



Looking for Leads in All the Wrong Places?

Ask Yourself These Questions.

There's no doubt millions of consumers visit websites to research their automotive purchases each month – to compare multiple brands as they narrow down their buying decision. Unbiased third party automotive websites were important to consumers 20 years ago when Autobytel pioneered the automotive Internet, and they remain a critical component to the car research and shopping process today.

But let's face it. For dealers, selecting a quality third party lead provider is a lot like dating. The starry eyed honeymoon phase can lead to relationship problems, and fast, if conversion rates or profit margins dwindle – like realizing your partner throws dirty laundry all over the floor or snores like a 426 Hemi.

So you break it off. And you wonder why you didn't do your homework ahead of time before diving head first into a full blown relationship. To avoid lead provider heartbreak, consider asking yourself the following questions.

1. Do they deliver quality consumer connections?

The days of lead slinging are over (at least for some of us). It's not a lead, it's a customer, and your vendor should focus on connecting you with customers you aren't able to reach through your own marketing efforts – in this case, quality consumer connections to help you grow sales.

2. Do they help you optimize your own website traffic?

They should offer the tools and services to help you convert your own website traffic to a sale, and to communicate with consumers the way they prefer – with a texting platform or virtual showroom

technology, for example. The better the connection, and the deeper the engagement, the greater the likelihood a consumer will buy from you.

3. Do they put your brand above theirs?

Just because a vendor spends tens of millions of dollars in mass media advertising doesn't automatically mean the leads they deliver are from consumers that will result in the best ROI for you. Do they offer products and services that help you build your brand? Perhaps the best partners are the ones that work diligently behind the scenes to drive consumers to your business, not theirs – partners that invest in products that actually help you sell more cars and grow your revenue. Sometimes less is more.

4. Do they let you dictate price?

We all know car buyers are as unique as fingerprints, and no two deals are identical. Factors such as credit score, trade-in value, down payment amount, vehicle availability, your willingness to be more flexible with longstanding customers, and a host of other factors ultimately impact price. That said, third parties shouldn't get between dealers and consumers, *especially* on price. That conversation should occur directly and confidentially between you and your customers.

5. Do they offer positive ROI?

Compared to other marketing spend, quality third party connections represent a value for dealers. When you couple this with new and innovative ways to reach consumers – such as mobile, texting, and web co-browsing capabilities – positive ROI is easily achieved. Don't expect anything less.

6. Are they a true partner?

Is your lead provider your partner? Do they offer education programs to help you fine tune your sales processes? Do they provide you with detailed reporting, such as lead info matched to actual vehicle state registrations to help you determine which vehicles were ultimately purchased and from whom? Do they legitimately care about the quality of consumers with whom they connect you? These are all pertinent questions to help you get to one bottom line: A true partner helps you improve your bottom line.

We all make relationship mistakes, but this is business. Be sure to work with a company that connects you to quality consumers; one that cares more about your brand than its own; one that lets you dictate price instead of dictating it for you; and one that offers positive returns while acting as a partner to help you sell more cars and grow your business.

Sure, breaking up is hard to do, but if you answered “no” to any of the questions above, you should probably start writing that “Dear John” letter now.

For a full suite of products that enhance your brand and drive website traffic and showroom visits, contact Autobytel at (866) 589-5498 or visit <http://dealer.autobytel.com>.



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