

# Smarter Dealership Operations Playbook

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A Leadership Guide to Control,  
Productivity and Scalable Performance

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## Why Dealership Operations Are Under Pressure

The Australian automotive industry continues to perform at scale. In 2025 automotive sales generated \$93.2 billion in annual turnover, employed more than 68,000 people, and contributed \$20.9 billion to the Australian economy.<sup>1</sup> More than 1.2 million new vehicles were sold nationally in 2025, creating significant operational activity across sales, finance, service, parts, and administration teams.<sup>2</sup>

However, dealership success is no longer determined by vehicle sales alone.

As dealer groups grow, leaders are increasingly required to maintain visibility, consistency, and control across an expanding network of people, processes, and systems. This challenge is becoming even more pronounced as consolidation accelerates across the industry, with just seven dealer groups now controlling 25.6% of all dealership rooftops in Australia.<sup>3</sup>

Deloitte's 2025 Dealership Benchmarks report highlights ongoing margin pressure, increased competition, and changing market conditions across the sector.<sup>4</sup> In this environment, operational performance becomes a competitive advantage.

For many dealer groups, the advantage lies not in replacing core systems such as their Dealer Management System (DMS), but in improving the high-volume workflows that sit around them. Approvals, invoices, documents, audit trails, and operational reporting all play a critical role in how efficiently a dealership network operates.

This playbook explores where operational friction commonly exists within dealership environments and outlines practical priorities for improving control, productivity, and performance.

# The Operational Control Gap

As dealership networks grow, maintaining operational control becomes increasingly complex.

For many dealer groups, the challenge is not a lack of systems, or the DMS itself. The problem is the manual processes, disconnected approvals and fragmented document management activities that occur around the DMS.

This can present in several ways:

- Finance teams spending valuable time chasing invoice approvals or supporting documentation
- Different dealerships within the same dealer group following different processes for the same operational task
- Service, parts, and administration teams relying on email chains to track requests and approvals
- Delays in locating customer, vehicle, or transaction records when responding to enquiries or audits
- Limited visibility into the status of key operational activities across sites.

Individually, these issues may appear minor. Collectively, they increase administrative overhead, introduce operational risk, and make it harder to maintain consistency as the business grows.

This challenge is reflected more broadly across the Asia-Pacific region. Data issues remain the most commonly cited barrier to successful transformation initiatives, ahead of employee availability, technology strategy, and skills shortages.<sup>5</sup> For dealer groups, fragmented information and inconsistent processes can make it difficult to achieve the visibility required to manage performance effectively across the network.

At the same time, industry advisors warn that fraud risk is re-emerging as profitability tightens, reinforcing the importance of strong governance, clear accountability, and reliable audit trails.<sup>3</sup>

High-performing dealer groups recognise that operational control is not created through oversight alone. It is achieved through consistent processes, clear ownership, and timely access to accurate information. When leaders can see how work is progressing, where bottlenecks exist, and how decisions are being made, they are better positioned to improve productivity, strengthen compliance, and support scalable growth.



# The Leadership Blueprint for Smarter Dealership Operations

The following priorities provide a practical framework for improving control, productivity, and scalable performance.

## 1. Create Visibility Across Critical Operational Workflows

Many operational challenges are not caused by a lack of effort. They are caused by a lack of visibility.

Across APAC organisations, data issues remain the most commonly cited barrier to successful transformation initiatives, ahead of employee availability, technology strategy, and skills shortages.<sup>5</sup> For dealership groups, these challenges often emerge through fragmented information, inconsistent document management practices, and limited visibility across operational workflows.

When finance teams cannot see where invoices are sitting, when service managers are waiting on approvals, or when operational leaders cannot easily identify bottlenecks across locations, decision-making becomes reactive rather than proactive.

Creating visibility means providing leaders with a clearer view of workflow status, ownership, and progress across critical activities such as supplier invoice approvals, vehicle delivery documentation, warranty administration, and compliance management.

### Potential Outcomes

Faster decision-making, earlier identification of bottlenecks and greater confidence in performance.

## 2. Standardise Processes to Support Growth

As dealership groups expand, process variation can quickly become a source of inefficiency.

Pitcher Partners notes that Australia's used vehicle market is approximately twice the size of the new vehicle market, creating additional complexity across vehicle acquisition, appraisal, reconditioning, approvals, documentation, and compliance activities.<sup>3</sup>

Standardising high-volume workflows helps ensure that common processes are executed consistently regardless of location or team. This improves accountability, supports more consistent reporting, and reduces the effort required to manage operations at scale.

For dealership groups operating across multiple locations, standardisation also helps embed governance while creating a more consistent experience for staff and customers.

### Potential Outcomes

Greater consistency across sites, stronger operational control, and a more scalable operating model.

## 3. Strengthen Governance While Improving Productivity

Strong governance should not come at the expense of efficiency.

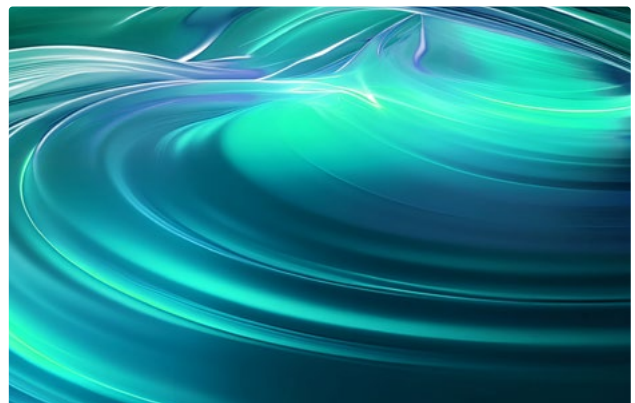
Deloitte highlights the growing importance of aftersales performance, with stronger service bookings reinforcing its contribution to dealership profitability.<sup>4</sup>

At the same time, Pitcher Partners reports that operational optimisation initiatives have helped dealer groups improve net profit per technician by more than \$1,500 per month.<sup>3</sup> While every dealership environment is different, the finding highlights the cumulative impact that process improvements can have on operational and financial performance.

The most effective organisations recognise that governance, visibility, and productivity are not competing priorities. When embedded into day-to-day workflows, they help reduce risk, improve accountability, and strengthen the management of approvals, supporting documentation and audit trails. This creates more capacity for teams to focus on customers and revenue-generating activities.

### Potential Outcomes

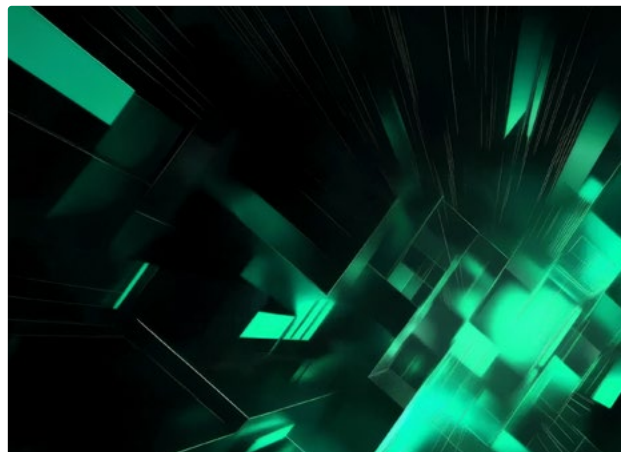
Stronger audit readiness, reduced administrative burden, and improved staff productivity.



# Common Workflow Opportunities Across the Dealership

While priorities vary between organisations, many dealership groups focus on similar areas when looking to improve operational visibility, reduce administrative effort, and strengthen governance.

The following examples highlight areas where workflow modernisation may support more efficient and controlled dealership operations.



Operational Area	Common Challenge	Potential Opportunity	Potential Business Impact
Sales & Showroom	Manual handoffs between sales, finance, administration, and delivery teams can create delays, inconsistent documentation, and limited visibility into transaction status - particularly as activity increases across multiple locations.	Improved workflow visibility, structured documentation processes, and more consistent management of customer and vehicle records.	Reduced delays, improved accountability, and a more consistent customer experience.
Parts & Distribution	High transaction volumes, inventory-related documentation, approvals, and information requests can create administrative overhead and reduce visibility, especially where processes vary across locations.	More structured workflows, improved document management, and greater visibility across operational processes.	Improved responsiveness, reduced manual effort, and stronger operational control.
Finance & Administration	Invoice approvals managed through email, delays locating supporting documentation, and limited visibility into approval status across teams and sites.	Digitised invoice capture, structured approval workflows, and centralised document access.	Faster approvals, improved visibility, and stronger financial control.
After Sales Service	Warranty administration, service documentation, approvals, and customer records often involve multiple stakeholders and manual follow-up, making consistency difficult across locations.	Structured workflows that improve visibility, consistency, and access to supporting information.	Reduced administration, improved responsiveness, and stronger customer service outcomes.

These opportunities are becoming increasingly important as dealerships seek to improve productivity without proportionally increasing administrative overhead. Industry advisors continue to identify fixed operations as one of the most significant opportunities to improve dealership profitability, reinforcing the importance of efficient, well-governed operational processes.<sup>3</sup>



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For many dealership groups, the challenge is not identifying opportunities for improvement. It is knowing where to focus first and how to create lasting operational change without disrupting day-to-day operations.

They need confidence that processes are being followed consistently, governance requirements are being met, and teams can operate efficiently across multiple locations.

At FUJIFILM Process Automation, we help automotive organisations improve the processes that sit around their Dealer Management System. Rather than replacing existing platforms, we work within dealership environments to strengthen the flow of information, reduce manual handling, and improve operational visibility across finance and operational workflows.

Our dealership-ready solutions can support:

- Sales and showroom teams by improving visibility and consistency across customer and vehicle-related workflows

- Parts and distribution operations by reducing administration functions through stronger controls, streamlined approvals and improved access to information
- After sales service teams through efficient management of service, warranty, and supporting documentation processes
- Dealer leadership through greater visibility, governance and consistency across multi-site operations.

The outcome is a more connected operating environment that helps reduce administrative burden, strengthen operational control, and support scalable growth across the dealership network.

The first step is understanding where operational friction exists today and identifying the opportunities most likely to reduce that friction and deliver measurable business value.



## Take The Next Step Toward Smarter Automotive Operations



Discover how automotive organisations (like yours) are streamlining operations and driving growth - explore our automotive solutions.

<sup>1</sup> Australian Automotive Dealer Association (AADA), 2025. Automotive Statistics 2025. Available at: <https://www.aada.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/2025.02.06-AADA-Automotive-Statistics-2025-Final.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI), 2025. Australia's New Vehicle Market Remains Resilient. Available at: <https://www.fcai.com.au/australias-new-vehicle-market-remains-resilient/>

<sup>3</sup> Pitcher Partners, 2026. Motor Industry Services (MIS) Report, March 2026. Available at: Dealmakers 2026 - Pitcher Partners, <https://www.pitcher.com.au/dealmakers-2026/#downloadreport>

<sup>4</sup> Deloitte, 2025. 2025 Dealership Benchmarks. Available at: <https://www.deloitte.com/content/dam/assets-zone1/au/en/docs/industries/2025-dealership-benchmarks.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Forrester Research, 2024. Predictions 2025 APAC Webinar: Technology

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**FUJIFILM**

**FUJIFILM Business Innovation Australia Pty Ltd**

Level 2, 54 Waterloo Road, Macquarie Park, NSW 2113 Australia

Contact us at [fujifilm.com/fbau](https://fujifilm.com/fbau) or 13 14 12

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