

African Americans, is frequently singled-out for its abysmal minority dealership record. None of the 174 Lexus dealerships are owned by minorities. "We completely agree with what's being said," says Mike Michels, a Lexus spokesman. He adds that Lexus had one black dealer who eventually sold his franchise. Mercedes-Benz had one African American and a Hispanic dealer who also sold their franchises.

NAMAD has done yeoman work in the past to increase the numbers of minority-owned dealerships. Vaden-Williams vows 1997 won't be any different.

Carl Dukes, the owner of Joliet Dodge in Joliet, Ill. has no doubt of that.

"I think they need to have time to react and develop a long-term plan to combat changes in the marketplace," Dukes says, a rare, black second-generation dealer whose father, R.L. Dukes, had a Chicago Oldsmobile dealership. "If they do what they've done in the past, they'll provide the leadership that we need."

**Organization:**

National Association of Minority Automobile Dealers.

**Headquarters:**

Washington, D.C.

**Founded:**

1990

**Members:**

425 African-American, Hispanic, Asian and Native American dealers in the U.S.

**Dealer profile of largest auto companies:**

Company	African-American Dealers	*Total Dealers
General Motors	97	8,346
Ford	240	5,120
Chrysler	75	4,615
Toyota	12	1,364
Honda	4	1,285
Nissan	12	1,233
Mazda	11	898

\*As of 1996

\*GM, Ford and Chrysler all have established programs to recruit and train minority candidates. BMW, Honda, Toyota, Nissan and Mitsubishi have recently established such programs. Jaguar, which plans to add new dealer franchises, said it will seek minorities. Mazda has no such program in place, which is the case with other import manufacturers.

## 'Who Said It's a Man's World'

By Tedra Butler-Dudley

Pamela Rodgers isn't a household name. But anyone browsing the pages of most African-American magazines would know her face. She is General Motors "cover girl", pitching the world's largest automaker as a company supportive of women and minority auto dealers.

Rodgers is one of a handful of African-American women owning automobile dealerships in the industry. The Michigan-based Rodger's Chevrolet is a \$19.8 million success that is growing. And Rodgers reaffirms that a woman's place is where she chooses. Indeed, Rodgers asks in GM's ad: "Who said it's a man's world?"

Rodgers attributes her own success to "working harder to prove yourself." When Rodgers decided to leave Ford as a financial analyst in 1986 to pursue a dream of becoming an automobile dealer, "there were few women in the automotive business," she says. "It took persistence to convince the minority dealers training programs that I was serious. I had to reapply for the program and was finally accepted in January 1988."

Rodgers is a product of Ford's dealer training program, but speaks highly of GM and Chrysler. "All the programs are good but they don't teach you one thing -- about how to deal with people."

In fact, Rodgers says she learned how to deal with people "by selling cars at my mentors' GM dealership before I entered the training program."

In addition, Rodgers draws no distinction between African-American auto dealers and other auto dealers. "Many African-American dealerships are not in African-American neighborhoods so you must know how to earn your business, and that's by concentrating on quality, not numbers."



Pamela Rodgers



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