

Shift Happens:

Navigating the Next Generation's ***NEW*** Road to the Dealership

Olivia Stapleton | Dealer Teamwork



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GEN X
GEN Z

Who is Generation Z?

Marketing to the most *empowered* demographic of automotive consumers.



GOLDFISH

9 Average attention span **seconds**



GEN Z

8 Average attention span

seconds



GEN Z

350 FT

Daily Scrolling Distance

“We **do** it this way because we’ve always ***done*** it this way.”


#1
The **Experience** Matters More Than Ever

From a Transaction to an Experience

For Gen Z, the process *is* the product – if the journey feels broken, the sale never happens



1

Seamless Experience



2

Personalized Experience



3

On-my-terms Experience

The Experience Gap in Automotive

Gen Z compares you to TikTok, not just other dealers



66%

Of us want a personalized experience.

50%

Of us would switch brands for that experience.

Speaking Our Language – Four Non-Negotiables

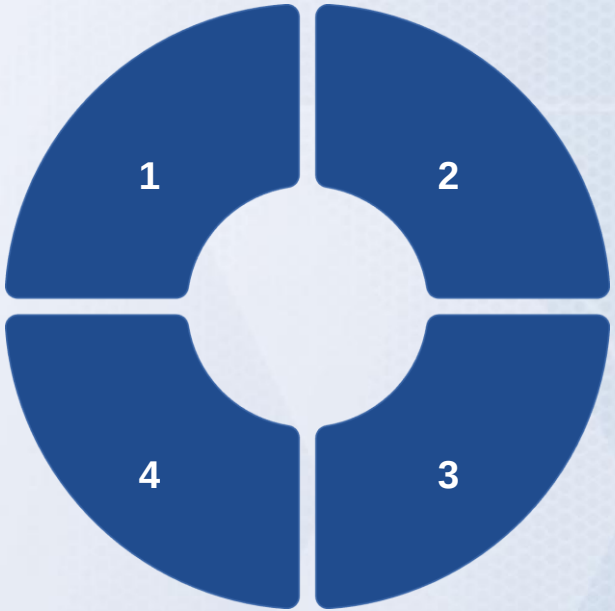
Deliver speed, clarity, relevance, and reach – or lose the sale

Be Immediate

Minutes, not hours.

Be Transparent

Pricing, fees, processes.



Be Everywhere

Omnichannel or out.

Be Personal

Relevance converts.


#2
Transparency is Non-Negotiable

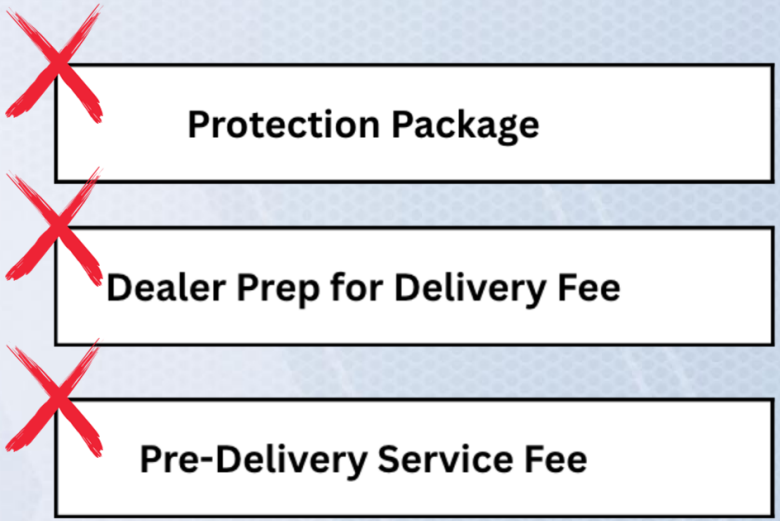
85%

Of Gen Z buyers say hidden costs or unclear terms are **deal-breakers.**

Every Fee Tells a Story

If you explain it, they'll understand. If you hide it, they'll walk

MSRP/Retail	$37,900.00
Selling Price	$35,438.00
Total Savings + Rebate	$2,462.00
DOCUMENTATION FEE	$358.00
GOV.-TEMP REG. OH	$715.00
Dealer Prep Fee	$1,295.00
VIN Etch	$695.00
Total Taxes	$2,887.58
Cash Down	$20,000.00
Amount Financed	$21,388.61





68%

Of GEN Z

Won't return after being misled **once**

Dealer Transparency Checklist

The 5-min audit that puts you in your customers shoes



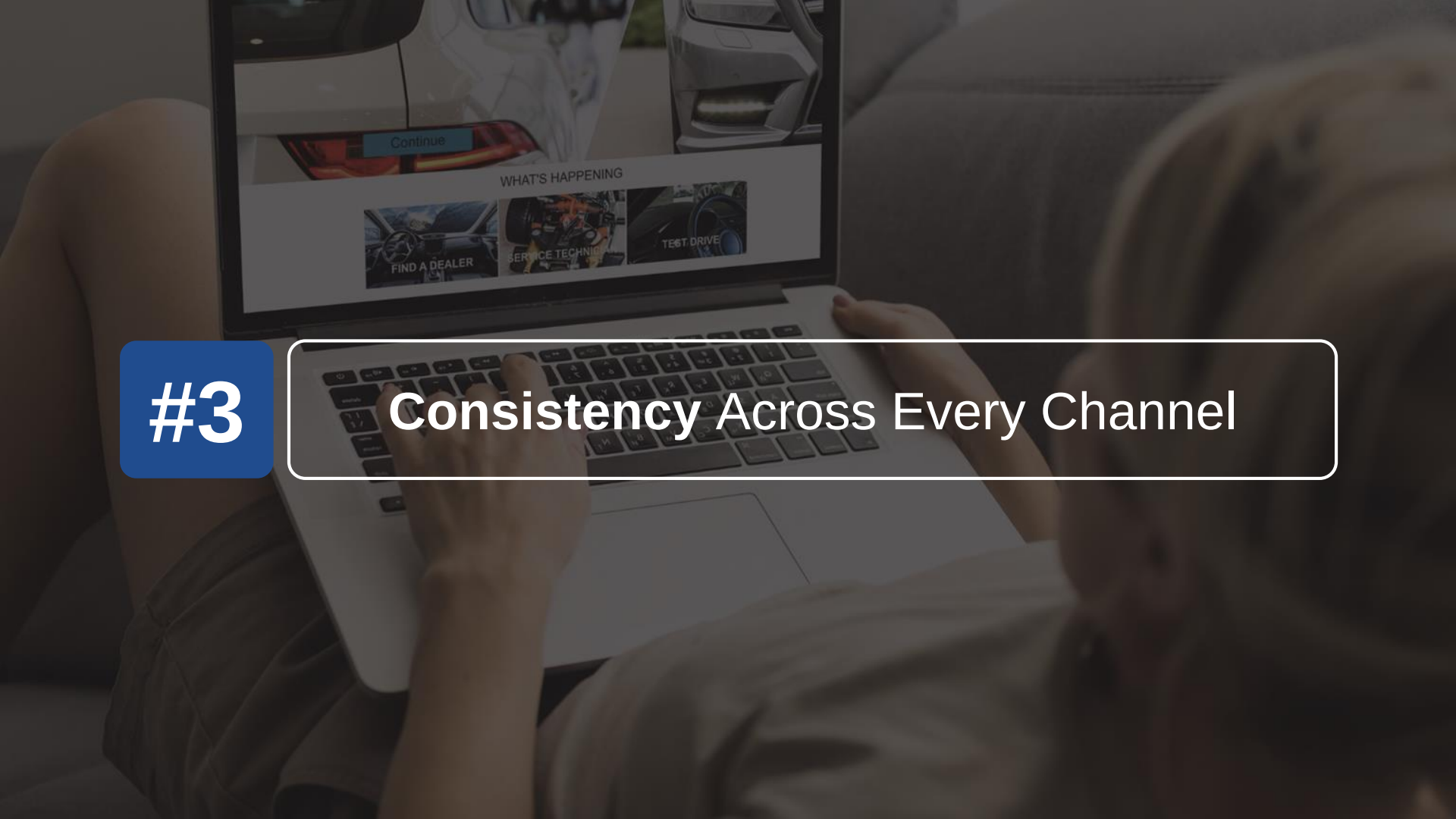
OTD Price Discovery

Price Consistency Check

Real-Time Availability

Instant Quote Response

Clear Next Steps



#3 **Consistency** Across Every Channel

You Nailed the **First Impression.**



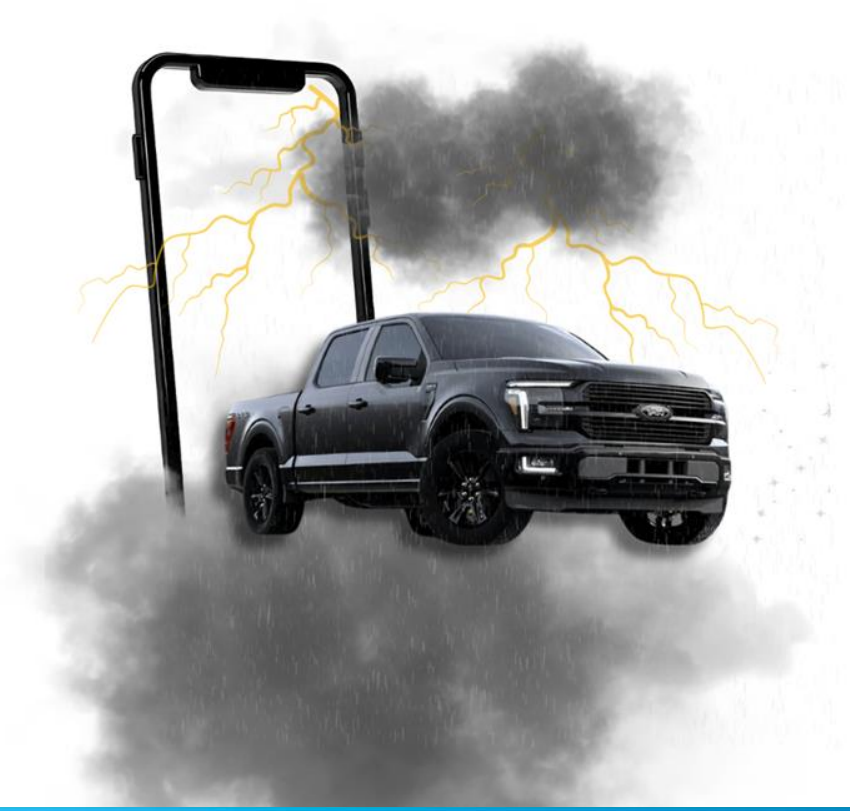
New 2026 Ford F-150 Offers - 20 In Stock
Lease For A Price You Can Afford | dreamcar.com

Ad www.dreamcar.com

Test Drive Your New Ford F-150 Raptor at Dream Car Today. Buy For A Price You Can Afford or Lease For A Price You Can Afford. We Will Save You Money And It's Available Today At Our Store.

Search New Inventory • Search Used Inventory • Contact Us

Sold me a dream. **Handed me a substitute.**



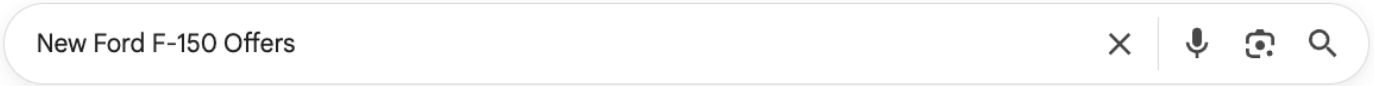
New(ish) Ford F-150 Offers - 20 In Stock (But Not The One You Are Looking For) | dreamcar.com

Ad www.notmydreamcar.com

Explore great options on a variety of Ford F-150 models. Certain configurations may be limited, but we will help you find something similar. Availability may vary and may not reflect current inventory.

See What Our Ad Almost Meant Here

Which ad better answers your consumers **search intent?**



New 2026 Ford F-150 Offers - 26 In Stock Lease For $291/mo | mhford.com

Ad www.mhford.com

Test Drive Your New Ford F-150 at Mel Hambelton Ford. Buy For $44,988 or Lease For $291/mo. Available APR 0% for 48mos. Save up to $6,302 with Special Offers at Mel Hambelton Ford.

Search New Inventory • Search Used Inventory • Contact Us

High Ad Relevance

ABC Ford - Great Deals Happening Now - abcford.com

Ad www.abcford.com

Come In Today and Drive Away In A Brand New Ford. Come Experience The ABC Ford Difference And Test Drive Your New Ford Today At ABC Ford.

Search New Inventory

Low Ad Relevance

Fragmented Experiences → Fractured Trust

Confusion kills deals.. Consistency is your brand.

1	2
Inventory Accuracy	**Pricing Transparency**
3	**4**
Cross-Platform Experience	**Team Alignment**

> Gen Z doesn't separate your platforms. They see one brand. Make every touchpoint tell the same story.



#4

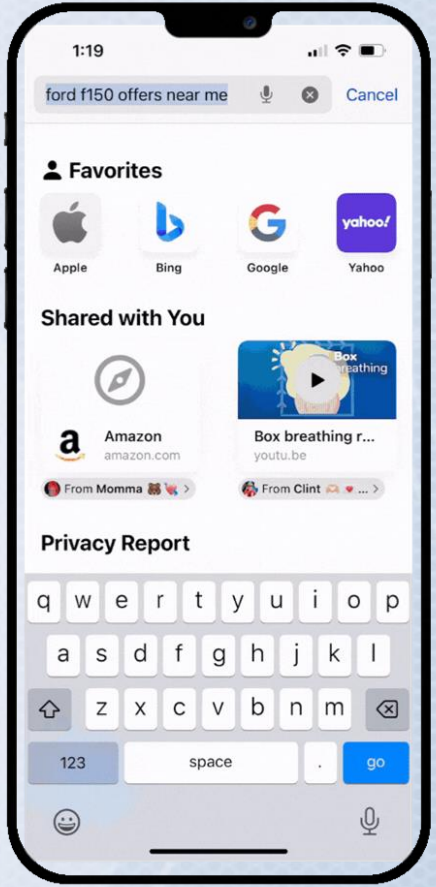
Information Power Shift

Then vs. NOW: The Information Shift

From “Dealer Knows Best” → “Buyers Know First”



Gatekept | Sales-controlled | Dealer Knows Best | Fragmented



Accessible

Experience Orientated

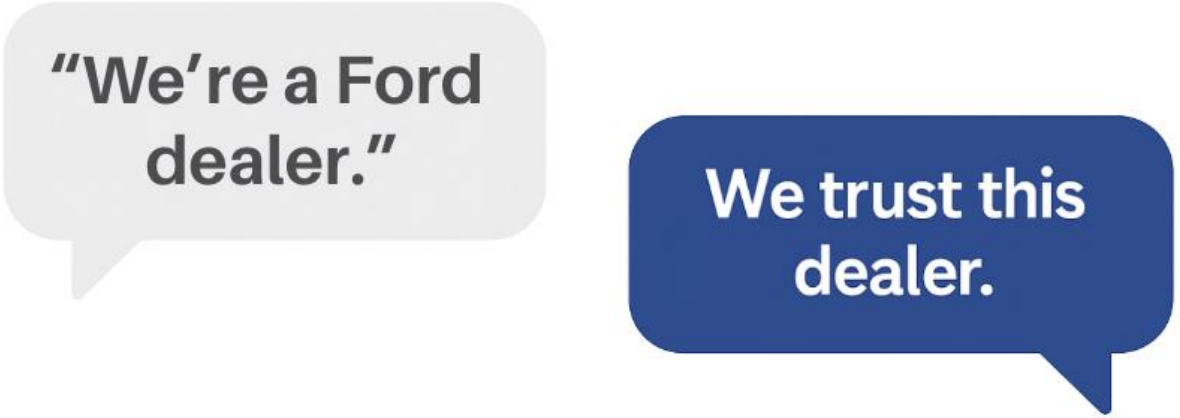
Personal

Searchable

“Shift from being an information gatekeeper, to an information **partner**.”


#5
Brand Loyalty: Retaining Next Gen Buyers

We trust this dealer.



Loyalty is local. **Dealer trust** is the new brand equity.

ONLINE CONTROL

OFFLINE VALIDATION

38%

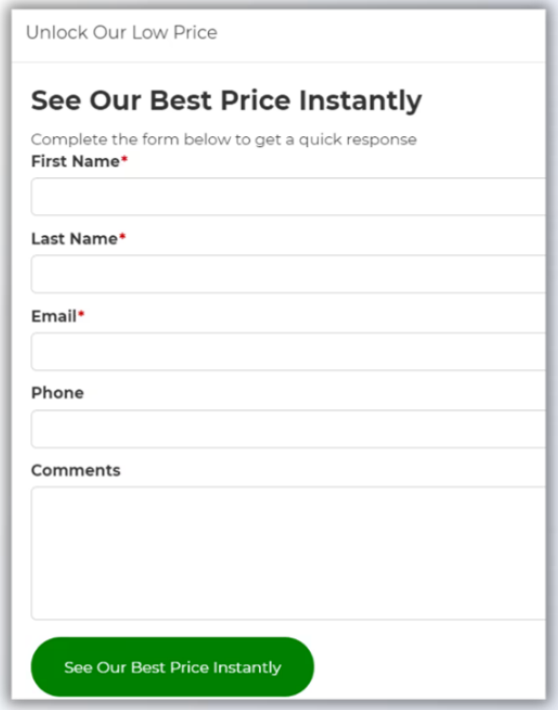
Of us are open to purchasing a vehicle entirely online.

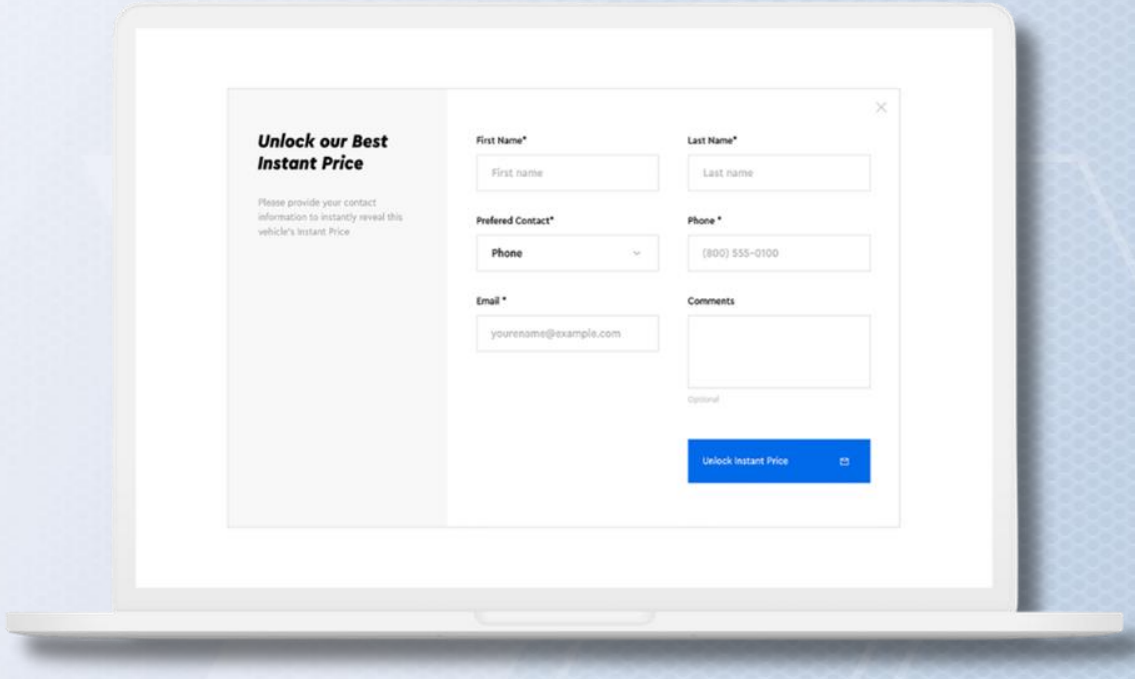
43%

Still believe dealerships are essential.


#6
Personalized. Private. **Proven.**

If this looks familiar.. You've already **lost the deal**



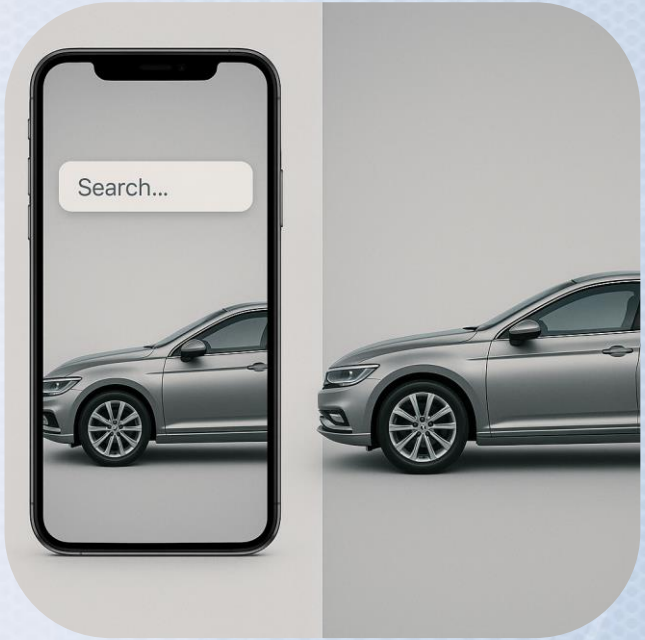


Key Actions to Adapt 

Meet us where we are.

The Experience

- Push consistent inventory + offers on social channels with clickable paths
- Implement one digital-to-store flow; one conjoined experience



Nothing **Behind** the Curtain.

Transparency

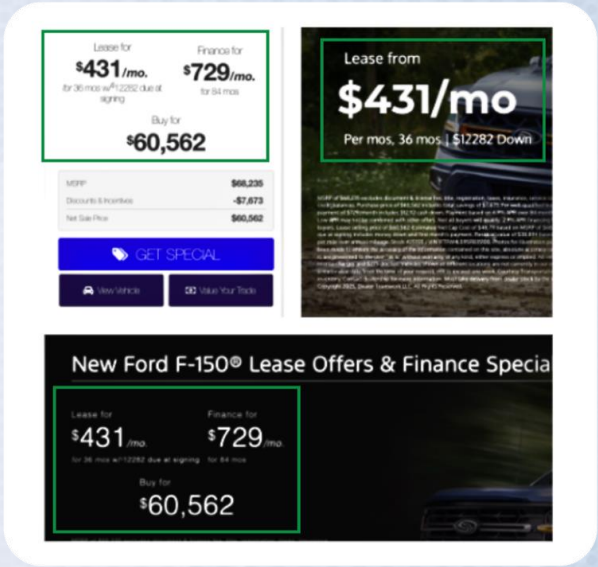
- Show all fees upfront (no “call for price”
- Align ad → site → showroom pricing & details



Give us the answers we are **searching** for

Consistency

- Adopt a create once, publish everywhere content tools
- Regularly audit inventory accuracy across platforms



Be the **guide.**
Not the wall.

Information Shift

- Add “What to Expect” pages
- OTD Calculators
- Display FAQs & how-tos on your Landing Pages & Website




#7
Listen And Learn to *Lead*

NEVER GO TO FORD OF [redacted] IN [redacted] - absolute zero understanding of basic consumer expecations and nothing matches online in store.

Everyone go give Kia of [redacted] one star reviews please. Sleazy salesmen and zero customer respect.

r/sanantonio · 1y ago

Are there any car dealerships that don't suck?

151 votes · 240 comments

Take a male friend with you or else you will have a problem at Honda of [redacted]

r/cars · 1y ago

I had a great dealership experience. Nobody believes me.

278 votes · 84 comments

FORD OF [redacted] IS THE WORST DEALERSHIP



Why do dealers lie?

23 votes · 23 comments

r/ElantraN · 6mo ago

Why are dealerships such a pain!

28 votes · 40 comments

research is your biggest ammo

Drove 6 hours and their inventory was outdated.

ZERO TRANSPARENCY!!!!!! AVOID IT AT ALL COSTS.

THEY DIDN'T CARE WHAT I WANTED. THEY JUST WANTED THE FUCKING SALE.

The future of Automotive isn’t about keeping ‘up’ with Gen Z.

It’s about adapting to the consumer we’ve all become.

QUESTIONS?



THANK YOU!

Let's Connect:

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LAS VEGAS

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