

# AutoNation

## Automotive CX Success Story



### Key Stats

- **98%** of reviews were responded to through Reputation in 2020
- **122,800** reviews were received through Reputation in 2020
- **>6,300** AutoNation staff man-hours saved since partnering with Reputation
- **120+** Locations have improved their RepScore or have become more engaged since partnering with Reputation
- **148%** AutoNation's return on investment since partnering with Reputation

### How AutoNation Leverages Reviews to Build Customer Trust and Drive Platform Adoption

Headquartered in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, AutoNation is the most admired automotive retailer in the United States. With more than 300 locations spread across 18 states (and growing!), AutoNation has sold or serviced vehicles to more than 13 million customers. The company calls its more than 22,000 associates its "greatest assets" and notes that "What drives you, drives Us," placing prime emphasis on the customer experience and the person-to-person interactions that drive every part of the business forward.

### Getting More Reviews

As a top brand connecting stores, facilities, and associates from coast to coast, AutoNation is a very online-centric business. They rely on digital channels to reach current and potential customers as well as help manage the day-to-day operations of its locations. As such, the company is very cognizant of the value of online reviews, particularly in attracting new customers and business.

AutoNation launched its partnership with Reputation in 2012 when it first adopted the company's Reviews product. Reviews enabled AutoNation to continue to utilize the word-of-mouth advertising and marketing it had been getting from happy customers. But now they

were able to share this positive customer sentiment online at a much bigger scale, helping the company win over anxious customers who may not have had experience with the brand.

As a result, AutoNation’s review volume exploded — to the point that it deepened its partnership with Reputation to have Reputation automate and manage responding to each review the company receives, which has freed up time for AutoNation to dive deeper into its processes.

**122,800**

Total reviews responded to in 2020.

**98%**

of all reviews were responded to in 2020

### Leveraging Insights

Along with garnering more reviews, the Reviews product also gave the company an opportunity to audit how it was doing as a business. The locations that consistently received good reviews could share best practices with other locations, such as sending car service diagnosis videos to customers so they could see what needs to be done for themselves.

“ If someone comes in for service, you leave your car and don’t know what’s really going on with it. We’ll have one of our technicians take a video of what’s going on with your car and send it to you, and people love it! We’ve gotten a lot of great reviews from it, so we’ve taken it to other dealerships.”

Ashley Dias, Senior Manager of Customer Marketing at AutoNation

See what customers are saying on DealerRater:

**July 08, 2022** ★★★★★ SERVICE VISIT

**Wow is the word that comes to mind regarding the service**  
 I received at Porsche Irvine. From beginning to end the experience was superb! I made my appointment ahead of time and was provided a loaner. My service advisor, Natasha was so professional, friendly and knowledgeable. She communicated with me throughout the day via text, even sending a video from Alejandro which showed the details of the condition of and service needed on my car. I have visited a lot of car dealerships and have never experienced anything as completely delightful as this. HIGHLY recommend Porsche Irvine. **LESS**

On the other hand, through Reviews, AutoNation was able to more readily identify locations that weren’t performing up to expectations and offer recommendations. While these suggestions for performance improvement may be more basic and general at other companies, AutoNation takes a much more detailed, hands-on approach.

“ For locations with a lower review sentiment, I have implemented a process where our team will have one on one deep dive sessions with tips on how to improve the customer experience and provide additional support should a location need it,” says Dias. “For each component of their score, our teams will break it down so the location’s leadership understands each component of their calculated score, how they compare to their market and peer groups, and how they can improve specific metrics. Over 120 locations have improved their scores or have increased their engagement with the Reputation tool.”

**>6,300**

AutoNation staff man-hours saved since partnering with Reputation

## Fostering Adoption

Education and adoption are key elements for AutoNation’s team as they continue to strive to deliver a peerless customer experience. All of AutoNation’s retail locations use Reputation and are supported in doing so from the top of the organization down. In fact, each location’s use of the Reputation platform is entirely paid for by AutoNation’s corporate arm and evangelized by the company’s C-suite, so there are no barriers to adoption or utilization.

The scorecards Dias sends out have helped, too. Since launching her scorecard program, which adds gamification and competitions to Reputation score management, Dias estimates AutoNation has added more than 600 users to the Reputation platform — from the CEO and general managers to sales staff and service providers.

“I recommend to any customer-facing employee that they become a user. It’s at the point now where we’ve repurposed our sales leaderboard to reflect individual locations’ Reputation score. People will email me on the weekends saying that their score isn’t accurate. Gamifying it has made a big difference.”

Ashley Dias, Senior Manager of Customer Marketing at AutoNation

To help cement this ongoing participation and utilization, Dias created the 900 Award to recognize AutoNation locations that have reached a milestone Reputation score of 900 on a scale of 0 to 1,000, which can be considered “best in class” in a given industry. If a dealership hits 900, they’re

sent the first piece of a magnet to display and show off for two months; if the dealership maintains its 900 score for another four months, they’re sent another magnet piece, and if they hit another six at 900, they’re sent the final magnet piece which completes the award.

“I made the 900 Award to congratulate teams not only for hitting 900, but for maintaining a score of 900,” says Dias. “The point of the award is that it grows for a year. Our teams have been working really hard — they deserve the recognition and all of the praise.”

**148%** AutoNation’s return on investment since partnering with Reputation

## What’s Next?

Thanks to its positive partnership with Reputation, AutoNation has since added on many of the Reputation platform’s products, including Surveys, Inbox, and Competitive Intelligence (CI). CI, in particular, will be an area of focus for AutoNation and excitement for Dias within the highly competitive automotive industry.

The strategy is already paying dividends. After becoming and maintaining its presence as the leading public auto group in the United States for many years, AutoNation lost that title and was displaced to third place in 2021. The company set goals to get to second place by mid-2022, but thanks to its partnership with Reputation and the innovative strategies AutoNation has put in place, the company is already back in first place.