



BY RICK MCCORMICK

The Path of People: Let them Lead

Third party confirmation is the most powerful tool to move people down the path of buying.

For many years, we have been walking customers down the path that we determined worked best for us. As more and more information has become available to the consumer, the resistance to our preferred way of conducting business has increased. Customers spend more time than ever online researching their purchase — the average consumer spends more than 12 hours online before contacting the dealership, according to Cox Automotive.

Consumers feel they are well educated on their purchase and options, and they have a preferred path once negotiations with a dealership have begun. They want to lead the process. If they encounter an F&I manager that insists on their way of doing things, the trust level diminishes and resistance increases. Today demands a different approach. We must seek to understand the preferred “Path of People” and provide a process they expect and enjoy. Over the next several articles, we will look at the four paths they prefer to take and how to adjust our process to make their buying and ownership experience the best they have ever had before!

PATH #1: INSIGHTFUL INFORMATION

Today’s customers have information overload — they do not need more information. What they need is insight — information or perspectives they cannot get on the internet or anywhere else except from you. It is compelling information or expertise that enables consumers to see

things in a different manner. To utilize insight to create “light bulb” moments and move people to buy, there are three things that must happen.

First, you must acquire the insight to share. This requires research and intentional activity on your part. Someone recently asked me, “Where do you get this information?” I responded by telling them that I read news articles on my phone every morning to gain up-to-date information. I



also read periodicals such as Car and Driver and several others that focus on computer technology in every part of our society including vehicles. You cannot provide information you don’t possess — gather it and insight happens.

Secondly, share information in a compelling manner. Most customers want to hurry and get out of the perceived selling situation and unless we have insight they have not heard they will rush out of our offices as well. After a customer declines service contract protection, simply state

the following:

“That is concerning, especially with the troubling trend we are seeing in the service department. According to Car and Driver more than 40% of the cost of your vehicle is electronics and computers, and most of the visits to our service department concern the unserviceable and non-repairable electronics. Since the cost to replace these parts are some of the most expensive on a vehicle today, it is critical to transfer the risk of this cost to someone else.”

Third and finally, the insight you share creates opportunities to move customers to buy that others cannot create. You must follow the insight with information that confirms what you are saying. Customers will not believe you because you say it is true; they will believe it when someone else says it is true. Third party confirmation is the most powerful tool to move people down the path of buying. A recent repair order from your service department and/or recent research form a source

they recognize compels them to act. That is the “Path of People” they prefer. They are leading by demanding up-to-date insightful information and when they receive it, they will buy in record numbers. And your numbers will be a record as well. That is the “Path of People” and the path to more success for you and your customers. ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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