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Ferrari factory service no longer available here

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BY **KEN LEISER** • kleiser@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8215 | Posted: Friday, December 23, 2011 12:10 AM | (31) Comments



St. Louis Motorsports LLC has told Ferrari owners that it will no longer perform factory warranty or recall work on that line of automobile.

The Chesterfield car dealership is embroiled in a legal dispute with Ferrari North America. Missouri Ferrari owners now will have to take their vehicles to Chicago or Denver to have their warranty work done, said Motorsports partner Graham Hill. Motorsports has still offered to perform routine Ferrari maintenance.

Motorsports, which sells new Bentleys, Lamborghinis and other top-of-the-line vehicles, filed a federal

lawsuit in August alleging Ferrari did not follow through on its promises to grant Motorsports a Ferrari sales and service franchise.

Hill confirmed the letter was sent to customers earlier this month. "It was an unfortunate business decision that my business partner and I didn't want to have to make," he added.

He referred questions about the lawsuit to his attorney Robert Zarco. Zarco was unavailable for comment Thursday.

But in a complaint filed in U.S. District Court for Eastern Missouri, Motorsports contends it relied on promises of a future sales franchise before entering into a service-only agreement with Ferrari North America in May 2005.

In order to maintain a service-only facility, Motorsports contends it had to upgrade its facilities to service Ferraris, bought special tools and parts, and invested in training for its personnel. Following a meeting with a Ferrari North America representative in 2006, Motorsports purchased property for more than \$1 million to accommodate the Ferrari sales.

The suit alleges breach of oral contract, implied contract, fraudulent inducement and misrepresentation.

Ferrari North America did not return a telephone call on Thursday, but it has filed a motion to dismiss Motorsports' lawsuit.

In its Dec. 9 letter to customers, Motorsports officials recounted how they became a factory-authorized Ferrari Service Center with the understanding that they would ultimately be granted the sales agreement.

But after six years, the letter continued, Ferrari North America determined St. Louis "does not represent a viable market" for Ferrari sales. Hill disputes that perception, saying there are "a ton of Ferraris" in the St. Louis area.

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