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# AutoSuccess™

THE #1 SALES-IMPROVEMENT MAGAZINE FOR THE AUTOMOTIVE PROFESSIONAL



Hitting the Jackpot...  
**With Digital Ads!**



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# Internet Sales 20 Group

What exactly is a **20 Group**? Like its name implies, it is made up of about 20 people representing various franchises or management positions in the dealership. The feeling is that owners, managers and dealership executives all face many of the same problems, so why not get together with your peers in non-competing markets and share your challenges and ideas that have been working in your operations?

The concept is quite simple: Leverage the power of the members in the 20 Group network. Meetings normally have an agenda and suggestions are submitted by the members and organized by a moderator. Members also submit a financial overview of their operations called a composite. This is a complete breakdown of the dealership's financial statement and statistics. The idea is to compare each of the dealership's strengths and weaknesses to help the group improve and identify problem areas. It is a great way to share information, best practices, vendor insights, technology and proper benchmarking techniques from various parts of the country all with the aim of improving performance of the individual members.

The two major organizers of 20 group services are NADA and NCM & Associates. I have had the pleasure of working with both of these groups very closely; as a matter of fact, I have presented to over 37 NADA and NCM 20 Groups, and was the exclusive trainer for three NCM Internet Sales Bootcamps in the last seven months. These bootcamps are intensive 2½ day sessions that really delve into the details of Internet sales and operations. These experiences and contact with hundreds of dealership executives have brought me great insights into the daily challenges faced by Dealer Principals,

GMs, GSMs, and Internet and BDC directors from across the U.S.

Based on the dynamics I have seen in 20 Groups, I see incredible value in developing an Internet Sales Managers 20 group. I have gotten great feedback from Internet and BDC

Directors out there. Rather than create a physical Internet Sales 20 group, I have chosen to create our own virtual 20 Group right here in *AutoSuccess* Magazine and through some select Web sites which will be announced soon.

Early in 2008, these sites will launch to support the Internet 20 group column, here in *AutoSuccess* Magazine. The beauty of our group will be that we are not limited to 20 members but instead can reach out to the entire community of Internet Sales Professionals at all 22,000 franchised dealerships in the country and offer everyone a chance to participate.

Some of the subjects covered will include:

- Products and Technology
- People: hiring, recruiting, pay plans, training, mentoring...
- Process: What to do, when to do it, how to do it and WHY to do it.
- Promotions: All forms of advertising — VSEO, SEO, SEM, Banners, third party lead providers and aggregators, OEM compliancy, Focus sites, micro sites, convention advertising, data mining and everything else.
- Used Cars and Special Finance online
- Problems, questions, and concerns
- Best ideas

I invite you to use this column as a place you can find out the truth without the spin factor. It will be a 20 Group to serve the members and the members have input on setting the agenda. If you have a question or problem you want answered, you can submit it to me and I will share my thoughts on it and then invite the group to respond as well.

Let's not sugar coat anything and be blunt but polite in our questions and our answers.

There are two main points of the column going forward each and every month:

- Fix a problem / answer a question
- Present a best idea

I encourage you to send questions to this column anytime throughout the month and I will attempt to answer as many questions as possible. Then I will select one question or problem each month to be spotlighted in the upcoming article. The person submitting that questions will be highlighted and receive a gift from me and the Dealer Synergy Team.

For example, next month we'll give away

a Flip Video Camera ([www.flipvideo.com](http://www.flipvideo.com)) which was featured on Oprah (\$179.00 value). One exciting aspect of the Dealer 20 groups is their "Best Idea" component. Each participating dealer puts \$50 in to a "pot" and they collect the "Best Ideas" from everyone in the group. The group votes on which one is the best. The winner takes the cash! We are going to do something similar in our group: Reader participants are invited to submit their ideas, and then I, along with my team members from Dealer Synergy, will pick the "Best Idea." Winners will receive prizes like digital video cameras, iPods or other MP3 players, or other cool gadgets, free training, workshops or trips.

While I think this is a great concept it won't work without your feedback and participation. Working together we can make this Internet 20 group really powerful for all of us. Please feel free to tell me whatever thoughts you have for content as well as for the free prizes and giveaways.

I have two goals in mind:

- I want to educate everyone in our virtual 20 group
- I want to give back to the auto retail community that has helped make me a success in this industry

This will be a real forum to educate our peers and help the great people who make up this business. And, along the way, let's see if we can have some fun too. This will be your opportunity to pose the questions you want answered and no topic is off limits.

A real quick "Best Idea" this month is the Video Flip Camera. This is one of the *absolute* best ideas I have come across in the last year. It is *perfect* to assist you on your Video Search Engine Campaign. You can get this amazing technology at Best Buy for about \$179 OR you can win it for FREE there at Internet Sales 20 group. It has software included that integrates with YouTube & AOL Video, now you can create video testimonials, custom walk-arounds and more and have them live on You Tube or AOL Video in minutes.

I look forward to hearing your questions, problems & Best Ideas.

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