University of St.Gallen

PORSCHE

Accelerated Excellence

The International Dealer Academy and its Impact on Porsche's Retail Network and Dealer Personalities

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Executive Summary

Dr. Ing. h.c. F. Porsche AG (hereafter Porsche), the renowned German car manufacturer sells its products through a network of regional subsidiaries and independent, franchised dealerships across the globe. While Porsche does not own or manage most of these dealerships, it clearly holds a strong and interdependent relationship between HQ and the markets. For all training and qualification related elements, the Sales Qualification department at Porsche's headquarters in Zuffenhausen shows responsible. In 2012, Porsche published its new strategic plan for the next five years, Strategy 2018 (since replaced with Strategy 2025) and as part of this strategy, Porsche was determined to invest in the development of their dealership partners.

In 2013, the "International Dealer Academy" was launched as an integral part of the Porsche Business Excellence (PBE) initiative. Since its inauguration in 2012, PBE serves as a strategy transmission belt into the retail market. The elite Dealer Academy in collaboration with the world-leading business school at the University of St. Gallen would support this endeavor. It enhances the management capacity of General Managers at the franchised dealerships from around the globe and prepare them for future impact. What made the Academy unusual as a custom executive program was that it was designed and delivered through close collaboration between Porsche and St. Gallen whilst at the same time had the participants self-selecting and paying their own way from the dealerships.

The program is very select, with only fifteen participants in each intake. The program has three week-long 'Semesters' run across two-years and is delivered partly in Zuffenhausen, partly in St. Gallen and also at different global dealership locations for each cohort; additionally a mini-thesis is required for a 'Certificate of Advanced Studies' from St Gallen. Now embarking on its seventh iteration, the Dealer Academy has carved itself a prestigious reputation in the Porsche dealership community with a waiting list to attend.

The impact of the program is demonstrable in the improvement of relevant KPI of dealerships where managers have attended, and in the promotion of attendees within their dealership hierarchies.

The success of the program is due to a mixture of factors including the innovative structure between Porsche and the dealerships, the unusually strong working relationship between Porsche's Program Management and St. Gallen, and the on-going impact of the annual alumni reunion meeting.

International Dealer Academy Opener