

Undercar Express Receives Prestigious Frost & Sullivan Customer Service Leadership Award for 2008

Frost & Sullivan has recognized remanufacturer Undercar Express of Cleveland, Ohio as the 2008 recipient of the Customer Service Leadership of the Year Award for brake calipers in the North American automotive aftermarket. “Undercar Express (UCX) offers a high level of customer service, responsiveness to changing customer needs, and a focus on customer profitability goals,” according to Frost & Sullivan Research Analyst, Ratika Garg. “The company implements practices that improve customer interaction, monitor feedback, and address their needs, especially those of the automotive technician.”

The Frost & Sullivan report points out how closely UCX works with its customers—warehouse distributors—and consumers—automotive technicians—to understand their needs and challenges. Calipers are rebuilt and improved with input the company receives through regular on-site visits and questionnaires, which are administered on a quarterly basis. Since the company has a single-point focus on remanufactured calipers, it provides full, comprehensive coverage of all vehicle makes and models through Class 6 vehicles (Medium Duty Trucks). As a caliper specialist, UCX is able to allocate resources to meet specific customer needs. UCX is certified to ISO 9001:2000, which exceeds service quality level standards in the industry.

The report documents that Undercar Express provides flexibility to their customers in terms of

their product and packaging. UCX has the ability to meet unique product specifications. This includes but is not limited to customized packaging and labeling as required.

Currently, the main challenges facing automotive technicians are related to time spent waiting for correct, high quality parts to arrive. Poor quality parts delivered late results in loss of service bay productivity,

which directly translates to lost shop revenues. UCX works closely with its warehouse distributors to ensure they have the right inventory on their shelf at the right time, thereby ensuring prompt, correct delivery to the technician. On this point, UCX enjoys a high customer satisfaction rate for its fast order turnaround times and high fill rates.

For a technician, a service “comeback” means loss of all profit on the original work. Undercar Express takes extra measures so that the vehicle owner does not have to return to the service center due to a faulty caliper. Rigorous quality control procedures have been implemented for this purpose. Products are triple-checked and pressure-tested before they are packaged. They are completely assembled and shrink-wrapped to eliminate the loss of component parts. As a result, warranty claims on UCX’s calipers are less than 2 percent, compared to the industry average of 4 to 6 percent. UCX’s distributors/partners benefit because fewer service comebacks leave technicians more satisfied and more likely to call next time they need a caliper.



UCX analyzes and tests all warranty returns, quickly identifies any problems and takes immediate action. Results of this process include: 1) A unique part number label, featuring a visual indicator that guarantees that the caliper is correctly packaged; and 2) Installation by hand of the brake hose inlet bolt to ensure that technicians do not have to redo the brake service because inlet threads are stripped. This quality process enhances their customers' experiences with UCX brake calipers.

Production practices are modeled on a cellular manufacturing system. The objective is to minimize product defects and maximize resource efficiency and responsiveness. This generates cost efficiencies that UCX passes on to customers. Other value-added services include online catalogues, product training and support programs, rapid order processing, and flexibility in order placement.

"Undercar Express' strong orientation to customer needs and high-quality services has helped it in building strong relationships with its customers," reports Frost & Sullivan's analysts. "For these reasons, Frost & Sullivan is pleased to recognize Undercar Express as Customer Service Leader for brake calipers in the North American automotive aftermarket for 2008."

AWARD DESCRIPTION

The Frost & Sullivan Award for Customer Service Leadership is bestowed upon the company

that has demonstrated excellence in customer service leadership within its industry. The recipient company must show exceptional responsiveness to customer needs and with a consistent focus on long and short-term customer profitability goals. In addition, the recipient company must demonstrate flexibility in tailoring its product features to suit customer needs.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To choose the recipient of this Award, the analyst team tracks industry participants and monitors their customer service methods on an ongoing basis. The Award recipient is selected based upon extensive research collected

from key market participants, secondary and technology sources, and customer interviews. Collected data is then cross-tabulated to identify the number one ranking company.

MEASUREMENT CRITERIA

In addition to the methodology described above, there are specific criteria used in determining the final ranking of industry competitors. The recipient of this Award must excel based on the following criteria:

- ◆ Providing value-added technology and services
- ◆ Responsiveness to specific customer needs
- ◆ Efficiency in time to market
- ◆ Monitoring and addressing customer feedback



"UCX is honored to be recognized for its focus on customer service. From the day we opened our doors in 1997, we have always considered ourselves a service business more than a manufacturing business. It's gratifying that Frost & Sullivan has recognized this as well." — *Rob Wright, Managing Director of Undercar Express*

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