
How to brand your dealership.

a dealership branding guide
by **AutoRevo**.

Take a good look at your dealership...

How do customers see your dealership? Do you have an obvious identity, or do you look like every other dealer in town?

It's incredibly important to know your brand and live it every day. If customers come to your website and see a \$3,000 cash car next to a \$50,000 BMW, they're going to be confused.

This guide will help you understand why branding your dealership is vital to continued success. We'll show you how to build your brand and create a feeling of trust in potential customers.

Don't be just like all the other dealers in town...



REALLY look at your business

Yes, you're a car dealer... but are you the guy with the nicest trucks in town? Or the best sports cars? Do people think of you as *THE* source for the cheapest, most reliable vehicles? Do you consider yourself to be a luxury dealer? Is your specialty cargo vans?

Most of the time, dealers are trying to purchase as many cars as they can, as cheaply as possible. They wind up with an eclectic mix of cars and trucks that don't really attract much of a crowd. Even worse, their dealership isn't really "known" for anything.

EVERY dealer who wants to build a brand has to become the best of the best destination for local area buyers. It's an undervalued way of looking at inventory acquisition, but the results will be incredible if you back it up with action.

Branding is not a new concept. Many auto dealers are slow to embrace the idea because in the past, they've gotten by pretty well by just buying whatever they could buy cheaply. Branding involves looking at the big picture and making changes - and that sounds like work.

The truth is, everyone can have a brand. Every dealer can come up with an area that they can specialize in.

Branding isn't just about your inventory - it's about your entire dealership experience. From your cars to your website to your business cards, a cohesive branding strategy will help your dealership succeed.

Public perception is **EVERYTHING**

Do you ask for a Kleenex® when you really mean a tissue? How about a Coke® when another soda brand like Pepsi® will do? Brands like those aren't just dominating the global marketplace, they're changing the way we talk to each other.

Your goal would be to have everyone in town - *even people who haven't bought from you* - look at their friends and say:

"If you want to buy a diesel truck you're a fool if you don't check out (your dealership). They've got the nicest trucks around!"

"Those guys are Corvette experts. They know the ins and outs of their cars and you've gotta see the selection."

"I looked around. Nobody's got better small, fuel efficient cars."

Don't jump around. When you find a type of inventory that draws the customers you want, stick with that mix.

Imagine having only one nice car online that attracts shoppers to you. Now imagine someone searching for something similar on AutoTrader and having 10 of your listings pop up in a row? Pair that with a few positive reviews on Google and you can imagine how many more customers would drive over to see you.

We're not saying that you should pass up the big truck that's amazingly cheap, we're saying that you should focus on and put most of your energy into

determining the type of cars that work well for your brand. Once you've got that figured out, keep buying those cars. You'll build a reputation and people will seek out your vehicles.

Branding goes beyond your inventory

Branding is important because it defines an established "look" and identity for your dealership. Establishing your dealership as unique and different has never been more important; car dealers are plentiful and every dealer has a website. What makes you different?

If you don't have a logo, get one! Use your logo instead of just having text across the top of your website and your business cards. This creates a look of professionalism that helps a customer identify you and set you apart from your competitors. It also helps to establish a sense that you can be taken seriously.

Don't use generic gmail or Yahoo email addresses. You've got a website, so there's *no reason* not to use an email address based on your domain name. Not only does it make you look more professional, it's an extra branding reminder every time someone reads your email.

Consistent graphics and color schemes are also important. Give your customers a cohesive brand experience by using the same colors on your website, business cards, social media, and even your window stickers.

If you're a diesel truck guy, you'd probably want a casual, laid-back design that caters to your customers. A "no hassle, no frills" approach to buying a truck is something that a truck customer would identify with and appreciate.

If you specialize in Mercedes-Benz or BMW, you'd want a classier design, and you'd focus on the unprecedented level of style and service that those buyers expect. Your sales staff would most likely be in suits and ties, as opposed to a salesperson from the truck site who could probably get away with a t-shirt, jeans and boots.

Make your online presence unique

Too many dealers have a "set it and forget it" mentality when it comes to their websites. Most dealers have nearly the same text on every page of their sites.

Help your dealership stand out by adding unique content, especially on your home page and your "About Us" page. Tell your story; talk about who you are, where you've been, where you're going, and how you plan to get there through sales and service. Customers are much more comfortable doing business with someone they can identify with.

Besides your website, use social media to brand yourself. Make the branding consistent with the same logo and color scheme you use on your site. Don't just post your inventory, engage with your customers. This allows customers to interact with you, and their friends to interact with you as well. Post helpful tips, interesting articles, and the occasional cool piece of inventory.

I'm Zach, AutoRevo's Dealer Trainer, and I'm here to help any way I can. I have an extensive background in marketing vehicles exclusively on the Internet. I'm not a software guy - I'm a car guy who experienced first-hand the value in the tools that AutoRevo provides. Feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns. I look forward to helping you be more successful.

We hope you enjoyed this guide...

Unlike other providers who forget about you until you complain about a technical problem, AutoRevo is dedicated to helping each and every dealer succeed.

This branding guide is one of many free guides that we provide for our dealers. We've worked with thousands of dealers through the years, and we want to share our knowledge and experience to help dealers be the best they can be.

Real data, real solutions, and real success. From vehicle acquisition to point of sale, we're with you every step of the way.

