



Sean V. Bradley

Internet Sales 20 Group

Wow! I want to first thank everyone; I have had some amazing feedback in regard to my articles, as well as to our new Internet Sales 20 Group. I hope everyone had a great holiday and is very focused on making 2008 their absolute best year ever.

I had a tremendous response from my article "Online Value Package Propositions." When I was talking to Shannon Haney, Internet Sales manager of Sonju Superstore in Minnesota, she told me she was having tremendous success with her dealership's rewards program. I was all ears. She uses Visible Customer (www.visiblecustomer.com), a company also based out of Minnesota. The reason why the product is so amazing is the fact that it *actually works*. Shannon sells 20 units a month over the Internet in a small town outside of Duluth. She tells me that it is a great way to differentiate her dealership from all of the others in town.

If you go to www.sonju.com, you'll see a button that says "Customer Rewards." When you click that button, it will take you to a back page with the following information:

"At Sonju Two Harbors, our goal is to develop a long-term relationship with you and your family. As a preferred customer you are entitled to valuable discounts, complimentary service items, and a VIP membership standing. Each time that you use your rewards card you will accumulate points for service discounts,

service offers and up to **\$500 off next vehicle purchase.**"

Holders of the service rewards card, complimentary to all Sonju's



Shannon Haney



customers, receive perks such as a car wash with every paid service, local shuttle service, a loaner car while their vehicle is serviced, alignment checks, discounts on oil changes and other maintenance, VIP Saturday service hours, and many more.

Customers also accumulate rewards points for every dollar spent, which go to lowering the prices of the next vehicle they purchase at Sonju Two Harbors. For 2,000 points, for example, they get \$50 off. For 25,000 points, they get a \$500 discount.

"Anything the client does at the dealership — sales, service buying parts, referrals etc. — gets them Sonju points that are converted to dollars for future sales and services," Shannon said. "But the best part is that it is NOT vapor. It is a real program with technology to back it up. Customers go to the dealership site to check status, upgrades, free stuff.... It gives them a great reason to keep coming back to your site, even after they purchased a vehicle."

Shannon also went on to say that it increases gross profit for her dealership. A lot of her competition "gives cars away." I am sure all of you can relate to that — your competition just shotgunning over their "Best Price" on their first e-mail to a customer. At Sonju, they were able to build real *value* with their benefits and thus, "the price you receive elsewhere needs to be weighed against the value of our dealership," she said.

Thank you, Shannon! Good luck this month and close strong. I will be sending you your FREE Flip Video camera for having this month's "Best Idea." Do me a favor and take video of your happy customers and put them on your Web site and e-mail templates.

As for the challenge, I had a lot of calls and e-mails from dealers with a consistent theme. The challenge is:

How do I get my owner or GM to pay attention to this Internet thing? How do I get them to start get serious about it? They don't see the value...

You would be surprised that in 2008, with 87 to 97 percent of people going online to do some form of research before EVER stepping foot into the dealership, with LOWER cost for advertising and higher ROI, with full accountability in HR and capital investments,

with over 211,000,000 people registered to www.myspace.com, with Google buying You Tube for \$1.7 billion, with CNN conducting the Presidential Candidate Debates via YouTube, with the city of San Diego (with 2.8 million residents) offering FREE complete wireless broadband access to the entire city..., well, you get the idea. Now, add to the fact that there are lead source providers like Carsdirect that *actually sell cars*. People don't talk about that too much anymore, but Carsdirect has an actual dealer license; with NO inventory or real dealership, they sell over 1,500 units a month out of their L.A. corporate office. How about Autotrader.com? They have NO cars, no dealership and no sales people, but they make *hundreds of millions of dollars* telling the public to go their *Web site!* Yet, some dealers still to this day see little value with the Internet, or they see it but just let it fly right by them.

So, what do you do with those dealers who still choose to ignore the obvious?

My advice is give them this article to read. Then, I suggest coming up with a solid plan as to what you want to do, with details. What are the products or resources you are going to need? Who is going to work in that department? Do you need more people? Where are you going to get everyone trained? What are your Standard Operating Procedures going to be? And where are you going to get your opportunities to do business (leads, Video Search Engine Optimization, Regular Search Engine Optimization, Pay Per Click, third-party providers, membership buying programs, etc.)?

Outline how much is this going to cost, how much you are planning to gross and net and finally, how long this is going to take to see a return. Put all of that together and you should have a better shot at getting their attention.

You can only do your best to change their minds and show them the light. It is up to them as decision makers if they want to walk into it or not. But you always have choices.

If you need help in trying to put that together, it would be my pleasure to do so with you or for you for FREE. Just e-mail me or call me.

Sean V. Bradley is the CEO and founder of Dealer Synergy. He can be contacted at 866.648.7400, or by e-mail at sbradley@autosuccessonline.com.