

October 2011

# The Social Dealership

A Social Media Magazine For Auto Dealers

## STRATEGY EDITION

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Social Media And Fixed Ops

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Going Viral



# Letter From The Publisher

We're Dedicated To  
Both Auto Dealers And  
Social Media, Where We  
Marry Both Worlds...  
Perfectly!



In this month's edition of Social Media Magazine, we wanted to address the importance of creating a social media strategy as well as some helpful tips to accomplish this. Briefly, you must have a strategy to eventually be able to measure your results. I'm not saying anything you probably don't already know but translating social media results into a traditional ROI is very challenging. In next month's edition, we will focus on this subject and show you that it can be done but creating a strategy is the first step.

Seems logical enough I'm sure so I ask you, does your dealership have a social media strategy? Be honest but the reality is most don't. Most dealers create a Facebook account and post their specials or inventory on their page. This won't get results; moreover, it will tend to aggravate people as they see this as spam.

Hopefully in past editions and most certainly in future, we will arm you with good principals to help you succeed in social media but like anything, you have to follow a process to success with a dealership strategy being the first step. Here is an easy four step process to creating a social media strategy:

- Investigate your market – Look at your market from an outsiders perspective and really look at what gets people excited. Topics that bring out emotional responses in people are always best. Look for local social platforms to interact with people close to the dealership.
- Define objectives- without goals, you will never know you have arrived! More likes on Facebook, more blog traffic, higher levels of engagement, etc.
- Define actions – what actions will it take to accomplish my goals.
- Choose your platforms – yes this should be the last step. Don't get yourself locked into thinking you can only operate on Facebook or Twitter. In step one, you may find some local forums that are very active and you can interact with local people.

Next month: Putting an ROI on social media

Good selling!!!Enjoy the magazine and please feel free to [email us](#) with comments or suggestions for topics or just to be social!

- Rob Hagen

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# The Social Media Shotgun Blast

By: Brad Alexander

In the auto industry I believe we use the same



approach to many different scenarios and obstacles. In F&I when there's a questionable deal we "shotgun" it out (fire it out to several lenders) to see who bites or, like a good pasta chef we throw it against the wall to see if it sticks.

These are not the best ways to handle car deals, but we do it. Many of us have taken the same approach with social media. We build business profiles on several social media sites and hope for someone to bite or we almost haphazardly toss something together to see if it gleans any business. Truth be told, just having your name out there may garner you an extra deal here or there and since, in most cases, it's free- we get our money's worth. Just because most aspects of social media and networking are free doesn't mean we should treat them with any less priority or strategy as our "paid" advertising. This is sometimes the only impression a perspective customer will get of your business. Even though we don't use FaceBook to advertise specials, people form their opinions of us by what they see and read. It is "image advertising" and reputation/perception management to the core.

The fact of the matter is, I am not a "social media expert". So, I listen to them and have some that

work with my company to manage this aspect of our business. The success my dealership has had through increased exposure via social networking is, largely, due to letting the right people use their expertise. The bottom line is this: you can take what you get from the free exposure or you can have a calculated, strategic plan and "invest" time and even a little money to maximize and capture more business.

The people responsible for this publication are such experts; they will provide guidance and proven techniques by which social media can be a predictable asset and not just a "shotgun blast". Read and listen to what they have to say and employ their suggestions to get the most you can out of these fantastic opportunities. This trend is not going away, it will become more and more prevalent. Years ago there were many dealerships that resisted using the internet at all for business. They ended up trying to play catch up and never regained the business they lost by not embracing the opportunity before them; don't let history repeat itself. Grasp it, get it, learn it and use it as a tool to grow your business.

## Top 10 Problems with Social Media

- 10) What happens when this whole internet fad dies off?
- 9) People can't get the real essence of me through a computer.
- 8) My last "social media experiment" ended up in "stalking" charges and restraining orders.
- 7) People never believe what they see on the internet .
- 6) Well, wun pozitiv is nobuddy cairs to much aboutw speling things rite.
- 5) It takes so much time away from my "Angry Birds" winning streak.
- 4) Who wants to do business with a bunch of computer nerds anyway?

3) The minute I get involved in that and some dude from Indonesia is going to hack my account, steal all my Farmville crops and my identity and use my credit to buy a sitar or something.

2) I tried computer dating once and the woman posted her senior picture from her yearbook as her profile; 18 years and a few truck loads of pork rinds later a lot changed. It's probably the same with business on line.

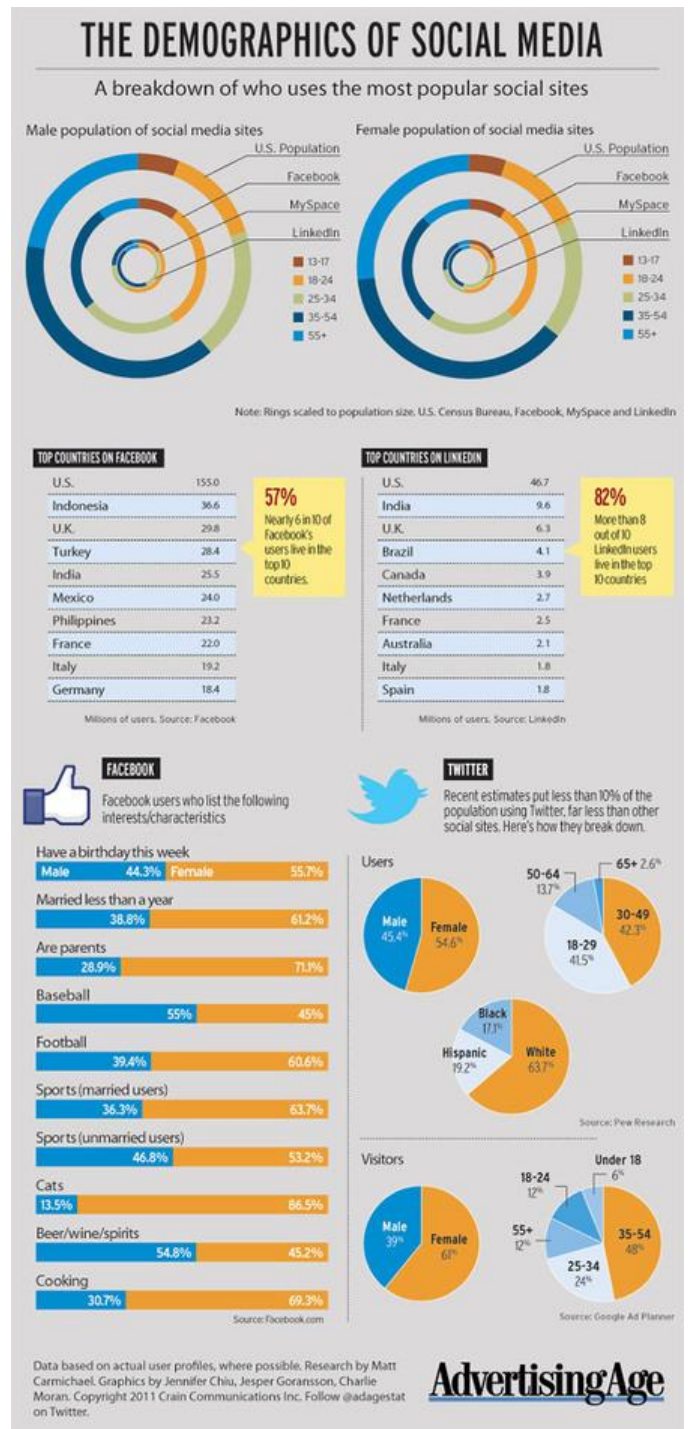
1) Cold calling out of the phone book IS my social network.

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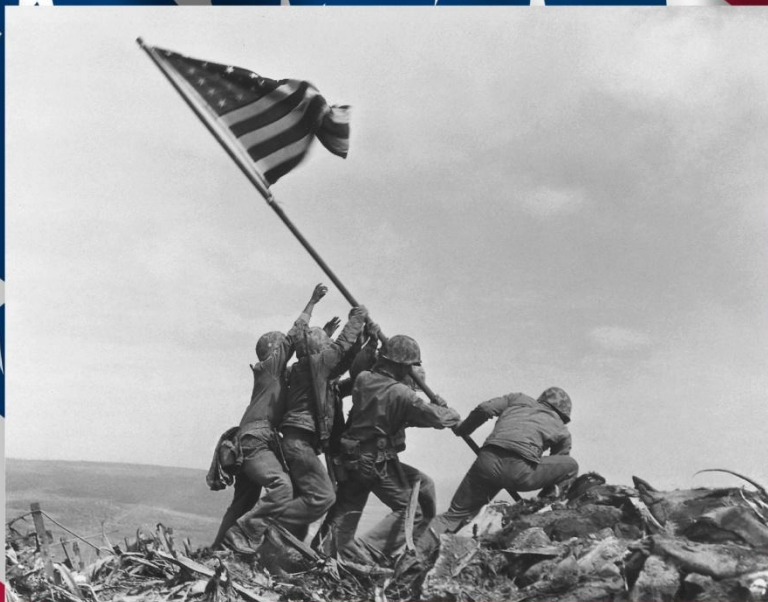
Networking is not about hunting. It is about farming. It's about cultivating relationships. Don't engage in 'premature solicitation'. You'll be a better networker if you remember that.

Dr. Ivan Misner



# The Vets-Cars Group

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And Serving The Military And Veteran Community.



A Loyal And Deserving  
Fifty Million Strong  
Consumer Demographic

**"Where Dealers Meet Heros."**

# Going Viral, The Best Money You Can Spend

By: AJ Ager



Oh yes, the golden days of TV advertising. There were three channels. All you had to do was come up with a commercial that people could remember. Then you scraped together all of the money you could to buy as many spots as possible. If you

wanted more car deals, you bought more spots. If you didn't get more deals then you spent more money on the spots to come up with a new idea or slogan. Meanwhile in the present, most areas have a billion channels to choose from, people's attention spans are lower, and even the best spots will get changed in a heartbeat by people trying to get their money's worth out of DirectTV. The Internet has killed the newspapers and most towns have a dozen or so small shopper publications that water down the effectiveness. The good news is that the Social Media Boom, although increasing the amount of content that a customer can take in, has made it possible to blast so much out there for cheap that embracing new technologies is a blessing. All you have to do is go viral.

Before your start contacting the free clinic, what we are looking for is an ad or series of ads that you can produce for cheap and starts getting

many hits. How many of you have seen the Trunk Monkey Ads? Or the Badger Ads? How about the ads for Blendtec? These are all examples of ads people have created and through YouTube, Vimeo, Facebook, Twitter, and other Social Media Sites, have generated millions of hits. It's time to think outside the box. Better yet, all of these sites are free to post to. Here are some tips to creating a Viral Marketing Campaign

1: Be Imaginative: Start brainstorming all the ideas you can think of. If you can't come up with something go down to the local college and find an advertising class and brainstorm with them. Ask people who don't have a vested interest in your store (like an advertising company who wants to play it safe to keep your account). You want something people will want to tell their friends to watch.

2: Be Funny: No video of the owner and their spouse talking about how good it was when they started the company in 1943 long before there was microwave popcorn and depends will keep anybody's attention. Again, if you are having trouble hit up some of the local comedians and the local comedy clubs. Many times they are looking for exposure just as much as you are.

3: Get your Message Out There: Don't just post to one site and then hope that the Field of Dreams effect happens (if you build it they will come). You have to actively work for the branding to take place. Post the videos to your website, to your Facebook page, Twitter, basically any site you can find to put it in front of somebody. On the TV in your waiting room, make sure the commercials are shown. You never know what people will think is funny and what they will do with it when they do. Of course this also comes down to having an active Social Media Marketing plan anyway. Don't just put a page together and cross your fingers that they will show up and 'Like' you.

All advertising campaigns are about branding. How do you make them listen? How do you make them buy? How do you make them make you

their dealer for life? No matter what you can't do this without getting their attention and it is flushing your money down the toilet to spend a ton on TV when the Internet is right there for free.

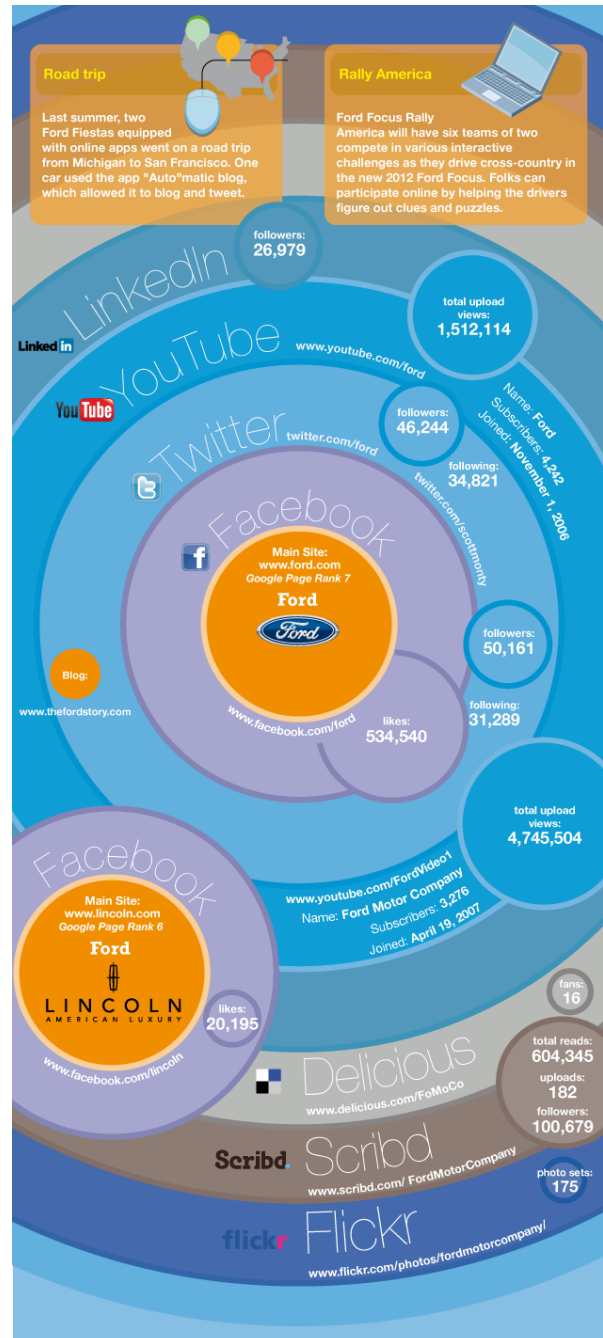
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“Our head of social media is the customer.”

– McDonald's







## Stop Hating, You Haven't Seen What Social Can Really Do!

We've heard it all before. Social marketing is a waste of time. Social media is just a fad. Where is my ROI? I don't have anybody on staff that can do it right. Yadda, yadda, yadda. Stop complaining, give us a call and let us do it right. **Are you looking for incremental business? Then we should be your first call!**

*"People Love Us! We have over 11k fans on Facebook, but even better than that, people love us! I'd love to keep Next Generation Dealer Services a secret but since they hand out area exclusivity, my area is protected! If you want to dominate your market and dramatically increase your word-of-mouth advertising, you really should give these guys a call!"*

**Greg - GM Metro Honda Of Union  
County**



**Space Is LIMITED, Call Now!**

**855-70-Media**

**If You're Gonna Go Social, Go All The Way!**

# Upcoming Industry Events

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## Industry Summit

9/26 – 9/18

Las Vegas Hilton, Las Vegas

<http://www.industrysummit.com/>

## 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Digital Dealer

10/5 – 10/7

Mirage, Las Vegas

<http://www.eventfarm.com/DD11>

## Driving Sales Executive Summit

10/9 – 10/11

Bellagio, Las Vegas

<http://drivingsalesexecutivesummit.com/>

## 2011 Automotive Internet Roundtable

10/11 – 10/12

Red Rock Casino, Las Vegas

<http://businesscenter.jdpower.com/Events.aspx?f=/jdpacontent/CorpComm/Events/AutoInternetRoundtable/AutomotiveInternetRoundtable.htm>

## 2011 SEMA Show

11/1 – 11/4

Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas

<http://semashow.com/>

## 2012 NADA Convention and Expo

2/3/12 – 2/6/12

Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas

<http://www.nadaconventionandexpo.org/nada2012/public/MainHall.aspx?ID=4614&sortMenu=101000>

*If you would like us to include your event in next month's edition, please email me the information about the event at [RobH@nextGenDealer.com](mailto:RobH@nextGenDealer.com)*

# The Power and Pitfalls of Social Networking For Automotive Advertising Agencies

[BY: Philip Zelinger](#)

Sharing visions, experiences, relationships and resources with your auto dealer/vendor clients will inevitably provide an enhanced outcome from your combined efforts. Similarly, placing your clients in the online conversation that is the market through targeted social networking channels in the real and the virtual world will supplement your in-house staff and resources.



Social networking best practices can exponentially multiply joint efforts with a common goal to increase market position. Auto dealers and auto industry focused vendors faced with a struggling economy and consolidating retail auto industry are seeking alternatives to conventional sales processes and marketing platforms. The use of

cutting edge technology based applications amplified through social media can provide the needed solution.

Online networking relationships through auto industry portals, press/blog releases and blog talk radio shows will generate added value exposure beyond any cash investment. More specifically, one well timed strategic partnership with a channel partner to share a non-competing platform will provide an R.O.I. not available through any other means.

Specific actions and related activities to accomplish your clients established goals using social networking/media should include:

- Develop & moderate a social networking/blog site for your clients
- Host an integrated blog talk radio show to promote their products & best practices
- Organize online Dealer 20+ Groups using an integrated Webex Video forum
- Produce informative and entertaining videos about your clients products/services and place them on You Tube and other industry social networking forums
- Promote Blog/press releases promoting the radio show and related subjects distributed to relevant social networking sites
- Manage your clients online reputation by monitoring posts on their products as well as competitors and relevant issues and contribute positive comments and replies
- Inject your clients into auto industry dealer, vendor and consumer facing social networking and blogging forums such as Twitter, Facebook, [www.automotivedigitalmarketing.com](http://www.automotivedigitalmarketing.com), [www.dealerrefresh.com](http://www.dealerrefresh.com), [www.drivingsales.com](http://www.drivingsales.com), [www.askpatty.com](http://www.askpatty.com), <http://www.InternetSalesManager.org>, <http://www.DealerElite.Net> ..

- Reference your clients' products/services in auto industry forums including seminars, conferences, Dealer 20 Groups and other "real world" venues. Example: <http://www.digitaldealerconference.com/>
- Solicit strategic partnerships with cutting edge automotive applications through auto industry online networking and established relationships
- Maintain regular contact with your clients to virally forward developing issues through established networking, blogs, blog talk radio shows and press releases
- Support your clients in auto industry vendor exhibits IE; Digital Dealer, NADA, etc.
- In general – function as a "full time" advocate and "outsourced" member of your clients public relations, marketing, advertising and product development team!

The definition of viral marketing and social media

Viral marketing distributes a message in such a way that it will be forwarded by the recipient in a geometric progression enhanced by its valued content, unique creative, entertaining production or some quality that will motivate the initial consumer to share it with their spheres of influence. The exponential growth of this type of online distribution channel affords an extremely cost effective media to distribute the initial message to a diverse audience that may or may not be interested in the content, but even a small percentage of conversions represent a superior short term and quantifiable R.O.I. to conventional marketing media. The "buzz" created by the extended online community also develops long term branding recognition that enhances the reach and frequency of the message with less measurable results but similar value in developing "top of the mind awareness" for future customers.

By extension, social media is a channel for distribution of both viral and targeted marketing messages through controlled blogging forums as well as expanded spheres of influence through online communities such as Twitter, Facebook, Linked In, YouTube, etc... These online social networking communities have unique profiles that attract different profiles of users.

Twitter and Facebook, for example, are more universal and personal in nature while Linked In is more professional and focused on business to business networking with YouTube using video to express the message. These online communities should be part of your extended social media channel, however, more specialized networks targeted to the auto industry should be your core channels based on their applicable content, audience and related links.

The general definition of social media and/or social networking does not directly consider its commercial application as it is primarily an online platform to build relationships and share information. On the contrary, any commercial abuse of a social media site will alienate users and create negative backlash.

That said, human nature has survived from the real world to the virtual world and people still prefer to do business with friends – real or virtual. As long as the sales message is secondary to providing valued content or is placed in the context of a relationship focused community with shared interests then the ability to develop sales is both measurable and assured. The fact that car dealers are people too supports the value of internet marketing and social networking in B2B as well as the more conventional uses in B2C.

Why viral marketing / social media is an important aspect of marketing looking forward

Viral marketing and social media have obvious cost advantages over conventional media – including radio, TV, print, direct mail, etc. - as well as online investments in search engine marketing, (SEM) - such as pay per click and banner

advertisements - since there is no direct costs. They are similar in their R.O.I. and value to Internet based search engine optimization, (SEO), with comparable indirect costs in that they are labor intensive however, properly leveraged reciprocal links and automated content provided by RSS feeds from related online sources can be integrated to reduce the labor for both content and distribution enhancing the R.O.I. even after the cost of labor is considered.

An additional unique value of social media is the increasing importance of relevancy and consumer generated content in consumer preference in their selection of sites as a resource for information -- auto dealers are consumers too. Improvement in conversion and bounce rates, time on page and a number of other site analytics can be directly attributed to improved relevancy and consumer content – as is provided by social media when properly integrated with a website. More significantly, is the resulting impact it is having on search engines such as Google in adjusting the algorithms that establish both page rankings and even costs associated with their pay per click programs.

Also, the constantly changing messages provided by user generated content on the posting site improves its SEO. The importance of relevancy has been firmly established by both consumers and the search engines insuring that its impact on Internet use will increase as should your focus for your vendor clients on it to reach their consumers -- auto dealers!

A less obvious but equally valued aspect of the use of social media to extend your marketing plans is the “evolution” of the use of the Internet by consumers to be more of a pull/push media vs. the old world marketing logic of push/pull. Remember, auto dealers are consumers too!

The Internet has allowed consumers the freedom to gather information from a variety of online resources to avoid the sales hype and self serving messages used by advertisers in other

media. The recognized preference for consumers to rely on referrals and shared personal experiences from third party sources and friends has been enhanced by World Wide Web and automotive advertising agencies that stay in the Social Media lane on the Internet Super Highway will have the inside track for new business before, during and after the sale.

**Discuss The Article  
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“The goal of social media is to turn customers into a volunteer marketing army.”

- Anonymous



# Social Media Marketing Strategies

[BY: Jae Chang](#)



Social Media Marketing (SMM) is a daunting topic. My goal is to socialize some research. Some of you are early adopters. Some of you

are just testing the waters (myself included). Some of you are doubters but all of you, since you are reading Social Dealership Magazine, have begun your engagement. I think I may be in the majority so I began the journey of doing some research so I can better understand Social Media by taking a current twist to learn more about it – Google and YouTube. There seems to be so much content out there, I wonder why we still don't get it yet. Perhaps it is the lack of context. This is my attempt to throw light on the meaning.

There are two names on our current radar since they have been announced to be Keynote Speakers at upcoming conferences this fall, Erik Qualman and Gary Vaynerchuk. I found an interview with Erik Qualman from March of 2009 at the Search Engine Strategies Conference in New York, that was 30 months ago; much of which is being realized today.

“Socialnomics is the value created and shared via social media and its efficient influence on outcomes (economic, political, relational, etc.). Or, more simply put, it's Word of Mouth on

digital steroids. A subset of this is in the future we will no longer search for products and services, rather they will find us via social media.” (Qualman 2009)



Gary Vaynerchuk is very CarGuy-esque. I can feel his passion and quite frankly speaks in a way, we in the business can relate to. This is his speech at the Innovation Forum held at New York University in 2010.

“Just as open, honest communication is the key to good interpersonal relationships, so is it intrinsic to a brand or business's relationships with its customers. People embraced social media because communicating makes people happy; it's what we do. It's why we carved pictures into rocks. It's why we used smoke signals. It's why ink won. And if someone ever develops a tool that allows us to communicate telepathically, we'll be all over that, too. How businesses will adapt to that kind of innovation, I have no idea. But they will, I'm sure. At least, the ones I am associated with will.” (Vaynerchuk)



I have found one of the most challenging tasks in adopting a new strategy is 'getting it'. You

can't 'just do it' If you or others don't 'get it'. The last thing anyone wants is a Sisyphean tragedy. "It takes a champion to guide decision makers within the organization on how to best implement social tools and services, how to use them, how to establish guidelines, and how to measure success and ROI. (Solis, 2010). I ran across this strategy called—Darkcasting being implemented by Lexus:

[CHECK OUT THE SERIES HERE](#)

We don't have the budget of Lexus but the video helped me grasp and GET the concepts better.

Whatis.com defines Social Media Marketing (SMM) as a form of Internet marketing that utilizes social networking websites as a marketing tool. The goal of SMM is to produce content that users will share with their social network to help a company increase brand exposure and broaden customer reach. SMM helps a company get direct feedback from customers (and potential customers) while making the company seem more personable. The interactive parts of social media give customers the opportunity to ask questions or voice complaints and feel they are being heard.

"Perhaps the biggest mistakes committed by businesses, personalities, and brands in social media occur when people jump into social networks blindly without establishing guidelines, a plan of action, a sense of what people are seeking and how and why they communicated, an understanding of where people are congregating, a definition of what they represent and how they will personify the brand online, and the goals, objectives, and metrics associated with participation." (Solis, 2010)

My goal is to help you get it so you can do it. I am far from an expert however being social by sharing in the learning process makes it that much more fun. Selling cars and being Social is here! I have also found a site that listed in no particular order: 99 Favorite Social Media Quotes and Tips listed on [www.mir nabard.com](http://www.mir nabard.com) .

I had great fun contributing to this topic hope you enjoyed the non-traditional social approach. Thank you and Great Selling!!

Here is a link to a Best Practices and Disclosure Tool Kit posted on [www.Socialmedia.org](http://www.Socialmedia.org):

<http://www.socialmedia.org/wp-content/uploads/Disclosure-Toolkit.pdf>

And who doesn't like a good Video!!

T-Mobile's use of current events: Viral Marketing through YouTube



Welcome Back:



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# Got Salespeople?



## **No Bad Habits. Car Selling Machines.**

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# David's Top 5

*5 Things You Need To Know BEFORE  
Designing Your Social Media Strategy*

By: [David Johnson](#)



Welcome to the newest edition of David's Top 5. In this edition I will be sharing with you the top 5 things you need to know before designing your social media strategy.

## **#1 Social Media Is A Force Multiplier**

Stop looking at social media as an *add-on*, in order for social marketing to be truly effective you must first work to integrate it into your daily processes. Instead of seeing social media as a separate identity, one that needs a separate strategy before it can be implemented fully, you need to see it for what it is, a force multiplier.

In military terms a force multiplier refers to an attribute or a combination of attributes which make a given force more effective than that same force would be without it, that's social media exactly!

So, instead of thinking in terms of new goals, in which a social media strategy would be used to reach, think in terms of how you can use social media, alongside your other marketing efforts, to reach your current business goals.

## **#2 Never Let Tactics Dictate Strategy**

Too many times we look at Facebook as the strategy, when in fact, because it's a tool,

much like the phone and email, it's a tactic. As such, remember that it's NEVER okay to let a tactic dictate how you develop your strategy, instead, your strategy will dictate which tactics you use.

## *The Difference Between Strategy and Tactic*

Tactics are the day-to-day activities that are repeatable and clear-cut, they are comprised of the basic components that define the actual strategy.

Strategy is the big picture, it's the overall plan, comprised of tactics, that gives direction towards meeting goals and objectives.

## **#3 Think Laterally**

The "lateral" that I am referring to is the conversation that is happening between people. With traditional advertising you have only one direction that communication can flow: out from the dealership.

With social media you are able to influence the conversation, the lateral communication that is happening between people in different social channels. So, when designing your strategy always think in terms of how you can get people to talk in a positive manner about your dealership.

## **#4 Connect With Social Objects**

Too many times, as marketers, we think about how we can create a social object, that is a purpose, cause, or past time that people want to socialize about and around. Instead, take a look at social objects that people are already congregating around and find a way to connect it with your dealership.

While that is easier said than done, you do this by becoming part of the community, a

contributor that adds to the overall enjoyment of the social object. If you live in a collage town, maybe it's the local football team, live in a family friendly city, maybe it's education, it could even be a local charity or fishing, the ideas really are limitless. What can your dealership connect around?

### #5 Don't Go At It Alone

While developing a strategy for the dealership, don't go in thinking that you don't need any help. A proper social media strategy will affect each and every department in the dealership and as such, each department should have input into how the strategy is structured. I refer to this group of people at the Strategic Response Team or the SRT.

The SRT is comprised of at least one person from each department in the dealership, even detail and office staff. The reasons are plenty, but I feel the most important reason is creativity. The creativity of the group will always be better than the creativity of the individual.

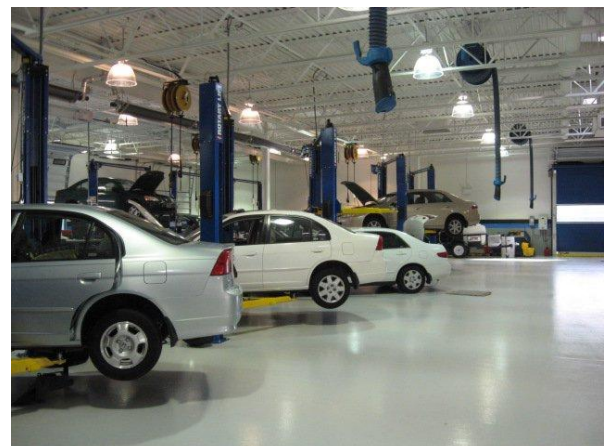


## Discuss The Article In Our Forum



“Engage rather than sell  
... Work as a co-creator,  
not a marketer.”

– Tom H. C. Anderson,  
market researcher



**More Google Reviews  
= More Website Traffic  
More Website Traffic  
= More Sales ... Questions?**

**Did Google Slash Your Reviews?  
Did Your Star Rating Decrease?  
You're Not ALONE.  
We Have The Solution!**

**More Info**

**YOU Need To Be  
Right Here**



**If You're LOOKING To...**

- ★ **Gain More Customers**
- ★ **Dominate Your Market**
- ★ **Lower Marketing Costs**
- ★ **Increase Sales & Profits**

▶ [Al Serra Used Cars - Used Car Dealers Huge Inventory](#) 🔍

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Chat w/ All Serra About Used Cars  
1570 Auto Mall Loop, Colorado Springs - (719) 867-1000 - [Directions](#)

[Ready to Buy a Car? - New or Used, Peak KIA has the Car You Want](#) 🔍

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Great Prices, MPG's, More

[AutoTrader.com® - Find Cars for Sale in Your Area.](#) 🔍

[www.autotrader.com](http://www.autotrader.com)  
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Places for **auto dealers** near **Colorado Springs, CO**

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[www.mikeshawsprings.com](http://www.mikeshawsprings.com) - 1313 Motor City Drive, Colorado Springs - (719) 636-3881

**B** [Perkins Motor Company](#) 🔍 - ★★★★★ 12 Google reviews  
[www.perkinsmotors.com](http://www.perkinsmotors.com) - 1205 Motor City Drive, Colorado Springs - (719) 475-2330

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# Building Ad Copy That Matches Social Media Marketing Strategies

By: Sara Hassler

Social media strategies are not a cookie



cutter type program, every dealership has a different image that makes them unique but there is one rather obvious fundamental that is synonymous with any businesses efforts in social media, which is getting your message

Automotive dealers can easily integrate social media strategies into every ad easily and effortlessly as they build out their marketing programs. Social media has taken a cozy front seat position in today's online marketplace. This has made auto dealers re-think their marketing strategies and find new, inventive ways to include as many socially interactive ad campaigns as possible. In order to appeal to a mass consumer target market, car dealers can approach their ad copy with socially active voices when creating ad campaigns.

When new clients sign on with GenerateMyAds, our team first offers social media education, market planning and ideas on how to brand a dealership's voice so that it communicates in a social way. This is a task that translates easily because automobiles are generally a social purchase. Automobiles have become an important part of our lives because they carry us from point A to point B and we know vehicles often define who we are in our social circles. By applying the same advertising techniques that a dealer would use to advertise a vehicle, other marketing programs can take the same social shape for example:

A typical automobile ad with OEM copy might read like; Mustang convertible, V6 3.8 cylinder, red, air-conditioning, power windows, automatic, alloy wheels.

A socially active automobile ad with social media content would read in contrast like: Love this beautiful red Mustang convertible with a powerful V6 3.8 engine that hums like a songbird. Your air-conditioning keeps you cool on hot summer days while the convenience of power windows makes driving a joy! Concentrate on your passengers with the ease of an automatic transmission and enjoy turning heads with bright shiny alloy wheels.

The OEM ad copy is dry and stale with its limited verbiage and offers little excitement to the consumer on why this Mustang convertible is so special. On the other hand, the socially active ad copy that includes social media content reaches out and grabs the consumer and calls their attention to the special options that the red Mustang offers. By doing this the social media content is exciting and paints a beautiful picture of this car with words that in turn allow the consumer to visualize and enjoy the vehicle before ever stepping foot inside of it for a test drive. This is the difference between plain advertising copy and socially interactive ad copy.

Auto dealers can integrate social media marketing strategies into their entire marketing

platform by matching the style of socially interactive ad copy like the example above into all of their advertising efforts. Take the ordinary Oil Change Special as a classic example of a common auto dealership service special. Then think of how your dealership might paint a picture for the consumer of how important this simple vehicle maintenance is. We compare plain ad copy with social ad copy below to show the difference in style and general market approach.

A typical ad for an oil change special might read like: Oil Change Special, 14.95, includes 14 point check, oil and oil filter, stop in today with this coupon!

A socially active ad that applies social media content for the same oil change special would read like: Imagine listening to the soft purr of your vehicle's engine as you coast down the Highway! Protect your investment and stop in today for our Oil Change Special that includes a 14 point check, oil and oil filter that gives you peace of mind. All for the low price of 14.95! Set up an appointment or stop in today for our Fast, Easy & Budget Friendly Car Maintenance Specials!

The socially interactive oil change ad copy accomplishes several marketing goals; it describes what an oil change will do for a car engine by comparing it to the soft sound of purring and explains that an oil change is a protective measure for the high-cost investment of a vehicle. The ad copy also tells the consumer that an oil change will put their mind at ease and describes the auto dealer's brand by using the words fast, easy and budget-friendly which leads the consumer to believe that all vehicle maintenance with that dealership is fast, easy and affordable. This particular ad copy has used general terms that describe their value and this encourages consumers to consider this dealership for a variety of maintenance services. In an economy that is as competitive as ours is now, every word in every ad counts towards earning a profit. This is why social ad copy and

social media content has taken center stage in today's marketing plans.

Every business that is vying for the consumer's attention is speculating on whether or not their advertising dollars are being spent wisely. There truly is only one real way to pull buyers in and that is by talking to customers and connecting with them socially. Auto dealers can work to find a voice that puts them in the forefront of the minds of their target market, for instance:

A high-end luxury dealership might write their oil change ad to sound like: You've made the investment of a lifetime in your luxury BMW, let us take care of your engines needs. We offer oil change maintenance appointments that...

A dealership that specializes in family-focused vehicles might write their oil change add to sound like: Take care of your engine with our oil change special so your engine takes care of your precious cargo...

Two very different auto dealers are selling the very same service and are marketing the exact same oil change special with two different voices to two different types of consumers. Both ads have socially interactive copy that appeals to their demographic base. The high-end luxury dealership is asking for their customers to invest with them and gives their customers the reason why they should. At the same time, the family-focused dealership is also asking their customers to invest in their service specials and also explains why they should. Each dealership is utilizing their social media marketing skills to the highest level because they are connecting to their specific consumer.

Each time your auto dealership puts out a call to action, we always advise that if you're going to ask your consumer to do something like call or invest in your dealership, that it's equally important for your business to give the same investment back to the consumer. This is easily done by explaining the importance and value of what your car dealership offers on a personal

level. The next time your marketing team sits down to map out your next big special event, ask one question — what does your special mean to your customer. Once that question is answered, your social media content will form itself into the perfect set of words that will sell your product or service!

As always we wish our automotive dealers and partners all our best in their marketing efforts. These are competitive times. With competition as high as it is and pocketbooks as light as they are, we're always here to lend a hand, answer questions, and support your dealer's marketing programs.

*Sara Hassler is the Resource Development Manager for GenerateMyAds and CreateYourSEO and specializes in strategic social media content marketing. Her talent for catching current trends and vast knowledge of the cyber-marketplace help drive sales and rev-up website performance in search engine ranks. Hassler's success in the online publishing and social media arenas are testimony to her unparalleled dedication to creating quality social content that works across a variety of media channels. Learn more about Sara by visiting <http://www.linkedin.com/in/sarahassler> and explore the benefits of working with her team of auto-dealer marketing professionals at [GenerateMyAds](#) and [CreateYourSEO](#).*

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Social Media is about sociology and psychology more than technology.”

– Brain Solis



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**Contact Rob Hagen At  
855-70-Media**

# Social Media and Fixed Operations

By: Ken Hite, [ClearMechanic.com](http://ClearMechanic.com)



Social Media and SEO have become the buzzword and acronym of the 21st century auto industry. I've read a lot of articles on social media and SEO. Every one of these articles has been about capitalizing upon the social media craze and how we can sell more new and pre-owned vehicles. What I haven't read about is how social media can help fixed operations.

Social Media is in its infancy stages today, and there's no doubt that it will be a driving force within the auto industry. The big question is how do we leverage social media to best serve current auto clients and prospective auto clients? I don't believe that currently there's a proven model.

Fixed Operations or more importantly the "Backbone of the Auto Industry" is a great place to start with social media. The auto dealer has a built in UIO-Units in Operation from all their years of retailing automobiles. Unfortunately the franchise auto dealer loses 80% of their UIO over time. There are a multitude of reasons of why dealers lose 80% of their UIO, however if today's auto

dealer will simply focus on the customer and start taking care of their customer in the service drive, then today's auto dealer will no longer lose the vast majority of their UIO.

How do auto dealers better serve their customers in service? Let's start with what consumers have been telling OEM's and dealers in survey data for decades, yes decades.

The primary reasons cited by consumers in survey data for not returning to a repair facility are: 1) Trust 2) Lack of communication between the repair facility and their customer 3) Lack of understanding on behalf of the consumer as to what specifically the repair facility is recommending for repair.

We know what customer's pain points are per the survey data noted above. How do we address these pain points and simultaneously build social awareness around the solution?

Step One: TRUST-Post real time photos of recommended repairs directly back to the dealer's web site so that service advisors can review the real time photos with their customers. By demonstrating to your customer through visual explanation as to why a repair or service is necessary, your building trust and confirming for the consumer why the task needs to be completed. This is a much more efficient process than attempting to convey to the consumer verbally what's wrong with the vehicle. We're visual beings, take advantage of visual explanations with real time photos. This is also much more efficient than walking a consumer back into the shop and or saving replaced components to give to the consumer after the fact.



Step Two: LACK OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE REPAIR FACILITY AND THEIR CUSTOMER-If you consider the decade's old process of the customer drops their vehicle off; technician sources the vehicle, service advisor calls and leaves a message or repeatedly attempts to contact the consumer via phone, while all this time the vehicle is sitting on the rack costing everyone time and money while we await the customer response. Let's compliment this decades old process by posting real time photos of the recommended repair back to the dealer's web site, simultaneously email and SMS the consumer so that at the dealer level we've made every attempt to contact the customer via phone, email, sms, and posting the repair recommendations to the dealer's web site. The dealer has now gone out of their way to effectively communicate with their customer.

Step Three: LACK OF UNDERSTANDING ON BEHALF OF THE CONSUMER AS TO WHAT SPECIFICALLY IS BEING RECOMMENDED FOR REPAIR-Consumer's have a difficult time understanding verbally what dealership personnel are attempting to convey regarding a recommended repair. Lets make this process simple for the dealer, dealer personnel, and most importantly, your customer. The dealer will post real time photos of a recommended repair from the customers actual vehicle to the dealer's web site, associate those photos with supporting content from an interactive service library (illustrations, context, and stock images of new components), and then communicate those concerns via phone, email, sms, and posting the real time photos and supporting content back to the dealer's web site. The consumer now has real time photos of their vehicle and its failed component(s),

illustrations that show location, system, and function of the failed component, supporting context to verbally explain the component and system, and the expertise of the service advisor verbally walking the customer through the visual process.

How do we tie the social process into the aforementioned steps? Dealer's need to utilize their web sites more effectively and capitalize on the current traffic, as well as generate more eyeballs/visits to their sites. The visual process of selling recommended repairs via real time photos and posting this content back to your web site is a great start. The dealer is providing current customer's a reason to revisit their web site to review repair recommendations, while simultaneously promoting on their web site that they stand for transparency in automotive repair and validate repair recommendations with real time photos and detail illustrative content. Think about the consumer who's visiting your web site for a new or pre-owned vehicle and for whatever reasons chooses to purchase elsewhere-happens all the time. This same customer while visiting your site sees that you validate repair recommendations with real time photos and you represent transparency in automotive repair. That customer is more likely to come back to your dealership regardless of where they purchased from since you support transparency in automotive repair.

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# Are You Utilizing Video of Your Happy Customers?

By: [Jim Kristoff](#)

Are you trying to decide what your Social



Media process should look like?

Are you trying to decide where to begin and what to do?

One of the easiest and most effective ways to use social media to enhance your dealership's presence is to utilize video of your happy customers either taking delivery of their New or Pre-Owned vehicle, or video of their experience in your service department!

You first have to understand, social media is like a family BBQ. At the family BBQ, everyone gathers around and talks about what is going on in their lives. Everyone trades stories of the positive things in their lives and the negative things. At the family BBQ, a positive or negative story about a retail experience, could persuade you to either give that business an opportunity or stay away from that business!

Wouldn't you want your happy customers to persuade their friends and family to give your dealership an opportunity to earn their business??

When your happy customers are taking delivery of their New or Pre-Owned vehicle or getting their vehicle out of your Service Department, get the entire family together in a well lit environment. Have them gather around the vehicle. Whether they are inside or outside the vehicle, it makes no difference. As long as they are smiling and having a good time, the video will be positive.

Keep the video short! No more than 60 seconds! No one wants to watch a long drawn out video!

Don't make the video seem scripted or planned. Make your video appear as casual and fun as possible! Most people want to do business with a place that is both professional and fun!

Make sure you introduce the family and the dealership at the very beginning of the video.

Example: "Here we have the Smith family taking delivery of their new (model) here at ABC Motors!"

Then ask the family just ONE question for the video. This will ensure you keep it to 60 seconds or less in length.

Questions such as:

- Tell us about your Sales experience!
- What do you like best about your New/Pre-Owned vehicle?
- What is the first thing you will do with your New/Pre-Owned vehicle?

- Where is the first place you will go with your New/Pre-Owned vehicle?
- How did you enjoy your Service experience today?
- If you could tell your family and friends just one thing about (ABC Motors), what would it be?

Explain to the customer you are then going to upload the video to the Dealerships Facebook page, your Dealerships YouTube channel and on your Dealership website. That way they can share the video on their Facebook page or e-mail the link from YouTube to their friends.

Make sure you give them a reason to do this video for the Dealership. After all, there should be something they receive in return for their endorsement of your Dealership. In return for the video, you may want to give them a free oil change or a discount for any further service or accessory purchase.

You want to make sure you have their permission to use the video in writing to protect yourself and the Dealership. Have your attorney construct a simply worded "release form" for your customer to sign.

Once you start building a series of videos, you can use them in your Social Media marketing and networking plans. You will have a video "why buy here" book.

Once a month, showcase a particularly great video on your Dealerships website, Facebook page or YouTube channel. Make sure you contact that customer whose video you are showcasing and thank them again for their business. I would encourage you to once again offer your customer an additional discount or service for allowing them to "feature" them on your sites!

An attitude of gratitude will go a long way!  
And everyone likes receiving gifts!!

Utilizing video, to start your Social Media presence and process, is both easy and fun to do. There is nothing more convincing to a perspective client of your Dealership than seeing happy and contented customers doing business at your store! The more videos you have, the better!

Make sure you have a way of continuously playing these videos in your showroom or your Service waiting area. It will be a reassurance to your customer or perspective customer that your Dealership is an awesome place to do business!

Start utilizing video of your happy customers to use in your Social Media presence! There is no better testimonial you can receive! A video with smiling faces and satisfied customers that tells a story of a happy and pleasant experience at your Dealership is Social Media GOLD!!

**Discuss The Article  
In Our Forum**

# The Importance Of Vets-Cars, By Chris Walsh

Being fortunate enough to be the son of a highly decorated World War II U.S. Navy veteran, patriotism, love of country, and respect for the men and women that guard our freedoms was something instilled in me at a very early age. Growing up, I never had an atypical hero as a kid, not a professional athlete or celebrity; my dad was and continues to be my biggest hero.

Through the power of social media, I came across Vets-Cars and immediately reached out wanting more information. After one conversation with Chris Walsh, his high moral values and the business ethics of the entire Vets-Cars program was eminent. Having a second conversation with co-owner Greg Walsh gave me instant confirmation on my first impressions plus I knew my company needed to get involved due to the worthiness of the cause.

What impressed me the most about Vets-Cars was the emphasis on finding dealers that embrace an exceptional customer service experience and by backing it up with their code of conduct. The ideal Vets-Cars dealer is one that strives to create the “WOW Factor” for their customers but also shares the admiration and debt of gratitude that I have for all of our armed forces and believes that they deserve our undying respect.

Our company Next Generation Dealer Services looks for the same type of dealer just on a grander scale so from a business perspective, the synergies between us and Vets-Cars were indisputable. Having 20 years of experience in the auto industry, I have worked with some great dealers that put his customers first but also for some that still

hold true to many “old school” car business principles.

In the social economic world we currently reside, a dealership’s, or any business for that matter, reputation is more important than ever. According to the new 2011 Online Influence Trend Tracker from Cone Inc., a Boston-based public relations and marketing communications agency, positive reviews has swayed 87% of shoppers, confirming their decision to purchase.

The study also finds that the pricier the purchase, the more likely shoppers are to do extra digging, with people saying they are nearly 25% more likely to verify recommendations for high-cost purchases, such as cars, than they were in their 2010 study.

What does all this mean? Dealers need to be proactive in managing public perception of their business brand and reputation. To accomplish this, there must be a shift in dealer’s reality to ensure it matches people’s perception. Customer service needs to be at the forefront of their business and it needs to be a commitment from the top down.

As a company, we work with dealers to manage their reputation as well as market the quality experience they provide for consumers. We are excited to be working with Vets-Cars to find dealers across the country that want change the public’s general perception of auto dealers while demonstrating a sincere appreciation to the hero’s that guard our shores.

As I mentioned at the beginning, my dad was a proud member of the U.S. Navy during World War II and was present at several

major battles. One of the most prominent moments of his career was shared through his own eyes as the senior surviving officer on the USS Johnston during the Battle of Leyte Gulf. Here is the story from the Saturday Evening Post in 1945:

<http://ussjohnston-hoel.com/6217.html>

My dad always felt that the respect shown to him by the men that he survived this experience with was worth a helluva lot more than the medal he was awarded. In his passing, I had a chance to experience this respect on his behalf. A gentleman that served directly under my dad called me after my dad had passed away and told me "The Navy just lost the best damn gunnery officer it ever had." At the time and even as I write this, I am emotionally moved and filled with a tremendous amount of pride.

Every single man and woman who fights for you and me so that we have all the freedoms we hold dear is deserving of the same type of respect.

God bless our troops!

## FEEDING THE FUNNEL WITH FACEBOOK

### SOCIAL MEDIA'S IMPACT ON THE SALES FUNNEL

Cold calls? Collecting business cards? All old hat. As social media transforms the relationship consumers have with the brand, product and each other, the game is definitely changing. Here's what a sales funnel looks like when it's fed with a helpful dose of social media.

#### THE STAGES OF THE SALES FUNNEL

<b>1. Attention</b> Attracting prospects by building awareness.	<b>2. Interest</b> Educating them by demonstrating the benefits of your product or service.	<b>3. Desire</b> Fostering their desire for the product or service promoted.	<b>4. Action</b> The customer completes the purchase or takes action.
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#### WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SOCIAL MEDIA IS ADDED TO THE MIX?

Social media has saturated our lives both online and off. Now's it's permeating throughout the consumer purchasing model, amplifying inbound communications, referrals and more.

#### 1. Attention

With the help of search engine optimization and marketing, as well as popular social networks like Facebook, potential clients can gain awareness of the brand and spread its reputation through word of mouth. Best part for companies? It costs nearly nothing.

#### 2. Interest

After prospects enter the funnel, the company and existing satisfied clients can build trust by providing information and help. Depending on how the brand leverages its online presence, one can see existing company-client dialogues that demonstrate solid relationships.

#### 3. Desire

This is when brands can demonstrate that what they're selling will satisfy desired needs. From user reviews on Yelp to interactive customer communities, prospects will see testimonial proof confirming the quality of the product or service they're seeking.

#### 4. Action

After prospects transform into paying clients, it will prove the brand has used its channels successfully.

#### 5. Advocacy

When customers engage actively and spread the word, they become great ambassadors **who can continue the brand's sales cycle automatically**. The addition of this new stage to the funnel illustrates the true power of social media.

SOURCES: CaptureTheConversation.com EO-Forward.com Focus.com

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# Social Media for Every Department of Your Dealership

By: [Rob Hagen](#)

“Social media is not just about sales, it’s about your bottom-line.”



If you have ever heard me speak or heard one of our webinars, you’re most certain to have heard me say this. I believe it so much that I have it on the back of my business cards. Every opportunity I get to have the ear of a dealer I try to stress this point. Social media is not just a sales tool; it is a marketing/relationship building/reputation management tool.

Erik Qualman wrote an amazing book about social media entitled Socialnomics and one of my favorite quotes that he says is this: “Why are we trying to measure social media like a traditional channel anyway? Social media touches every facet of business and is more an extension of good business ethics.”

This quote speaks to two important facets of social media. First, trying to measure results which is obviously one of the largest

challenges, we will be addressing in coming editions of this magazine. Second and more important to this article is that social media is good business ethics which is not a sales or a service thing, it’s an entire dealership thing.

Let’s look at a common situation that happens in most dealerships across the country and add a social media strategy to increase the impact.

## **Dealership Sponsors Little League Baseball Team**

Most dealerships will sponsor a local team at some point or another. How does this process normally go for a dealer? First the dealer writes a check. Then, he forgets about it until the coach of the team brings a team photo to the dealer as a sign of the appreciation. Last, that photo ends up on the wall of the service waiting room.

Nice, shows community involvement which is extremely important for a local business but who sees this picture? Your existing service customers, the people that already love you! Let’s see how we can influence some other people and get people talking, all while not coming across as a self promoter.

At that meeting where you hand the check to the coach, ask him for game photos, updates on the team, winning pitchers, star performers, pictures of the team training, after game pizza party photos, tournament and league updates; basically everything that is happening with the team.

Now you have constant updates and content being sent to you about “your” team. Take this information and share it on your social networks. Post about the home run Johnny hit and congratulates him. Imagine Johnny’s

proud parents are going to be telling everyone they know to go check out the publicity Johnny is getting from ABC Motors.

You can also create a page of your blog about following the team through, on their road to greatness. Post a link on your website and this is sure to get traffic to your blog.

Invite the team to your dealership for a pizza party and autograph signing party. Treat “your” team like they are super stars. Again, every parent will be singing the praises of your dealership to every one of their friends!

### **Getting Other Departments Involved**

What about getting video testimonials in the F&I department? Ask a handful of customers a month if they would let you shoot a quick video of them explaining why they purchased a service contract or GAP or financed with the dealership instead of going to their credit union. Take these videos and share them on video sites as well as upload them to your Facebook page.

How about getting Google reviews from your service department? Your service writers see a lot more customers than your sales people do, have them ask for reviews. Ask if a customer has a Gmail account and if so let them put a review in right there on an iPad or an iPhone with the Google Places app. If they don’t have a Gmail account, have business cards printing up customers asking them to give you a review on Google when they get home.

How about having Facebook day in parts and service? Create a coupon that can only be found on Facebook for people to print out and bring into the dealership on a certain day. Chose a day of the week that historically slow in the back of your dealership so that

you will be able to handle the increase in traffic.

How about getting pictures of before and after work from your body shop? Take these and share on all your social networks. Create a page specifically for these on your blog. Put them in a slide show and share them on your video sites. Bonus tip: Every new car delivery says to introduce new car customers to the service manager, add the body shop manager. A lot of people probably don’t even know you have a body shop. Everyone likes to do business with people they already know, like and trust!

How about finding new Fleet customers through LinkedIn? LinkedIn is the number one professional networking site and there are big opportunities to interact with decision makers of companies.

How can social media help you hire better quality people? Quality people want to work for quality employers. Your reputation, how you’re viewed in the community, will play a role in some people looking for a career with your dealership.

This is only scratching the surface of what can be accomplished by incorporating a social strategy throughout your dealership. What are some of the other ways you are using social media in your dealership?

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