



# FOCUS N REMARKETING

## Uniquely, wonderfully used



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USED CAR  
COLUMNIST

The used car business has changed dramatically over the past few years.

The basics of buying, pricing, reconditioning, merchandising and selling them have all evolved.

Properly taking in retail trades starts with the salesperson asking the right questions, using the right body language, showing the right level of interest, collecting the right information and getting the customer to emotionally give up their car, on the lot, at the trade, and then passing those details on to the person doing the market assessment.

I seldom come across a dealership that does an appraisal using only Black Book, TRADER and their gut.

Pricing a used car today is more like making a stock pick, as real-time wholesale and retail market data is mined by various platforms.

The management team then can assess things like local, regional or national supply, demand, days in inventory, criteria of the best sellers, etc.

For many process-driven dealerships, turn rates are at historical lows, thanks to their ability to now price cars first above, then at and finally below the market, in very short time spans by leveraging online asking price guides

– the same ones buyers reference from their phones.

The Internet has changed how people shop for used cars. In fact some dealerships – especially those targeting poor credit – have chosen to not price their inventory at all so they don't conflict with regulatory pricing disclosure laws.

Reconditioning breadth and depth depends on the philosophy of the store. What matters most here is consistency, your target demographic and that your front line sales team is highly trained on how to present your philosophy, how it affects your pricing, delivery time frame, warranties, financing options and more.

Merchandising is all about your curb appeal, both virtually and physically.

Your website must be first and foremost mobile friendly as desktop surfing goes the way of the Dodo bird. So surf and walk your lots with the eye of a consumer, not a dealer. Be sure to fix anything that could deter them from an easy and fast customer experience.

Close all the pipes and reduce as much friction as possible.

And finally selling them, retail. Because every previously loved used vehicle is different, your team must spend some time every day studying their virtual and physical inventories up close and personal.

Your sales team should work to ensure any discrepancies are noticed and corrected on your website and wherever your digital listings might be hosted.

Study the features, service history, reconditioning, accident reports, owner stories and the vehicle's unique "personality traits and blemishes."

And learn to love long distance phone calls and email leads. The buyer is online looking for a needle in the haystack. And if that needle is in your haystack, close the sale on the phone and just arrange delivery. **CAW**

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