



## Are You Missing Out on Potential Buyers?

### *The Continued Erosion of your Showroom Traffic*

Measuring showroom traffic has always been one of the key indicators into the health of our dealership and our marketing efforts. Everyday countless dealership managers still walk down to the desk and look at the log wondering how many “ups” they had for the day and the status of each of them. The only problem is that over the last 10 years that number continues to erode at an ever more rapid rate.

This is obviously due to the Internet and the shift of information that has become available online, allowing consumers to shop for their next vehicle from the comfort of their own home without having to step foot inside your dealership. This massive shift has forced us to change our selling strategies and tactics. Some dealerships have carved out complete businesses that cater to the customers’ wishes and will even deliver the vehicle to the customers’ home while other still refuse to even quote a customer a price besides MSRP online.

The shortest distance between two points is a straight line, yet we continue to try to put up more and more roadblocks in an attempt to slow down or limit the information that we share with our online customers. This is a big mistake, and goes against what successful dealership are doing to secure more Internet sales. So the first step is to somehow make your website more than informational. You need a way to reach out and “Meet and Greet” your online shopper to move them faster down the qualifying funnel. No matter how great your website is it is still just information. The future is creating a conversational website showroom. Turning your website into a tool that will help facilitate more conversations with your shoppers and address their needs or concerns they may have about doing business with your dealership without forcing the customer to call you or even send an email can be quite a challenge.

Just having an 800 number isn’t good enough because it forces a customer to stop the online shopping process and experience, pick up the phone, dial your dealership and hopefully connect with someone who can assist them. Your website could have the best forms in the world complete with voice instructions yet that information will never reach you as one of the greatest barriers and fears for customers is sending personal information over the web. If, in fact, the forms are completed, that information will be delivered to you via email and you will then need to respond—taking minutes, hours or in some dealerships days to complete and answer the question or questions that the customer wanted an answer to right then and there. I never thought I would say that

email alone is too slow but with ever increasing customer demands as they shop retail websites you need to have an edge.

If you are looking to connect instantly with your website shoppers and give them access to your staff, “Chat” is your answer. “Chat” software has been around for years but is hard for most dealerships to administer effectively because they do not have the unlimited resources necessary to hire staff to monitor the site and attempt to interact with each website visitor.

Managed chat is a powerful way to give your customers a connection point between your website and your showroom while allowing your sales staff to focus on what is most important—selling cars. Imagine not only having the ability to chat with your anonymous shoppers but also lead them around your website, explaining vehicles and sharing information about your dealership in the process. Imagine you are able to push an interactive video of a vehicle when a customer wants to know more about that certain vehicle, all while continuing a real time dialogue with them, allowing you to point out the advantages of that particular vehicle.

Streamlining and connecting with your website visitors isn’t a luxury—it is a necessity as more and more of your old showroom customers enter your online dealership. A “Meet and Greet” system will help you give customers what they need when they need it, putting you at the top of their shopping list. You need to extend your hand through the computer and say “Hello” and to do this you will need an interactive chat tool.

As dealerships continue to spend more money on their online marketing, isn’t it wise to ensure you are converting as many of your website visitors into leads as possible? Your online dealership is the showroom of today while your brick and mortar showroom is transactional hub where the deal and the paperwork get finalized. Investing in more online marketing will drive the traffic but what will you do to convert more of that traffic into opportunities?

As the months go forward we will explore chat and other interactive tools that you can use to create customer loyalty and more interaction on your website turning your anonymous visitors into leads and sales for your dealership.

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