

Technology ineptness is an industry issue, not a dealer issue

-- By Ryan Gerardi

A new blog has appeared on the scene and one of the recent posts on it talks about how car dealers are “2-3 years behind on Internet trends.” While this is not automatically a bad thing when it comes to business and technology, I am concerned with the statement that car dealers are slow to embrace technology trends in comparison to other industries because I don’t think it is necessarily a dealer issue.

One area that lacks in car sales is online shopping carts. All you can do online with dealers is generate leads, make offers, and request quotes. You can’t actually make a vehicle purchase on the Web. eBay is the only successful online selling system for autos which demonstrates the fact that **PEOPLE WILL PURCHASE CARS ONLINE** and that DEALERS UTILIZE THE TECHNOLOGY. **So why don’t dealers offer this on their websites?** Is it because they don’t want to, don’t know how, or is it because the technology is not available?

Is this a car dealer issue, or an industry issue?

I think it is an industry issue. The auto industry is riddled with “technology” + “marketing” companies which makes for mediocrity in both areas. Dealer.com has their 360 product, a “complete” dealer marketing solution, but guess what, consumers can’t purchase vehicles with it from dealers. I don’t mean to single them out because everyone is a culprit here. Everywhere you look, someone has a “complete” solution or a silver bullet, but no one gives dealers the ability to execute vehicle transactions on their site...well, almost no one.

The only company with a product designed for dealers to make direct sales on the Web is Ai-Dealer. Their software plugs in to a dealer’s site and requires customers to identify themselves before they can even begin to make a purchase. While lead generating companies might argue that this limits the number of potential leads that could be generated from people choosing not to input their info, the proprietor has statistics to show that this actually makes those that do register with the software more qualified, which is as we all know of high importance for dealers.



So here we are, in a moment of time where essentially every major retail business in the world sells their products online with shopping carts, except for car dealers, and only one company has the means to make it possible. This is why I think the problem is an industry issue and not a dealer issue. People WILL BUY CARS ONLINE if they are capable of doing so and I think this attitude needs to be better understood and embraced by those producing tools and solutions for car dealers.