

2018 ONLINE REVIEWS AUDIT

BY JENNA VASQUEZ



(Unsplash.com, 2018)

Jenna Vasquez
Intern, Ken Garff Auto Group
111 E Broadway
Salt Lake City, UT 84111

DECEMBER 13, 2018

Christine Hawley
Manager, Ken Garff Auto Group
111 E Broadway
Salt Lake City, UT 84111

Christine,

How do five stars sound to you? Now, I'm not talking about restaurants or hotels; I'm talking about online reviews.

I'm sure you as a manager here at Ken Garff Auto Group can think of nothing more satisfying than searching for our company online and finding hundreds of satisfied customers raving about our speedy service, our friendly employees, and our killer deals.

Ideally, that's all we would find when we search our company name. However, since receiving your assignment to submit an audit of our current online reviews for our Orem dealership, I have found that we do have some possible areas of improvement, which I will discuss throughout this report.

You know as well as I do that here at Ken Garff, we care what our people have to say. This report details our current standing among our Orem customers (according to their reviews) as well as a few suggestions I have that will help us to fully satisfy our past, current, and potential Honda buyers. I have also included in the appendix a response email to our customer Sabrina Masters who requested a year of free oil changes as compensation for her four-hour wait at our Orem location (don't worry, I let her down easy).

If followed, the suggestions in this report will have us well on our way to the five-star dream.

I again thank you for this assignment and will stop by your office next week to further discuss my findings and set a game plan as we move forward.

Regards,

Jenna Vasquez

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Online Reviews: Where We Are	Pages 4 – 6
Strengths	4 – 5
Weaknesses	6
My Recommendations	Pages 7 – 8
Conclusion	Page 9
Appendix I – Works Cited	Page 10
Appendix II – Response Email	Page 11

ONLINE REVIEWS: WHERE WE ARE

When it comes to online reviews, our Orem location looks to be doing pretty well for itself. We are averaging 4+ stars on DealerRater.com and Cars.com, with Google Reviews not far behind at 4 stars and Yelp being our lowest average at 3 stars (see right).



4.5 | ★★★★★
124 Lifetime Reviews



★★★★★ 4.4 41 reviews

Customers are generally satisfied with what Ken Garff has to offer. I have sifted through dozens of online reviews received within the past year and have determined a few key strengths, as well as weaknesses, of our Orem location.



★★★☆☆ 43 reviews



4.0 ★★★★★ 739 reviews

STRENGTHS

A Pleasant Atmosphere

If there's one thing we do well in Orem, it's making people feel welcome. Yvette from Provo "**[loves] the popcorn**" and enjoys the "**cool lounge**" (Yelp.com, 2018). Barbara from Orem appreciates that she "**never [feels] pressured**" (Cars.com, 2018).

Our Orem location is in tune with what people want and expect to find at their car dealership. Plenty more positive reviews point out the warm and inviting vibe and the careful attention to detail that help Ken Garff Honda of Orem to stand out in the ever-competitive car dealership market.

Our Friendly Employees

Nothing makes people less likely to come back than the feeling that their business is not appreciated. Luckily, our Orem location does not have that problem. Our staff is professional and kind, and our customers notice and appreciate when our employees go the extra mile to ensure a happy experience for all parties.

ONLINE REVIEWS: WHERE WE ARE

A few recent reviews illustrate this point. Jeff from Huntington Beach commented that he was "**treated like family**" (Yelp.com, 2018), and Cec from Alpine added, "**[My sales rep] cares about my car and remembers me**" (Cars.com, 2018). Just over a week ago, Renzo gave Ken Garff Honda of Orem a five-star rating and noted, "**[Our service rep] even invited us to lunch because we lost track of time looking at cars and test driving**" (Google.com, 2018).

This is the kind of positivity that leaves a lasting impression on our customers and drives (no pun intended) people into the dealership.

We Know How to Make Amends

No business is perfect, and even our high-caliber employees in Orem are bound to make mistakes from time to time. Luckily, however, we know how to handle negative comments and experiences and show our customers we want to make things right. Check out this response to a negative review received just weeks ago:

Nov 20, 2018 -

Ken Garff Honda of Orem responded

We are so sorry to hear about this experience. We understand how frustrating it is to have to rearrange your schedule, and then have it be a waste of time. We would love the opportunity to speak with you about this and try to make things right. We can't look up your info based off your review. Will you please reach out to our Brand Advocacy Manager, Carli Anderson, at 801.714.2284 or carlia@kengarff.com? We look forward to speaking with you.

(Dealerrater.com, 2018)

With this additional review from JD from Orem, we gain the assurance that our Brand Advocacy Manager really does her job well: "**[Carli] did what she said she'd do which makes us more likely to return**" (Cars.com, 2018).

Whether it's following through with promises made or responding to reviews to regain lost confidence, Ken Garff Honda of Orem excels at winning back (and thus maintaining) our customer base.

ONLINE REVIEWS: WHERE WE ARE

WEAKNESSES

Poor Time Management

A pretty upset customer recently lamented, "**I brought [my car] back to be fixed the THIRD TIME — they had my Ridgeline for almost three weeks**" (Dealerrater.com, 2018). Cameron from Orem also left this review (at right) at the beginning of this year:

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ 1/27/2018

Service Dep't Review:

4 hours to replace a battery and tell you your alternator is busted after initial '~1hour' estimate. No proactive information, I have to ask to find out anything. Service techs walking around slowly with no sense of urgency.

(Yelp.com, 2018)

These are not isolated incidents. Other reviews note the lack of urgency and long wait times for service at our Orem location. This is definitely something we want to look into.

Lack of Communication

According to reviews, a gap exists between what our Orem service department does and what gets communicated to the customer. One customer Karl left the following review: "**Speaking of communication...there is none to be had. The service techs try to avoid answering your questions and just tell you an estimated time of completion (which keeps changing)**" (Yelp.com, 2018).

Comments like this help us realize that our customers are acutely aware of our communication techniques — or the lack thereof. Another upset customer "**had to leave [his] car multiple days due to a mechanic's lack of knowledge and communication in repairing [his] Honda**" (Cars.com, 2018). This is another area of potential improvement for our Orem dealership.

Customer...Service?

A final area of possible improvement in Orem is overall customer experience and satisfaction. An unfortunate review from Dallin in Provo highlights the need for a revamp in our customer service strategy: "**HORRIBLE experience with service department — multiple times**" (Yelp.com, 2018).

We can do better than this. Read on to see how.

MY RECOMMENDATIONS

At Ken Garff Honda in Orem, we are doing a lot of things right, and this is good news. By incorporating the few suggestions listed below, we'll take our company to the next level and have every car lover in town boasting about our five-star service.

Increase Communication

Many of our recent customer reviews are complaints that go unanswered. Thus, our customers' woes are aggravated because they feel their voice is not being heard. You'd be hard pressed to think of a quicker way to lose business than this. Something has to change.

Communication with customers is made simpler by the fact that the four major review sites analyzed in this report (Yelp, Cars.com, Dealer Rater, and Google Reviews) all have an easy-response function. While Google Reviews seems to have a lot of replies from our Orem location, the other sites are lacking in engagement on our part.

This is **goal number 1**: respond to reviews on all four of the major review platforms to show our customers we really care about what they have to say and we are willing to communicate on how their experience could be improved.



Follow Through on Review Responses

Scrolling through Google reviews for Ken Garff Honda in Orem, viewers find multiple cases like this one from Jesse two weeks ago: "**Honda's response is a total cop out and a lie, no one ever looked into it and reached out to me**" (Google.com, 2018). We can't let this happen!

MY RECOMMENDATIONS

To provide effective customer service, we need to do just that — serve. If we say we're going to look into something, we look into it. Let's make this **goal number 2**: follow through on our promise(s) within 48 hours of responding to the related review.

Revamp In-Shop Customer Experience

If we increase our communication with our customers and follow through on our promises, in-store traffic is going to increase, and we need to be ready for this. Our biggest focus in this regard should be time management.

Remember that pretty upset customer who had to wait three weeks to get his Ridgeline back? That's three weeks without a car, three weeks of wondering what's wrong, and three weeks to develop a passionate distaste for Ken Garff Honda of Orem.

To fix this sentiment, I recommend the following three strategies:

1. Train the maintenance department in effective time-management strategies.
2. Keep accurate records of each car that comes in and out to determine average time spent on each car, then work to shorten this length.
3. Assess the local competition for car service and repairs to get a sense of how Ken Garff of Orem measures up, then strategize accordingly.

Goal number 3 here is to revamp our in-store customer experience in order to stand out as the fastest, most-efficient car service shop around. Orem residents and all other customers will thank us for it.

CONCLUSION

Ken Garff Honda of Orem is doing incredibly well. Reviews are averaging around four stars and customers are generally more than satisfied following their experience with us.

That being said, we want to be better, and we would be silly to ignore our potential areas of improvement. If we can **increase communication with customers, follow through on our promises, and incorporate better time management**, we'll change the way our less-than-satisfied customers feel about us and we'll make our satisfied ones all the more happy along the way.

Happy Honda Days from me to you!

APPENDIX I – WORKS CITED

Cars.com. (2018). Ken Garff Honda of Orem. [online] Available at: <https://www.cars.com/dealers/23516/ken-garff-honda-of-orem/> [Accessed 10 Dec. 2018].

Dealerrater.com. (2018). Ken Garff Honda of Orem - Honda, Service Center - Dealership Ratings. [online] Available at: <https://www.dealerrater.com/dealer/Ken-Garff-Honda-of-Orem-review-7698/> [Accessed 8 Dec. 2018].

Google.com. (2018). Ken Garff Honda Orem Reviews - Google Search.

Ken Garff Honda of Orem. (2018). Ken Garff Honda of Orem | Honda Dealer in Orem, UT. [online] Available at: <https://www.kengarffhondaoforem.com/> [Accessed 12 Dec. 2018].

Unsplash.com. (2018). Beautiful Free Images & Pictures | Unsplash. [online] Available at: <https://unsplash.com/> [Accessed 10 Dec. 2018].

Yelp.com. (2018). Ken Garff Honda Of Orem - Orem, UT. [online] Available at: https://www.yelp.com/biz/ken-garff-honda-of-orem-orem-3?sort_by=date_desc [Accessed 8 Dec. 2018].

APPENDIX II – RESPONSE EMAIL

To: <smasters@gmail.com> Sabrina Masters
From: <jvasquez@kengarff.com> Jenna Vasquez

Subject: An Apology and an Offer

Sabrina,

I want to start out by thanking you for choosing Ken Garff Honda of Orem as your service destination. I know you have many options when selecting a car dealership in the Orem area, and I want you to know that we as a company value your business and strive to have your best interest in mind at all times.

An Apology

I know you recently had an experience at our Orem location that you and I both wish would have gone better. Perhaps a bad taste has been left in your mouth, and I hope to offer you a better flavor moving forward. While I won't be able to grant your request of one year of free oil changes, I sincerely apologize for the increased stress and hassle caused by your four-hour wait to get your CR-V serviced. Since the incident, I have spoken with my manager and our service team about strategies to ensure this kind of thing does not happen again—to you or to anyone else.

An Offer

Again, I want you to know that your business is valuable to us. Thus, next time you come in to have your CR-V serviced, please show this email to one of our customer service representatives and your vehicle will be moved to the front of the line.

I know your time is valuable and I once again thank you for spending it with us.

Regards,

Jenna Vasquez