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Internet Marketing: More May Not Necessarily Be Better - Yet

By Robert Moore

The shift toward Internet marketing has led many automotive industry experts to convince dealers that the way to increase their profits, and get the most from their marketing dollars, is to spend more on digital marketing and advertising efforts. Yes, keywords, microsites, search engine marketing, and search engine optimization can all contribute to successful Internet sales, but to what end? As a dealer, before jumping on the Internet-charged bandwagon, you should ask yourself, "Do I need more leads, or do I need to improve my performance with the leads I already receive?" Why invest more money driving customers to your Web site if the final result is little to no lift in sales? Before optimizing your Internet business, you should optimize your eCommerce processes.

Internet-savvy Shoppers Call the Shots

Internet shoppers dramatically impact your bottom line, so it's critical that you pay close attention to satisfying their needs, especially in a timely manner. According to J.D. Power (2008), nearly 70 percent of new vehicle shoppers now use the Internet in their shopping process. In addition to being accustomed to having knowledge at their fingertips, these Internet buyers tend to be "time-poor" and want to avoid traditional sales methods. If your Internet personnel are not responding to these leads within an acceptable amount of time, your process quickly conveys that you are not interested in doing business, and they'll move on to other brands or dealerships. Consider your Web site an extension of your showroom. Just as you would not ignore the customers on your lot, you should not ignore the ones on your Web site.

Know Your Business and Your Processes

The most critical order of business is to determine how many leads you're currently receiving, your lead response times, your appointments made-to-show ratios, and your sales-to-appointment rates. If these numbers are not competitive with current standards, you should strongly consider investing energy toward improving the functional aspects of your eCommerce process. Having the right processes in place will not only help you gain new customers, but it will also help you prevent damage to your dealership's reputation and business. Without the proper foundational processes in place, spending more money on digital marketing in an attempt to drive customers to your showroom could do more harm than good.

The Internet – Make It Work as Part of Your Dealership

Ineffectively managing the leads that you already receive, and then spending money on the Internet to increase these leads, will not increase customer volume or cure your ad spending woes. Only by developing and testing a sound eBusiness sales process will you learn how well your money is working for you and achieve better business results. To get started, check with your manufacturer about their eBusiness process initiatives. You may also consider contacting your dealer management system provider or third-party eBusiness consultant. Remember, as demanding as today's buyers are, if you meet their needs, you're well on your way to drawing lifelong customers.



Robert Moore
General Manager and Senior Director
Reynolds Consulting Services

Robert has worked in the automotive industry for more than 30 years, with over 10 years experience in automotive consulting.

Reynolds Consulting Services, one of the most skilled and knowledgeable consulting groups in the automotive industry, offers dealers a fresh perspective on common challenges. Experience proven results from over 25 unique process improvement projects, specially designed to focus on specific departments and drive results for your dealership.

[Click here](#) to find out more.

Reynolds Consulting Services:
Phone - 888-556-7342
E-mail - consulting@reyrey.com

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Superior Service Leads to Superior Results
A Customer's Perspective

To Whom It May Concern:

Hello, my name is Brian Seufert, Business Development Director at Blossom Chevrolet in Indianapolis, Indiana. I am writing you today to let you know how satisfied I have been

with my Reynolds Consulting Services experience.

When I joined the team here, Blossom had neither a BDC nor a sufficient customer relationship management (CRM) tool to speak of. After reviewing several available solutions from a host of competing companies, Reynolds Contact Management application stood out as the obvious choice, due to its integration with ERA and overall capabilities.

As part of our selection of Reynolds Contact Management solution, we signed up for the associated Reynolds Consulting Services to assist us getting up and running as quickly as possible. These services included the creation of our desired schedules and the necessary training for our staff. This proved to be a very wise decision for our dealership. Not only did we get out of the gate running, we also had the opportunity to benefit from our consultant's (Ron Pyles) vast knowledge and experience of working with a multitude of other dealerships.

Ron was able and more than willing to provide real consulting services to us. If we desired to go in a certain direction with our BDC as it pertained to Contact Management, Ron would figure out a way to make it happen or advise us, based on his previous experiences, as to why we should consider another direction.

The results for our dealership have proved to be very respectable and the future looks very promising. Our BDC continues to grow, both in staff and results. Currently, we are responsible for nearly 70% of the delivered units and expect this trend to continue upwards as we refine our processes.

Reynolds Consulting Services has met and even exceeded our expectations. It is truly rare these days to receive what is promised! I would highly recommend Reynolds Consulting Services!

Sincerely,



Brian L. Seufert
Business Development Director
Blossom Chevrolet
Indianapolis, IN



Brian Seufert
Business Development Director
Blossom Chevrolet
Indianapolis, IN

Ron Pyles has worked 15 years in the automotive industry, focusing on variable operations. He is also a member of the National Guard and spent time serving our country in the Air Force.



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What Do You Have In Writing?

By John Carpenter

It is amazing to me, the answers I get when I ask salespeople to write out their dealership's sales process. It's a little sad, too. Here's a thought: do you think having a common sales process in writing might help your salespeople? It certainly would. We need to clearly define the salesperson's job and what is expected of them. A good place to start is by writing out a simple sales process, similar to the sample below:

1. Meet & Greet
 - Start off any customer encounter with a friendly, professional greeting. For example, "Welcome to _____. My name is _____. Are you here to see anyone in particular? What are you hoping to accomplish today? I'd like to help. Can I ask you a few quick questions?"
2. Interview/Needs Assessment
 - Conduct a Guest Survey, preferably inside, to establish what your customer is looking for. This process will also help you determine other vehicles or services you can offer.
3. Product Presentation/Walk Around
 - Tailor the walk around to the information gathered during the Guest Survey. This demonstrates that you've been paying attention to the needs of the customer.
4. Demonstration
 - Drive First – Explain all interior features and benefits.
 - Switch – Tell the customer how good the vehicle looks and performs.
 - Customer Drive – Silence is golden here. Let the customer take ownership.
5. Trial Close
 - Use this time to further refine what your customer is looking for, so you can offer something that will be appealing and meet their needs. Ask



John Carpenter
Business Consultant II
Reynolds Consulting Services

John has worked 20 years in the automotive industry, focusing on the variable operations side of the business. He was named Most Valuable Player in the Eastern Division of Reynolds Consulting Services in 2008.

questions like, "On a scale of 1-10, 10 being the best, what would you rate this vehicle?" and "What would make it a 10?"

6. Tour Service Department
 - Tell them about your service department and give them a tour, if possible. You can bet your competition probably didn't. This is the perfect opportunity to convert buyers into lifelong service customers.
7. Deal Write-Up
 - Make sure that all the information needed to work a deal is gathered before approaching the desk. This will help the process run more smoothly and maintain your professional image.
8. Negotiate/Close Deal
 - It is hard to believe, but most salespeople have never been formally trained on how to work a deal. This, combined with the fact that most dealerships don't have a standardized way to work a deal, spells trouble. Set up a standard process!
9. Turn Over to Business Office
 - This is all about professionalism and customer satisfaction. Work on a routine to make this process smooth and painless. Your customers will thank you for it.
10. Delivery and Follow-up
 - Remind the customer about suggested maintenance and future service visits. This is also a good time to review your process, determine what you did well, and make any necessary improvements.

These are things that we all should know, but they're important points to reinforce with your salespeople. As I mentioned earlier, this is just a model. The most important thing is that you standardize a process, put it in writing for your employees, and let them know they're required to know it inside and out. Implementing these steps may mean more training for your sales team, but a solid sales process pays off.

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Offers of the Month

Check out these three special deals from Reynolds eBusiness Consulting, specially designed to help you capture quality Internet leads, convert more leads into appointments, and increase sales!

eBusiness Tune Up:

Order five days and receive a sixth day free!

eBusiness Results:

Order 10 days and get two additional days free!

eBusiness ROI Builder:

Order 17 days and get three additional days free!

[Click here](#) to learn more about eBusiness Consulting.

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