DATA DRIVEN DEALER PLAYBOOK

A COMPREHENSIVE MARKETING GUIDE FOR DEALERS

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A comprehensive marketing strategy that puts the customer at its center has never been more important to the success of dealerships and dealer groups.

Our Shifting Landscape

In the span of few years, customer expectations have changed—how they're messaged to, how their information is used, how they want to do business both online and in-person, and more.

At the same time, uncertainty surrounding the very basics of business such as inventory, pricing, and staffing promises to make attracting and retaining customers more challenging for the forseeable future.

Customer Relationships Matter More Than Ever

Exciting technologies make business evolution possible but the speed at which we need to adopt them is daunting. We can still rely on one thing as we navigate these changes: the relationships we forge with our consumers.

Dealers whose marketing communications make people feel informed and respected will be the ones who see the best success going forward.

Using this Playbook

Inside is everything you need to create a comprehensive marketing plan that harnesses the most potential from the resources you already have.

You don't have to tackle everything in this Playbook at once. Use it as a guide to create a strategy that makes sense for you right now. Then, come back and reference it again each time you want to up your game.

Data-Driven Marketing for Dealers

The biggest play in your book as a dealership or dealer group should be a solid marketing plan that's informed by reliable consumer data.

Ready for the play-by-play?

We'll take you through everything you need for a marketing strategy that communicates to your consumers in a more personal, engaging way, giving you the competitive advantage in a technologically advanced lanscape.

➔ An Organized Marketing Strategy

Your brand, messaging, and every channel where you communicate to prospects and returning customers.

➔ Driven by Data

The most successful coommunications revolve around your consumers' needs, expectations, and next actions. Data a powerful way of determining these factors for your consumers.

➔ Backed by Artificial Intelligence

Interpret otherwise unwieldy data easily with artificial intelligence (AI), to better communicate to prospects and returning customers alike, no matter where they are in their business lifecyle with your brand.

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BRAND STRATEGY

"Bland Out" or Stand Out.

1. Determining Your Desired Brand

Start with consistent, strategic branding to show prospects and customers how your business is different from the rest.

Your brand is most successful when it:

- Makes a memorable impression on consumers.
- Tells customers what they can expect from you.
- Gives people a reason to care about your business.
- Shows the value of what you offer.
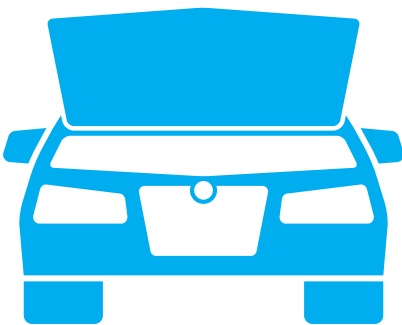
Virtually all vehicles have the same under-the-hood components and advancing technology.

YOUR BRAND IS A WAY YOU CAN DIFFERENTIATE.

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Your Brand Versus the Manufacturer's Brand

Your dealership or dealer group brand operates as a provider of yet another brand or brands, the vehicles you sell and service.

Manufacturer's Brand

Customers want to buy a certain make and model, based on that vehicle's brand.

Your Dealer Brand

Customers want to buy or service their specific vehicle make and model from you, based on your brand.

CONSUMERS DO NOT DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN THE TWO

When your customers and prospects receive communications from the dealership, the dealergroup and the manufacturer, they view these messages as coming from the same place. Keep this in mind as you plan your desired brand.

ALL EMAILS ABOUT FORD ARE FROM FORD.
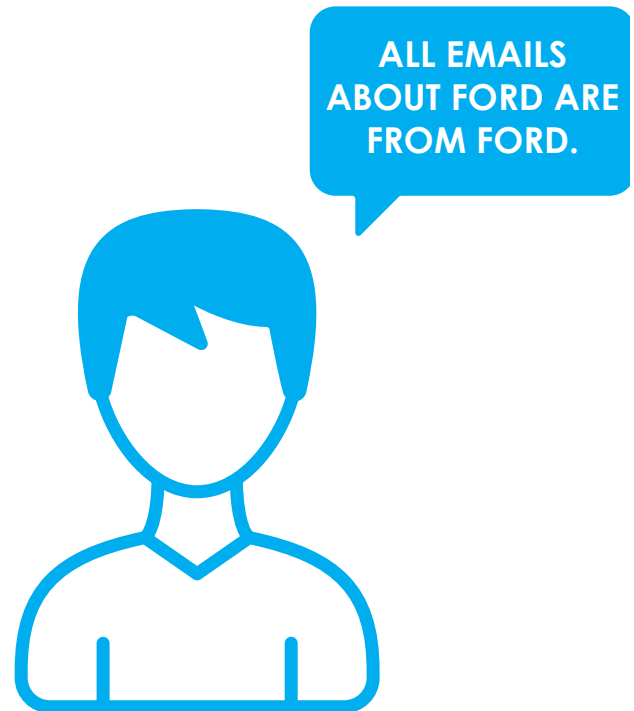
Internal Input and Agreement

Start by talking with your employees and stakeholders about how your brand can best represent your business.

Be Sure to Include A Mix of Stakeholders

Don't limit your conversations to those in management! Be sure to get a good mix of those who work directly with customers every day and decision makers guiding the company forward.

YOUR TURN

TALK TO EVERYONE AT YOUR DEALERSHIP OR DEALER GROUP ABOUT YOUR DESIRED BRAND. ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS TOGETHER:

• What do you want your customers to think when they go past your store or see your business name?

• What does your dealership or dealer group stand for?

• What are your company's priorities and goals?
  What makes your dealership different?

• What kind of experience do you want customers to have?

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Get to Know Your Customers

You have to deeply understand your customers to create a brand that will serve them best.

Consider Your Primary Market Area

What do you know about your customers already? What data and information do you have about them that can help you understand their needs and expectations better?

Ask for Feedback...

Create a survey or ask your customers outright when you speak to them about how they think about your brand. How would they describe your business? Would they recommend you to a friend or family member? If so, for what? If not, why not?

...And Be Ready to Respond

Be sure to respond quickly and professionally to any reviews you receive that show areas for improvement, and do so via the customer's preferred communication channel.

Once you **know your customers**, you can better decide what your brand should be.

Defining Brand Values

Every successful brand communicates certain values to consumers — what the business cares about and stands behind.

What is your business philosophy?

You approach business differently than your competitors, or any other dealership selling and serving the same vehicles. This difference is based in your philosophy about what you provide consumers and how you manage operations day-to-day.

Not sure?

If this is your first time considering your business philsophy, think about why your customers choose you. What type or level of service you consider non-negotiable for giving consumers the best experience possible?

Consider Your Manufacturer's Brand Values

Consumers will have pre-existing ideas about your dealership or dealer group's brand based on the brand values they associate with your vehicle manufacturer. The brand values you define for your business will need to align with or complement those of your manufacturer.

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YOUR TURN

WRITE DOWN 3 OR 4 BRAND VALUES FOR YOUR BUSINESS, USING A SINGLE WORD OR PHRASE FOR EACH, CONSIDERING THE FOLLOWING:

- What values are communicated by the way you do business?

- Which of your manufacturer's brand values does your business also value?

- What values do you provide consumers by being more local to them than the larger manufacturer brand you sell and service?

Distill Values Into a Brand Statement

Your brand values will be the core of your brand statement. This is a short, single line or idea that conveys the essence of your business. Very often, brand statements become a tagline or slogan that's repeated across marketing materials.

Well-Known Brand Statements and Their Values

Brand Values

- Adventure (going to a new place)
- Forward-Thinking (the brand and its consumers are going places)
- Reliability (always ready to go places)

Brand Values

- Good Customer Service (happy with the experience)
- Fun (happiness that comes with travel)
- Easy (happy that there's no hassle)

What Would Your Brand Statement Be?

Try your hand at writing a brand statement that combines your values into a single line or thought that will resonate with consumers.

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2. Understanding The Perception Of Your Brand

What you want your brand to be and how it is viewed currently may not be the same thing.

Consumers' Point of View

Your customers will often perceive the value of your vehicles according to how they view the quality and expense of the automotive company, based off the vehicle's brand.

Your job: To ensure that their perception is as positive as possible.

Also Monitor

Social Media

Respond professionally to any comments or questions posted on your account or that you are tagged in.

Online Reviews

Be sure to respond professionally to these reviews, offering help where you can.

YOUR TURN

ASK THE FOLLOWING GROUPS OF PEOPLE WHAT COMES TO MIND WHEN THEY THINK ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS.

Long-Term Customers

New Customers

Recently Lost Customers

Non-Customers

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Deeper Insight

Artificial intelligence solutions can can do the heavy lifting of gathering and analyzing customer data.

Better Data for Better Understanding

Making sense of consumer data is a large undertaking for anyone, especially for those who aren't data scientists. AI-assisted technology helps make sense of consumer perceptions and behaviors without extra burden for your team.

Simplifying Branded Marketing

Technology offering artificial intelligence solutions can automatically create consumer profiles based off of your data. By analyzing this data and drawing insights from it, you'll put yourself heads and shoulders above the competition.

Volvo Before and After

Volvo's brand image revolution shows the power of aligning your priorities with the experience consumers want.

Before: Brand Perception

Quality. Safety.

Environmentally focused.

Responsible, but snooze.

Customer Values

Looks expensive.

Feels good to drive.

Oh and all that responsible stuff too.

After: Brand Strategy

Premium brand.

Fashionable.

Also trustworthy.

Volvo's New Messaging

Scandinavian-chic.

Sharp design.

Dependable but not dull.

3. Creating a Style Guide

Once you have determined your current brand perception versus your desired brand image, it's time to create or refine your style guide.

Why is a style guide so important?

It's about trust. Consistency in your business shows that you are dependable, reliable and, most importantly, trustworthy.

Marketing Materials Communicate Your Trustworthiness

If the visuals and messaging you use to communicate about your brand are consistent, consumers will feel like they know what to expect from you. You lose a little of that trust every time your brand is inconsistent.

All of the ways a consumer perceives your business need to align every time for them to always think of you as **a brand they know and trust.**

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An Effective Style Guide

Plan for A Living Document

Maintained and update your style guide often as your branding elements evolve over time.

Share Widely

Your style guide is for all employees and stakeholders. Encourage everyone to use it as the standard for communications.

When your brand is cohesive, **your reach increases.**

What goes into a style guide?

Any marketing or communications element that identifies your goods and services as distinct from others is part of your brand.

Name and Logo

Your business name and how you present it visually.

Terms

Both those specific to your business and those more widely used.

"Tweet"   *"Stories"*

"Follow"   *"Thread"*

Symbols and Icons

Graphic elements that represent your business at a glance.

AI BRAIN   DATABASE   EMAIL MARKETING   CUSTOMERS   VIN SERVICE ENGAGEMENT   DATA MANAGEMENT

CONQUEST   BUYER DETECTION   LEASE RETENTION   REPUTATION MANAGEMENT   EQUITY MINING   INVENTORY MOVER

CONNECT   SOCIAL   EMAIL   DIRECT MAIL   CRM INTEGRATION   OMNI CHANNEL CAMPAIGNS

Typography

The fonts you will use and how they are presented in headings, paragraphs, etc.

TYPOGRAPHY
Primary Typeface

Secondary Typeface

CENTURY GOTHIC REGULAR
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
12345678910

CALIBRI REGULAR
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
12345678910

CENTURY GOTHIC ITALIC
*ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
12345678910*

CALIBRI ITALIC
*ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
12345678910*

CENTURY GOTHIC BOLD
**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
12345678910**

CALIBRI BOLD
**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
12345678910**

CENTURY GOTHIC BOLD ITALIC
***ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
12345678910***

CALIBRI BOLD ITALIC
***ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
12345678910***

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Color Palette

CYMK 100.0.0.0
RGB 0.174.239
HEX #00AEEF

CYMK 100.44.0.0
RGB 0.121.193
HEX #0079C1

CYMK 0.80.96.0
RGB 241.90.39
HEX #F15A27

CYMK 0.50.98.0
RGB 247.148.33
HEX #F79421

CYMK 28.0.98.0
RGB 195.216.50
HEX #C3D832

CYMK 0.19.63.0
RGB 255.208.118
HEX #FFD076

CYMK 0.0.0.70
RGB 109.110.113
HEX #6D6E71

CYMK 0.0.0.30
RGB 188.190.192
HEX #BCBEC0

Color, typography, and visuals come together to represent your brand.

Brand Voice

Are you funny? Always to the point? Philosophical? The way you write and talk about your brand to consumers is as important as all the rest.

Your Story

What's the "why" for your dealership or dealer group? Why do you exist, how did you come to be, and why should customers care?

YOUR TURN

CONSIDER HOW YOU'RE USING THESE BRAND STYLE ELEMENTS TODAY. ASK YOURSELF:

Do my communications look and sound like they all come from the same business?

Are there areas where my communications can and should be more consistent?

What brand elements are not defined or not defined very well for my dealership or dealer group?

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Where Your Style Guide is Applied

The elements you define in your style guide should appear consistently across all of your communication materials.

Channels to Check

Make sure that the following have the same general look and feel:

- Website
- Emails
- Video
- Direct Mail
- Social Media Accounts and Posts
- Advertising (Traditional and Digital)
- Shared Testimonials
- Storefront
- Tradeshow Materials
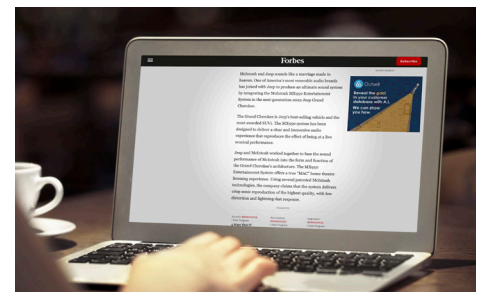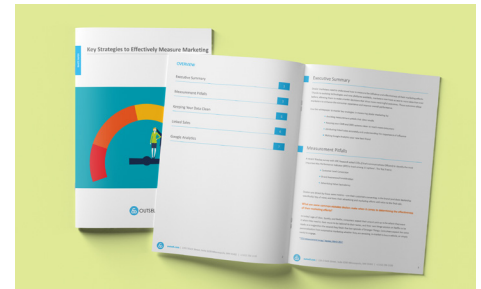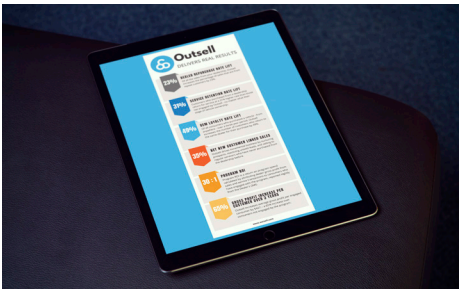
The above shows brand consistency across communications. When your brand is cohesive, your reach increases.

4. Evoking Emotions

Connecting with prospects and customers on an emotional level shows that you care, and gives them extra reason to care about you.

Necessity and Humanity

In our industry, people see the products and services we sell as a necessity, but also an expression of who they are.

Marketing Emotions for Dealers

Whatever other emotions your brand might play to, your messaging can and should also be: **hopeful, empathetic, human**

You provide deals and services to make customers' lives easier.

You exist for your customers. Make sure your branding for your group, in your store and with each individual employee portrays that in every interaction with consumers.

Hiring for Emotional Resonance With Your Brand

Every employee brings along their own personal brand to their individual organizations. Hiring people who align with your dealership or dealer group's brand builds trust, loyalty, and a deep-rooted relationship with the people in your community.

Connecting Emotionally Through Your Brand

There are many ways to form a stronger relationship with your customers and prospects through your brand and communications.

Emotional Marketing Techniques to Try

Look for opportunities to incorporate emotional content into your brand messaging.

Human Interest Stories

Did someone at your dealership or dealer group do something good or interesting? Did something happen that people might want to hear about?

Spokespeople

The right spokesperson — one that resonates with your target audience — can convince people to buy your products or services right away.

Giving Back

Dealerships and dealer groups often contribute charitably in good times and bad. Show your audience that you care just as much as they do by telling them about your impact on the community.

Aspirational Messaging

A vehicle is a large purchase. Focus on the emotions consumers will feel in their new car. Positive perceived value can make their vehicle feel like a dream come true.

Milestones

Is your dealership or someone who works there approaching a major business or life event? Is a customer buying their first car (or 10th?) Recognizing these moments connects you with your audience.

Anniversaries

Collect and act on birthdays, car purchase anniversaries, number of years as a customer, and other passage of time events. Remind consumers of these anniversaries to show them that you value their individual business.

Community Connection

For the most part, you and your employees live in the same community as your customers. A reminder that your people are part of the community makes a strong connection.

Local Pride

So much of the car buying process can be done online. Encourage your customers to "shop local" and do business with you. Few things endear people to a brand like connecting to a sense of community pride.

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5. Fostering Brand Loyalty

Customers become fans and supporters of brands they trust. That trust makes them feel secure in their business decisions and like they belong to something bigger than themselves.

Trust

"This dealership never lets me down."

vs.

Loyalty

"I only ever do business with this dealership."

vs.

Feeling of Belonging

"I tell my friends to go to my dealership."

YOUR BRAND

Delivering on Your Brand Promise

Your brand promises consumers something they value and that's essential to the way you do business. Then, you deliver every time.

Tactics for Increasing Loyalty

The more you know about your customers, the better you can engage with and appeal to them on a personal level. Ultimately, this leads to increased trust, loyalty and sales.

Loyalty Programs

Today's consumers are more likely to engage with a loyalty program that they can access through their phone than with a punch card.

Instant Gratification

Your prospects and customers will be most engaged if points and rewards update automatically so they can see immediate results from doing business with you.

Think Starbucks

Their creative approach to rewards and customer appreciation makes people's lives easier. Their app even allows customers to order ahead of time so that they can glide through their morning routine that much faster, all while earning their rewards and making progress toward a free drink.

YOUR TURN →

THERE'S NO REASON THAT YOUR DEALERSHIP OR DEALER GROUP CAN'T START A MODERN LOYALTY PROGRAM OF YOUR OWN.

What conveniences and incentives could you offer to make your customers' days better or make their lives easier?

Reputation Management

The work of checking in on your brand perception and responding to feedback continues long after you've determined your desired brand image.

Check in Throughout the Customer Lifecycle

If you collect reviews and survey responses early and often in your relationship with a customer, you will be able to more quickly address those who might defect to a competitor. That allows you to connect with them personally in a way that retains them as a loyal customer.

Request Reviews

Ask your customers outright for feedback, driving them to your website and social media pages to leave their reviews.

Keep Them Coming Back

Your customers will be more likely to purchase a vehicle or service from you again if you ask them for their opinion and let them know that their perception matters to you.

Customers will also be more likely to recommend your dealership to someone else if they feel you have engaged with them in a positive way.

Customer Satisfaction Surveys

These surveys can help you listen to and engage with the customers who have been with you for a long time.

Personalized Communications

The competition today goes way beyond customers avoiding ignoring and blocking too many emails. It's about who knows the customer best and can relate to them on an individual basis.

Always Communicate to Customers' Needs

Personalized communications, tailored to each consumer's preferences and behaviors, shows them that you know them and know what they want. When consumers feel like they've been listened to, they have more incentive to purchase from you again and stay loyal to your dealership over time.
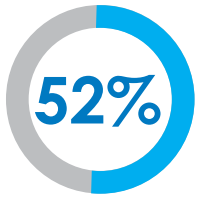
52% Percentage of consumers that always expect offers to be personalized and to get special consideration for their interaction with your company, according to a study conducted by Salesforce.

Loyalty from Top-Value Customers

Your top customers who engage more, spend more, and carry your business through the worst times—as long as you can keep them with your store or group.

Communicate With a Soft Touch

Focus the conversation on their interests based on what you know about them. Make the communication natural —don't say your data told you to reach out.

Example

Did you see your consumer looking at a specific model? Mention a special on it. Or if they're in good equity, send them current OEM incentives to encourage them to consider a purchase so they don't miss the opportunity.

Focus on the Relationship, Not the Data

Lessen the burden on your consumer, empathize with them, and go the extra mile to provide value. Be explicit about wanting to do these things for your consumer and let data guide what you say and do, rather than telling the consumer that your data is the reason you're reaching out.

STUDY: Why Focus on Top-Value Customers

Conducted By

RXA and Outsell

Findings: Top-Value Customers Increase Profit

Top-value customers increase gross total profit for the dealerships and dealer groups that have attracted their loyalty.

30% of existing customers account for 80% of gross profit

6x likelier that top-value customers will make a purchase

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Dealerships that use artificial intelligence to tap into deeper insights win over more consumers than their competitors.

Identify Patterns to Connect and Create Loyal Customers

The primary benefit of AI is its ability to process huge data sets quickly and accurately and find patterns that your BDC and sales teams can't.

You Benefit from AI Every Day

Alexa, Siri, Netflix, Spotify, and all of the services we use all of the time because they seem to just know what we like and understand what we need use AI to personalize their content to your tastes.

Over time, as these AI-driven services learn more about you, their picture of you becomes more and more accurate and so do their recommendations.

And that's what keeps you loyal.

Dealerships and Deal Groups Can Do This, Too

There is no reason in today's advanced and ever-changing landscape that dealers can't do the same for their prospects and customers. In fact, not embracing artificial intelligence to make the best use of your data is to your detriment—it will put you lightyears behind your competitors one day.

Deeper Insight

How do you get to know your customers better than anyone else? Collect information each time you interact with them so that you know how to communicate to their values and needs in the future.

Interpreting Data Made Easier

Over time, you'll collect a lot of information, or data, from a lot of prospects and customers. Organizing this data and making sense of it in a way that you can use it to personalize communications can be a lot of work.

It's also very difficult to interpret certain data correctly when it goes beyond straight demographics, such as data for consumer behavior and vehicle status.

Data solution platforms assisted by artificial intelligence can help you sort data quickly and effectively, and even help with personalized communications by automatically creating messaging for customers based on their information and your brand.

A system backed by artificial intelligence can also build individualized consumer profiles that engage consumers based on their lifecycle and show you important information about your audience—including who is the most loyal and making you the most revenue over time.

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The Ultimate Goal for Your Brand

Give prospects and customers undeniable reasons to choose — and continue to choose—your dealership or dealer group over all the rest.

In a world where it is difficult to differentiate, your brand is where you can **"bland out" or stand out.**

A Play for Dealer Groups

Adopt a unified brand strategy focused on customer retention and loyalty for the whole group, not just individual stores. The combined brand and selection power of your group makes your brand all the more powerful when it's presented consistently.

Removing Brand Siloes

Get rid of siloes in your brand presentation. Dealer groups leveraging their unified brand most successfully all have the following:

- Consolidated customer data
- Personalized communications
- Marketing automation

Example of Unified Brand Strategy

Toyota brand customers and Honda brand customers should both receive group sales and services messaging based on their brand, not based on the location where they purchased.

The Need for Omnichannel Brand Marketing

When creating a brand strategy for your dealer group, consider how you will portray the unified brand across marketing channels for a higher conversion rate with in-market car shoppers.

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Car Buyers Are Active on Multiple Channels

According to V12 quoting Autotrader, consumers do more than half of their car buying research online. The time we spend researching online brings lots of distraction and presents many different purchase paths, so it's important for your dealer group's brand and services to appear often as car buyers go through their research process.

Multi-Channel Shoppers Are Worth More Over Time

Favor customers who are active on multiple channels versus only one, especially when it comes to social channels.

According to V12, for each additional channel a consumer uses, they spend more money in-store. Consumers who are active on four or more channels spend 9% more in-store compared to consumers who only use one channel.

Managing an Omnichannel Strategy

To be successful at omnichannel communications, you'll need to create and implement a cohesive omnichannel strategy plan across all channels that effectively builds a continuous and personalized marketing relationship with your audience.

How to Automate a Unified Brand Strategy?

Dealer groups use an arificial intelligence solution called a Centralized Data Platform to achieve personalized, consolidated messaging automatically.

DATA MANAGEMENT

Is Your Data Helping Achieve Goals or Sitting Stagnant?

1. Using Data for Personalized Communications

When you have data practices in place to know who the people are that you're communicating to, you can engage consumers on a far more personal level.

Putting the Focus on People

More and more, people are looking for communications that are relevant, useful, and engaging—content that seems to have been created especially for them.

It's All About How You Manage Data

If your dealership or deal group carefully plans, manages, and applies the information you capture about consumers to understand their needs, you can anticipate what they might be looking for next and deliver communications about it.

Consistent data management practices are **the key for effective communications.**

Types of Data

You collect data about consumers as a natural course of business. If you find you're missing any of these data sources, it's time to implement them now.

First-Party Data

This is the data you collect from doing business with people every day and is the most useful to you for understanding your specific consumers, those who already know you and have done business with you in some way.

Transactional Data

Think about the data you gather from sales, leases, repair orders, leads, prospects, or any other information you collect from consumers during the business day.

Data from Marketing Platforms

This is information you gather from engagement with your content. Think about clicks and leads from email campaigns or social efforts, visits and actions taken from your website visible through Google Analytics, or responses from direct mail.

Second-Party Data

This is data that comes from partnerships and involvement in initiatives or events outside of your dealership or dealer group. It can include information gathered and shared by affiliates, OEMs, or organizers of events you've been a part of.

Third-Party Data

This is data you have likely licensed in the past regarding consumers' demographics, location, aftermarket service, etc.

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It's Not Enough to Simply Collect Data

Your data comes in from different sources capturing different types of information over a period of time. If you do nothing else with that information, what we call raw data, you will find it extremely difficult to use for marketing or communications efforts.

Data Should Build on Itself

Make sure data coming in from different sources works together to form patterns you can act on in your marketing plan. For example, your CRM and DMS data should work in tandem with data collected from your social and other promotional efforts, instead of keeping that data separated and siloed where it can't give you good insights.

Clean Your Data

Your raw data will invariably have pieces that are missing, incorrect, filled out in the wrong fields, or otherwise entered or captured in a way that makes them unreliable or unable to form patterns right out of the gate.

This is what we call "dirty data" and it must be cleaned before it can provide insight into what consumers are doing and how your content might help them.

Think that your CRM and DMS data is clean enough as it is? Your **consumers will become up to 30% more reachable** if you purposefully clean your data.

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2. The Power of Cleaning Data

Cleaning data regularly is the first critical step toward understanding consumers' interests and behavior—invaluable knowledge for marketing to them effectively.

What Cleaning Data Does

You can use various vendors, professionals, and third-party services to clean your data, correcting misentry by consumers or your team, duplicate information, and more.

- Standardize Mailing Addresses to USPS Standards
- Scrub Email Lists
- Validate Email and Mailing Addresses
- Remove Potentially Malicious or SPAM Email Addresses
- Identify Households
- Merge Individual Duplicates

Fix Fat Fingering

There will always be human error when collecting information due to "fat-fingering," or incorrect data entry. Cleaning data takes care of these errors for healthier, more actionable consumer insights.

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Creating Good Data Management Practices

Data doesn't clean itself, and it's not something you can clean once and forget about. Ensure that your collection and cleaning practices are sound to make your consumer data a valuable tool for successful, engaging marketing communications.

Clean Early and Often

Put a routine in place to ensure that your data is cleaned regularly. You should aim to clean your collected data at least once a quarter, and once a month is even better.

Don't Sabotage Your Own Efforts

Have you ever entered fake information, just to have a data field filled in? Maybe you didn't have an email address for a consumer, so you put down a fake email for them? Or maybe you were missing the zip code for the consumer so put your dealership's in instead?

Don't do that.

It's valuable to know which fields are empty and what data is missing. When you know where data acquisition is lacking, you can work with your sales and service teams to make sure they are always capturing data from their interactions with consumers.

Allow for a Small Margin of Error

You will always have some margin of error in your data, so plan accordingly. But, if you are practicing good ongoing data management, your margin of error will stay below 10%.

YOUR TURN

WHAT PROCESSES CAN YOU PUT INTO PLACE TO CLEAN YOUR DATA MORE OFTEN AND COLLECT DATA MORE ACCURATELY?

Are there pieces of data you know you should collect but haven't put a plan in place yet to ensure you're collecting them?

Have you talked with your sales and services teams about how they collect consumer information?

Who should be in charge of making sure data is cleaned regularly?

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3. Enhancing Your Data

Combined with partners offering additional information layers, your clean data will do the heavy lifting of determining which consumers are most likely to do business with you, and how to best reach them.

Use Your Second and Third-Party Sources

Your second-party and third-party partnerships are a must for enhancing your data. This will make your data incredibly actionable and valuable for your dealership's or dealer groups marketing communications.

Combine Your Data with Consumer Attributes from Other Sources

Various data solutions can help you enhance your existing data with additional information about consumers such as demographics, psychographics, previous transaction data, and VIN ownership.

Applied to your data, each information source provides a stronger picture about who consumers are and how likely they are to do business with you.

Track Your Current and Future Business

You can give your business planning a boost when you understand:

• How many of your consumers are prospective sales, service customers, or unsold leads.

• Baseline for average new versus used units sold.

• Average number of services completed each month.

Ongoing Improvement of Your Data

Enhancing your data can reveal more holes where information is missing or not as detailed as it could be, like missing addresses or validation of phone numbers.

Over time, you'll discover new opportunities for cleaning your data and enhancing it all over again.

YOUR TURN

WHAT SECOND-PARTY AND THIRD-PARTY SOURCES COULD ENHANCE YOUR COLLECTED DATA?

What partners or resources do you currently get additional data from?

How are you currently using your second-party and third-party data?

Do you need additional partners to fill in gaps needed to enhance your data?

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Make the Most of Your Data

Anyone can collect data. Put yourself above the competition by cleaning and enhancing your data, understanding who your consumers are, and using that information to send individualized content every time.

Data-driven, AI-backed communications are **a critical part of your marketing arsenal**.

A Play for Dealer Groups

Dealerships' CRM and DMS data is notoriously oudated and inaccurate. Take the "dirty" data from a single dealership and multiply it across every store in your group. That's a frightening amount of data!

Clean Your Dealer Group Data

Whether you clean your data via a third-party service or manually on your own, make sure you prioritize getting your data clean on a regular basis. It will allow you to expand your reach and improve deliverability of communications to all consumers, regardless of which store they originally purchased or serviced from.

More Efficient Data Processes

With the right data solution, you can even get rid of your DMS handcuffs and allow second-party partners into your system for more efficient and less frustrating data management processes.

Ultimately, you can't build consumer relationships and trust for your dealer group without clean data.

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ARTIFICIAL

INTELLIGENCE

The Driver for Next-Level Data Practices and Marketing Strategy.

1. Optimize Your Reach

Once your data is in the best shape it's ever been in and optimized for the best possible success for effective communications, just how do you get your data-driven messaging out to consumers?

Think Beyond the CRM

You could send communications out only through your CRM, but you will only be able to target delivery time using point in time triggers or time to transaction triggers. Your CRM doesn't account for deliverability. It doesn't observe and track consumer behavior to trigger messages and campaigns when consumers need your communications the most.

Your Data Deserves Better

After all of the work to clean and enhance your data, you want a better delivery solution—one that accurately predicts consumers' needs and send communications to them wherever are and at the precise right moment.

This is where artificial intelligence comes in.

An artificial intelligence solution, paired with good data practices, delivers **a tailored experience at every step** of the consumer lifecycle.

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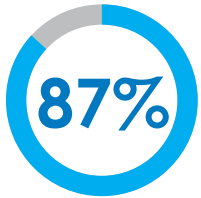# Personalization Through Artificial Intelligence

Communications using artificial intelligence, or AI, technology allow you to deeply individualize consumers' experience with your dealership or dealer group.

Consumers Expect Personalized Communications

Your consumers are bombarded by thousands of messages each day. With so many communications coming in, people are looking for quality, relevant content.

Use Consumer Data for Their Good As Well As Yours

Consumers will willingly give your dealership or dealer group their data if they feel they are doing so in exchange for being more than just another nameless, faceless consumer receiving the same information and offers as everyone else.

87% Percentage of loyalty customers willing to have details about their activity tracked in exchange for more personalized communications, according to Bond Brand Loyalty as reported by Retail Dive.

Artificial Intelligence Helps You Personalize Better and Faster

Traditionally, analyzing data to personalize communications for particular consumers has been time-consuming and best done by a data scientist.

AI Processes Data and Identifies Patterns on the Quick

Technology driven by artificial intelligence acts like a supercharged human brain, "thinking" to process data and identify patterns more efficiently than a human could.

Examples of Artificial Intelligence

Most of us are familiar with artificial intelligence from common examples of AI technology in our everyday lives.

Robotics

Self-learning robots, like robot vaccuums and smart thermostats.

Self-Driving Cars

Once something out of sci-fi movies, self-driving cars work via artificial intelligence.

Image Recognition

Like your phone's ability to unlock with face recognition or find photos of your dog.

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Artificial Intelligence Terms

You may be familiar with some of these AI buzzwords, but aren't sure what they mean in practice. Different types of artificial intelligence can be applied for different needs.

Machine Learning

A machine using this AI technology can learn and achieve desired results on its own, without being explicitly programmed to do so.

Predictive Modeling

A use of machine learning that can predict future needs, behavior, and outcomes.

Deeper Insight

What are some forms of artificial intelligence you're familiar with from your everyday life?

Think About

• Video or audio streaming services you use.

• Smart home solutions and services you subscribe to.

• Emails or texts you enjoy receiving from brands and businesses.

You enjoy this content and these services because, through AI, they know something about you. Therefore, they can provide the information and actions you need when you need them.

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AI is Critical for Dealer Marketing Success

Predictive modeling can help you prioritize resources and reach out to your consumers when it will make the most impact on an upcoming decision for them.

Making Sense and Use of Consumer Behavior

Your AI solution will take information from consumers' behavior, including shopping patterns, browsing habits, and past purchases, to help you provide the information the consumer needs most at the time they most need it.

Getting the Most from Your Communications Efforts

Using an AI solution based on your first-party data is much more effective and a better use of your resources than firing out marketing messages randomly that you hope will be relevant. This method far overshadows any list you could buy from a third-party vendor.

Deeper Insight

Communicating to consumers at the level we've been talking about is not possible without AI.

An Example

Outsell has hundreds of millions of individual data records for our consumers and about 100+ data points per record. Those numbers are constantly growing.

This means that our AI technology processes billions of data points to continually perfect our predictive models over time. A whole team of data scientists couldn't analyze the sheer amount of this information over the course of years, let alone in the minimal time it takes artificial intelligence to process it.

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Continuity of Communications

No longer can you simply run a conquest campaign, a retention campaign, an after-sale campaign or a loyalty campaign. Communications must be intentional and display continuity across channels and brands associated with your business.

The Power of Data and AI Versus Conquest Campaigns

By using your own data powered by AI, you already know far more about the people you're communicating to than you could otherwise. Unsold lead data even on its own will be more effective at converting a potential prospect than any Conquest program.

Reaching Consumers Across Channels

Having enhanced data and the power to act on it is the only way to create truly dynamic, individualized campaigns across channels. You want to reach your consumers via the various channels that they engage with, but you also wouldn't want to send a direct mail piece to someone who just responded to you via email.

AI can help you manage these channel-specific and cross-channel efforts efficiently.

Alignment With the Bigger Communications Picture

If you're part of a deal group, you have to consider your group's consumers and communications as well as that each individual store. And every dealership has to consider their manufacturer's consumers and communications.

When you use AI as part of your communications strategy, you're better able to create messaging that addresses consumers' holistic lifecycle.

AI provides automatic, near
real-time data analysis for
the experience consumers expect.

2. Real Results

You can expect to see the fruits of your labors in multiple ways when you make your data management efforts easier through AI.

Data Efforts Made Easier Through AI Will Bring

- Higher Customer Retention
- More Service Revenue
- Greater Profitability from Customers in Database
- Increased Customer Loyalty

STUDY: Data-Driven Marketing Engagement

Consumers who received data-driven lifecycle communications were more loyal than those who did not, **resulting in customer retention and profitability across all customer life stages**.

Conducted By

Leading Analytics Firm RXA, Experian, and Outsell

Basis of Measurement

Long-term impact of consumer lifecycle engagement through data management and AI solutions. Measured change in sales and service behavior over time, comparing those who received individualized lifecycle communications with those who did not.

Who Was Involved

960 dealerships, 5.6 million consumers, and 63 million+ vehicle purchases over 3 years, with 60,000 segmented consumer groups based on life stage, purchase type, and service frequency from all brands and all regions across the United States.

+23%

Increased Repurchase Rates

On average across all lifecycles due to data-driven marketing.

+19%

Frequent Servicers Who Repurchased

After receiving data-driven marketing communications.

+49%

Likely to Repurchase from Same Dealer

For those who purchased and received data-driven marketing.

+31%

Service Frequency

For those who received data-driven marketing communications.

+65%

Increase in Profits Across Dealership Database

Comparing an average of 3-year gross profit from those who received data-driven marketing communications and those who did not.

Findings show that **those who received data-driven communications represented $427 more gross profit per consumer**.

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Be Careful When Choosing an AI Solution

Many marketing automation solutions say they are powered by artificial intelligence, but are in fact very limited in their capabilities. Look for a full-capability Consolidated Data Platform backed by artificial intelligence.

What to Look For in a True AI Solution

The best solutions capture and track consumer behavior to continually refine your content and delivery toward the experience people expect and how they wish to be engaged with. But how do you choose a platform?

Make Sure It's AI and Not:

✗ Powered by Business Rules

✗ A Cadence Based on the VIN

Buyer Detection

The right solution will be able to determine which consumers are most likely to purchase or service based on their behavior, then automatically deploy personalized communications for specific consumers.

Equity Status

The right AI solution will identify consumers who reach positive equity status and help you automatically inform them that they can trade in and purchase their new vehicle.

Service Reinforcement

Sales reinforce service and service reinforces sales. Your Consolidated Data Platform solution should also allow you to automate the following to help keep your service bays full:

• Pull lists of high engages with service content to send followup messaging.

• Filter by Lapsed Servicers to find consumers for targeted outreach.

• Customize communications with special service offers.

• Identify in-market servicers to focus communications and marketing spend.

Timeliness of Messaging

You don't want to send a consumer a message about a vehicle they haven't owned for three years. Messaging like this dilutes trust in your store or group and makes it less likely that people will do business with you again in the future.

Your solution should help you prevent this kind of mistake by helping you keep information accurate and the right messages going out to the right consumers via the right channel at the right time.

The right artificial intelligence tool can help you master the entire consumer lifecyle.

Harness the Power of Your Data

Integrating artificial intelligence into your marketing strategy gives you the ability to create the personalized experience consumers desire.

Artificial intelligence is
a marketing game changer
for dealerships and dealer groups.

WEBSITE

Give Your Consumers the Experience They Expect.

1. Your Virtual Storefront

Many consumers will never set foot in your physical location and will only experience your brand and business virtually.

The Same Experience Online and In-Person

You put care and consideration into your physical dealership location or locations to provide consumers with a particular experience. You should put that same care into how they experience your website.
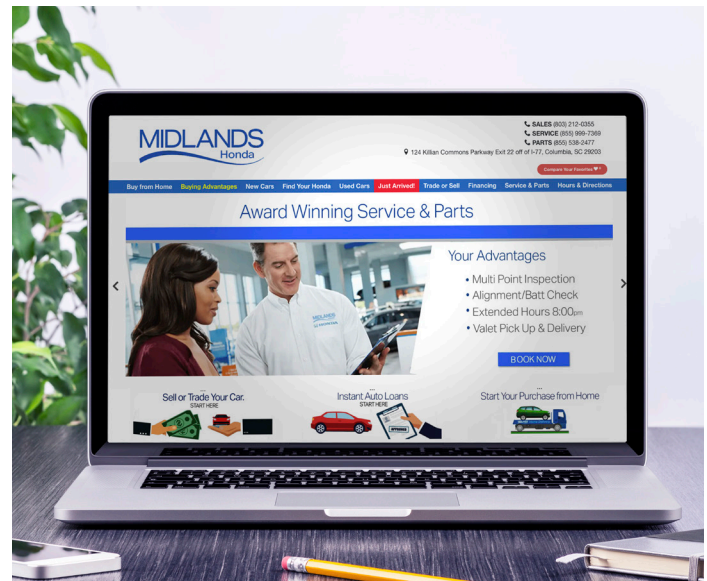
Your Site's User Experience

The interaction a consumer has with your dealership or dealer group in a digital context is called user experience, or UX.

Create a Consistent Experience in Every Part of Your Business

How a consumer experiences your website should match how they experience your dealership, your social media presence, your radio ads, your TV ads — everything. Create a cohesive brand experience across all interactions with your business.

What's On the Page?

It's very tempting to talk nonstop about your business on your dealership or dealer group website. Instead, put your consumers first. Make sure what's on the page matters to them.

Make It All About Your Consumers

Pay close attention to providng value and actionable information for consumers' needs and expectations, just like you would if they were to meet you in a dealership store.

UX v. UI

You've probably heard these two terms before and may have wondered what the difference is. UX is the overall experience of interacting with you online while UI represents the visible design and functional elements that make up your site.

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User Experience (UX)

- Encompasses the feeling or perceived ease with which someone interacts with you online.

- Not visible.

- Determines UI (user interface) elements.

User Interface (UI)

- Individual elements that make up a screen: buttons, fields, headings, and visual styling of those elements.

- The part of the experience we see.

- Stems from decisions regarding the overall user experience.

Good UX v. Bad UX

Your website will offer some kind of user experience just by existing. Good UX takes planning and intention. Bad UX can happen all on its own.

Good User Experience

- Puts consumers' actions and needs first, over all other content and actions.

- Doesn't reinvent the wheel. Sticks to well-established online standards.

- Is relentlessly helpful, courteous, and useful.

- Delights consumers by anticipating their needs and answering them with ease.

- Creates consistent interactions and messaging across digital efforts.

Bad User Experience

- Puts dealership or dealer group concerns before the needs of the consumer.

- Tries to create new, unexpected interactions. Bucks established norms.

- Makes it hard for consumers to take action or find information.

- Presents information that does little to answer consumers' questions or needs.

- Disjointed experience with new interactions to learn across digital spaces.

Make your site about your consumers, not about your dealership or dealer group's internal goals and desires.

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Qualities of Effective Websites

Every successful website is the following things to consumers:

Useful

The site provides actions and information the consumer needs in a way that makes it clear their desires and needs are understood.

Straightforward

Navigation, headings, interactions, and all content areas are named and described in clear, succint, plainspoken language.

Relatable

Content communicates to consumers on their level: their interests, actions, and questions they may have.

Truthworthy

The design looks professional, interactions don't look broken, and information is presented in a way that shows it is credible.

Aesthetically Pleasing

Although you can't rely on this alone, sites that are easy on the eye are perceived as easier to use.

Logical

The site follows a set of rules and patterns that consumers can learn and rely on as they navigate.

Website Content & Layout

Online, information is scanned, not read. Ensure you're communicating to your consumers effectively when building pages, planning content, and writing messaging.

How Consumers Enage With Information Online

Your consumers will never read every word of your site. Your layout and presentation of content must communicate important information and actions at a glance.

People Scan Left to Right, Top to Bottom

Imagine a large capital "F" over top of your screen content before someone would start to scroll. This is the approximate area where consumers will pay attention to what's on the page.

Don't Put Important Information on the Right or Bottom of the Page

Most content on the right of the screen will be ignored and the further down the page you go, the less likely it is that a consumer will interact with that content, or maybe even ever see it.

Be concise. Anyone surfing your site wants clarity and simplicity.

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Heading Hierarchy

Visitors should be able to easily tell the importance and relationship of information based on headings and subheadings associated with each area of content.

Levels of Headings

Most typically, your content will require about four levels of headings, heading 1 through heading 4 moving in order of prominence per content section.

Heading 1

Reserved for the page or screen title, the most prominent and top piece of information on any given screen.

Heading 2

Introduces each major content section on your page with a clear name that sums up the points that will be made under it.

Heading 3

Comes after each heading 2, introducing subtopics clearly before their paragraph text.

Heading 4

Works best as the same size or slightly bigger than paragraph text and serves as an additional subpoint of any heading three subtopics.

Headings in Action

Heading 1

Heading 2

Heading 3

Heading 4

Don't Use Headings Merely to Call Out Content

Too many websites use headings out of order, applying them as they see fit to influence design and call out particular pieces of content on the screen. This confuses content order, prominence, and association. Use headings only in hierarchical order, heading 1 through heading 4 and find other design solutions for content you want to call out.

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Clicks and Interactions

Consumers expect certain behavior when they click on a link or button. Follow best practices to give site visitors the experience they expect.

Make Clickable Elements Obvious

Anything consumers can click on your site should look clickable and, by the same token, anything that cannot be clicked should not look like it could be interactive.

Action Color

Choose one action color and use it for all links, buttons, and elements that can be clicked. Do not use it for anything that cannot be clicked.

Avoid Popups or Use Sparingly

Popups can be obstrusive, interrupting your consumers' flow as they move through your site, particularly on mobile. If you must use popups, make sure that they appear at the right time, when a user is ready for the action they're presenting.

Noticeable, Easy Search

Consumers expect good search functionality online. Make sure your site visitors can search quickly and effectively from any major page of your website.

Make It Easy to Do Business With You Online

Determine the action that ends your visitors' experience with your site and sends them to the next step to do business with you. Make sure that this action is clearly visible, particularly at the point in the user journey where they are ready to act on it.

Website Landing Pages

Landing pages drive consumers to a specific marketing campaign goal, such as driving traffic to a special or a service offer. These pages should follow all of the rules we've covered, plus a few of their own.

Consider the Amount of Time Consumers Will Spend on the Page

The amount of time any visitor is going to stay on your landing page will be extremely minimal. Pay even more attention than you normally would to being succint and offering one action or one piece of vital information.

Extreme Focus

Cut all unnecessary distractions, focusing only on your single, concise message. Make sure that the most important content, especially the call to action, is front and center.

To be effective, every word and message on a landing page must also resonate with the reason the person came to the page in the first place.

Deeper Insight

A landing page can be easier to customize for individuals' experience than your website at large.

An Opportunity for Individualization

The data you've gathered about consumers can inform what content to populate on a landing page, perhaps for a particular vehicle visitors might be interested in or additional information that might be relevant to them.

Landing Page Example
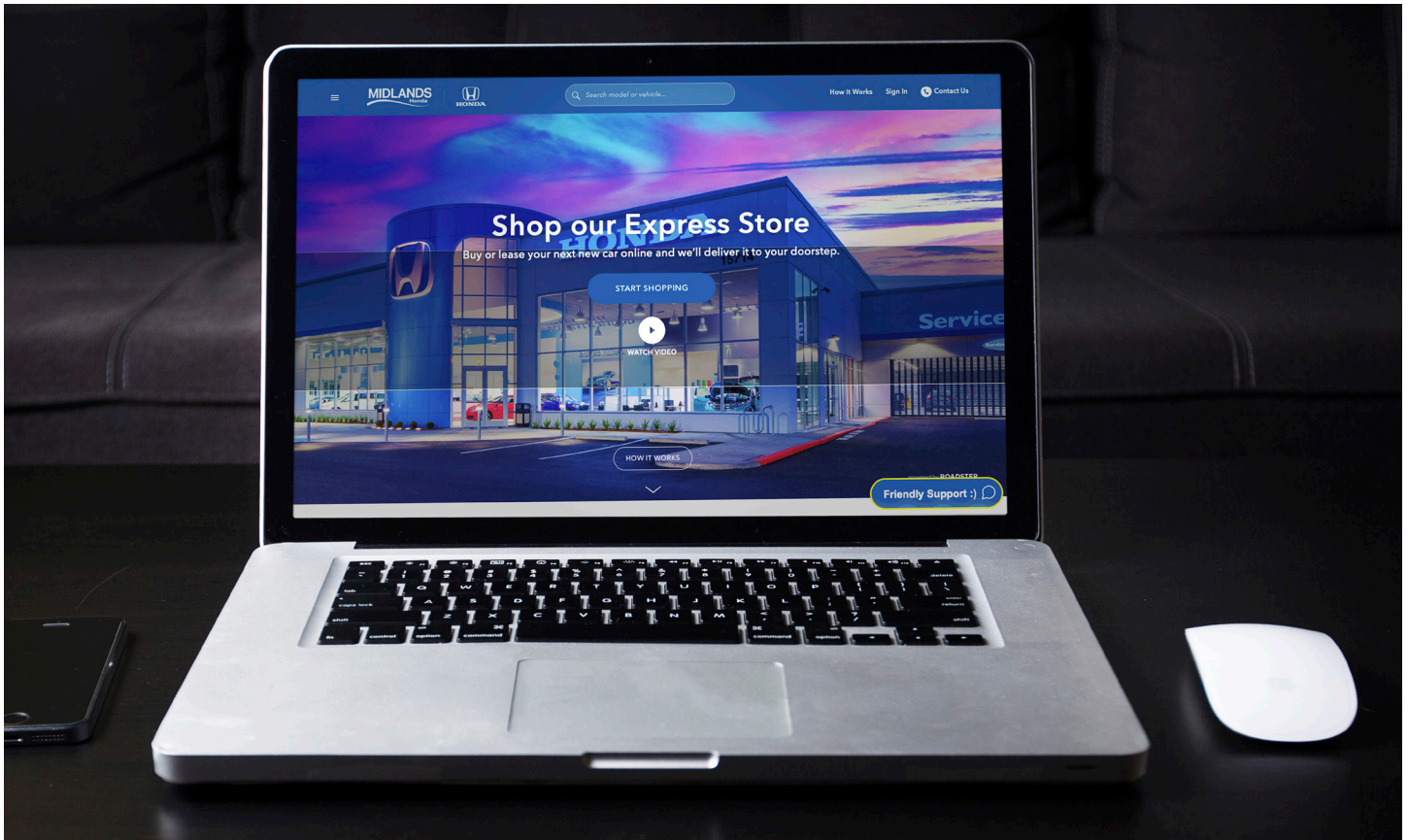
Clickability

Elements you can click are a certain color.

Prominent Search

Search is high on the page and clearly a search bar.

Heading Hierarchy

Content presented in headings and not too many words.

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Universal Design and Digital Accessibility

You will have consumers in your target audience who are older, have a form of disability, or otherwise need to use your site in a non-ideal environment. It's important to make sure that these consumers can still do business with you via your website.

What is univeral design?

People learn and understand information in different ways. Universal design sets out to provide options for absorbing and engaging with content.

What is digital accessibility?

Making your site accessible ensures that those with disabilities can interact with you online. Accessibility has recently also become legal requirement for all businesses in the United States. WCAG Level AA guidelines are the accepted standard to follow.

Types of Disability

Many of us think about disability as blindness or deafness or something to do with a wheelchair. In reality, disability encompasses a broad spectrum and is far more common than you might think.

You may be familiar with the following disabilities:

Color Blindness	Arthritis	Short-Term Memory Loss
Hard of Hearing	Stroke	Nerve Damage
ADD/ADHD	Epilepsy	Dyslexia
Autism/Aspbergers	Autism	Stutter

People who own vehicles can have any of these disabilities, and more.

More Website Best Practices

There's a lot to know about creating an excellent site. There are whole books written on the subject. It will help to keep some of the most critical best practices in mind.

Header and Navigation

• Full logo in in the top left corner of every screen
• Main navigation menu visible at the top of every page
• No more than 7 main navigation items (and 5 or fewer is better)
• Contact link in the main navigation or otherwise prominent in header area
• Search in the header, appearing on every screen

Page Elements

• Page title prominently displayed on every screen
• Main call to action near the top of every screen
• Clearly named headings and subheadings
• Lines of paragraph-sized text no longer than three returns at a time
• Major action links get their own line or are otherwise prominent
• Links open in the same tab and window

Footer

• Repeat logo in the footer
• Consider a link to sign up for newsletter in footer
• Linked social media icons in the footer
• Repeat Contact link for a second chance for users to find it
• Less visited links (like Privacy Policy) in the footer

Live Chat

Some visitors may want to call or submit a form but consumers are now used to being able to communicate via chat while they carry on their lives in between exchanges.

Types of Chat Solutions

Automated

- Responses are pre-programmed
- Varying levels of AI-supported help
- Less satisfying for users but can answer common questions
- Less expensive option

Choosing an Automated Chat Solution

There are chatbot services that mimic a real person well enough or connect consumers to a live person after a series of questions. Choose one of these to provide the best user experience.

Live Person

- Run by your customer service team
- Responses sent by a human
- Satisfying for users and can address more complex or one-off questions
- More expensive option

Tips for an In-House Chat Team

Make sure the team members running chat introduce themselves, are trained to be friendly and helpful, review responses before sending, and avoid unprofessional communications: all caps, going off-topic, or using humor.

Keep Consumers' Preferred Form of Communication in Mind

Give people the option to switch to text, phone call, or email follow-up at any time, depending on their question and preference.

YOUR TURN

LOOK AT YOUR DEALERSHIP OR DEALER GROUP WEBSITE AND IDENTIFY:

- Jargon or internal phrasing an average consumer would find unfamiliar.

- Placement of actions for consumers to take — are they prioritized over other content?

- How many times a consumer needs to interact with 3 or more screens or options to complete the task related to why they came to the site.

- Ease of finding commonly needed information.

- Non-standard and non-consistent interactions.

- Large areas of text where reading is required rather than skimming content.

- Other points of potential confusion, inefficiency, or frustration.

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Need Help Knowing if Your Website is Working?

It can be difficult to gauge the user experience of your own site because you're so close to your business and your content. The best way to understand what's working and what's not is to ask the actual people who will be interacting with you online.

Try a User Test

User tests can get very fancy and involved but for the purposes of a quick gut check, your user test doesn't need to be complicated.

1. Round up a group of representative consumers.

Choose people who would typically do business with you online or that you would like to get business from. Family and friends count!

2. Ask them to complete top tasks from your site.

Choose tasks you know consumers need to act on often: research a car, make a purchase, schedule service, etc. Keep neutral! Don't give away answers or ask leading questions during the test.

3. Record results.

Note both when people fail to complete tasks and when they succeed.

4. Adjust your content and interactions accordingly.

Keep what worked and rethink what didn't. Keep in mind that anything that went wrong is not your consumers' fault, it's the fault of your website experience. That's okay though! You can change it now that you know what to change.

5. Test again.

Ideally, perform the test again after making changes to make sure what you changed is now working.

2. Digital Retailing

Consumers now expect to shop and purchase from the comfort of their homes.

Consumers Start Their Shopping Online

Make sure that your website is an easy and obvious place for your consumers to start when considering a purchase or service decision.

Virtual Showrooms and At-Home Services

If you haven't implemented a digital buying experience, it's time. This service is now the expectation and more competitors will be offering it by the day.

Reach and Sell to More Consumers

Those who wouldn't purchase from you otherwise may purchase online.

Let Your Consumers Know

Make sure you're promoting your digital buying options in the following places:

Website

Prominently promote via your site, where visitors could be poised to buy.

Social Accounts

Share what the virtual buying experience is like with your business.

Digital Advertising

Advertise where your consumers are online and where you can measure ROI.

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The Main Job of a Successful Website

Allow prospects and returning customers to engage with you on their terms, providing information and actions that are immediately relevant and valuable to them.

Drive your consumer toward their goals, **which are your goals too**.

SEARCH

PERFORMANCE

Drive People to Your Site.

1. Search Engine Marketing (SEM)

SEM refers to paid and non-paid methods that increase search engine visibility.

Set Narrow Marketing Goals for Search

Define narrow success outcomes for search marketing campaigns based on definitive goals. That way, you can align your efforts to reach those outcomes.

Multiple Goals, Multiple Campaigns

Each campaign should keep a narrow focus. Don't do everything at once.

Example Campaign 1

Desired Outcome

Boost used Toyota sales in Q2 over sales from Q1.

Specific Goal

Create new site content and ads to drive traffic to used Toyotas for sale.

SEM Methods

- Content about benefits of buying a used Toyota for site and backlinks.

- Google Ad campaign targeting keywords for local used Toyotas.

Example Campaign 2

Desired Outcome

Get more Toyota customers in for an oil change in Q2.

Specific Goal

Look for ways to improve search visibility for Toyota oil changes.

SEM Methods

- Message customers via Google Ads about importance of oil change.

- Oil change promo page with strong title tags and URL keywords.

Google My Business

One of the hottest emerging search engine marketing and advertising platforms is Google My Business, and it's proven especially lucrative for dealerships.

Drive More Traffic to Your Website with a Business Listing

When set up and used properly, dealerships have seen this their listing produce more website traffic than any other source.

Steps to a Successful Google My Business Listing

The best thing about these steps? You can complete them right now. It will only take a few minutes and you're likely to begin seeing the results in very little time.

1. Claim your business.

It's amazing how few businesses have taken the first step to claim their Google My Business listing. Go do that right now.

2. Verify your information.

Make sure your operating hours are correct and double check your phone number.

3. Complete all sections of your business listing.

The more complete your listing, the more organic search traffic you're likely to drive.

> ## Google My Business is a Must-Have for Dealerships
>
> According to a Bright Local study, dealerships receive more calls and website visits from Google My Business than any other industry.

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Filling Out Each Section

Category

Mercedes-Benz dealership, Honda dealership, etc.

Description

Use keywords that include your location and services.

Keyword Magic

Between your category and description, you will have the single best way to be found when someone searches for a dealership or service near them: "Kia dealer near me" or "Kia Optima oil change in Marietta, GA" for example.

Service Areas

Your whole service territory: metro area, outlier cities, neighborhoods, etc.

Photo Library

Pictures of your facilities, employees, and satisfied customers.

Uploading photos can increase your conversions up to 28x.
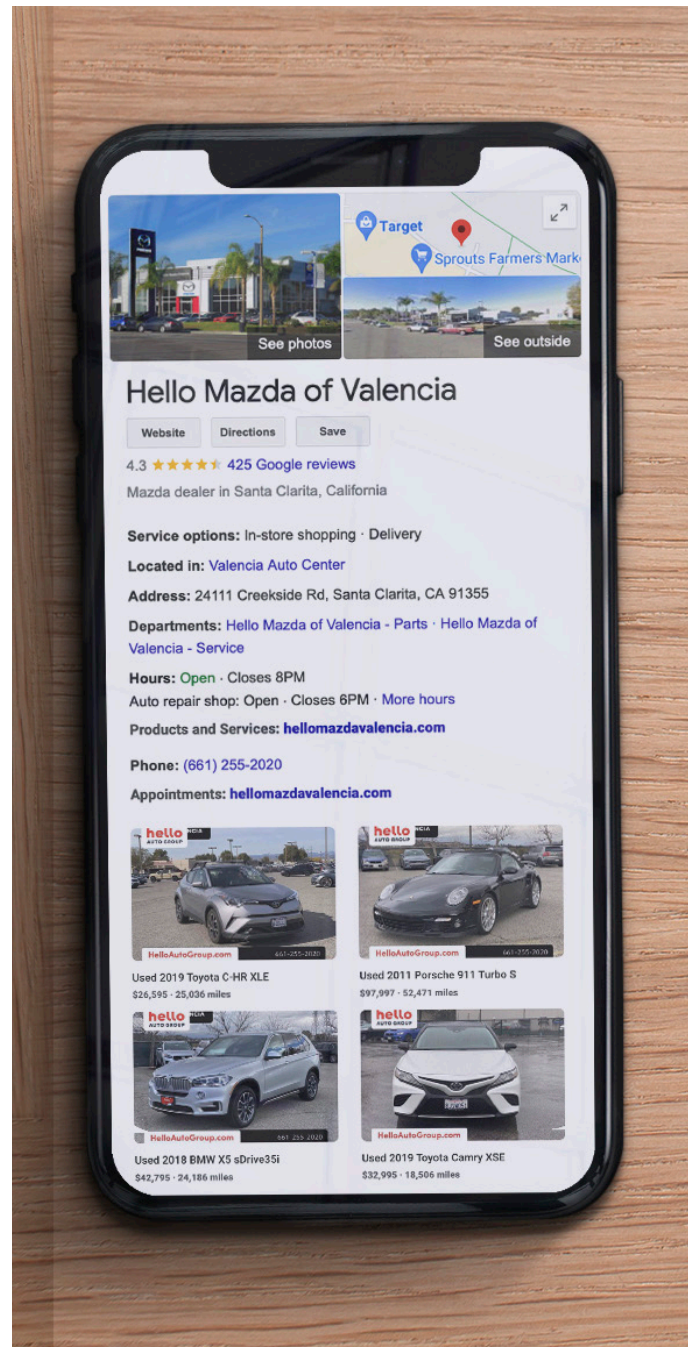
STUDY: Google My Business Photos

Conducted By

Search Engine Land

Findings: Photos Drive More Business

Businesses with more than 100 photos saw drastic increases in engagement over businesses with fewer than 100 photos.

520% more calls

2,717% more directions requests

1,065% more website visits

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2. Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

SEO is the practice of optimizing your site content to appear in the top search results, a critical piece of your search marketing strategy.

How It Works

Search engines like Google use machine learning and behavior data to decide what content to show to users first. Search engines monitor click data and look at what users do once they are on your site to decide whether your content is valuable and relevant to specific search terms.

Essentially, if you are producing great content that is relevant and useful for your visitors, you'll be rewarded with higher search results.

Best of all, it's free.

Ranking in the Top Results

Search engines don't give away the secret formula they use to rank content. It's important to know going in that SEO is a long-term strategy and competition can be fierce for the top organic search positions.

There is a popular saying in marketing:
The best place to hide a dead body is the second page of Google search results.

Applying SEO to Website Content

When you build new or update existing site content, think about your subject keywords. These are the words people will most often be looking for and, therefore, most often typing into search engines when they are searching.

Choosing Keywords

Think about what keywords best describe your dealership, your brand, and what services you offer.

Tools for the Best Keywords

Google Keyword Planner and other digital tools can help you decide which are the stronger keywords and known terms to use. These platforms can provide search volume for a given word or term to help you make sure you're using the right ones.

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YOUR TURN

WHAT ARE THE WORDS YOUR CONSUMERS WOULD USE FOR YOUR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES?

Stick to vernacular.

Whatever regular people call something, use that term or word.

Avoid jargon and internal language.

This kind of content won't help you attract people outside of your industry.

Simpler is better.

People type very basic questions and terms into search engines.

NEED HELP?

If you're unsure of the best term or keyword to use, or you have a situation where one keyword doesn't seem better than another, you can always go straight to the source.

Ask Real People

Poll a group of people who are likely to be in your website's audience. Ask what words they would use to describe your products, services, and other areas of business.

Where to Use Keywords

Incorporate key words and terms naturally throughout your site content but also be aware that search engines use some content elements more often for results ranking.

Page Titles (Heading 1)

Make sure your strongest keyword or term is always in the page title, or heading 1.

All Page Headings

As you use headings to organize your content, use the keywords or terms your consumers would use to search for the topic at hand.

Title Tags

You can set these to include the page title plus additional terms people might search.

Meta Descriptions

A short marketing description for each page that helps consumers choose your site or result page over others. Google does not use these descriptions to rank content.

URLs

Using keywords in your URLs will help search engines know what the page is about.

Image Alt Text

Add alternative text, a description that describes what's going on visually, to every image on your site using keywords and terms.

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Unique Content on Every Page

Location and frequency of keywords do not mean success on their own. Search engines are interested in ranking valuable, unique site content.

Straight From Google

Google has stated that you should avoid "duplicate or near duplicate versions of your content across your site."

Avoid Keyword Stuffing

Once upon a time, websites focused on density of keywords for results ranking. These days, this practice will decrease your site's ranking.

Differentiate Products and Services

The content on any page of your site must be 100% unique. This can be difficult for dealers when you have hundreds of vehicles and similar products, but will make you more successful with both search engines and humans.

Try a Similar Pattern but Different Content

Certain pages might need the same kind of information but the content can differ page to page. To make writing different content for each page easier, set up a template for the page containing the sections each similar page will have.

Linking

How often a page on your site is linked to and where it is linked from gives search engines information about how valuable that page is and how high it should rank.

Internal Links

The more a page is linked to via other pages on your site, the more important a search engine perceives that page to be and the higher it ranks that page. Make sure you link to pages you want people to visit most.

External Links (Backlinks)

The more often highly ranked sites link back to yours, the more authority search engines give your content.

Ways to earn backlinks:

• Develop sharable content and post it on social media

• Look for opportunities to post to offsite blogs as a guest

• Post press releases to the wire and encourage local news sites to pick them up

• Contribute content to industry publications

If you are making good content , **you will eventually see improvement in your search rankings**.

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Technical SEO

Outside of great content, also make sure that your technical set up is sound so that search engine bots can easily crawl your content and rank your site better.

Optimize Site Speed

Search engines rank sites higher that decrease loading time for site content.

Top Tips

• Make sure your images are no larger than 400kb

• Limit the number of third-party scripts you have running when the page loads

• Try to avoid using redirects

Make Sure Your Site Map is Up to Date

Your XML site map tells search engine bots which pages are important. If a search bot encounters broken pages or redirect chains, it will tank your results ranking.

Top Tips

• Monitor and eliminate technical errors like broken pages and bad links often.

• Use free or paid tools to help you find and eliminate errors on your site.

Take Care of Backlinks from Questionable Sites

You'll want to make it clear to search engines that you don't endorse backlinks from low-quality sites. The technical term for this is "disavowing" the backlink. Your free or paid SEO tool can help you do this.
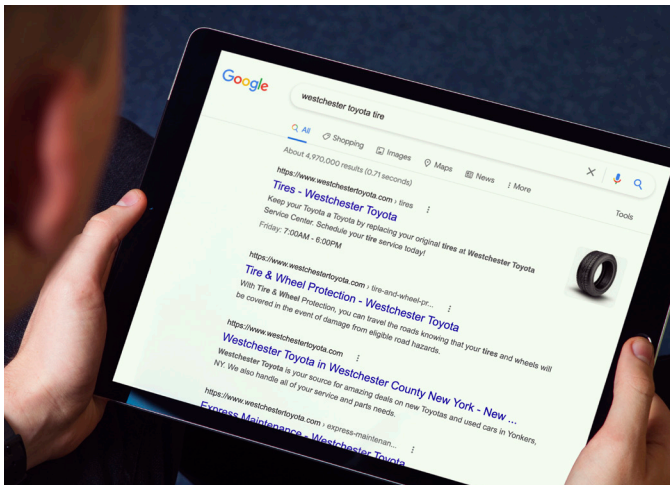
Paid Search

When you don't have time to wait for your content to start ranking or want to be sure that you're ranking at the top of search results, paid search can be a powerful tool.

Paid Ads

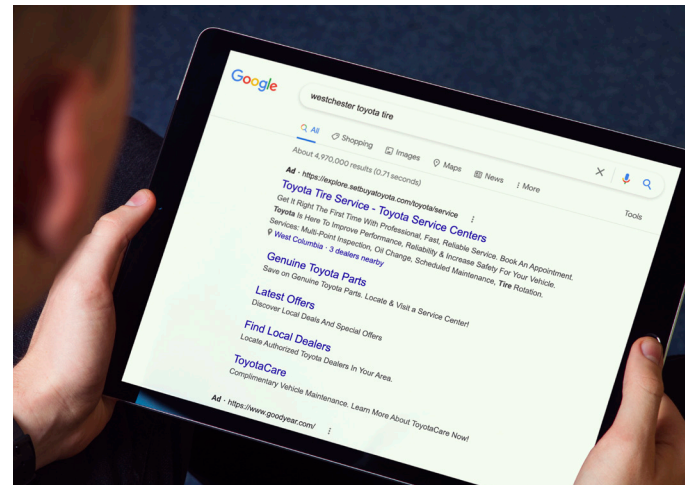Paid search ads look like beefed up versions of search results.

Regular Search Results

Paid Search Ad

What You Get from a Paid Ad

Paying for an ad for certain search terms gets you a sure spot at the top of those search results and allows for more content options than a regular ad including multiple headlines, descriptions, site links, custom URL, phone number, and hours.

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Ad Creation and Management

Google ads gives you a keyword quality score based on the strength of your content and engagement.

Factors for Your Keyword Quality Score

• Your ad copy

• Quality of landing page that ad goes to

• Ad's clickthrough rate (CTR)

You can adjust your view in Google Ads to show these dimensions one by one to check campaign health, troubleshoot underperforming keywords, or generally determine what you might want to adjust for better engagement.

Experiment a Little

Rotate your ad creative to see which messages resonate with your audience. Or, target new audiences based on demographics: age, income, occupation, etc.

You can even use retargeting lists to go after users who have visited your site in the past or who are already in your database.

Selecting Keywords

When selecting keywords, make sure that you are considering both user intent and search volume so you can get the most bang for your buck.

Finding the Right Balance of Broad and Specific

You don't want to go too specific, or you won't get enough people searching your terms to make it worth your while. One the other hand, broad keywords may bring you a lot of traffic, but maybe not many viable prospects.

Make sure you're choosing a good keyword balance for your paid ads to get visitors who have the right purchase intentions when they reach your site.

Too Broad

Search keyword: "Chevrolet"

More Balanced

Search phrase: "Chevrolet dealerships in Atlanta"

Consider Keyword Competition

The more competition there is for a keyword, the more expensive your campaign is going to be. It's up to you to make the decision whether bidding on high competition keywords makes good business sense.

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YOUR TURN

QUESTIONS TO HELP SET SEARCH GOALS

- Which 3-5 keywords or phases do you want to try to rank for?

- Where do you currently rank in search results for these words and phrases?

- What are you hoping you'll gain by ranking for these keywords or phrases (more prospects, wider brand recognition, etc).

- Where can you enhance your content or technical SEO to try to rank for those keywords and phrases?

- Are there external opportunities to write content that would include your keywords and phrases to earn a backlink?

- Is the content people will need when they get to your site from search valuable and actionable?

- For each keyword or phrase, think about the first page visitors see when arriving to your site from search. Does it present exactly what they need to ultimately do business with you online?

- Do any of your keywords or phrases need their own landing page or will pages from the rest of your site suffice?

Your Ultimate Aim for Search Performance
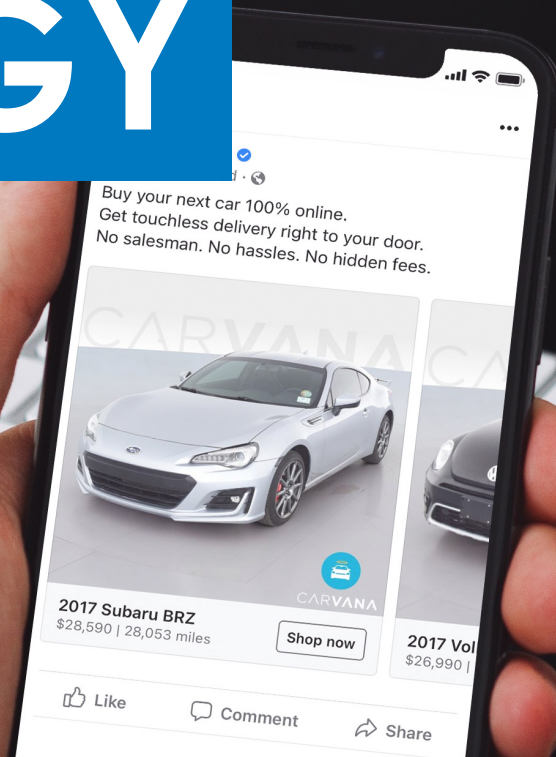
Search is a major way you drive consumers to your site, but it's about playing the long game. Set specific, achievable goals and measure your progress regularly. You will see eventually improvement in your rankings and conversions.

You work hard to get consumers to your site, so **make sure you're providing relevant, actionable content when they arrive**.

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FACEBOOK

STRATEGY

Buy your next car 100% online.
Get touchless delivery right to your door.
No salesman. No hassles. No hidden fees.

CARVANA

2017 Subaru BRZ
$28,590 | 28,053 miles

Shop now

2017 Vol
$26,990 |

👍 Like   💬 Comment   ↪ Share

A Unique Opportunity for Dealers.

1. Facebook's Automotive-Centric Ad Platform

Facebook has invested in creating an automotive-centric ad service that caters to the unique needs of the automotive industry. For that reason, we'll focus solely on building your Facebook game first and foremost over other social platforms.

Facebook and Your First-Party Data

Dealers are accustomed to targeting past customers and prospects through channels like email and direct mail, but Facebook has a special appreciation for your first-party data.

Facebook Versus Other Typical Marketing Channels

Facebook: Easy, trackable, and gets in front of your consumers in a place where they spend a lot of their free time.

Email: No one will open every email from you, and email has a tendency to get lost.

Direct Mail: Gets expensive, especially if you send direct mail to everyone in your database.

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Two Primary Data Methods to Target Consumers

You can use both direct and lookalike targeting for marketing to past customers and prospects via Facebook's automotive ad service.

Direct Targeting

This method allows you to upload a list of existing consumers from your DMS or CRM and assign them to see a specific ad that you've created in Facebook.

Segment Your Lists Before You Upload to Facebook

The possibilities are endless if you have the ability to properly segment your lists before loading to Facebook. Generally, you'll want at least 1,000 people in your list for it to run properly.

Large Lists Match More Consumers

Facebook won't find every person you have in your database. Upload a larger segment of consumers (1,000+) for a better chance at matching them to ads.

Cost Per Click for Direct Targeting

Your cost per click (CPC) will be a bit higher for direct targeting, especially at small target sizes. When you show an ad to a lower volume of consumers, each consumer will see the ad more frequently, which leads to a higher CPC.

Likely Worth the CPC Price

It's often worth the price you pay per click to target to your existing consumer base so you can ensure that you keep their business, because you can be sure that your competitors are targeting them on Facebook, too.

YOUR TURN

SEGMENTING THOUGHT STARTERS

Which of these segments could you target on Facebook with your existing consumer database? Some of these may be difficult for dealerships with smaller databases but can get you thinking about who you can target.

- Customers who have lapsed on service
- Unsold prospects who have submitted a lead within the last 30 to 180 days
- Customers with vehicle leases ending n the next 6 months
- Customers with estimated mileage above 60K

GIVE IT A TRY

You may have other ideas, too. The important thing is to give it a try. You'll notice the results.

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Lookalike Targeting

In contrast to direct targeting which uses existing consumers in your database, lookalike targeting is primarily used to find and target new consumers.

How It Works

Artificial intelligence comes back into play with lookalike targeting via Facebook.

1. Upload a list of consumers that represent the prospects you want to find.

2. Choose "Create Lookalike List" in Facebook.

3. Facebook's AI will examine your uploaded consumer list and find new consumers that have similar demographics and behavior.

4. Assign your lookalike list to an ad within Facebook.

Choose Consumers with a High Lifetime Value

Since Facebook will find consumers like the ones you upload, it makes sense that you want to upload your high-quality consumers. These are people who have made multiple purchases and schedule service appointments regularly.

Many dealers don't realize **the importance of database targeting in Facebook**.

YOUR TURN

SEED LIST THOUGHT STARTERS

Which of these consumer types do you have in your database that you could upload to Facebook as a lookalike seed list?

- Customers who have purchases more than one vehicle from you

- Customers who own your primary make and have serviced with you at least three times

- Customers who have purchased an SUV in the last two years

GIVE IT A TRY

You may have other ideas, too, based on your own consumer database. Give it a try and see how many lookalikes you can match and start advertising to.

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Manual v. Automatic Facebook List Management

You can load lists manually or automatically for both direct targeting and lookalike targeting on Facebook.

Manual List Loading

You can load lists yourself if you know how to properly segment your DMS and CRM lists to select the people you want. You can also manually set these campaigns to run every month, or only choose to run them periodically.

Automatic List Loading

If manual list loading and campaign management sounds like too much extra work for your dealership or dealer group team, or if you don't know how to segment your lists to target the people you want, you might consider using an API.

Implementing an API to Automate

There are vendors you can work with who have APIs already set up with your DMS/ CRM solution. They can set up an API directly between your database and Facebook to automate audience creation for you, both for direct targeting of your existing consumers and lookalike audience creation for new consumers.

Your first-party data is your most valuable asset. Use it to your greatest potential.

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2. Inventory Ads

You can use your inventory to automatically create Facebook ad content.

Create Facebook Ad Content in Your Sleep

Leveraging your inventory to create content automatically can relieve a huge burden for your team.

Flexible Messaging

Inventory ads are a great way to merchandise your products without writing ad content. But if you want to customize your ads with a bit of additional messaging, you can do that too.

Cost Per Click for Direct Targeting

Your cost per click (CPC) will be a bit lower for inventory ads. This is because inventory ads aren't directly related to relevance for the consumer.

If consumers are clicking your ads, Facebook will start showing them to more people. A wider pool of interested people creates a lower cost per click.

Consumers like your Facebook inventory ads if you have low CPC and high engagement.

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How It Works

First, connect your inventory data to Facebook. This is called setting up your Vehicle Catalog and it can be done manually or by using a technology partner to help.

Manually Connecting Inventory Data to Facebook

The manual upload process takes getting used to, but is possible to do in-house at your dealership or dealer group.

1. Create a catalog in Catalog Manager, under the Business Manager menu.

2. Create/upload a vehicle feed. Make sure to include all the required fields, such as vehicle ID, make and model, and use a supported file format to upload.

3. Use Vehicle Sets to group types of vehicles you want to promote together, like all SUVs or all used inventory.

4. Associate a pixel or mobile software development kit (SDK) with your feed.

Streamline the Process with a Technology Partner

For many dealerships and dealer groups, the manual process of connecting inventory data is just to cumbersome to bother with. Using a technology partner, or inventory provider, makes set up in Facebook easier.

1. Create a catalog in Catalog Manager, under the Business Manager menu.

2. Select Auto, then select Connect to Inventory Provider.

3. Select an inventory provider from the list.

4. Log in or create an account with an inventory provider and follow on-screen instructions to complete setup.

More Targeting With Machine Learning

Once your inventory is connected to Facebook, you have even more opportunities.

Ongoing Identification of Interested Consumers

Facebook's machine learning algorithms are constantly identifying consumers who are likely interested in the vehicles you have in your inventory catalog.

Select Which Inventory You Want to Deliver to Interested Consumers

Deliver used inventory to used vehicle intenders, SUV inventory to SUV intenders, etc. Even retarget consumers who visited products on your site with the VINs they viewed.

Push Used Vehicle Listings to Facebook Marketplace

This is yet another capability you gain just by connecting your inventory with Facebook. Facebook Marketplace is a very effective marketing channel because consumers thre have decided already to shop via Facebook.

Place Paid Vehicle Ads in Marketplace Listings

This will give your products even more visibility in Marketplace. No need to create new ad content, just check the box to advertise in Marketplace.

What is Facebook Marketplace?

This is a huge section of the Facebook platform where users can buy and sell various items. Marketplace is a popular place for consumers to find used vehicles for sale, so it only makes sense to place your inventory in these listings.

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3. Offline Attribution

When you use your first-party data on Facebook, you can tell which ad spends are leading to sales and repair orders.

A New Reality for Digital Marketing

It hasn't been that long since digital advertising was a black box for offline attribution. There wasn't a way to connect offline sales to digital ads. These days, attribution of digital advertising is much easier to measure.

Attribution You Won't See

Facebook won't tell you that a specific person like "John Smith" saw your ad and bought a car because there are important privacy protocols in place to protect that information.

Attribution You Will See

Facebook can give you numbers and patterns for attributions. For example, "11 people" bought a car after seeing or clicking your sales event ad.

Your first-party data has many compelling use cases for Facebook targeting, content, and attribution.

Calculate Your ROI Compared to Media Spend

You can load your revenue or gross profit with your sales and service transaction file to Facebook to calculate your return on investment versus media spending.

Uploading Your Files Correctly

Your sales and services RO file will need important data points including:

- Consumer's Name
- Email Address
- Phone
- Date of Transaction
- Sale or ROI

Facebook will anonymize the personally identifiable information (PII) through a sophisticated hashing process so your consumer data will remain secure.

Partnering for Automated Calculations

Like most things on Facebook, you can do this calculation process manually or there are partners available who will help you automate it.

Facebook Will Not Count Every Sale or Service

You load a list of 1,000 people who bought or serviced with you.

Facebook will try to match that information to people.

Facebook may not be able to find everyone. For instance, if a consumer used an old email for Facebook and gave you a new one, Facebook cannot match the person based on email.
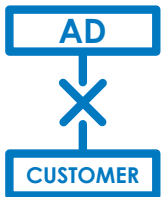
Unmatched sales will not be attributed to your ad. This is actually good news. It means that Facebook is under-reporting attribution, which means your ROI is likely much higher than Facebook's report.

Facebook as an Essential Marketing Tool

You can achieve success on Facebook without taking advantage all of the first-party data capabilities offered there. But, it's so easy to set up and benefit from data-enhanced content creation, targeting, and attribution. So why wouldn't you?

If you don't incorporate your data into your Facebook marketing, **you're leaving opportunities on the table.**

EMAIL

STRATEGY

Stay In Touch
With Consumers.

1. Investing in Email Marketing

Stay in touch with consumers during their vehicle ownership lifecycle.

The Staggering Value of Email

Hubspot and business data platform Statista tell us that email sees 4 billion users each day! That number is projected to climb to 4.6 billion by 2025.

For reference, the world population is 7.9 billion at the time of this publishing.

Whoever you want to reach, they likely have email.
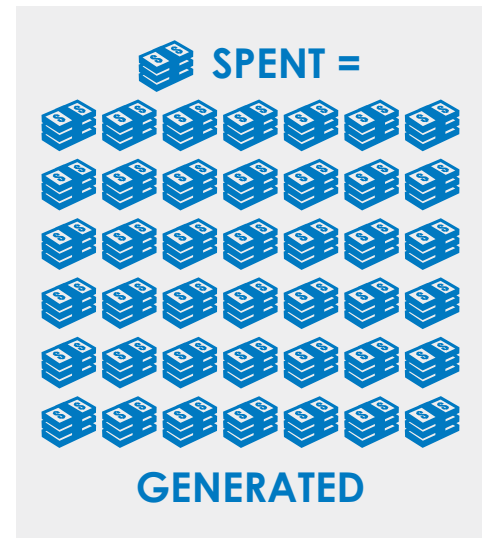
Your Best Marketing ROI

Email is also one of the most, if not the most, valuable marketing channels for money in versus money back, with staggering numbers for return on investment.

42,000% ROI!

Return on investment
from email marketing,
at $42 generated
for every $1 spent.

from Hubspot, "The Ultimate List of Email
Marketing Stats for 2021"

SPENT =

GENERATED

Get Smart About Email Marketing

Dealers often market to everyone in their database all at once with the idea that the more consumers you market to, the more likely you are to get conversions. This has never been true. It's time to try a different way of email marketing.

No More Graymail

Just because a subscriber signed up for your emails once upon a time doesn't mean that they are actively engaging today. Marketing email that goes out to subscribers who never engage over a period of time is called "graymail."

Why is graymail a bad thing?

You might be thinking that it doesn't matter whether someone engages with your email or not. But actually, it really does matter.

Graymail can affect your email sender score.

Each email provider ranks your reputation as sender on a score from 100 to 0.

The higher the score, the more likely your emails will go to your recipients' inbox. The lower your score, the more likely your emails will go to your recipients' spam folder, where they will likely never be seen.

The Spam Filter Cycle

If you send emails to recipients who never engage, you can start a cycle that sends more of your emails to spam as your sender score continues to decrease.

This is how you end up with recipients who do want to receive your emails but never see them because they go straight to spam.

2. Maintaining a Healthy Subscriber List

You need to remove non-active recipients from your subscriber every so often to keep only those who are showing they want to engage with your emails.

Suscriber Sunset Policy

Create a policy about what recipients should be removed from email communications and when. Maybe you sunset recipients who haven't engaged in so many months or in so many email campaigns.

Resting, Not Deleted

Don't remove your inactive subscribers forever or delete any valid consumer records from your database. You can still re-engage them down the road.

Using Artificial Intelligence to Keep Your List Healthy

You can use an AI-driven tool to predict a consumer's likelihood of engaging. This will prevent graymail and keep unengaged consumers from becoming totally unreachable in the future.

90% **Increase in Inbox Placement Rate (IPR) for those who use artificial intelligence to determine how often to communicate to each subscriber.**

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Looking Ahead: Email Engagement Changes

Knowing who engaged with your emails is getting trickier, and the jury is out on what it means for email sender scores.

New Privacy Features

Apple's new privacy feature as of September 2021 returns almost all emails sent to Apple Mail inboxes as "opened" even if the recipient never even saw the email.

What's Different Now

The difference has to do with the Apple Mail client now downloading images and email tracking pixels automatically when the email arrives instead of when a user opens the email, making email campaign platforms report the email as "opened."

Possible Impact for Dealerships and Dealer Groups

Email engagement is now harder to track via number of opens and you might not want to sunset subscribers just because they haven't clicked on an email yet. Focus on giving email recipients simple, meaningful actions to take in each email so that they click through for more content and you can tell who is truly engaged.

YOUR TURN

CREATE YOUR OWN SUNSET POLICY.

Can you choose to rest certain types of email subscribers so that they aren't impacting your sender score and can be re-engaged later?

- Recipients who haven't engaged with an email in 3 months

- Subscribers who have been on your list for 6+ months but never clicked an email

- Recipients who have received more than 5 discount or promo emails but haven't acted on them

3. Integrating Email with Other Marketing Channels

Integrating your information about email suscribers with other channels allows you to reach customers more often through their preferred method of contact.

Benefits of Omnichannel Integration

Different Consumers Prefer Different Channels

You can track consumers who aren't engaging via email and try sending them communications another way, like over social media or as a direct mail piece.

Inboxes Get Busy

The average person can receive 100+ email promotions in a day.

Meet Consumers Everywhere They Are

Omnichannel marketing ensures you reach consumers where they will respond.

Multiple Touchpoints

You're more likely to recapture unsold leads when people see your brand multiple times across channels.

Repetition Counts

The brands we know well are always reminding us that they're there.

4. Images, Animated GIFs, and Video in Email Communications

Visuals add interest, personality, and clarification to emails. Be sure to follow best practices for this content though, or your best intentions may backfire.

Be Intentional with Visuals

Images, animations, video, and other visuals can help your emails look more on-brand, modern, and appealing...when used the right way.

Don't Send Image-Only Emails

Many consumers will receive your email initially with all images turned off. If your email is all images, it may find itself in the trash without ever being seen.

Images Support the Main Point

Use images sparingly to add emphasis, depth, or tone to the rest of the email.

Keep Text Out of Images As Much As Possible

Any text that you include in your images will not be visible to those with their images turned off.

Write Alternative Text for Every Image

Writing a description, or alt text, for each image is a best practice. An email client will substitute that text for your images that cannot be accessed by the recipient for whatever reason.

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Image-Heavy Email with No Images Loaded

✕ Avoid These Problems

No Message

This email has zero live text, which means this recipient cannot see any part of the message. Instead of going through the extra click to download images, they will likely trash this email.

No Alternative Text

If these images had a description, or alt text, it would show up as words where they images should be. With alt text, this recipient would have an idea of the message and might choose to download the images after all.

Try This Instead

All Important Points Are Text

The message is clear because the important parts of it are live text in this email and no not need to be manually downloaded by the recipient.

Images Are Supportive and Applied Strategically

Downloading the images here is not mandatory. It's possible to understand and take action without ever downloading or looking at the images.

Alt Text Included

Consumers can make a better decision about whether they'd like to download the images with the help of these descriptions.
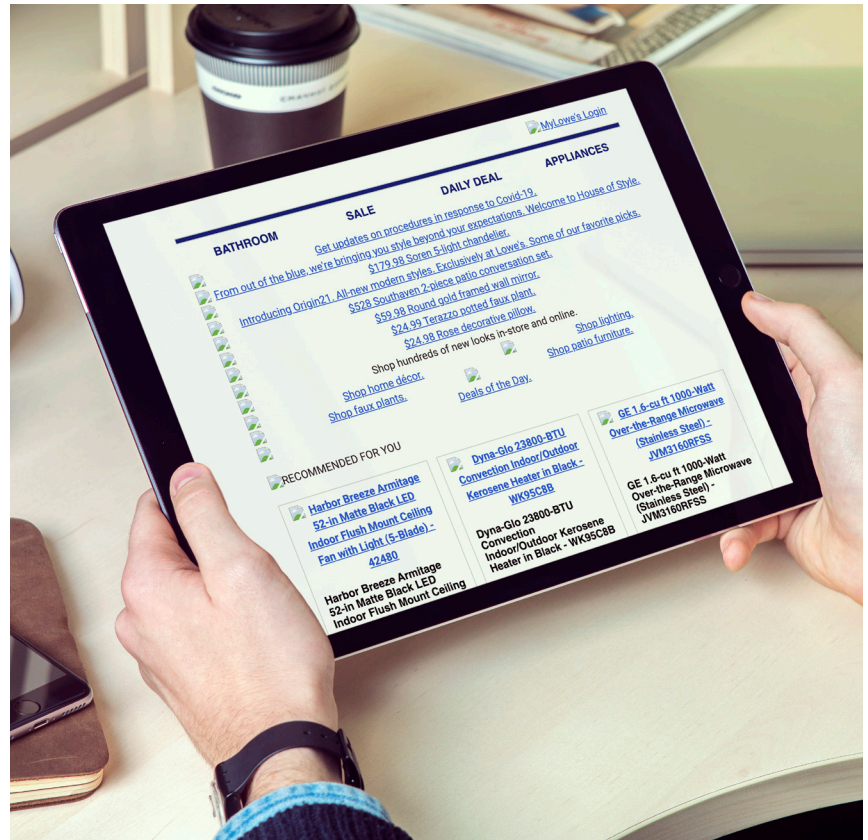
Use Animations Strategically

Animated images can make an email more engaging, but don't overdo it.

Keep It Subtle

Too many animated images or an animated image that's causes a lot of movement on the screen can be distracting. These types of animations can even keep consumers from seeing the message you want them to engage with.

Watch Load Time

Animations can drastically add to your email load time. If your email takes too long to load, your consumers won't sit around waiting on it. They'll forget it or trash it instead.

Animations Must Also Work as Stills

Animated images will not display in all email clients. Make sure that your design and content works even if recipients can only see the first frame of the animation.

You have eight seconds or less before you lose your consumers' attention. **Don't waste any precious time** on content that is distracting or takes too long to load.

Carefully Consider Video

Think through how recipients will interact with videos before including them.

Don't Add Video Just Because You Can

Ask yourself what value including the video will provide to consumers. If the answer isn't a resounding value add to the email, you may want to skip it.

Be Aware of the Pitfalls of Playing Videos Inside Emails

It's usually better to link to a landing page where the video lives.

Load time will always be a problem.

Videos are large and you have no way of knowing what kind of internet connection recipients will have when they open your email.

You're using people's data.

Never allow videos to autoplay, as that uses consumers' data without their permission.

Videos do not play in all email clients.

Some of the major email platforms won't play embedded videos. If you choose to embed your video, you'll still need to plan for a still and link to a landing page.

It's Easier to Measure ROI on a Landing Page

Taking consumers to a landing page to play a video is an excellent way to get them to your site and track their engagement.

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5. Email on Mobile Devices

It's crucial to optimize and test your emails for display on mobile devices.

Approximately Half of Email Use is Mobile

Consumers check their email on the go just as often as they do at their computers, and those numbers are swinging more in mobile's favor every year.

Readability Is Your Biggest Concern

Emails on a mobile device are just much smaller than on a computer. The smaller screen area brings its own set of things to watch out for.

Text Size

Make sure your text is a size that's easily readable on smaller screens and for people who don't have 20/20 vision.

Image Content

Limit or avoid text within email images for easier reading.

Size of Your Calls to Action (CTAs)

Make your CTAs prominent, large, and clear.

On small screens it can be harder for people to select CTAs successfully, so give them plenty of space to be able to click the action.

Getting the ROI You Want from Emails

Used correctly, email can be one of the most powerful tools up your marketing sleeve. Keep best practices in mind and your success with email will astound you.

Email greatly enhances your overall marketing strategy if you continuously maintain it and integrate it with your other cross-channel efforts.

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TEXT
MARKETING

A Newer Channel
You Shouldn't Ignore.

1. Text is Now a Marketing Channel in Its Own Right

It comes as no surprise that consumers are opting in to text message marketing services. But as a newer option, you may not have delved deep here yet.

High-Level Benefits of Text Marketing

SMS text marketing is direct and immediate, can be integrated with other channels, and is more reliable for you, the publisher.

Significantly Higher Engagement Rates

According to research from Gartner:

- Open rates for text messages can be 78% higher than for emails
- Response rates for text messages can be 39% higher than for emails

Open Rates

- Email: 20%
- SMS: 98%

Response Rates

- Email: 6%
- SMS: 45%

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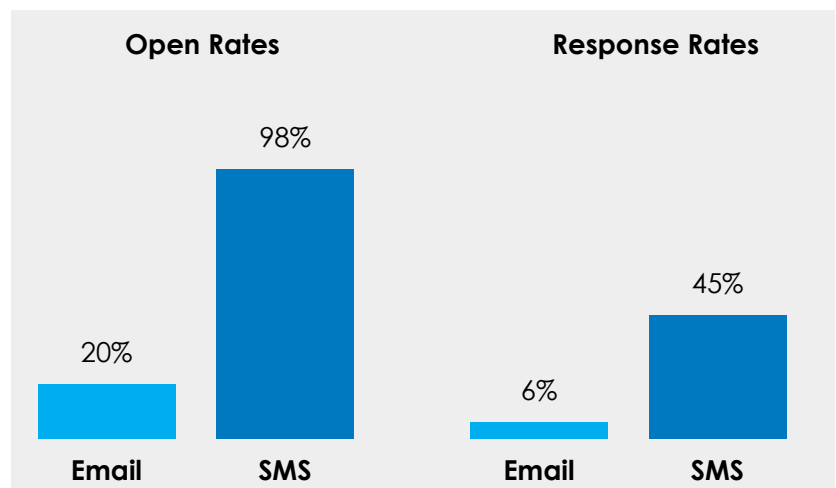
2. Text Marketing Ettiquette

The experts at *Entrepreneur Magazine* shared the following important tips for successful marketing texts.

Consider Your Audience

Each text message you send is a projection of your business. Present your brand the way you want it to be perceived.

Communicate Clearly with Plain Language

Avoid jargon and complex concepts. Keep it simple and direct.

Respond Promptly

Texting is about timeliness, so respond as soon as you can. Your response can always offer a future time when a complete answer can be provided.
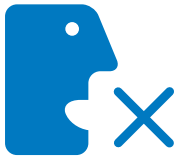
Don't Be Long Winded

Make your point directly. People should be able to understand what you are saying without having to do much reading.

Be Patient

Recognize that your message is likely less important to others than it is to you. People have other things happening and may not be able to respond immediately.

Know When to End the Converstation

Most people are not looking for continued text messages from you if they are not interested in the product or service. Constantly texting will likely lead to the other person opting out of your texts and perceiving your business in a negative light.

3. Compliance for Texts

The Federal Communication Commission has implemented strict rules that govern how business text messaging can be conducted.

The Rules at a High Level

Large fines have been imposed against companies found to have improperly solicited customers and prospects via text.

Text Message Opt-In Cannot Be Required for Goods or Services

Businesses are not allowed to require a user to opt into a text program as a condition to purchase products or services.

Recipient Permission is Required

According to the Telephone Consumer Protection Act, customers must give businesses "express written consent" before the business sends them any text messages. You cannot buy a list of phone numbers and start texting.

Consent Must Be Clear and Conspicuous

Written consent cannot be buried in a pages-long form full of legalese.

Ways Consumers Can Give You Consent for Text Messages

- Send a keyword you give them to your number
- Enter their phone number in an online form belonging to you
- Sign up in-person at a physical location

Clear Call to Action at Opt-In

There are specific guidelines for what your prompt, or call to action, must contain when your recipients opt-in to your text messages.

Purpose of the Text Messages

You must let subscribers know what they are signing up for. Are they getting reminders? Coupons? Tips? Specify what is being offered so there aren't any surprises.

Message Frequency

Include the approximate number of text messages the customer should expect to receive in each week or month.

Message and Data Rates May Apply

Even though unlimited texting has become more common, some recipients may have to pay a small fee to receive text messages.

You don't know which recipients will and won't have to pay to receive your texts, so you must inform them that they could incur these charges if they sign up.

Terms and Conditions

List the terms and conditions and privacy policy in full beneath the call-to-action or provide a link nearby:

- The identity of the company/brand/program
- Customer service contact information
- Description of the product people are signing up for
- Opt-out instructions in bold type

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Confirmation of Opt-In is Required

Regardless of how users signed up, the very first text must be a compliance message confirming opt-in. If you've signed up for a text message program before, you've seen these opt-in messages.

Reiterate the following:

- Business Identity
- Message Frequency
- Message and Data Rates May Apply
- How to Opt Out

Compliant Confirmation Message Example

Review Your Import List Before Texting

To avoid getting in legal hot water, review all text contacts to ensure each of them gave you permission to text them before importing a contacts list to start texting.

What You Cannot Text About

There are four topics you cannot legally send communications about via business text messages. To remember these, use the pneumonic device "SHAFT."

S SEX

H HATE

A ALCOHOL

F FIREARMS

T TOBACCO

Likely to Result in Immediate Ban from Texting

If you text about any of these topics or even include communications about them in your call-to-action, you could find your business immediately banned by the CTIA, an association of mobile carriers who set rules and best practices for text marketing.

Always consult federal, state, and local regulations before planning a text campaign.

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4. Uses for Text Communciations

Regulations aside, text marketing can be an extremely effective channel for dealerships and dealer groups.

Connect With Consumers Who Have Expressed Direct Interest

If someone gives you permission to text them, that shows definite interest in your business. Text can be a direct line to your most engaged customers.

Option to Opt-In Via Digital Forms

Offer this to both prospects and customers.

Offer Instant Trade-In Value Via Text

Use a service that allows consumers to enter their license plate and get their trade-in value via text. Then use those phone numbers to build an opt-in list.

Text as an Alternative to Chat

Let consumers choose to text with you about questions, selections, and other concerns in addition to website chat.

Positive Equity Alerts

Let consumers know when they have crossed into positive equity. You might even offer incentive updates to upgrade to a new vehicle.

Offering Exceptional Service Via Text

Send helpful text messages that drive your consumers to your business and make them feel like you're watching out for them with service-centered text campaigns.

Service and Maintenance Reminders

Allow customers to schedule an appointment easily from their phone as soon as they receive the reminder, via phone call or a mobile app.

Discount Coupons and Offers

Receiving these via text is easier for most consumers to use and remember email or direct mail promotions.

Vehicle Inspection Results

Most multi-point inspection tools have a text option that enables service advisors to text the results of the inspection directly to the consumer. These texts include what needs to be done, the cost of doing it, and approval for the work.

Work Completion and Payment Services

This is a must-have for the modern dealership. This text functionality lets you show the repair order with final cost and an option for the customer to pay via their phone.

Text is **not a channel to ignore**.

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5. Reputation Management via Text

Progressive dealers have reputation management systems that they use to help generate positive reviews and respond to those that, for whatever reason, aren't so positive.

Ask for Review Through Text

Include a thank you note after a purchase, service appointment or other meaningful engagement and ask them to review and rate your dealership.

You've probably seen these texts at work in your everyday life while using Amazon or another online shopping service.

Make Their Review Quick and Easy

Provide a link they can access on their phone and keep the process incredibly short with a single rating and space for review comments. Asking for more than about 30 seconds of their time is likely asking too much.

The Benefit of Asking for Reviews

This simple request can dramatically increase the number of reviews associated with you online and helps balance out the negative ones.

Negative reviews are typically the ones that get written because unsatisfied customers are more likely to go to the reviews on their own.

YOUR TURN

PLAN A TEXT PROGRAM

Start with the essentials for sending business texts to your consumers.

Choose a Text Solution

Your text program should be able to connect to your CRM so you can capture contacts.

Understand the Compliance Regulations

Assign a Compliance Officer who governs usage, storage, and permissions.

Create Rules of Ettiquette

Write these down. Teach them to your team. Call it a code of texting conduct and monitor adherence to these rules.

Strategies to Build a Compliant Text List

Collect mobile numbers, in compliance with regulations, from your website or at the point of sale or service.

Define Text Strategies and Campaigns

If you don't do this and document it well, decisions will be made without you. Make sure the right people make the right decisions for protocol and systems.

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Text as a Powerful New Marketing Tool

Get ahead of the curve and set up a text program for your dealership. Your communications with text subscribers have a chance to be even more personal, effective, and immediate than those for many other channels.

A compliant, effective text message strategy cannot happen on its own. Take the reigns — don't leave the fine details to chance.

VIDEO MARKETING

Show, Don't Tell.

1. Put a Face to Your Dealership

Video builds trust and drives engagement with your dealership or dealer group. Video marketing doesn't have to be intimidating once you understand the basic principles to make it work for you.

Consumers Look for Videos

Many consumers will be looking for a video when they reach your website, because most people like to engage with videos.

The Best Videos Talk About One Thing

You likely engage with video content on a regular basis your own online activity. You know the ones you like and the ones that don't hit home. But what is it about the most effective videos you watch that make them resonate?

The best, most engaging thing you can talk about in your videos? YOU.

Short Attention Spans

Yes, consumers tend to love video but their attention spans are also limited. You'll want to grab and keep their attention for the length of the time they will pay attention.

71% The percentage of marketers who report that video outperforms other content.

2. Planning Professional Videos

Your consumers are constantly bombared by videos. Make sure you say what you want to say in a succint, engaging manner by going in prepared.

Outline Your Goal

What is the purpose of this specific video? Is it to get your customers to try out a digital retailing solution? Or to learn about your service offerings? Define this goal first so you can act on it when creating your video.

Identify Your Audience

You know your community and customers best, and you know how to talk to them. But what if this video is for someone who's never been to your dealership? The tone of your video should match who you intend to watch it.

Use Emotions

Don't be afraid to let your personality show through. Have a good joke? A mascot? Get it in there! Is your dealership is responding to a crisis in the community? Be honest and sensitive. Consumers will trust you for your openness.

Plan Short Takes

Plan your video to be shot in short takes, a few seconds each, to make it easier to quickly reshoot segments when someone forgets their lines or you want to try a different direction. This will make editing much easier for the final version.

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Decide Where to Shoot

Think about where would be valuable to your consumers. Choose somewhere that would mean something to your intended audience.

Take Advantage of Your Dealership Location

Your dealership gives you a head start over other companies. You can show what it's like during a visit and make consumers feel at home before they ever even set foot in your shop. Give a tour, show them the lot, and involve your staff.

Shooting Your Video

You can invest in video equipment and a videographer who will set everything up for you. But if you're not ready for that, you can make a polished video on your own.

Use Your Smart Phone Camera

Modern smart phones have powerful cameras that are fully capable of shooting a high-quality video that you can use for business purposes.

Lighting is Key

Excellent lighting is part of the secret to any high-quality, polished video.

Outside

Plan for an hour before sunset or an hour after sunrise for the best outdoor light.

Inside

Choose a room that gets a lot of natural light or use plenty of lamps.

Follow the Rules of Composition

Most directors use these golden rules of video composition that are simple enough for you to follow as well and will give you the best results possible.

The Rule of Thirds

Imagine an invisible grid hat divides every scene in your video into three rows and three columns. Your subject will appear most appealing when you place them at at the intersection of those grid lines.
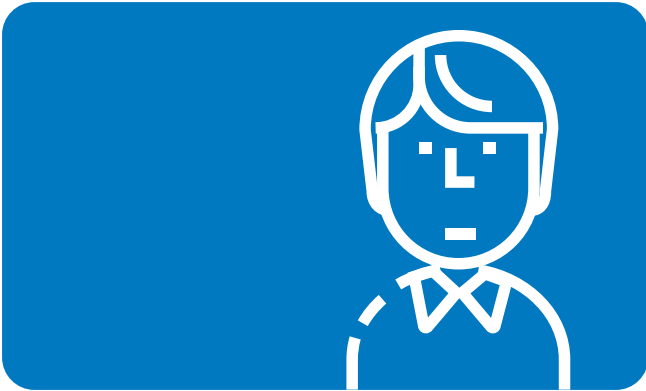
Example of Subject Placement
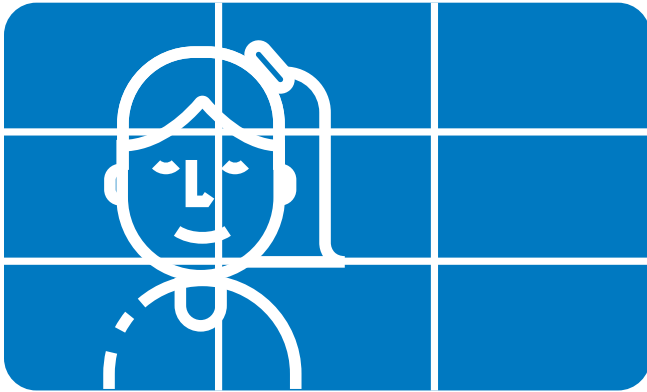
Here, the subject is placed in the middle of intersecting grid lines in the lefthand side of the scene.

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Mind the Head

In every scene that features a person, limit the space above your subject's head but don't cut the top of their head off, either.

Example of How Much Head Space

Here, the subject is prominent in the screen, but there's enough space above the head for this placement to feel comfortable and natural.

Going In for a Closeup

If you're going to shoot a closeup of a person's face and their head won't fit in the frame, it's better to cut off the top of the head than to cut them off at the chin.

Example of Closeup That Won't Fit in the Frame

Here, the subject's head doesn't fit in the frame for this closeup. The head is cut off rather than the chin so the audience can see the full face.

3. Animated Videos

Animated videos can be the right choice for simple, engaging videos.

Planning an Animated Video

The rules for animated videos differ slightly from those filmed live with people.

Choosing an Animation Partner

You'll have an abundance of options for partners to create high-quality animation work. Don't rush into a partnership just to get a video out the door.

Your Brand is Still in Play

Like anything other marketing content, your animated videos must match your the way you do business. That includes voiceover narrators and music choices.

Explain, Don't Sell

"Explainer" videos take a step-by-step format, making them easy to plan and write for you and easy to understand and act on for your consumers.

Write for Animation

Keep your script simple. Write in basic phrases that translate well to visuals.

4. Guerilla or "Viral" Videos

"Guerilla" style videos are usually the ones you see go viral on social media. This type of video can set you apart from the overdone type of video marketing consumers usually see from dealerships.

Rules of Successful Guerilla Videos

Think about what will get consumers talking the next day, or for days afterward.

You don't need a big budget for this, just ingenuity and an understanding of how your brand can resonate with your audience.

Address Your Audience's Pain

Highlight how your dealership or dealer group solves typical problems.

Make It Clever

You don't have to be outright funny. If your video is smart in how it addresses consumers, the humor will be evident.

Be Humble and Subtle

Don't sell your product outright. Instead, show why your brand and business are trusted by your customers. Maybe even put some of them in the video.

Know Where to Place the Videos

Guerilla videos probably won't get a ton of traction on your website or even via email, but they're perfect for your social media accounts.

YOUR TURN

Questions for getting started:

What is the goal?

Think about areas of the business where consumer exposure might be lacking or, on the flip side, areas where consumers have shown recent interest.

Who are you communicating to?

Your video will likely not speak to your entire consumer audience and their needs.

Who needs to hear this message? Why do they need to hear it? And why should it be from you?

What kind of video should this be?

We covered three types of videos in this section: live action, animated, and guerilla. Do your goal and audience lend themselves better to one kind of video than another?

What results are you hoping for?

When answering all other questions, keep the end result you want in mind so you can plan toward that outcome.

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5. Using Video Across Channels

You'll use video differently across your different marketing channels depending on where it's placed and what kind of video it is.

Videos On Your Website

The right videos, placed well, will be a game changer for your SITE.

Start With the Home Page

A video on your home page describing your dealership, your commitment to the community, and the value you provide is a great place to start.

Think About Landing Pages

Each landing page on your site addresses a specific topic or site section. A video can be a great way to introduce these topics on these pages.

Ideas for Videos on Your Site

• Featured inventory walkarounds

• How-to guides

• A typical service experience at your dealership

• Previous customer testimonials

• Response to events nationwide and in the community

Soon it won't be "if" you should use video but "where."

Videos in Email and Text

Video is a good way to keep email and text subscribers coming back and engaging with your content.

Best Practice

Before you start dropping videos in your email and text campaigns, keep the following in mind to see the best results.

Encourage Clicks, Not a Video Embed

Many consumers' email platforms don't allow embedded videos to play in the email itself. Even for those who do, it's best to give consumers a call to action to play the video via a landing page on your site or your video hosting patform instead.

There are too many factors you can't control that will break with a video embed.

You can't control what subscribers' internet connections might be like, how much data they have, whether they're in a place where they can listen or watch, or any other number of factors required to watch a video online.

Tease the Video

Get consumers excited about your video content from the minute they see your email, in the subject and preview lines as well as in the body text of the email itself.

Just using the word "video" in a subject line is enough to **increase engagement rates**.

Videos on Social Media

Consumers engage with video in huge quanties across social media platforms.

Engagement with Social Videos is Through the Roof

You might know from your own social scrolling that video has never been more popular on social media, and its reign over social content is only growing.

1200% The percentage of videos consumed via social media platforms versus directly from YouTube.

50% The percentage of videos watched on mobile devices.

Tell One Story

Stick to one goal with your message. Don't be tempted to include a sales pitch or other additional points. Instead, include a relevant call to action at the end.

Understand Your Social Audience

Most social media users scroll through their social feeds looking for only the most compelling content. They expect a video to reward them with something interesting and digestible in just a few seconds.

Tips for Social Video Success

Understanding how your consumers engage with your video content while on social media will help you when post videos that get people's attention and keep it.

Hook Them Right Away

Any video designed for your social audience needs to be compelling up front. You only have a few seconds to capture your viewers' attention before they move on.

Be Brief

Only communicate the most important information via your video before directing consumers away to your website or email subscription link.

Write Clear, Descriptive Headlines

Your video headlines, descriptions, and hashtags determine who your content is displayed to. Watch your analytics to see what performs well and adjust over time.

Include Captions for Every Video

Consumers can't always turn on their sound to engage with your video and not everyone can engage with content that requires audio.

In an industry that lags in social advertising, **strong social media content will put you leagues ahead of your competition.**

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YOUR TURN

CREATE A VIDEO FOR SOCIAL

Try out one of these popular video types.

360 Video Tour

Show consumers your dealership space, your sales lot, your service bay, or any other area where a tour might be of interest.

Live Videos

Film yourself or another dealership expert talking live about a common question or giving a simple how-to. Stream these videos live, then post them for more consumers to watch later.

Human Interest Stories

Did a staff member, customer, neighbor, or someone else associated with your business do something or experience something meaningful? Make a video and share it.

Tie to Pop Culture

Jump on the bandwagon with popular movies, video trends, or whatever you hear everyone around the dealership talking about right now. These videos are time-sensitive but they'll make up for it in immediate engagement.

Using Video for Wider and Deeper Reach

Videos are taking off unlike any other marketing content and there's no sign of it slowing down. Try different types of videos across platforms and see what works for your business to drive engagement.

Before long, **you could be capturing people who have never engaged before** and showing existing consumers a side of your business they've never seen.

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MEASUREMENT & METRICS

Which Marketing Efforts Are Bringing in Success?

1. Effective Measurement Practices

Even the best strategy, team members, and tools are difficult to build on when you don't know what's working and what isn't.

Identifying the Right Metrics

Your metrics should not only measure your success but also help you continually plan the next steps in your strategy. For that to happen, it's important to be sure that you're measuring the results that will keep taking you forward.

Considering Outcome-Based KPIs

Specific qualifications for the strongest KPIs (key performance indicators):
- What information can you access that would help you measure success?
- What are the true indicators of your success for your marketing efforts?
- How specific can you get with your metrics?
- How can your metrics align with your specific brand and business goals?
- Which metrics could you act on to improve marketing strategy over time?
- Which metrics can you measure quarter over quarter, year over year?

What is an outcome-based KPI?

This type of key performance indicator measures the results of past activity, such as revenue or leads generated, is crucial to measuring progress.

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Outcome-Based KPIs and Goal Achievement

It's easy to lose track of your goals if you haven't set metrics to measure the results of your goal-driven efforts.

The right KPIs tell your team, "Wow that really worked!" or, "Let's not do that again."

Examples of Goals and Their Metrics

Each time you identify a KPI for a given goal, evaluate its worth by answering: Why is it important that we track this? What do we learn from this metric?

Goal	KPI to Measure
Reach more consumers via new email marketing content direction.	Email campaign clicks and responses before and after new content direction.
Increased clickthrough rate for display ads with more prominent call to action.	Display advertising clicks before and after new call to action implemented.
More site traffic from narrowing of paid search terms big on in Google Ads.	Clicks from paid ads through to website.
New consumers captured in database from form fillouts on new landing page.	Number of times same form was filled out before and after landing page lauched.
High number of landing page visits from direct mail campaign.	Visits to the direct mail landing page while campaign was active.
Drive more consumers to view vehicles through advanced site search.	Number of visitors to vehicle pages from search before and after advanced search was implemented.

2. Understanding Your Measurements

It's not enough just to measure KPIs. You'll need to attribute outcomes to specific efforts so you can determine which channels, messaging, and strategies are leading consumers to do business with you.

What is attribution?

In its simplest form, it's the analytical science of figuring out which metrics and tactics are contributing to overall sales and conversions.

Focus Efforts Where They're Most Valuable

Attribution allows you to see where your time and money matter most.

You'll Be Able to Improve:

- Marketing Spend Optimization
- ROI
- Consumer Content Personalization
- Marketing Creative and Copy

98%

The percentage of leading marketers who use strategic metrics to measure the effectiveness of their campaigns.

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Models for Attributing Results

These are the most popular ways to measure and report success.

Single Touch Attribution

100% of the credit for the outcome goes to the first or last touchpoint only.

Example of Single Touch Attribution

If you send an email campaign for three months with various interactions by a single consumer, you give credit to the first or last interaction along that journey when the consumer reaches your goal outcome.

Even Distribution

Equal credit is attributed to all touch points along the user journey.

Example of Even Distribution

If there are four touchpoints along the path to an outcome, each touchpoint gets an even 25% percent of the credit.

Custom Attribution

More credit is attributed to one or more touchpoints along the journey than to others. You should use this only when you feel strongly that one touchpoint should be weighted more heavily than others.

Example of Custom Attribution

You might credit clicks on an email campaign more heavily than opens when attributing success for an outcome.

3. Creating an Attribution System

You can create your own in-house attribution system with Google Analytics (GA) or by partnering with a vendor who can do the legwork for you.

Google Analytics for Measurement

Even if you don't use Google Analytics for more complicated attribution methods, you should still use it as a marketing tool. It's free and easy to implement on your website.

Your Website Analytics

Putting Google Analytics on your website is the first step for harnessing the information this powerful free tool will give you. If you haven't already done this, you're already behind the curve. Make it an immediate priority for your site.

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Even Basic Analytics Provide Insight

Google Analytics can take some getting used to due to the sheer amount of information you can find there. Look first for who is visiting your site and what they are doing there, then move deeper.

Google Analytics training and certification courses are available if you want to become a GA master.

Link GA and Your Google AdWords Account

Google allows you to look at AdWords information within your Google Analytics view. The best and easiest-to-digest reporting comes from being able to see everything in as few places as possible, and it's easy to link these two accounts.

Create Filtered Views

You don't need to see when your team is checking your website. Be sure to filter out your internal IP addresses and try out some other filtered views to see different segments of consumers while you're at it. You might try:

Watch Source and Medium Rankings

Keep track of who is most often driving traffic to your website to determine which external partners and marketing efforts are working. Make note who is in your top 25, top 10 and top 3 referring partners as well as who is lagging on page 2 of the data.

- Search-and-replace filters
- Advanced filters
- Filter domain referrals

- Filter based on geography
- Custom filter fields
- Social network filters

Without Measurement, Goals Are Harder to Reach

Understanding the interactions that lead to the marketing outcomes you want, backed by a clear system to relate and attribute those interactions, will help you chart a course to continuing success.

Without a measurement strategy, you're essentially the captain of a ship that has no compass and nowhere to go.

We've covered a lot of ground in this Playbook. Yet all the while, we've kept our focus on two things: Your consumers and your data.

If you can keep those two constantly working together in your marketing efforts, you'll build relationships that turn consumers into loyal customers.

What to Do First?

Don't try to implement everything we've covered here all at the same time.

Start with your data, your team, and your audience. Identify immediate gaps and opportunities with the help of the exercises and information in this Playbook. Pick three to five steps you could take right now to improve your marketing strategy and document it as part of your marketing plan.

Revisit and Level Up

When you have your new tactics in place and your marketing strategy is working better than ever before, come back to this Playbook and pick another three to five points to implement. Work those into your strategy and document them in your marketing plan. Repeat every time you're ready to add to your marketing game.

Looking for more help with data-driven marketing?

Visit Outsell.com for more ways to improve your marketing strategy and harness your collected data to build deeper relationships with your customers.

www.Outsell.com