



**SUBARU**

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—Darryl Draper, National Customer Relations and Loyalty Training Manager



## Subaru achieves industry first with WebEx Training Center.



### LINE OF BUSINESS

Automotive manufacturer

### WEBEX SERVICE IN USE

Training Center, Meeting Center

### SUMMARY

Subaru's launch of its Owner Loyalty Program required efficiently delivering training to 600 dealerships across the US. Implementing WebEx Training Center enabled the program's sole trainer to reach 2,400 dealers within six months at a cost of \$0.75 per person. As a result, Subaru was able to roll out the industry's first customer service recovery program, while offering quality training that its dealers love. Subaru of America is in the process of implementing WebEx throughout its enterprise.

### ABOUT SUBARU OF AMERICA, INC.

#### Headquarters

Cherry Hill, NJ

#### Number of employees

800

#### TARGET MARKET

Consumers and dealers

#### WebEx Customer Since 2003

Subaru of America, Inc. is the exclusive United States marketer of Subaru products manufactured by Fuji Heavy Industries Ltd. (FHI) of Japan. First to introduce four-wheel drive passenger cars to the world, FHI's Subaru division currently sells more than 10 million vehicles a year worldwide. Working with 600 dealerships nationwide, Subaru of America works to maintain the value of the Subaru brand—long associated with quality and reliability—across the US.

#### The Challenge

Subaru's launch into the luxury car market prompted the car manufacturer to evaluate the level of customer service it provided. Subaru's Owner Loyalty Program (OLP) addresses the needs of a high-end market that expects premium customer service. The program, which uniquely focuses on predicting and fostering customer loyalty, requires the thorough training of Subaru's dealers. With just a single trainer dedicated to this program, providing training to 600 dealerships across the nation proved challenging. "When we launched the program, I spent seven months on the road. I would spend three to four days a week teaching a class, travel home and then do the same thing the following week," says Darryl Draper, Subaru's National Customer Relations and Loyalty Training Manager. Despite the intense seven-month schedule, Draper was only able to reach dealerships in the Western region of the US. "We needed a more effective way to deliver quality training to our 600 dealerships, while freeing my time to creatively develop new programs," she says.

#### The Solution

Draper searched the Internet for an online training solution. After comparing four solutions, she chose WebEx because of its ease of use. "It was very intuitive and had all the features I was looking for, including attendee tracking, live chats, polling, and testing," she explains.

With WebEx Training Center, Draper was able to implement a crucial and unique component of Subaru's OLP program: Customer Service Recovery. According to Draper, "If a customer submits a negative survey, we notify the dealership and offer the dealer the opportunity to go back to the customer and fix the problem." To ensure dealers are qualified to participate in the Customer Service Recovery Program, Subaru requires each dealership to send at least two employees to an in-depth training program developed by Draper. The program, which teaches the dealers how to reverse negative opinions, consists primarily of WebEx prerecorded and live online training sessions. It also includes a traditional classroom segment that Draper plans to replace with WebEx Training Center sessions in the near future.

Using the on demand module in WebEx Training Center, Draper developed seven OLP recovery presentations that dealers may access 24x7. The company hosts the presentations on a Subaru-branded WebEx portal that dealers frequent. "Each prerecorded presentation lasts 10-20 minutes, so a dealer can leave the sales floor and complete a session even during a short work break," says Draper. She continues, "Because accessing the presentations is



so convenient, some dealerships have as many as 20 employees—instead of the two we require—participating in the trainings.”

As part of the recovery training, Draper also requires the dealers to attend a live 45-minute WebEx session. The live online sessions optimize her time by making it possible for employees from multiple dealerships to attend the same session. “By enabling us to institute the Recovery Program, WebEx is helping us foster customer loyalty that will increase both car and service sales,” says Draper.

At Subaru, WebEx Enterprise Edition is now being integrated throughout the organization for a variety of purposes. For instance, the IT department uses WebEx for internal application training, while regional vice presidents and training managers use Meeting Center to conduct meetings with dealers and salespeople located throughout large geographic territories. Subaru Service Technical Trainers also use WebEx to deliver diagnosis and just-in-time trainings to dealership technicians.

#### The Benefits

WebEx enabled Subaru to execute quickly on a customer service program unique to the industry. “We’re the first car manufacturer to create a customer service recovery program to increase customer loyalty, and WebEx helped us do it,” states Draper. Since launching its online OLP recovery training program six months ago, Subaru has trained 98% of its dealers. “Using WebEx, we trained 350 dealers in the first month. Now it costs approximately \$0.75 per person to deliver training. No other program in Subaru’s history has achieved these types of results.”

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As a result of using WebEx, Draper has reallocated the time and money once spent on in-person training to an effective, measurable solution that dealers love. “Now the dealers use Subaru’s training as the gold standard to compare other manufacturers’ programs,” explains Draper, adding, “WebEx has raised Subaru to a first tier level in the dealers’ minds.” With its better training, Subaru now gets more attention from the dealerships, a crucial factor in increasing sales.

WebEx has not only improved efficiency at Subaru but it has also helped the company strengthen its dealer relationships and the impact of its programs. Draper uses WebEx to start impromptu online sessions or conduct just-in-time trainings whenever necessary. She says, “I’ve established an ongoing relationship with our dealers through WebEx. I now have more one-on-one interactions and know more about them than ever before.”

Draper has also discovered that WebEx is an excellent tool for advanced learning. Using WebEx, she recently incorporated a higher learning course into her training offering and had surprising results. “The course required dealers to retrieve data from the OLP site and to create an action plan that would resolve problem areas in their dealerships,” says Draper. She continues, “Within a week, 75 dealers had

submitted action plans to me. Once again I knew I could rely on WebEx to drive important changes in my business.”

#### The Future

On the heels of her overwhelming success with the recovery training program, Draper already has plans for increasing the use of WebEx. She intends to transition half of her in-person classrooms to WebEx Training Center by the end of this year, converting to 100% online trainings by the end of 2007.

Draper is also investigating ways to use the WebEx Sales Center communications portal for training purposes. “I’d like to upload relevant documents to the portal so dealers can easily access them.”

Draper has identified herself as a WebEx evangelist who would like to help other departments at Subaru adopt the solution. She concludes, “With decreasing budgets and increasing demands for efficiency, WebEx presents a better solution to the way things were done before.”

## HIGHLIGHTS

- The launch of Subaru’s Owner Loyalty Recovery required the program’s sole trainer to efficiently deliver training to 600 dealerships across the US.
- WebEx Training Center enabled Subaru to train 2400 dealers in six months at a cost of \$0.75 per person.
- Providing dealerships with better training and frequent interactions has strengthened dealer relationships and programs.
- Subaru’s WebEx training is now considered the gold standard by which dealers compare other training programs.