



Successfully Implementing Disruption in your Dealership

by Jeff Robbins

Albert Einstein is credited with the quote, "If you always do what you always did, you will always get what you always got." Today, businesses and organizations that are able to successfully disrupt the market, industry, or competitive landscape, are generally the entities that reinvent themselves, stay competitive, and have higher returns on their investments.

As consumers become more savvy, more connected, and more discerning in their decision-making, dealerships must up their ability to match the consumers' thirst for information, understand the voracity by which they research products digitally, and devise creative ways to do things differently to increase engagement. Consumers utilize online listing sites (marketplaces) 40%, dealer websites 14%, and social media channels 10% when searching, when performing vehicle searches. Simply, dealerships must implement disruption through digital means.

Determine What You Can Do Differently - Build a Plan

Today's dealerships generally have roles that have existed for many years; Owner, GM, Sales Manager, Used Sales Manager, Service Manager, etc. Increasingly, dealerships are incorporating the "Internet Sales Manager" role, to help with leads that come from online channels. This role is part of the evolution of the dealership and oftentimes, is a key step toward digital disruption.

The function of this role is critical, both internally and externally, to a dealer's business. Internally, the role is critical to understanding the importance of online advertising and the best way to market vehicles to customers. This role may include the key function of updating online vehicle information and equipment listings, and utilize merchandise estimating and tracking software.

Externally, this role is the face to your website leads, online advertising channels and marketplace advertisers. She/he should, in many dealers, interact directly with digital marketing firms, website builders, or campaign designers that the dealer may employ, to drive demand.

Inventory is what gets customers to a dealership's website, so having the latest, most up to date inventory is key in the first step to implementing disruption. The Internet Sales Manager's role is a key addition and can help the dealer realize sales goals and targets, with a focus on nurturing and qualifying inbound leads.

The goal is to build a plan that enables disruption through increased digital capabilities and improved engagement. Having more of the following content is key:

- Inventory product pictures that engage the customer to want to see the vehicle
- Informative and educational videos about features that are unique to the vehicles or equipment
- Customer reviews about the dealership and range of products
- Customer testimonials or satisfaction surveys about the buying process and service experience
- Specials or products that are unique and differentiated, from the competition

Digital Is The Path To All Things Disruptive

In today's digital ecosystem, businesses are defining plans and objectives with the intent to be disruptive. The goal is to systematically increase relevance, to improve credibility with your prospects and customers, improve the ability to be found via the web through search engine optimization, and ultimately increase sales with digital marketing tools.

Digital marketing will influence buyers to purchase vehicles and equipment from your dealership, but it takes time to build up these capabilities. Once they are in place, your dealership will be on it's way to being a disruptive force.

Optimize Your Web Presence

First, reaching customers is an imperative and to achieve this, a dealer must incorporate SEO or Search Engine Optimization. Driving organic traffic to your dealership is key, whether you are small or large, new to the market, or a community mainstay. Optimizing your website with rich text and descriptions (images, video, testimonials, reviews, etc.), helps the search engine web crawlers find and represent your business in search results to your target audience. Optimizing your websites content, product descriptions, with information that educates and delights, helps increase search results and rank.

Displaying images of vehicles and equipment can help your visitors choose what they are looking for based on their unique preferences. So if you have a wide range of inventory, but you've relied more on standard stock photos, or out of date images, take some time to update your inventory with fresh, comprehensive, vibrant images. Accurate price is also important. Nearly 90% of consumers surveyed said, if price was not present, they would not click on a vehicle link. Work to include more content that represents what people are searching for in a new truck, piece of equipment, or recreational vehicle.

Doing so increases your reach, gives your brand and dealership credibility, provides more targeted leads, and improves the rank of your website. The first step is to be found, and then the key is to keep your prospects and customers engaged and on your site looking at your inventory and learning about your dealership, ultimately leading to a purchase..

Target Through Engagement and Outreach (Social Media, Email, and Content Marketing)

Other components that will help with implementing disruption include social media marketing, email marketing, and content marketing. Each of these components require a dedicated resource and support, and are critical to a comprehensive plan.

Social media marketing adds to your dealership's brand credibility, as well as increases engagement with your target audience. Today's social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter, etc.) are the perfect outlets to promote your dealership, inventory, and other unique aspects like service, warranty process, rentals, aftermarket products and parts inventory. These channels lead visitors to your website and ultimately into your dealership.

Email marketing, according to Geeks Chip, found that 25% of web visitors came from email marketing efforts. Creating campaigns that increase traffic, enhance customer experience, and improve engagement through lead nurturing is an advanced form of disruption. Whether a large,

multi-location dealership or small/medium dealers by having engaging content, success can be found by including an outbound marketing component.

Content marketing is ideal for targeting customers, who may be unsure of what they are looking for or are just starting their search. It's been said that anywhere between 70%-80% of a buyer's decision is made via the web before they engage a company. If this is the case, then content marketing is key to being able to cast a net wide and far, to bring in qualified buyers. Creating a blog or a newsletter that includes active links to featured vehicles or equipment is another good way to increase traffic, increase dealer brand and credibility, as well as search ranking.

Starting Your Disruption Plan

- 1.) Review the roles in your company and determine if you are dedicated to a digital approach with your dealership.
- 2.) Review your website, along with the content and inventory descriptions, pictures, and information.
- 3.) Determine how you want to target your prospects and customers.
- 4.) Seek help with a digital marketing company that specializes in development of website, marketplaces, and demand generation.

Connect With Us Today

For additional information or insights on how to successfully implement disruption to your dealership, please contact us at Marketing@traderinteractive.com or call (800) 684-6104 to contact our teams.

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