

# Dealerships hang "help wanted" signs

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U.S. auto dealerships had nearly 109 000 openings early this year, according to a survey published by Automotive Retailing Today (ART). This coalition of major automobile manufacturers and dealers found that there were more than 5,800 jobs available in the East South Central region alone. That four-state area includes Alabama.

Although more than 45,000 of those openings were in sales, 36,456 of the vacancies were in service, with an estimated salary range of \$28,000 to \$96,000 a year. Parts department, administration and collision repair specialists were also in demand.

Dealers are seeking to fill vacancies by recruiting both students and experienced candidates. Sixty-eight percent of dealerships report offering summer/seasonal employment and internship programs to identify future candidates.

A program called Hire the Heroes which provides links for dealers and military outplacement agencies, has resulted in nearly 30,000 veterans being hired by dealers in the last three years.

"The pool of recent military veterans includes technologically savvy motivated workers whose skills and military training may be easily adaptable to a variety of dealership positions," the report said.