

## **Enterprise Management Lab: Maximizing the luxury buying experience**

**A drive for excellence:** BMW, a world-leading manufacturer of luxury vehicles and related products, asked students in EM-Lab to answer two critical business questions for them: What makes a truly exceptional luxury car buying experience? And how can employee training help deliver on this goal?

**Stealth data gathering and analysis:** The EM-Lab team used secondary research to identify companies in the luxury market with both excellent customer service and well-respected training programs. Using a rubric and scorecard they created themselves, the students then conducted a series of "mystery shopper" expeditions. Posing as buyers at luxury car retailers, jewelry shops, and five-star hotels, they learned through experience what drives customer satisfaction. Students also met with several of BMW's corporate managers, dealership managers, and regional sales directors to gauge their varying needs. Ultimately, the EM-Lab team presented BMW with a series of recommendations for sales and training programs designed to ensure retailers provide the detail-oriented, seamless customer care that characterizes best-in-class service.

**Key insights for executives:** Simon Huang, sales strategy manager for BMW North America, praised the high quality of the EM-Lab team's work: "The research done by the MIT Sloan team focusing on leading luxury and premium retailers was shared with our executives in the U.S. and colleagues in Munich. The team provided key insights and direction that confirmed and challenged our approach to supporting and leading the change effort under way in providing the ultimate retail experience for our customers." BMW made plans to return as an EM-Lab host company the following year.