

**Key Insight**

Live Chat users are bona fide customers looking for a fast response to queries on imminent purchases.

Key Research Results

- **Outsell Live Chat users are high priority customers.** 60% are looking to purchase a vehicle as soon as possible.
- **Outsell Live Chat users are early-adopters looking for fast responses to their questions.** 99% say they decided to chat because they wanted a speedy response.

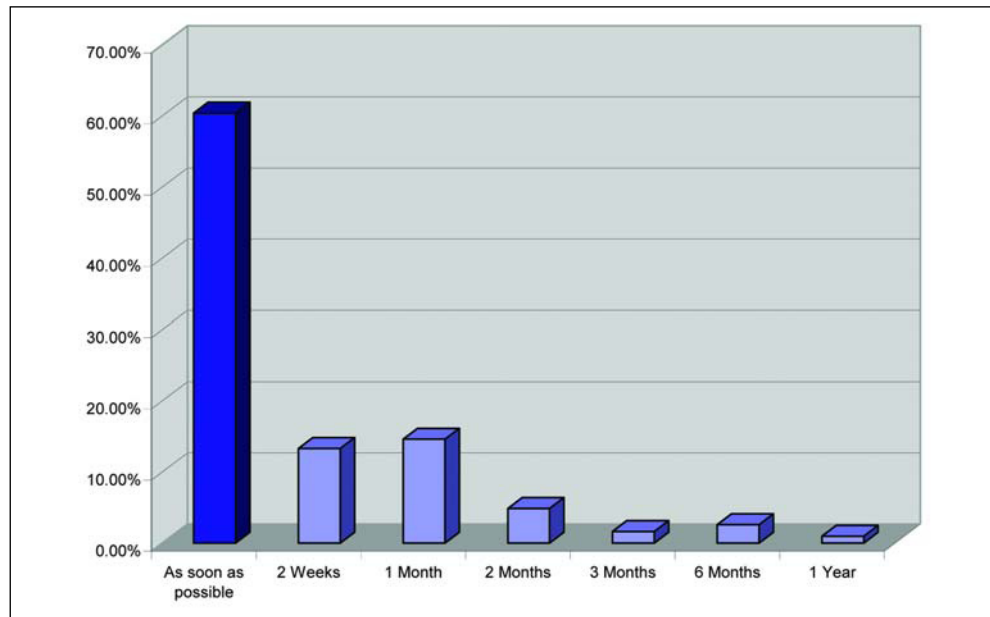
Key Recommendations

- Recognize differences in sales cycle and information needs between regular and iChannel customers.
- Create processes to provide customers with fast responses to specific queries.
- Provide customers with detailed information on special financing options online.

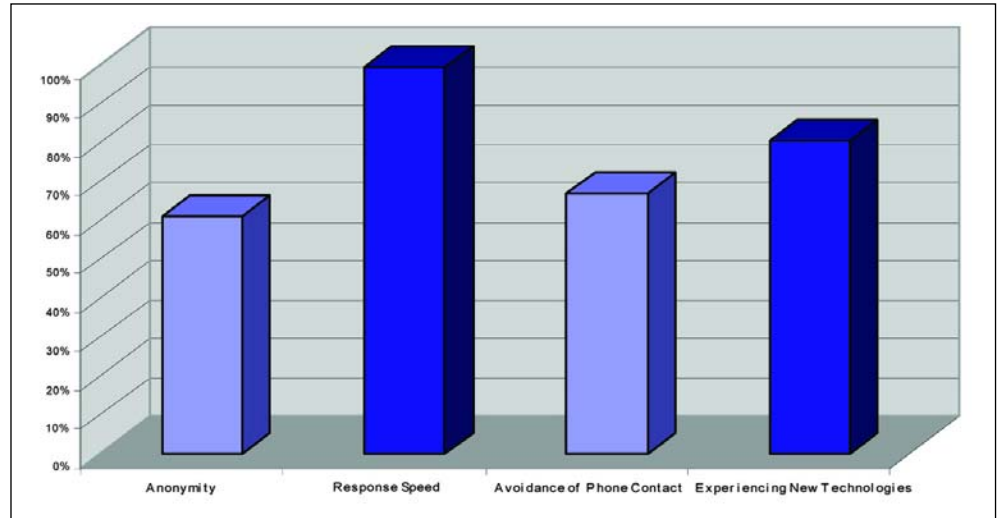
Analysis

Results from an online research study of Live Chat users finds these prospective customers to be further along in the sales cycle than regular customers. These customers have an expectation of rapid responses to their queries, and should be treated as high-value prospects due to the immediacy of their purchase intent.

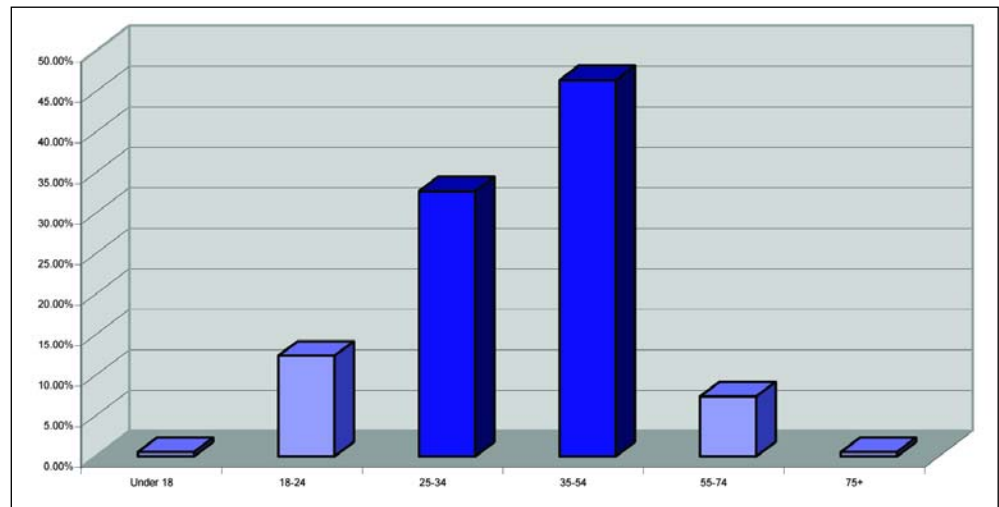
- **Outsell Live Chat users are high priority customers.**
 - 60% of Live Chat customers are looking to purchase a vehicle "As soon as possible."
 - 88% of Live Chat customers are looking to purchase a vehicle within 1 month.

**For More Information:**

- **Outsell Live Chat users are early-adopters looking for fast responses to their questions.**
 - 99% of Live Chat customers cite response speed as being important to their decision to chat.
 - 80% of Live Chat users like using new technologies to contact the dealership.



- **The 79% of Outsell Live Chat users are within the prime target consumer demographic.**
 - 32.7% are in the 25-34 age-group.
 - 46.4% are in the 35-54 age-group.



- **Outsell Live Chat customers are often interested in special financing options for their purchases.**
 - The monthly payment amount is more important than the total price of a vehicle to 46% customers.
 - The current APR and special financing options are important to 67% of customers, as opposed to only 51% who find filling out a credit application to be important online.

Recommendations

- **Recognize Differences in Sales Cycle between iChannel and Regular Customers:** iChannel customers who engage in Live Chat on a dealer site are further along in the sales cycle than regular customers who submit an information request. These customers are seeking a high level of engagement, as the vast majority of them are seeking to purchase a vehicle within a relatively short period of time. This necessitates procedures at the dealership to ensure that these customer's needs are met in a timely fashion. These customers also enjoy the technological advancement of Live Chat, and are better served by its implementation on a dealer site.
- **Create Processes to Provide Customers with Fast Responses:** Due to the relative urgency of the purchase need on the part of these customers, the speed of the dealership response is important. The customer engages in Live Chat rather than an alternative form of communication, driven by the belief that their information needs will consequently be met almost immediately. As these are high-priority prospects, dealerships should either maintain strict response standards ranging from 15-30 minutes at a maximum, or outsource the first-touch response to ensure that high-priority customers are taken care of appropriately.
- **Provide Customers with Special Financing Options:** Rather than merely providing customers with a credit application, dealerships should also provide them with detailed special financing information online. Live Chat customers tend to seek higher levels of engagement, and often have an expectation of holistic sets of information related to purchasing and finance online, rather than only portions of that information. Many customers also prefer to research financing options online in a similar manner to their research regarding their vehicle- by providing them with the information they desire, a dealership can build a higher level relationship with the prospect, fostering a sense of trust and reassurance that their needs can be met by the dealer.

Glossary of Terms

Live Chat: The Live Chat service operated by Outsell, iChat, enables dealerships to offer visitors to their websites the option to contact the dealership via online chat. Outsell conducts these real time interactions on behalf of the dealership leveraging highly trained Interactive Customer Agents (iAgents) and state-of-the-art live chat technology. The Outsell iAgent team is trained to Greet, Engage, Discover Needs and Gain Commitment to the next step in the vehicle sales or service sales process in an efficient, customer-centric manner. During the engagement the iAgents work to gather the customer's name, telephone number and email address, vehicle or service of interest, and expectations. This information is then forwarded onto the dealership in summary form to the dealership's lead management system, in full transcript form to a designated email address, and via telephone by calling a pre-arranged contact at the dealership upon completion of the engagement.

iChannel: The "iChannel" refers to online-based channels of communication. Dealer Websites, E-mail communications, and online Live Chat are all examples of the "iChannel".

iBase: iBase refers to a knowledgebase gathered by Outsell focused on the role of the internet in the process of buying and selling vehicles. It includes data on the behavior, perceptions, needs, and expectations of internet car buyers. It also contains information regarding how dealerships view and use the internet in their marketing and sales process. The iBase has been created based on customer and dealer interactions and strategic research studies that capture quantitative and qualitative information which is then analyzed in an objective manner.

iBase Survey Methodology. The chat user need-profiling survey was conducted from June 21-August 9, 2005. The survey was delivered to Live Chat users immediately following their interaction with an iAgent. Pilot testing demonstrated that the survey used was comprehensible to the average intended recipient. The survey construction was based on commonly accepted academic best practices. The final N for the survey was 618 completions with a Confidence Level of 95% (+/-) 3.8% Margin of Error.

Who is Outsell? Outsell, LLC exists to drive unit sales for automotive dealers. We provide interactive sales and marketing services that help dealers target, engage, qualify, and close more business. Outsell delivers measurable results for our customers.