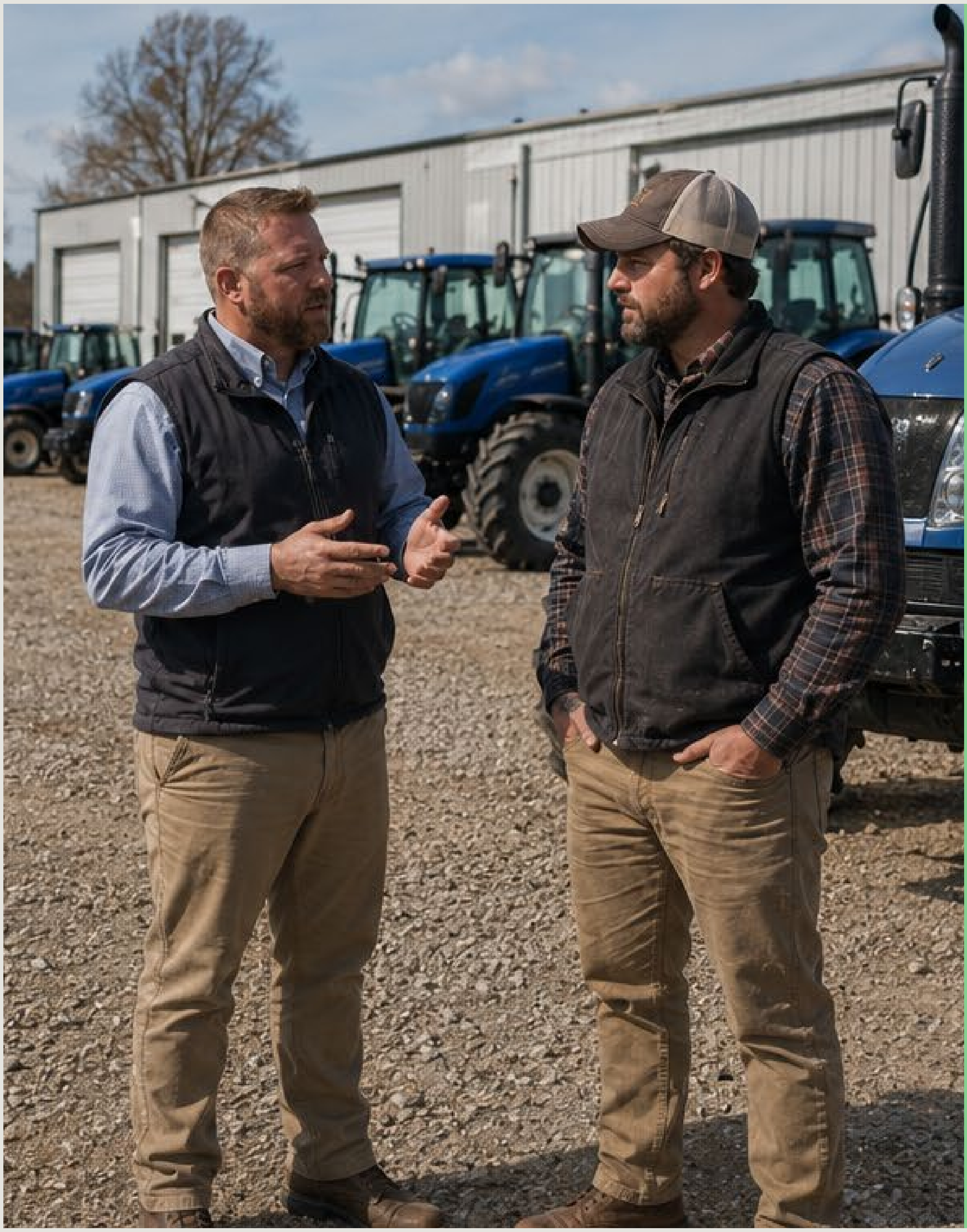
FUSABLE

Dealer Insights Report 2026

Find out what dealers really think. Uncover trends that can help shape smarter strategies—from inventory management to lead generation and margin protection.



Find out what's driving **dealer strategies** this year.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

In 2026, the equipment market hasn't collapsed, but it has compressed around a single, compounding problem: cost. *"It's not just one thing - it's fuel, labor, parts, interest... everything is going up."* Affordability has become the dominant force shaping every part of the business. Buyers can't move forward. *"No one is buying unless they absolutely need to."* And when they do, the deal is harder to profit from. *"Expenses are rising while margins are falling."* The challenge in 2026 isn't generating interest. It's whether customers can afford to act on it, and whether dealers can make money when they do.

That pressure shows up across the data. Buyer hesitation due to cost is the #1 barrier to closing deals, cited by 43% of dealers. Low customer demand has dropped 9 points as a top profitability concern - not because the market is healthy, but because the problem has moved downstream. Demand isn't the constraint anymore. Margin is.

Lead quality is slipping while volume grows. *"Tell me who is ready to buy equipment,"* one dealer said, capturing a frustration shared by more than a third of the market. Inventory has shifted from oversupply to misalignment, and disconnected technology is turning a workflow problem into a margin one, with staff spending *"25–50% of their time double-checking things."*

Yet one truth hasn't changed: nearly 70% of closed deals still come from existing customers. *"Equipment sales is still a relationship business."* In 2026, the dealers who pull ahead will protect that foundation while building the precision to compete in a market that punishes guesswork and rewards getting it right.

Snapshot: Trends to Watch

Affordability Is Now the Gatekeeper
"High equipment prices and high interest rates... customers simply don't have the funds to purchase." Financing structure and pricing accuracy will determine who keeps transactions moving and who watches opportunities go cold.

Margins Demand Attention
"The increase in equipment cost has decreased margins." With costs and inflation rising together, dealers who aren't actively managing margin per deal will feel the squeeze accelerate.

Lead Quality Over Lead Volume
"Send only good leads." The funnel may be fuller but commitment is weaker. The advantage goes to dealers who can identify high-intent buyers quickly - not those generating the most activity.

Integration Is No Longer Optional
"We have to access numerous platforms... it takes a lot of time." Disconnected systems aren't just frustrating - they're expensive. Connected workflows will separate the efficient from the overwhelmed.

Significant Findings

01 Buyers Are Stuck and Dealers Feel It
43% of dealers say buyer hesitation due to high equipment costs is their #1 barrier to closing deals. It's no longer about generating interest - it's about whether customers can afford to move forward at all.

02 Margins Are the New Crisis
Rising equipment costs (69.8%) and inflation (48.1%) are compounding simultaneously. Dealers aren't just selling harder; they're earning less, with shrinking margins emerging as a new core threat.

03 Lead Quality Is Slipping
37% of dealers report lead quality has declined, while only 17% see improvement. More digital activity is producing less committed buyers; visibility is up, conversion is down.

04 Inventory Is Misaligned, Not Just Oversupplied
Excess inventory tying up capital has dropped 10 points year over year, but aged and slow-moving equipment remains the top complaint. The problem has shifted from too much inventory to having the wrong inventory.

05 Data Use Has Shifted from Adoption to Dependence
In 2026, nearly half of dealers (46.9%) use third-party data daily, signaling a shift from weekly and periodic reference to embedded, real-time decision-making.

06 Technology Frustration Remains But the Stakes Are Higher
Lack of integration was the top frustration in 2025 (49%) and remains so in 2026 (38%), showing that while fewer dealers cite the issue, its impact is growing as reliance on data increases.

07 Disconnected Systems Are Costing Real Time
38% cite lack of platform integration as their top tech frustration, and staff are spending up to 50% of their day double-checking data across systems that don't talk to each other.

08 Relationships Still Win Deals
68.8% of closed deals came from existing customers - unchanged from 2025. Despite digital growth, trust and repeat business remain the most reliable path to revenue.

09 The Demand Problem Has Become a Margin Problem
Low customer demand dropped 9 points as a profitability barrier (24.6% in 2025 to 15.4% in 2026), while shrinking margins emerged as a new threat at 14.6%. Dealers aren't struggling to find customers - they're struggling to profit from them.

Start planning smarter.

Fill out the form to download the full report.

First Name*

Last Name*

Email Address*

Company Name*

Business Phone Number

Which option best describes your industry?*

Please Select

Which product are you interested in? *

Please Select

Get The Report