but it comes from a small cross-tabulation and does not show an effect. Satisfaction was measured separately from conversion in this study, and the two should not be conflated in interpretation.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Adopt a 30-minute first-response standard and monitor it daily, since only 20% of sampled leads met it.
2. Use a minimum structured cadence of several touches, combining calls with SMS or WhatsApp, before closing any lead.
3. Hold a weekly ageing-lead review, the weakest reported practice (33%).
4. Route digital leads for priority contact with tailored scripts, given their 22% conversion.
5. Record reasons for loss, including price and trust objections, and pilot these changes to test them.
6. Extend the survey to the same customers whose leads are tracked, so that satisfaction can be linked to follow-up experience.

VIII. LIMITATIONS

The sample was small (75 leads, 12 staff, 50 respondents), non-random and drawn from one dealership over about nine weeks. Records were researcher-compiled and unaudited, no inferential tests or controls were applied, and the original report contains internal inconsistencies. Staff self-reports may also be biased. Findings should not be generalised.

IX. CONCLUSION

Within this single-dealership sample, conversion was higher where first contact was faster, follow-up more persistent and channels combined, and referral and walk-in leads outperformed digital ones. Staff reported awareness of recommended practice but weak routines for reviewing ageing leads. These findings fit established ideas about responsiveness, trust and relationship-oriented selling, and they map onto the AIDA sequence and the sales funnel as practical heuristics. The evidence, however, is descriptive, small and unaudited; it supports hypotheses, not causal conclusions. Customer satisfaction could be examined only through a separate survey, so the link between lead handling and satisfaction remains untested. Future work should follow a larger, source-controlled lead cohort through CRM data, record reasons for loss, apply appropriate statistical models and measure satisfaction for the same customers.

Recommendations therefore centre on response standards, structured cadences and routine review of ageing leads. Such measures can be piloted and evaluated within a single quarter.

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