

# Customers are 'all in the family' at Brad's Chevrolet

SENTINEL STAFF REPORT

Brad Cohen considers his business family-oriented, but perhaps not in the traditional sense.

Cohen, the owner of Brad's Cottage Grove Chevrolet, has cultivated his own philosophy on employee and customer relationships. With employees, "treat them like family and they'll treat customers like family," he said.

At Brad's Chevrolet, this means entering into a relationship.

"If you're my family member, I'm going to take of you no matter what," said Cohen.

Cohen has no love for the "old-school" style of car dealerships, which he characterizes as aloof and often untrustworthy.

"I always believed that you treat your customers and your employees the same," Cohen said. "If you treat your employees really well, they'll stay your employees. If you treat your customers really well, they'll find a way to come back."

Brad's Chevrolet maintains a staff of 54, most of whom Cohen says have planted their roots in the com-



pany.

"We have a lot of good people and most of them are long-term," he said, "and that builds a good family-style business of success."

Cohen's father started his own Dodge dealership on Aug. 1, 1960. Thirty-two years later to the day in 1992, Brad opened his own dealership in Cottage Grove.

"I was 32 years old when I opened the store," Cohen said. "I was the youngest appointed dealer in the state."

Since then, the business has seen

its share of growth and shrinkage, following the ebb and flow of economic forces. Today, Cohen is proud of what his business has become.

"We've sold about 130 percent of our objective for 26 years," he said.

On top of positive sales, Cohen has seen a regular flow of awards and accolades stream into the business, something which he owes to the dealership's high Customer Satisfaction Index and numerous master technicians.

Just last month the company received an award from General Motors, praising the Cottage Grove business's 100 percent certification of all its technicians.

"We were the only store in the state that had seven master techs under one roof," said Cohen.

Cohen anticipates continuing the trend by putting customer care and honesty at the forefront of his business model.

"I guarantee you, if you have a problem, we're going to try to fix it," he said.

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