



**TITLE: Are You Ready for Dealers to Evaluate You**

**AUTHOR: Russ Ziegler, Connect**

#### About the Author:

Russ Ziegler is the Founder of Connect Sales, Coaching and Consulting, focused on helping OEMs and dealers strengthen performance through education, operational alignment, and measurable accountability. With more than fifteen years in the dealer distribution space, he has trained hundreds of professionals and supported dealerships across the United States in improving sales, profitability, and whole-dealer health.

### *Preparing Your Organization to Manage a Successful Dealer Network*

Most OEMs have a detailed checklist when evaluating potential dealers. This often takes the form of an *Ideal Dealer Persona (IDP)*—a profile that outlines what a high-performing dealer partner looks like. It includes everything from market coverage and facility standards to financial strength, sales process maturity, and customer experience. OEMs use these criteria to protect their brand, ensure market reach, and support long-term growth. But here is the part many OEMs overlook: **the best dealers are creating the same kind of persona to evaluate you.** Just as you have your IDP, they are building their Ideal OEM Profile—asking whether your systems, support, and strategy are built to help them succeed.

When a dealer takes on your brand, they are making a business decision with lasting consequences. They are evaluating your leadership team, your dealer onboarding process, your communication cadence, and your commitment to field support. If you do not have clear answers, proven tools, and repeatable systems, the most capable dealers will hesitate—or worse, walk away.

It is not enough to simply offer a great product. If your organization cannot actively support and grow your dealer network, you may be undermining your own expansion efforts. From territory coverage and lead distribution to parts availability and training resources, your internal readiness will either build dealer trust or erode it.



## The Connect Channel

---

At Connect, we help OEMs prepare for dealers just as much as we help dealers succeed with OEMs. From onboarding playbooks to territory transition plans, we believe your operational foundation is your competitive edge. Before you recruit, pitch, or sign your next dealer—make sure you are ready to deliver.

**Want to know what tools every OEM should have in place to manage a dealer network?** Email me and I will send you our list of essential tools for dealer management. [operations@connect-csc.com](mailto:operations@connect-csc.com)

**Build stronger OEM–Dealer results through clarity, alignment, and measurable performance.**  
Explore additional Connect Channel insights, field sales tools, and dealer development resources at  
[www.Connect-CSCC.com](http://www.Connect-CSCC.com)

You can also subscribe for future editions and updates.

