

Understanding the Car Buyer's Path to Purchase: How Dealerships Can Win at Every Stage

On average, car shoppers are influenced by six to seven different online sources when considering what and where to buy. A customer's path to purchase can be complicated but understanding what motivates them along the way is critical to the success of a dealership's business.

Let's explore the five stages of a car buyer's journey and how modern marketing automation and strategies can help drive leads to purchase.

STAGE 1 | AWARENESS

The new vehicle shopper has identified a need and is starting their research

FACT: 50% of car shoppers will use independent research sites and 49% will use search engines to research a new vehicle purchase.[1]

MARKETING TIP: Dealerships need to bring their brand to the shoppers' attention as they research. This includes having a multi-channel strategy to get helpful information like customer reviews and promotions in front of prospects via their website and social media.



STAGE 2 | INTEREST

The car buyer is beginning to evaluate vehicles to purchase and where to buy them



FACT: 80% of customers are more likely to purchase from a brand that provides personalized experiences.[2]

MARKETING TIP: During this stage, dealerships want to analyze any insights they have into a prospect's actions, then send them relevant sales messages. Marketing automation tools can hyper-target shoppers with specific vehicle information or finance specials to guide their decisions. Personalized dealership emails see on average 14% open rates compared to the industry benchmark of 10%.

STAGE 3 | CONSIDERATION

Now the buyer is looking deeper, checking out review sites, comparison shopping and even inquiring about financing

cross-shopping while researching a vehicle. [3]

FACT: 64% of auto shoppers will perform some level of

providing a highly-personalized experience with your dealership to be considered. Do this by tailoring marketing messages to a shopper's exact needs and interests. Even send them to personalized landing pages -- a high-conversion strategy proven to deliver more "hand-raisers" (leads) for sales.

MARKETING TIP: Help the buyer through the process by



The new car shopper has made the decision to purchase at your dealership

STAGE 4 | PURCHASE



hyper-targeted marketing, according to Activator customers. MARKETING TIP: Whether a customer completes a form to

FACT: 33% of top dealership sales are influenced by

schedule a test drive or pays a visit to the showroom, this is a winning moment for a dealership. Once the contract is signed, ensure your marketing automation efforts include sending a follow-up message within days of purchase to welcome the customer to your dealership, complete a satisfaction survey and enter them into a cycle to receive timely service reminders.

The customer has purchased but needs ongoing communication to stay loyal

STAGE 5 | POST-PURCHASE

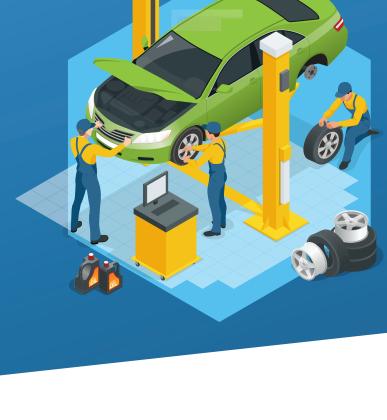
MARKETING TIP: The customer relationship doesn't end at a

sale, in fact, it begins that day. Ensure your dealership's marketing

FACT: Even just a 5% boost in customer retention can net a

25% to 95% increase in profit.[4]

automation tool allows you to send continuous relevant messages to the new vehicle owner from service reminders and offers to referral promotions and all the way to a new vehicle upgrade offer when the time is right.



With Activator, dealers can market seamlessly across critical customer touchpoints in

3. https://www.copper.com/blog/sales-funnel-stages#:~:text=During%20the%20interest%20and%20evaluation,they%20might%20be%20looking%20for

 $Sources: 1. https://v12data.com/blog/car-shoppers-prefer-digital-path-purchase/ \\ 2. https://www.forbes.com/sites/blakemorgan/2020/02/18/50-stats-showing-the-power-of-personalization/?sh=194838582a94$

the path to purchase and positively impact their entire business using a single solution.

Win at every stage of the buyer journey

4. https://www.callrail.com/blog/five-stats-automotive-customer-journey/