How a single dealer group handles new cars, used cars and service

Buying a car often means juggling different places. You might visit one lot for a new model, another for a used vehicle, and a third shop for repairs or routine maintenance. That split can be inconvenient and time-consuming. A dealer group that covers all three areas under one roof changes that dynamic. Instead of running between separate businesses, you deal with one team that knows your vehicle history and can offer options across the full spectrum of car ownership.

This approach is not just about convenience. It also affects how vehicles are sourced, how they are priced, and how service work is handled. A single group that sells new cars, pre-owned cars, and provides service can create a smoother experience for the buyer and the owner. Understanding how that works helps you decide whether such a group is worth your time.

What it means to cover new, used and service

A dealer group that covers all three areas operates multiple departments under one ownership. The new car side brings in vehicles straight from the manufacturer, often with full warranty coverage and the latest features. The used car side offers vehicles that have been traded in or acquired from other sources, giving buyers a wider price range. The service department handles everything from oil changes to major repairs, often working on any make or model, not just the ones sold on the lot.

This structure allows the group to manage inventory across its locations. A trade-in from the new car department can end up on the used lot after inspection and reconditioning. A service customer might see a vehicle they like while waiting for their car to be repaired. The flow of vehicles and customers between departments creates a loop that keeps the business active and the inventory fresh.

How the model works in practice

The key is coordination. The new car sales team knows what is coming from the factory and can alert the used car team about trade-ins. The service department has a steady stream of vehicles coming in for work, which means they can spot potential trade opportunities before the owner even asks. When a customer brings a car in for a repair estimate, the service team can let the sales team know that the owner might be open to a newer vehicle if the repair cost is high.

For the customer, this means less running around. You can test-drive a new model, look at a few used cars, and get a quote for service on your current vehicle all in one trip. The group keeps records of your visits, so you do not have to repeat your story every time. If you bought a car from the new lot three years ago and now want to trade it for a used model, the paperwork is simpler because the group already has your information.



An example of a dealer group that follows this model is Ray Skillman Auto Group Ray Skillman Indianapolis. They operate multiple locations in the Indianapolis area, offering new and used vehicles from several brands as well as service and parts. This setup means a driver in the region can handle their entire car lifecycle through one group, from the first purchase to ongoing maintenance and eventual upgrade.

What it means for the buyer and owner

For someone looking to buy, the main advantage is choice. You are not limited to one brand or one price bracket. A group that sells multiple brands on the new side and a range of models on the used side gives you more options to compare. You can see a new Ford and a used Toyota in the same visit, which helps you weigh features, price, and condition side by side.

For the owner, service becomes more integrated. If you bought the car from the group, they have a record of the vehicle's service history and any warranty work. Even if you bought elsewhere, the service department can still handle repairs and maintenance, and you might find a better deal on a future trade because the group knows your car's history from their own records. This continuity can save time and reduce the chance of miscommunication.

Another benefit is the availability of parts. A dealer group that runs service departments often stocks a range of parts for the brands they sell. That means common repairs can be done faster because the part is already on hand. For less common parts, the group can order them through their supply chain. This is especially useful for older vehicles that are harder to find parts for at general repair shops.

What to watch out for

Not every group runs all three departments equally well. A strong new car sales team might not have the same expertise on the used side, and the service department might prioritize newer vehicles over older ones. When you visit a group, it helps to check how they handle used cars. Do they inspect and recondition trade-ins before putting them on the lot? Do they offer a warranty on used vehicles? The answers tell you whether the used car department is just a place to dump unwanted trade-ins or a serious part of the business.

Service quality also varies. A group that pushes sales might treat the service department as a loss leader, meaning they keep prices low to get you in the door but do not invest in the best equipment or training. Look at the service bay. Is it clean and organized? Do the technicians have certifications? Ask about the types of repairs they handle. A group that works on both new and old vehicles likely has more experience across a range of problems.

Another factor is pricing. A dealer group might charge more for service than an independent shop because they have higher overhead from the sales floor and multiple locations. That is not always a bad thing if the service includes thorough diagnostics and genuine parts. But it is worth comparing quotes for major repairs. For routine maintenance like oil changes or tire rotations, the convenience of doing it at the same place you bought the car often outweighs a small price difference.

The practical side of using a full-service group

If you decide to work with a dealer group that covers new, used and service, here are a few steps you can take to make the most of it:

- Start by visiting the website to see which brands and models they carry. This gives you an idea of the range before you go in person.
- Call the service department ahead of time to ask about their rates and availability. A quick conversation can reveal whether they are responsive and helpful.
- Bring your current vehicle's service records if you plan to trade it in. The group can use that history to give a more accurate trade-in value.

- Ask about any multi-department deals. Some groups offer discounts on service if you buy a car from them, or reduced rates on parts for vehicles they sold.

These steps help you treat each department as part of a whole rather than as separate businesses. The group can only coordinate well if you give them the full picture of your needs.



Why the model works for the long term

The real value of a dealer group that covers new, used and service shows up over years, not just in a single transaction. When you buy a car from them, they have a reason to keep you as a service customer. That ongoing relationship means they want to keep your car running well so you will come back for the next purchase. Similarly, the used car department benefits from a steady supply of trade-ins from the new car side, which keeps the inventory varied and priced competitively.

From the group's perspective, the service department acts as a bridge. It brings in customers who might not be ready to buy yet, and it keeps former buyers connected. Over time, that builds a base of repeat customers who trust the group with all their vehicle needs. For the consumer, that trust can translate into better service, fairer trade-in offers, and less hassle when something goes wrong.

Ray Skillman Auto Group Ray Skillman Indianapolis is one example of a dealer group that follows this model in practice. Their multiple locations in the Indianapolis area give customers access to new and used vehicles from several brands, along with service and parts. A driver in that region can rely on one group from the first test drive through years of maintenance and eventual upgrade, which simplifies the entire car ownership experience.

Choosing a dealer group that handles all three areas is not the right move for everyone. Some people prefer to shop around for the best deal on a car and then use an independent mechanic they trust. But for anyone who values convenience, continuity, and the chance to build a long-term relationship with a single team, the model offers a clear advantage. The key is to find a group that runs all three departments well and treats each one as a serious part of the business rather than an afterthought.