

Ramsey Auto Group's got it covered - ten dealerships offer unparalleled choice



PHOTOS BY EUGENE PARCIASEPE, JR.

The Ramsey Auto Group The dealership group enjoys a reputation throughout the North Jersey region as a reputable and trusted entity. They have been honored with several outstanding achievements, such as the coveted Global NSSW Award, which honors dealerships that achieve and maintain the highest standards of performance in customer satisfaction globally. Pictured above are the Ramsey Volvo and Nissan dealerships on Route 17.

By **DOUG SCANCARELLA**
SPECIAL TO NORTH JERSEY CARS

Art Picciano, the general sales manager with Ramsey Auto Group, insists that none of the company's automobile dealerships employ any kind of sales gimmick. That may not be the impression a first-time customer gets the first time he or she walks into one of the

showrooms. Picciano understands why. The 40-year old, family-owned Ramsey Auto Group is a leading automotive retailer in New Jersey. Founded in 1968 by the Van Duren family, the company has steadily expanded far beyond the original Fiat dealership. Its current lineup of Route 17 dealerships includes Ramsey Volvo, Ramsey

Subaru, Ramsey Nissan, Ramsey Infiniti, Parkfield Saab, Ramsey Mazda, Ramsey Chrysler Jeep, Ramsey Pontiac GMC, Ramsey Mitsubishi and Maywood Mitsubishi. Signage in each of the group's showrooms, along with the Auto Group's Web site, promotes its referral program motto... "We'll Make Your Payments!"

"I think that a lot of people initially think that it's too good to be true," Picciano said. "We mean it. It's not a gimmick. It's not a crazy come on." The company launched its referral program earlier this year. It has been saving their customer's thousands of

dollars. When a customer buys a new vehicle at any of the group's dealerships, they receive ten referral cards to give to friends and family. If that person purchases a car from any

of the company's dealerships, their next monthly payment, up to \$500, is made compliments of the auto group. It's good for ten referrals. A customer can therefore realize a savings of \$5,000.

"It's a pretty amazing offer," Picciano says. "Some dealers have similar plans, but they don't really go about the same way we do. Our plan is very structured. We lay everything out up front and it's in writing. A lot of other dealerships just make the offer verbally, when they think it will cinch the sale."

The program could not have happened at a better time for most customers. Just about everybody is coping with the reality of the worst economy in decades. Every day, more and more families are having their homes go into foreclosure and are unable to make their monthly car payments.

That hard reality, though, has nothing to do with Ramsey's referral program. "We introduced this

program early in the year, well before the economy started to go south," he said. "It's been in the works for a while. We have always had a good, loyal customer base. We were looking for away to build upon that and generate even more repeat and referral business.

"We also know that this happened to transpire at a time when the economy is slumping. The public is hurting. Many people are hesitant about making big purchases. This program helps them out. All we ask is that our current customers refer their friends and family who are looking to purchase a vehicle to our dealership. That will enable us to alleviate their monthly payments."

Like the general public, dealers all over the country have been struggling. But because of its referral program, the Ramsey Auto Group has stood strong.

"You see other dealerships having a tough time," he said. "We have been impacted too, but not as severely as others. We've done well. We're off some, but business isn't down as much as people think. We're bucking the trend."

Picciano says it all comes down to customer service and the referral program is just "one example."

"You're going to get a reputation in any business," he said. "In this business, we've always thrived on a good reputation in this community. That stems from family ownership. We're all involved in the day-to-day operation and in every single department."



Ramsey Mazda is one of ten member dealerships that comprise the Ramsey Auto Group on Route 17.