

Top 5 Things You Can do Right Now to Optimize Website Conversion for your Dealership

by Simon Heseltine, VP of Audience Growth

We are currently living in unprecedented times. As I write this, several states are in lockdown, non-essential businesses are closed until further notice, and their customers are mostly all housebound, socially distancing themselves from other humans. It sounds like the right time to just sit back and wait it out, right?

The answer is no, this is a good time to evaluate your website and make changes, without being too disruptive to the everyday activities of your business. People are still out there, searching online for many items, including vehicles, we've actually seen some days of traffic above last year's for several of our brands, since this crisis started. So what should you be looking at improving on your site, to both increase the volume of traffic coming in, and the conversion rate once they're there?

1. Speed improvements

Google uses page speed as a ranking factor in their algorithm. If your site's too slow, it can impact where you show up in the search engine results pages (SERPs). Luckily there are several tools out there that can show you how fast your site is, and make recommendations for fixes to speed it up. The first of these is the [Google Page Speed Insights tool](#); simply type in your home page, and it'll come back to you with your scores on desktop and mobile, as well as offer opportunities for improvement. The next of these is [WebPageTest.org](#), this shows a waterfall view of all of the elements on your site, and allows a developer to see what's blocking other elements from loading.

2. Image Optimization

Many website owners take pictures, then throw them up on their site without editing them. This means that an image that only needs to be thumbnail size, is actually poster size, but resized by the browser after it's loaded. There's no need to load a 2.1MB image file of a truck, when a 160k one will do the exact same job. Think of the users, if they're downloading a page with 3 huge images on it, that could add several seconds to when they can view / interact with the page, which could be the difference between them staying and checking out the content, or leaving for a competitor.

3. On Page optimization

NB: The on page elements discussed in this section should be easily changed in your Content Management System (CMS), and not require development work.

When you open your home page, what do you see in the tab, if you see "HOME" rather than "Joe Bloggs Motorhomes, RVs for sale in Dallas TX", the chances for you outranking your competitors are low. The Title tag in your HTML code, should, in ~55 characters, state what that particular page is about. If it's a piece of inventory, it should have the product information / location in it, if it's a make & model results page, then the title tag should have that make, model and location in it.

Description tags are another area where you should be optimizing. While Description tags do not influence ranking, they do influence user behavior, as a well written Description tag, with a clear call to action, may result in a click on your listing, rather than those that are

outranking you. Description tags should be ~160 characters, written in sentence format, and act as that call to action.

4. A/B testing can be a great way to determine what resonates with your customers, and therefore what can increase conversions. Sometimes it can be as simple as changing the color of a button, or the wording in a section of a page, sometimes it can be making changes to the workflow process by which a customer connects with the dealership.

One thing we've noticed, at Trader Interactive, is that over the last few years, there's been a softening in the number of phone calls made to dealerships, but an increase in emails sent. If you don't have an email address, or don't closely monitor it, then you're running the risk of missing out on a cache of leads.

Try different things with your website, see what works, and what doesn't (reverting fairly quickly when it doesn't). Just think, if you didn't freshen your physical dealership up every now and again, with a new coat of paint, or a new logo, it would begin to look staid and unkempt, the same is true of your website, and A/B testing is a great way to determine what folks like now, rather than 4 years ago when the site went live.

5. Think about differentiators. If nobody else in your local market is offering internal and external videos or RVs, then go for it, especially when people can't get out to see for themselves. Put whatever information you have up on your website, floor plans, full specs, reviews, etc. Link to them, feature them prominently on the listing pages. Since the customer can't come to you, you can at least get them all the info they need to move towards the decision / purchase stage.

So, by utilizing the first 3 points, you're looking to increase traffic, which then gives you folks to convert, with 4 & 5 then giving you the ability to improve on your conversions.

While we are currently in strange, unprecedented times, we will come out of this, and those dealerships that have innovated, and improved both their website rankings as well as its functionality, will be the ones that will come out of this situation all the stronger.

Connect With Us Today

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

About Trader Interactive

Trader Interactive connects buyers and sellers in the powersports, recreational vehicle, commercial vehicle, and heavy equipment industries through a broad portfolio of marketplaces that reach 9 million unique monthly visitors. Linked by a widely recognized family of "Trader" trademarks dating back several decades, the company's brands include lifestyle vehicle marketplaces Cycle Trader, RV Trader, ATV Trader, PWC Trader, Snowmobile Trader, Aero Trader and Trade-A-Plane, as well as commercial equipment segments Commercial Truck Trader, NextTruck, Rock & Dirt, Equipment Trader, and Tradequip. For more information, visit www.TraderInteractive.com.

Trader Interactive family of brands:

