

## Lori Murtagh

Chief Risk Officer, SCI Ltd.



**Auto Remarketing Canada: What was your path to the automotive industry, and what do you enjoy most about working in the car business?**

**Lori Murtagh:** It was never my primary ambition to pursue a career in the automotive industry. Believe it or not, it was actually happenstance. I had just completed my undergrad in law and while I had intended to pursue a post-graduate law degree, I ended up applying for, and securing, a position in the

legal department of an equipment and automotive leasing company. It was supposed to be a one-year “break,” and then I was heading off to law school. That was over 27 years ago.

What I enjoy about the automotive industry is the possibility of completing a full career path from start to finish. For example, that job 27 years ago allowed me to apply what I had learned in my undergrad.

Eventually, I moved to HR, then back to operations, and now I’m back to legal and compliance at a very senior level. The auto industry is so multi-faceted and challenging and allows you to do so many things within it. For me, being a true generalist, at times, gives me the variety I crave.

**ARC: How is the Canadian auto business most different than when you first started out?**

**LM:** The biggest change I see is the number of women in senior strategic roles. Just take a look at the group of women you are profiling. These ladies have had extraordinary careers which they have pursued with unparalleled determination. Traditionally, the automotive industry, including automotive finance, has been critiqued for

hosting typecast roles, and over the years, I’ve witnessed a significant change in this regard. We are seeing more diversity. Diversity is key, as it brings new and different perspectives to traditional roles. It’s a good disruption.

**ARC: How would you describe your leadership style?**

**LM:** A boss dictates. A leader leads. I define a leader as someone who works alongside you and who is a champion of the people who they work with day in and day out.

It’s not about, “You do it.”

It’s about, “Let’s do it.”

That’s the kind of leadership quality I value and the style I deliver. I’ve always found tremendous pride in knowing that so many of those I’ve sponsored have become successful.

I’ve worked with many women and men over the years who were just getting their start, and I have enjoyed working alongside them, supporting them in their quest to find their way. I’ve always said, “You bring the will, I’ll help with the skill.”

These individuals have gone on to do remarkable work in our industry and I take such pride in just knowing them.

**ARC: How would you describe your approach to problem-solving?**

**LM:** For me, problems are simply opportunities that drive people to bring ideas to the table. They are great learning opportunities for growth. Seeking out a resolution just puts a positive spin on the whole notion of a problem.

**ARC: What are the biggest challenges facing the Canadian car business today, and how do you and your company work to overcome those hurdles?**

**LM:** Customer experience is the biggest challenge. We talk about millennials being those that drive “the now experience,” but I believe they are no different in their demands than those of us who are Generation Xers or baby boomers. Everyone, no matter their age or ethnicity, wants an experience that is less onerous — an experience that is easy and available when they are. All industries are moving towards creating a superior customer experience and we have to follow suit. In fact, we need to lead the way.

Dealers call me all the time and my job — our job — is to understand that we owe them a better experience. That’s a hurdle for everyone as we have things that bind us, processes and an infrastructure that may not be as well positioned to help us do that immediately.



However, we need to find new approaches and commit to the evolution of improving customer experience. If everyone is racing to create a best-in-class customer experience, then everyone has the right mindset. And that’s good for the market.

