

Engaging the New Automotive Buyer:

The Power of Customer Engagement



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Introduction

In this noisy, multi-channel, always connected marketing world filled with complexity and change, automotive sales and marketing professionals are struggling to effectively communicate with their customers in a way that drives results.

Marketing is about not only delivering the right message, but doing so at the right time and through the right channel, armed with intelligence of where a specific customer is in their consideration process.

Understanding a particular customer's behaviors and preferences, and delivering a timely, targeted message is critical to promoting your product or service as they make a purchase decision. Marketers must recognize customer behavior patterns and embrace customer engagement methods to reach this 'new customer.' Software-as-a-Service, or SaaS-based customer engagement solutions can make this effort both simple and affordable.



How Automotive Buying Has Changed

At a Digital Dealer Conference presentation in 2013, Phil Sura and Peter Leto suggested that in 2006 the average buyer visited 5 dealerships within a 20 mile radius before making an automobile purchase, versus visiting only 1.2 dealerships within a 100 mile radius today.¹

Customers arrive at the dealership with clear purchase intentions—they've done their research online. Dealers must understand that with the easy availability of information on the internet, upper sales funnel engagement is occurring outside the physical dealership. If dealers do not engage customers via digital channels, they are missing the opportunity to engage these early stage shoppers who are no longer walking through their front door.

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SaaS-Based Customer Engagement Software Can Help

What if you could utilize technology to easily understand customers' behavior patterns and engage them in a more effective, more targeted conversation via digital channels?

More so, what if that same technology seamlessly integrated behavioral patterns and analytics into ready-to-send campaigns you could access and execute from an easy-to-use platform?

Enter the SaaS customer engagement solution. Utilizing your dealership's DMS and CRM data, these solutions employ complex analytics models to give you the power of behaviorally-targeted campaigns. Analytics-driven marketing campaigns generate better customer engagement and thus better results through a more intimate understanding of customer behaviors. Plus, SaaS solutions are often less costly to operate than one may anticipate.



Know Your Shoppers

You have a wealth of data in your CRM and DMS systems that can be leveraged with analytical models and segmentation to create very powerful marketing treatments.

Yet, it shouldn't take a PhD to understand your potential and current customer base.

In a SaaS-based customer engagement platform, your data is consolidated and analyzed to determine shopper and owner behaviors, and these observed behaviors become the basis of targeted sales and service campaigns. Generating cross-channel marketing campaigns from a 'single source of truth' ensures messaging is relevant, personalized, and timely across each customer's phase of the buying process. Customers should feel as if you are providing them with appropriate information and insight just a step ahead of where they are in their consideration process. When done well, your marketing messages can feel like a service, anticipating consumer's needs and providing them meaningful information to make an informed buying decision.

Connect : The Right Time, Place and Message

SaaS customer engagement solutions make huge amounts of data easy to manage and complex analytical models simple and easy to understand.

Just as critical is the availability of analytically-driven, brand-consistent, ready-to-execute campaigns likely to drive the strongest engagement. SaaS customer engagement platforms should be flexible enough to allow for campaign localization and custom offer options, and simple enough to allow for 'set it and forget it' options for 'lights-out' campaign execution. This flexibility gives automotive marketers the ability to both accommodate local needs while harnessing the predictive power of sophisticated analytics to accomplish their goals.

“SaaS-based platforms can orchestrate and execute multi-wave, cross-channel campaigns that drive the greatest impact.”



Drive Business Impact: Continuous Learning = Better Engagement

Since customer engagement solutions provide a single view of the customer, tracking performance of marketing efforts is easy and powerful.

This tracking is not limited to open, click, and delivery rates. Through ongoing multivariate and ‘lift vs. control’ testing, the analytics models and segmentation criteria are constantly being monitored and improved to ensure campaigns generate the strongest possible business impact.

Reporting should be transparent and easy to understand. Keyperformance metrics and detailed campaign data give you powerful insight into buyer journeys and are able to connect-the-dots when a purchase occurs so you can understand your ROI.

Ridiculously Easy and Cost Effective

You may think that to capture the true power and effectiveness of a customer engagement platform, the costs will be prohibitive or the complexity overwhelming.

SaaS customer engagement solutions have changed the game for automotive marketing—gone are the days of installing and managing a specialized platform for each channel. Software-as-a-Service eliminates the need for servers, multi-vendor integrations, and software installs, making world-class customer engagement affordable for any sized dealership.

SaaS allows you to let automotive marketing experts manage the data and analytics so you can focus on your customers and vehicle

sales. With a full-time analytics team behind the scenes providing continuous improvements, the use of a SaaS platform ensures that you are always leveraging the best information, techniques, and campaigns to drive results.



Conclusion

There are significant benefits from using a SaaS customer engagement platform.

In a single platform you get:

- Expert data management
- Robust predictive & behavioral models
- Orchestrated cross-channel campaigns
- Brand consistency, with localization and custom offer flexibility
- Constant learning and continuous improvement
- Transparent reporting for actionable customer insights

Are you where today's automotive buyers are? Are you working too hard to get them through your front door?

Consider Customer engagement delivered as Software-as-a-Service: the power of robust data, behavioral models, and ready-to-send campaigns combined with an easy-to-use interface for quick and effortless execution. Your prospects and clients demand that you be in step with their buying journey, and expect you to deliver timely information and insights to help them along the way. When you do, your dealership will be the one they visit.

Automotive marketing has changed. SaaS customer engagement platforms provide the tools you need to drive results, at a cost that just makes sense. It really is that simple.

Footnotes

¹ Phil Sura and Peter Leto, "Building A Groundbreaking Video Strategy Guaranteed To Sell Cars," October '13



About Outsell

Outsell drives more revenue for auto dealers by transforming how they engage customers and prospects throughout their lifecycle. Dealers using Outsell's proprietary technology are tipped off when customers are most ready to engage, buy, or service. Outsell makes dealers' lives easier by keeping them in front of customers on a consistent, individualized basis, and automating follow up. The Outsell multi-channel customer engagement platform manages millions of interactions every month for dealers representing all major automotive brands.

