



Identity Theft In Your Service Drive

Today's car dealers are considered financial institutions, just like banks, because of the loan and paperwork processes completed in the finance office and because of the personal information needed to title a car. The result is a lot of valuable information identity thieves are looking for. What can you do to

protect customer identities and your dealership?

Securing valuable information.

Some dealers have designated their finance offices as "secure document areas" and have set rules to prevent deal jackets or any other personal information from floating around the dealership. Accounting offices have also become secure document areas with locks on doors and protected file cabinets.

Dealership liability.

What is the primary reason for all this recent attention to security? Some serious fines that can be levied against dealerships if they do not make the effort to keep their customers' information safe.

What about your service department?

Walk back right now and see how many repair orders with names, addresses, phone numbers, vehicle serial numbers, and more can be found by just sitting on your service advisors' desks. They are piled with information. Now take a look at your service history file storage area. Is it wide open for anyone to mess with? What about the customer information your salespeople save for future follow-ups?

Other areas need securing as well.

What about your cashier's office? What about your service manager's desk? What about your employees' files and all of the hiring information included within them? Watch for a list of rules called the Red Flag Rules. Take a walk around your store and make sure you are not leaving your dealership open for an employee or a customer to steal someone's identity. Do your homework and protect yourself, your employees, and your customers.

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