

There is a saying that if you are marketing to the masses, you may be missing many. Those who assume that Baby Boomers watch pretty much the same TV programs and read the same newspapers and magazines as Generation Y are at risk of losing some of their target market due to lack of relevance. The emergence of new technologies and capabilities continue to change the playing field for marketers in every industry making “spray and pray” marketing a thing of the past. As automobile dealers in particular struggle to stand out among the marketing clutter consumers interface with on a daily basis, it is critical to make every message relevant to every recipient—whether they are 65 or 35. Hence, the fast adoption of personalized URLs (PURLs) and microsites to help build brand awareness and drive sales with more customer-centric marketing techniques is not surprising. PURLs are designed to address the individual’s true interest, immediately creating a personal environment unavailable in traditional direct mail techniques; and the statistics back it up. According to recent studies, materials with personalization receive a response rate increase of 23.7 percent and overall revenue increases of 23.4 percent.

□ **Creating that unique**

dialogue □ The practice of using PURLs presents the ability to drive an individual to a microsite containing product information via the PURL, creating a dialogue with the target audience and providing a closed-loop marketing environment. If a dealer has a database of buyers and knows the date they bought their last car, and the average miles that each customer puts on the car on an annualized basis, the dealer can segment the database and target those who are most likely to be in the market to buy a new car in the near future. It is the perfect time, for example, to introduce the latest model to these buyers.

The dealer can then send a direct mail piece to the prospects with a PURL. The PURL leads the recipient to a microsite that has a flash demo imbedded that gives them an overview of the key features of the new car. A questionnaire, that can be triggered by corporate or triggered locally, is on the microsite capturing their interest in learning more. Either way, feedback is gained to follow-up directly with a call or a brochure. Using PURLs and microsites in this way supports a reduced sales force and provides a level of direct, unfiltered feedback that is extremely valuable for future interactions.

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Making it happen

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Corporate marketers responsible for distributed dealerships are taking notice of the value in web-based marketing automation platforms that enable the end-users the ability to localize materials to their specific demographic audience while ensuring brand integrity is maintained. The use of web-based automation platforms that provide customizable collateral templates have become the perfect solution for creating targeted, relevant materials that resonate with

It's a Personal, Personal World

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consumers. For example, a dealership based in California may choose to incorporate a convertible onto its marketing collateral promoting an upcoming tent event to appeal to those in the warm climate. On the other hand, a dealership based in Colorado may choose to incorporate an all terrain vehicle onto the same collateral piece due to the abundance of mountains its demographic drives on. And today, with the quality of digital print virtually at parity with traditional offset (and the technology developing at such a rapid rate), the cost to implement these programs is plummeting rapidly.

There is no doubt that PURLs and microsites are helping to build brands and drive sales. Embracing customer-centric marketing techniques and taking advantage of the comprehensive suites of applications enabling marketers in a distributed environment to develop integrated campaigns tailored to local dynamics is worth the time it takes to explore how to make them work for you in your marketing plan—and your bottom line.

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