



DRIVING SUCCESS

# Activator's Guide to Evolving Dealership Marketing



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# Navigating Challenges and Opportunities

In an ever-changing landscape, dealerships face both challenges and opportunities. Understanding the necessity of content marketing in dealerships is critical to strategizing effectively. As we delve into the nuances of dealership content marketing, we shed light on common challenges, from standing out in a saturated market to adapting to digital transformation.

While challenges loom, they are accompanied by opportunities for growth and innovation. From limited inventory to reduced OEM incentives and labor shortages, dealerships need new approaches to their marketing strategies to harness opportunities when presented.

This guide equips you with the insights needed to navigate the twists and turns of modern content marketing with the latest technology. We embark on a journey to unleash the potential of activation, uncovering the tools, tactics, and mindsets necessary to thrive in this dynamic environment. By the end of this guide, you will possess the knowledge to elevate your dealership's content marketing, driving engagement, customer loyalty, and business growth.

# Unify Your Data for Better Content Marketing

Data is the fuel that propels content marketing to new heights. Unifying your data through a Customer Data Platform (CDP) forms the foundation of personalized and effective content marketing strategies. We delve into the power of data, defining the role of a CDP in streamlining your marketing data sources. By understanding how to integrate data seamlessly, you will harness the ability to craft personalized content that resonates deeply with your audience.

## 5 Reasons Why Dealers Should Have a CDP

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1

**Better Customer Profiles:** CDPs excel at creating detailed customer profiles by merging data from multiple sources. By consolidating and unifying data from multiple sources, CDPs enable dealerships to make more informed decisions about their marketing strategies, sales efforts, and customer engagement initiatives.

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2

**Tackling Duplicate Data Issues:** Duplicate records are a common problem for most dealers, leading to confusion and inefficiencies. CDPs can leverage best-in-class data quality solutions to identify and merge duplicate entries, ensuring the system maintains clean and accurate customer information.

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3

**Overcoming System Incompatibility:** Dealers often face the challenge of managing data across various disconnected systems, such as DMS, CRM, Equity, and service marketing. Traditional dealer systems were not designed to communicate with each other effectively. A CDP bridges this gap, allowing for seamless integration.

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4

**Rationalizing Data for Personalization:** CDPs are not just about plugging in data sources; they also rationalize data to determine who an individual is and what to send them. CDPs can better understand dealership customer segmentation, allowing for personalized marketing efforts that have been shown to increase customer retention rates.

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5

**Addressing Data Incompleteness:** While the DMS is a useful tool for managing dealership operations, it is not meant to serve as a marketing database. A CDP addresses this limitation by providing more complete data around vehicle ownership, customer contact information, and other relevant details, enabling dealers to craft more targeted and effective marketing campaigns.

# What is a hybrid CDP and Multichannel Marketing Journey Builder?

The importance of utilizing a hybrid CDP and Multichannel Journey Builder for dealerships cannot be overstated. Having a flexible marketing solution that collects and unifies data from multiple sources, then automates and applies that data to multichannel journeys that enhance customer engagement and promote dealership efficiency, ultimately leading to increased sales and service-driven revenue. Fulfillment is built into the solution, allowing for a dynamic multichannel customer journey that aligns with dealers' goals and processes.

## Hybrid CDP and Multichannel Marketing Journey Builder



### UNIQUE CAPABILITIES

- ✔ **Customer Data Platform (CDP) and Integrated Solutions:** Built with Salesforce, Activator's solution seamlessly connects with the dealership's DMS and other critical enhanced first and third-party data. The solution was purpose-built for these connections, offering flexibility and efficiency.
- ✔ **Hybrid CDP and Multichannel Marketing Journey Builder:** Marketing fulfillment is built into the solution, allowing for a dynamic multichannel customer journey that aligns with dealers' goals and processes and reacts in real-time to customer engagement.
- ✔ **Reporting:** Guided by marketing experts with years of automotive experience, monitor engagement and ROI trends with reporting and easily adjust to dealership and industry changes.

Adopting a Hybrid CDP built for dealers can lead to better customer engagement, enhanced customer experience, and streamlined marketing operations. By offering dynamic campaigns that tie back to dealer goals and KPIs, multi-channel communication, data rationalization capabilities, and true journey builders that learn from customer interactions, Hybrid CDPs provide a comprehensive and powerful solution that can help dealerships thrive in an increasingly competitive marketplace.



## Identify Handraisers

Recognizing and capitalizing on potential leads is an art mastered by the most successful dealerships. Handraisers are past customers who have shown a strong interest in buying another car or selling their in-demand vehicle back to the dealership, typically by requesting more information, filling out a form, or scheduling a test drive. These leads are highly valuable because they have qualified themselves through their interaction as being ready to purchase.

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## Send Multichannel Marketing To Increase Customer Experience

In a world where customers engage with dealerships across various platforms, mastering the multichannel approach is a game-changer. It is important to craft consistent messages across different channels. By leveraging email, SMS (text), and direct mail, you can enhance the customer experience, creating a seamless journey that resonates at every touchpoint.

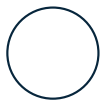
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## Engage Customers with Automated Timely Messages

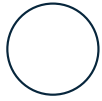
Automation holds the key to timely and effective customer engagement. Designing automated messages that feel personalized thanks to the multichannel journey builder that adapts to customers' preferences and needs over time. By implementing triggers and responses that align with customer behaviors, you'll create a powerful engagement strategy that fosters lasting relationships and retention.

# Content Creation Best Practices Checklist:



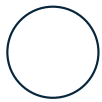
## **Know your audience:**

Understand your target audience's demographics, preferences, needs, and pain points to create content that resonates with them. Tailor your messaging and tone to match their expectations and address their concerns.



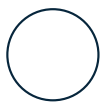
## **Focus on value:**

Ensure your content provides value to your audience by offering solutions, insights, or actionable advice. Highlight the unique benefits and features of your vehicles and services, and emphasize your dealership's unique selling proposition (USP).



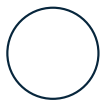
## **Maintain a consistent brand voice:**

Develop a consistent brand voice and tone that aligns with your dealership's identity and values. Use this voice across all content types and platforms to create a cohesive brand image.



## **Create engaging headlines and titles:**

Capture your audience's attention with compelling headlines and titles that pique their interest and encourage them to read or watch further. Use keywords and phrases that resonate with your target audience.



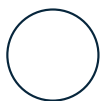
## **Use visuals effectively:**

Incorporate high-quality images, videos, and graphics to enhance your content's appeal and convey your message more effectively. Ensure visuals align with your brand identity and add value to your written content.



## **Optimize for search engines (SEO):**

Research relevant keywords and incorporate them into your content to improve search engine rankings. Use appropriate headings, meta tags, and URL structures to make your content more accessible to search engines and users alike.



## **Encourage engagement and sharing:**

End your content with a strong call-to-action (CTA) to prompt desired actions, such as scheduling a test drive, contacting your dealership, or sharing the content on social media. Engage with your audience by responding to comments and questions on your content, and encourage them to share their thoughts and experiences.

# Flexibility and Customization

A successful content marketing strategy requires a delicate balance of flexibility and customization. Catering to diverse customer preferences, you'll discover the art of creating dynamic content that appeals to various groups of customers and their needs.

That can only be achieved with the latest technology. Also, adapting to changing trends and feedback while maintaining a personal touch will position your dealership as a dynamic and customer-centric brand.

Do you have the latest technology to keep your dealership flexible? Fill out the scorecard below. Any dealer with a score below 50 should have a second look at their marketing technology.

## Latest Technology Scorecard

	Yes - 10pt	Not yet - 5pt	No - 0pt	Score
Is the customer data in your DMS reliable?				
Do you have a CDP?				
Do you have a Journey Builder?				
Do you have a hybrid CDP and Journey Builder?				
Are your solutions truly multichannel?				
Are your marketing solutions connected?				
Are your marketing solutions automated?				
Are your solutions built on Salesforce?				
<b>Total Score out of 80pts</b>				<b>80</b>



# Conquering New Frontiers with Customer-Centric Marketing

Shifting your technology towards a customer-centric approach can mark a turning point in your content marketing. Explore the strategies that build trust and loyalty through valuable content. You'll amplify your dealership's impact and extend its reach by harnessing user-generated content, customer reviews, and advocacy.

As we recap the key insights from each chapter, you're poised to embrace the evolution of dealership content marketing. With the strategies below, you can create meaningful connections, deliver exceptional experiences, and shape a future where your dealership stands at the forefront of innovation.

## Content Marketing Tips

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### ✔ Implement a Customer Data Platform (CDP):

- Invest in a robust CDP to centralize customer data from various sources, providing a comprehensive view of customer behavior and preferences. Leverage the insights from your CDP to create highly personalized and targeted content that resonates with your audience.

### ✔ Utilize a Journey Builder:

- Map out customer journeys to understand their interactions with your dealership at each touchpoint with the appropriate marketing technology. Develop content that caters to different stages of the customer journey, addressing their specific needs and pain points.

### ✔ Implement Dynamic Content:

- Utilize dynamic content that adapts based on user behavior and preferences. This approach ensures that customers see the most relevant content, leading to higher engagement rates.

### ✔ Personalize Content:

- Use the data gathered by your CDP to personalize content, such as product recommendations and tailored messaging. Personalization enhances the customer experience and increases the likelihood of conversions.

### ✔ Embrace a Multichannel Approach:

- Identify the channels where your target audience is most active and tailor your content for those platforms. Maintain a consistent brand voice and message across all channels to enhance brand recognition and customer trust.

### ✔ Segment Your Audience:

- Use your CDP to segment your audience into segments based on demographics, behaviors, preferences, and purchase history. Personalized marketing based on user behavior and preferences results in higher open and click-through rates.

### ✔ Stay Consistent with Branding:

- Maintain a consistent brand identity across all content and channels. This consistency builds trust and helps customers recognize and remember your dealership.

### ✔ Leverage Automation:

- Implement marketing automation tools to streamline repetitive tasks and ensure timely content delivery. Create automated journeys that nurture leads, guide customers through their journey, and re-engage past buyers.

# Evolve Your Dealership Content Marketing With The Latest Technology



## Introducing Activator’s hybrid Customer Data Platform (CDP) and Multichannel Marketing Journey Builder Solution

### Solution Infrastructure

Activator leverages the powerful Salesforce platform to unify and leverage customer data from multiple sources, creating a comprehensive and personalized profile for each customer. By automatically marketing to customers across multiple channels with personalized messaging, dealerships can achieve higher ROI, better customer retention, increase efficiency and achieve long-term success. Our dealers see an **overall +20% reach**, a **13% increase in sales volume**, and a **14% increase in service-drive revenue year-over-year**; here’s how.

### UNIQUE CAPABILITIES

- ✓ **Customer Data Platform (CDP) and Integrated Solutions:** Built with Salesforce, the solution seamlessly connects with the dealership’s DMS and other critical data like Activator’s enhanced data and third-party data. The solution was purpose-built for these connections, offering flexibility and efficiency.
- ✓ **Hybrid CDP and Multichannel Marketing Journey Builder:** Fulfillment is built into the solution, allowing for a dynamic multichannel customer journey that aligns with dealers’ goals and processes.
- ✓ **Reporting:** Guided by marketing experts with years of automotive experience, monitor engagement and ROI trends with reporting and easily adjust to dealership and industry changes.



+20% reach with SMS (text) and direct mail



13% increase in sales volume revenue year-over-year



14% increase in service-drive revenue year-over-year

### Data Quality & Integrity:

With Activator’s Customer Data Platform and overall solution, dealerships can maintain data quality and integrity to enhance customer experiences and optimize marketing efforts. Regular email verification, customer ownership checks, and deduping processes ensure accurate and reliable data to provide Primary Customer Records.

### UNIQUE CAPABILITIES

- ✓ **Duplicate Record Analysis:** Identifies duplicate customer records and selects the Primary Customer Record for optimal marketing and reporting.
- ✓ **Invalid and Spam Trap Email Suppression:** Quantifies and suppresses invalid and spam trap emails, preventing misfires in marketing campaigns.
- ✓ **Alternate Channel Utilization:** Fills customer contact data gaps by utilizing alternate channels such as SMS (text) and direct mail.

## Engagement & Customer Experience:

Activator's interaction-based Multichannel Marketing Journeys revolutionize customer engagement by creating personalized interactions tailored to individual preferences and positions in their buying or service journey. Create complete customer profiles, expand your market reach, and engage customers across multiple channels with purposeful messaging that adjusts to each customer to personalize their journeys based on actions taken over time. Tracks customer behavior and preferences to optimize automated Multichannel Marketing Journeys using email, SMS (text), and direct mail.

### UNIQUE CAPABILITIES

- ✔ **Qualified Handraisers:** Identifies the most promising leads ready to upgrade, service, sell, renew, or pre-order a vehicle for maximum conversion potential.
- ✔ **Comprehensive Core Journeys:** Address common OEM and dealer goals, including Sales buyback and pre-order, Sales equity, Lease end, Service, and Lost Service.
- ✔ **Multichannel Messaging:** Cohesive messaging across email, SMS, and direct mail ensures a consistent and compelling customer experience.
- ✔ **Real-Time Reactivity:** Responds to real-time customer interactions, adapting personalized messaging paths that build customer preferences over time.
- ✔ **Full Funnel Messaging:** Engages customers at various stages of their buying journey, providing a personalized experience for each individual.
- ✔ **Flexibility and Customization:** Dealers can select and modify journeys to suit their specific goals, supported by a team of marketing experts.
- ✔ **Custom Campaigns:** Tailored multichannel touchpoints to achieve dealership-specific objectives.
- ✔ **OEM Compliance at Scale:** Ensures compliance with every major OEM, providing peace of mind and streamlined operations.



“Oh, it's been incredible... we've been able to communicate with customers in a way that we haven't been able to before, which has allowed us to get additional leads, buyouts, selling new and pre-owned cars and just helping get through some of [the] inventory in our lot.”

**Tiffany Phillips** | General Sales Manager at Schaumburg Kia

## Driving Dealership Success with Personalized Customer Engagement

Stay ahead of changing industry conditions with a solution that provides a clearer picture of your customers and builds reliable marketing you can trust. Choose Activator today and transform your dealership's marketing strategies into data-driven, personalized journeys that elevate customer experiences and drive long-term success. Our expert team is here to support you every step of the way. Contact us now to schedule a personalized demo and see how Activator can enhance your dealership's performance.

# ACTIVATOR

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