



Dealer Sales Teams: It's Time to View the Buying, not the Selling Process

Let's face it. In this day of Internet research and usage by all age groups, the typical automotive sale is about two key elements:

- 1) Getting consumers to your dealership's website & the showroom
- 2) Then getting them to buy now (online or in-store) without wandering off to another dealership's website.

No matter if it is a phone up, an Internet lead, a chat or text lead, or a customer who actually walks onto your lot, sales success hinges on process.

A prominent auto industry executive has a plague in his office that, loosely translated, read "Show me something I am more interested in buying than you are interested in selling." That phrase really captures how the auto industry should be viewing the sales process differently in order to offer the best experience possible – Or instead of viewing it as Sales Process, we should view it as a Buying Process.

First, let's look at the established core fundamentals of the traditional auto sales process.

- 1) Here are the reasons why you should buy from a dealer sales person.
- 2) Here is the price of the vehicle you are interested in buying.
- 3) Here are a couple of other optional vehicles you might want to consider buying (always lower-priced options).

Now let's look at the buying behaviors of today's automotive consumers.

Car shopping is no longer linear.

The traditional sales funnel in which consumers narrow their options until they make a purchase decision has changed. It is now a dynamic process where consumers add brands – or eliminate brands – as they research. Our data shows that over 50% of consumers will buy a different brand than the brand for which they submitted a lead, which means you can't get a consumer to buy from you until he is convinced he should buy your brand in the first place.

How to relate and talk to the “Buying” Consumer:

Since every brand has its elevator pitch (safest crash rating, highest resale value, low or free maintenance costs, industry awards, best MPG, best warranty, etc.) and every brand has its halo, be sure to highlight that halo and congratulate the consumer for their interest in your brand. Make them feel that all their research has paid off and they have found the right solution for their transportation needs.

The end goal of any engagement is to convince consumers that they are done researching. When that happens, you essentially take dozens of dealerships in your area (or even next door) out of contention. The bottom line? Make them more interested in purchasing than you are in selling.

While we’re modifying the beginning of the traditional sales process, we also need to add a step at the end.

Many consumers start out to buy a new car but end up buying a used vehicle.

Data shows that this happens nearly 50% of the time. And with the prediction that used car prices are dropping, it’s important to expose EVERY customer to your entire used car inventory. Begin with CPO since these vehicles are similar to new and under warranty, but also show other brands with similar body styles or features. If they are interested in a new Honda Accord, show them a pre-owned Camry, Taurus, or comparable off-brand vehicle on your lot. And keep in mind that used car intenders also switch to new cars – roughly 15% of the time – so show your new car specials and lower trims similar to the used car VIN they’re interested in.

Finally, let’s review & then adopt a new Buying Process:

- 1) Here are the reasons why you should buy our brand.
- 2) Here are the reasons why you should buy from our dealership
- 3) Here is the price of the vehicle you are interested in buying.
- 4) Here are a couple of other optional vehicles you might want to consider buying (always lower-priced options).
- 5) Here are comparable used car options (all brands) you might consider buying.

The reality is that with all the independent research going on, consumers are “buying” more than we are “selling.” Sales success, or rather, buying success depends on process – and refining that process to offer the best car buying experience depends on you.

Note: This content was edited & submitted by the Autobytel Sales Team. To gain more sales resources and innovative sales support, visit <http://dealer.autobytel.com/website-traffic/> regularly and prior to your next sales meeting

