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4 Reasons to Centralize Dealer Group Marketing



By [Jim Irving](#)

Jumpstart Automotive Media promotes centralization for its ability to provide efficiencies in media, resources, data analysis and client service.

The digital era has disrupted the way virtually every industry conducts business, and automotive dealerships are certainly no exception. What began with online leads to find in-market buyers has evolved into myriad complex marketing efforts ranging from search engine marketing to contextual advertising on auto research sites to the latest flavors of behavioral targeting, such as advertiser retargeting.

This massive shift toward marketing to car buyers online points to a very real need: for dealers to take advantage of the significant benefits of centralizing their overall marketing efforts.

It used to be that a dealer media plan consisted of a standard mix of local TV, radio, newspaper and outdoor advertising. With this media mix, there was a rationale for marketing decisions to be made at the dealer level. The regional folks had relationships in the local market, and there were not a lot of efficiencies to be achieved by consolidating these decisions with the dealer. Additionally, it was like comparing apples to oranges when trying to aggregate media-driven consumer data on a national level when the reality is every market is distinctly different.

In the new digital era, however, there are distinct reasons for dealers to reevaluate their marketing model and strongly consider a more centralized marketing approach.

I will first start with **media efficiency**. As odd as it sounds, dealer groups who operate in numerous markets can leverage their media dollars and realize rates that more closely resemble those of automotive manufacturers, who buy on a national level. How? In the digital era, dealer groups can make a national buy through one source and target the media down to the geographic level, so that their messaging will be delivered as if it were purchased on a regional level.

It is also worth discussing the benefit of **resource efficiency**. It goes without saying that there is a duplication of dealer efforts across every region that can be minimized by centralizing decisions through one place. Not only does planning and buying in a centralized way eliminate duplicated efforts, it also enables the dealer to develop a single, all-star team to handle the entire media function.

Thirdly, by bringing marketing under one roof it also makes it much easier to **centralize data**. Though digital is highly measurable, collecting and analyzing the mass quantities of consumer data generated has become a massive undertaking. But, with an all-star team in place at a regional headquarters, it is possible to continually set benchmarks and draw valuable conclusions from the data that digital provides. Equally important is that this team will be knowledgeable enough to truly understand what this data means. It is easy

to misinterpret data and make bad decisions as a result. Centralizing this function increases the likelihood that data will be properly collected, evaluated and the right steps will be taken to improve on the next marketing plan.

Last, but not least, centralizing your efforts will likely result in **top notch service**, which is truly invaluable. With the digital marketing landscape changing by the minute, it only makes sense have the best resources focused on your business. It's no surprise that these resources are generally placed on the accounts that have the greatest revenue potential through a single contact; they can, in essence, provide both first rate client care and advice on the best approach to your overall marketing strategy.

Undoubtedly media is a costly investment for any dealer. So make your vendors earn their keep and lean on them to keep your digital marketing IQ high. The media companies that understand the big picture invest in the industry's best and brightest-- and put them in place to take their leading customer relationships from vendor-only to a trusted partner status. I urge dealer groups to consider a centralized strategy. And for those who already have, I urge you to leverage yourself as much as possible and reap the many rewards that can be achieved.

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