

JAMES-RIVARD PONTIAC GMC

By Christina Jackman

When it's time to buy a new car, what determines where you buy it? Do you simply go to the nearest dealership that sells the brand you prefer? And, for that matter, why are you partial to that particular make and model?

It is no secret that a certain stigma surrounds "car salesmen" and their tactics. Just as frequently, certain stigmas are attached to particular cars.

James-Rivard Pontiac GMC wants to be the dealership that changes your perspective on every preconceived notion you have of car buying. With many new models coming out, they want everyone to take a fresh look at what the Pontiac and GMC names are in 2007. And, more than that, they want to show you that buying a car at James-Rivard is like no experience you've ever had.

The unique style of James-Rivard can be credited to owner Roger Rivard. "Genuine" is probably not a word most people associate with the auto sales



industry, but it's the first word that comes to mind when speaking with Rivard and his staff.

Rivard, who worked as a CPA in Detroit, became known as the resident "dealership guy" for his accounting firm because of his interest and understanding of the business. It attracted him so much that, after moving to Florida, he bought James-Rivard Pontiac GMC in 1992.

"It's an addictive business," says Rivard. "I love it."

Perhaps it's his pure love of the industry that fuels so much of his revolutionary attitude.

"I want people who work here to have a family and a life," says Rivard. "With long hours, that isn't typical in this industry. But, we have very low turnover. Two-thirds of the people working here have been here over five years. Three of our managers have been here since I bought it. We want our customers to build a relationship with the brand and a relationship with the same people every time you come in."

Rivard must be on to something because they have one of the highest percentages in the industry of repeat business.

"Over 50 percent of our customers have bought from us or had an immediate family member buy from us previously," says Rivard.

Another one of Rivard's most important concepts is truthfulness and comfort.

"There is no grey area here," says Rivard. "If you want the cost of a car, call



us up and we will give it to you. We're not going to hassle you to come in; we'll just give you what you need to know. That's part of why our repeat customers are so comfortable with us, because we are consistent and honest."

And, it's easy to be upfront when you have a product you believe in. Which Rivard clearly does.

"Unfortunately, the public does not always realize that GM products are now in line with Honda and Toyota," says Rivard. "It will take a while to change everyone's perspectives, but that's what we want to do. Our service department is on the decline – but not because we don't give great service. It's just that our cars are now built so well that they don't need much maintenance or repair."

And anyone who has seen a Pontiac Solstice convertible driving around probably has noticed that the brand is taking a fresh direction. The G6, the most popular Pontiac, is available as a coupe, sedan, and now hardtop convertible.

GMC is staying true to their popular products like the Sierra, Yukon, Denali, and Envoy, but also introducing new concepts like the Acadia (I got to see the first one James-Rivard received and was stunned at its sleek beauty – if I hadn't known otherwise, I would have thought it was an Acura MDX).

And Rivard strongly believes in offering you an incredible selection.

"I order all of our inventory myself," says Rivard. "Not that I need to, but I want to personally ensure that we have the variety, mixture, and balance of cars you are looking for."

In addition, James-Rivard offers something else to stand apart from the rest – no dealer fee. If you are like me, I just assumed that was a natural obscure charge associated with car buying that was to be accepted. While in reality, a dealer fee is a charge that is pure profit and normally ranges from \$295-\$895. Rivard believes strongly in not tacking fees like this onto his customers.

"It's not worth it," says Rivard. "I might not be the most profitable guy in this business, but we do well. And, I'm happy because I can sleep at night knowing how James-Rivard does business."



For more information, call James-Rivard Pontiac GMC at 813-620-6500.