

# PLAYBOOK DATABASE 101



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Getting Your Customer Database Straight:

*An in-depth Powersports Dealership Guide to Database Building & Data Hygiene* .....3

- Chapter 1:** Where is Your Data and What In the World is Data Hygiene? .....6  
**Chapter 2:** Why Segment Your Customers? .....10  
**Chapter 3:** How Does Data Enhancement Help My Dealership? .....13

## Prep Your Dealership for Reopening:

*A path to looking further into your Database Marketing Strategy* .....15

- Chapter 4:** Ready Your Dealership for Re-Opening .....16  
**Chapter 5:** Is Your Database Marketing Strategy on Point? .....18  
**Chapter 6:** Start Now or Get Left Behind .....22

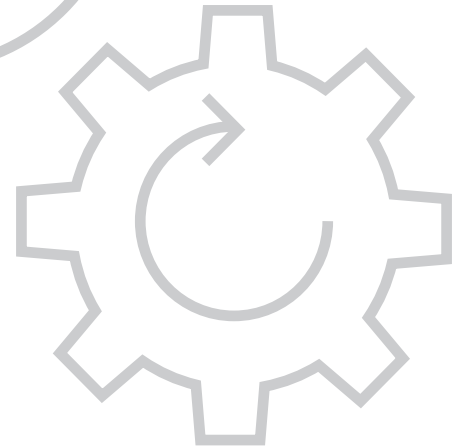
## Maximizing Efficiency in your Dealership:

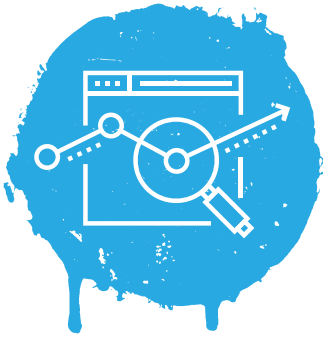
*A comprehensive look on strengthening your Conversion Strategy* .....24

- Chapter 7:** Conversion is Your Primary Metric .....26  
**Chapter 8:** Converting High-Value Traffic into a Lead .....29  
**Chapter 9:** Turning Leads into Shows .....32

DATABASE

# BUILDING & DATA HYGIENE





## INTRODUCTION: GETTING YOUR CUSTOMER DATABASE STRAIGHT

What is the single most important thing to your powersports dealership? Is it your inventory? Is it your sales team? Perhaps you believe it's your facility, or maybe it's the geographic location. Is it your marketing? Your banners? That big LED billboard out there on the interstate?

No. It's none of those.

The single most important thing to any powersports dealer **is your customer base.**

### »»» THIS DOES NOT MEAN:

- *New customers that you have yet to connect with.*
- *Potential customers who are toying with the idea of visiting your dealership for the first time.*
- *People that might hear about your dealership somewhere, somehow.*

What we're talking about right now is your existing customer base – those people who have purchased from you in the past, or at least paid a visit to your dealership in person, sent a query via your website, or otherwise made contact.

### »»» THIS CAN AND SHOULD ALSO INCLUDE:

- *Anyone who has downloaded loss leaders/freebies in exchange for their contact information.*
- *Anyone who has signed up for your email marketing or newsletter.*
- *Anyone who has visited your dealership's service center for maintenance or repairs on an ATV or other powersports vehicle.*

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Why are existing customers and those who have already expressed an interest in what you offer or have visited your dealership in the past more important than new customers? In the wake of COVID-19, you must realize that no matter what happens now, things out of your control can put your store in jeopardy. **Your existing customers are what will get you through**, not cold leads or those who have never heard of your dealership before.

That's why one of the most critical things for you to do is build your database. Think of it as your playbook – it contains all the vital strategies and solutions to help you win big. In this case, those strategies are your existing customers and anyone else who has given you their contact information.

Remember this: **It costs five times as much to recruit a new customer as it does to retain a current customer.** Plus, in instances like the global pandemic, there may be no way to reach new customers. This sentiment is embodied in an old saying, "Make new friends, but keep the old. One is silver, the other gold."

Of course, in order to benefit from those existing customers, you must be able to reach them. You must have a central repository where you store information, names, and other important data. That's a clue – the solution is right in the name. We're talking about your database.

Your customer database is an invaluable asset that provides you with traction, the ability to call, email, or send snail mail to existing customers and others you have connected with over time. However, many dealerships struggle when it comes to building their database and then maintaining it over time. In this playbook, we will walk you through building your database, maintaining it with proper hygiene, and more to ensure that you're leveraging this asset to its fullest extent.



## CHAPTER ONE: WHERE IS YOUR DATA AND WHAT IN THE WORLD IS DATA HYGIENE?

How do you keep track of your customers? What about the people who visit your service department? Where is the information on email-opt-ins stored?

If your answer is anything other than “in our database”, it’s incorrect. Your customer database is absolutely critical and if you aren’t taking strategic steps to store, safeguard, and ensure that you have access to it, you’re missing out on an invaluable asset.

### Where Is Your Data?

If you don’t have a defined database, then your customer information is probably spread across the entire dealership.

#### **YOU’LL FIND IT LOCKED AWAY IN THE FOLLOWING DEPARTMENTS:**

- Sales
- Service
- Marketing
- Website subscriptions

Now, you might think that this is fine. After all, that information is still in your dealership. **You’re not really missing out, are you?** Sadly, you are. Here are just a few of the problems with this distributed/disorganized method of customer information storage.

### 1. SILOS

One of the most challenging aspects to distributed customer information is that it tends to aggregate into silos. Each department hoards the data they have come into possession of, regardless of what that data could be useful to other departments.

For instance, your marketing department probably doesn’t share its data with sales or service. Sales doesn’t always share customer information with service or marketing, your Internet marketing team may not share subscriber information with your marketing or sales teams.

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What happens here is that customer information collects in what are called silos. It becomes locked in, walled off, and thought of as the property of the department that harvested it. In short, it becomes largely useless to the wider business.

## 2. DISORGANIZED

Another challenge with distributed/departmental storage of customer data is that it becomes very disorganized. There is not one single entity responsible for ensuring that data is entered the same way each time. This becomes very challenging over time as you collect more and more customer information.

For instance, in the marketing department, the team might create records using the customer's first name, middle initial, and last name. In the service department, they might use the customer's last name and first and middle initials. It becomes very easy to create duplicate customer entries without realizing it. Storage and access also become increasingly difficult to manage effectively.

## 3. ERRORS AND ISSUES

When you do not store your customer information in a central database, there is an increasing likelihood of errors and inaccuracies to grow. Consider the following:

- *Who is responsible for ensuring there are no duplicate customer records?*
- *Who is responsible for checking the accuracy of contact information?*
- *Who is responsible for checking and correcting spelling errors and typos?*
- *Who is responsible for removing old, outdated, and incorrect information?*

As you can see, there are plenty of reasons that you need to store your customer information in a central database. However, it is just as important that you practice good data hygiene. What does that mean? Actually, we've already touched on it, but it does bear further exploration.

## What Is Data Hygiene?

Data hygiene sounds like a complicated, challenging thing, but it's actually very simple. It's nothing more than ensuring that the information you have within your database is accurate and clean. **Inaccurate, erroneous information actually costs companies across the US billions of dollars each year.** Taking the time necessary to ensure that your data is accurate, clean, and usable ensures that you can put it to work on your dealership's behalf.

### DATA HYGIENE STEPS: AS SIMPLE AS 1-2-3

Again, ensuring that your data is clean and protected doesn't have to be a drawn-out, arduous process. It can actually be relatively simple. You do need to know what's involved, though. Here are just a few of the things you need to watch for to ensure that's the case:

**Check for duplicate information.** You will need to dive deep to ensure that you can double-check all fields, including address, email address, name, phone number, etc. Any duplicate entries should be bumped against one another to determine if:

- *It is actually a duplicate entry OR*
- *It is an erroneous entry that needs to be corrected OR*
- *It is a different customer within the same household*

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Check for inaccurate information. Inaccuracies can manifest in any number of ways, including:

- *Typos*
- *Incorrect information*
- *Missing information*
- *Outdated information*
- *Partial information*

Create a schedule for your information to be audited regularly. Auditing should check for duplication, errors, incorrect information, and more. It should also include correcting any incorrect information and/or removing entries that are no longer valid or usable.

## Create Rules and Constraints

First, understand that no matter what you do, some errors will always sneak into your data. You will need to regularly conduct audits and correct issues. You'll need to rinse and repeat.

However, with the right steps now, you can minimize the time and effort required for data hygiene. A few basic rules and constraints will help ensure that data entered into the database is more accurate to begin with.

So, what should you do? What rules and limitations should you impose? It's not all that difficult, and can actually be pretty flexible.

### **HERE ARE A FEW TIPS TO GET YOU MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.**

- *All phone numbers should be entered the same way*
- *All customer names should be formatted the same way*
- *All addresses should be entered the same way*
- *All email addresses should be entered the same way*
- *Case sensitivity should be eliminated unless it is absolutely necessary*
- *Abbreviations should be standardized for all entries*
- *Insist on either using abbreviations or not (such as Parkway or Pkwy, for instance)*

With a few basic rules and requirements applied across your dealership, as well as the insistence on customer data being entered into your main database, rather than stored in departmental silos, it is possible to build a strong, accurate database. However, this is not the end of things. You need to be able to segment that database in order to use it effectively. Not sure how to do that or what it entails? We'll explore it in the next chapter.





**37% OF EMAIL ADDRESSES** change annually

**30% OF ORGANIZATIONS**  
currently have no strategy to update  
inaccurate or complete records

**15% OF LEADS**  
contained duplicated data

**80% OF COMPANIES**  
say they have "risky" phone contact records

**40% OF LEADS** contain bad data





## CHAPTER TWO: WHY SEGMENT YOUR CUSTOMERS?

It's tempting to think of your audience as one, single homogenous group. After all, they all own or want to own powersports equipment, right? However, that's not the case at all. Not even remotely. That customer base is made up of individuals with specific needs, lifestyles, budgets, interests, passions, and requirements.

That makes sense, but why does it matter when it comes to your marketing? Simply put, you can't just put all your customers on blast. You can't "set it and forget it". Why? Because the same marketing message isn't going to work with every part of your audience. You need to segment your audience and then customize your message in order to get the most value and traction out of your database.

### What Is Customer Segmentation?

First, let's define customer segmentation. According to eCommerce giant Shopify, it is "the process of dividing customers into groups based on common characteristics so companies can market to each group effectively and appropriately".

There are two key points to that definition we need to explore – effectively and appropriately. In fact, they are interrelated.

### EFFECTIVE AND APPROPRIATE MARKETING

To delve into the definition above and apply it to your powersports dealership audience, we need to discuss effective, appropriate marketing. Not all types of marketing to all audience segments is appropriate, which limits its effectiveness. Therefore, the more appropriate the marketing, the more effective it will be. There are benefits for both you and the customer here, too.

With effective, appropriate marketing, you get to save marketing money that would otherwise be thrown down the drain on less than effective outreach efforts. You also get a higher return on your investment, sell more equipment and accessories, and forge stronger, longer-lasting relationships with your customers.

For customers, they get more relevant offers and information. They see you as an answer to their challenges or the supplier of their needs, rather than "just another salesperson". Customers also spend less time searching for an appropriate answer to their challenge.

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## LET'S CONSIDER AN EXAMPLE:

Suppose you're marketing a new ATV. It's got a 686cc liquid-cooled SOHC 4-stroke, 4-valve engine, fuel injection, a 5-speed reverse with a multiplate clutch, and is 2-wheel drive. Now, obviously, this ATV will work for a wide range of customers, but simply throwing out an image with some specs is hardly going to get the eyeballs you need to your marketing collateral.

You need to tell a **story**. You need to show your customers how that ATV will fit their lifestyle, how it will solve their needs, or how it will benefit them.

Here's the thing – different parts of your audience will perceive that ATV differently so your story must be tailored to those differences. You can't market the ATV we just discussed as a great hunting accessory to someone who doesn't hunt and instead wants to use the ATV to explore the dunes at their local beach. You can't market the ATV as being racing-related to someone who primarily wants it for getting to their hunting blind and then carrying their game out of the woods at the end of the day.

It's your job to take that ATV's specs, style, design, and potential range of uses and tell multiple stories, each of which is suited to one particular segment of your audience. Doing so helps customers within each segment see themselves using the ATV, netting you a greater ROI and building stronger sales.

## Additional Benefits of Audience Segmentation

Of course, the benefits of audience segmentation go deeper than what we've touched on so far. In fact, the full list includes the following:

- *The opportunity to upsell and cross-sell additional products or services offered by your powersports dealership*
- *The ability to create a stronger, more direct relationship with each customer*
- *The chance to test different pricing strategies with different audience segments*
- *The ability to focus on those customers who deliver more profitability*
- *The chance to choose the ideal communication medium for each customer, whether that's social media, email, snail mail, or something else*
- *The chance to improve your customer service*

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## How to Segment Your Audience

The information above clearly shows that audience segmentation is vital, but how do you do it? The first thing to do is to decide which metrics you'll use, and then collect that information. What metrics do you use to separate an audience into smaller pieces, though? Some of the obvious answers include the following:

- *Age*
- *Life stage – married, retired, divorced, etc.*
- *Income level*
- *Gender*

However, those are pretty basic options, and don't really tell you that much about a person and what interests them about your powersports equipment. Is that 35-year-old entrepreneur interested in an ATV for hunting or racing? Is that 60-year-old retiree interested in a cruiser or a sport bike? What sort of power does brand hold for a particular customer. To drill down into those questions, you'll need to gather information about things such as:

- *Hobbies*
- *Interests*
- *Pastimes*
- *Activity level*

So, how do you gain access to that information, though? You can do it in any number of ways, including surveys, questionnaires, investigations into responses to particular types of emails or social media posts, and more.

Of course, once you have that information, you need to put it to use. This is called data enhancement and understanding its value to your powersports dealership is **critical**.



## CHAPTER THREE: HOW DOES DATA ENHANCEMENT HELP MY DEALERSHIP?

Data enhancement – it's a fancy way of saying “adding new information to an existing record”. For instance, if you learn that Bob not only likes to ride motorcycles, but is an avid hunter, you can add that information to his customer record. That's data enhancement in a nutshell. It's nothing more or less than adding critical details to help flesh out your image of a customer or audience segment. How does that help you, though?

### Better Segmentation

First and perhaps most obviously, data enhancement helps provide you with better audience segmentation. After all, the more information you have about a particular customer, **the easier it will be to determine what segment they fit within, or even to create a new segment based on personal information.**

### Better Targeting

Data enhancement also gives you the ability to hone your targeting and increase its effectiveness. Rather than sending out an email message that might get the attention of a few recipients, you can be sure that your message is tailored to exactly what that audience segment values or is interested in. That in turn bolsters your efficiency and expands the reach of each ad.

### Better Channel Optimization

With more information about your audience segments, you can begin to make better use of the various marketing channels open to you. For instance, you might find that some segments of your audience respond better to social posts than they do to email messages. Others might prefer SMS marketing, while others may prefer something else entirely. With data enhancement, you begin the journey toward a more cohesive marketing strategy overall that maximizes channel optimization and value.

### Better Customer Experience

With more information about their preferences, habits, likes and dislikes, and all the rest, you are able to provide a better experience to your customers. This ensures that you're able to keep those you've already earned, which is the key to weathering future storms. **Remember that when the situation is out of your control, it is your existing customer base that will get you through.** By delivering a great experience with every interaction, you strengthen the bond between you and your customers.

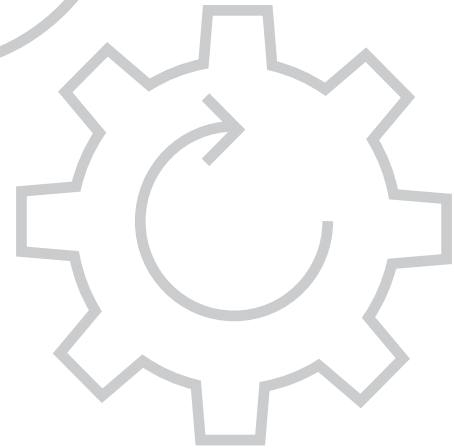
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## Better Control Over Marketing Spend

Finally, data enhancement helps ensure that you're making smart, informed decisions with your marketing budget. It reduces waste and cuts needless expenditures. Rather than dumping money into a campaign that will see little in the way of response, you can create multiple micro-campaigns that net massive ROI and help you build stronger relationships with those who matter most to you. Not only can you save money, but this also ensures that you're able to reduce wasted time and effort, ensuring that your team can focus on what they do best, and what will generate the most return.

# DIGITAL MARKETING & STRATEGY





## CHAPTER FOUR: READY YOUR DEALERSHIP FOR RE-OPENING

The COVID-19 pandemic has all-but stopped the world from moving around us. As a business owner, it can be a scary time. However, if you're smart in this situation, **it can also be a very productive time**. This is your opportunity to get a competitive edge in your digital marketing strategy and give all of your attention to the future growth of your dealership. While the others are sleeping on the job, you can capitalize on this time to revamp your marketing efforts, realign your strategies, and make sure that you're employing the best marketing strategies and tools so that when your doors are able to reopen, you can hit the ground running.

Your powersports dealership might still be conducting some online or hands-free business with customers, but you probably still have a lot of people who are not busy because the dealership itself is closed. Even if they aren't your typical marketing team, they might have value-added input or suggestions, so you should definitely include them in your brainstorming and marketing efforts. The frontline salespeople and others you might not consider could know more about creating the best customer experience with database marketing than you expect, and that can help you get ahead of the game.

Essentially, **it's about making use of your time and knowing where to focus your efforts**. For the sake of your future growth, database marketing is where your focus needs to be right now. Read on to find out more about database marketing and why it is the lifeline that will save your powersports dealership in a post-lockdown and post-pandemic economy.

### Make the Best Use of Your Downtime

You could sit around and enjoy a little extra time off during the lockdown since after all you're not allowed to operate your physical dealership. However, you could also take advantage of having this time to redefine and re-evaluate your marketing efforts and ensure that your dealership has the best strategies and practices in place. That way, **when the country does open back up for business, you'll be a step ahead of the competition**.

Feel free to review any and all of your marketing efforts, as well as your day-to-day procedures and other areas of your business that you might be aware are in need of improvement. Look at how you can make changes and adapt your practices to increase profits and reduce your expenses on a day-to-day basis. Finally, study up on the latest marketing trends and digital marketing solutions so that you can get your dealership on board with the tools for tomorrow.

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There is an endless sea of data available to you through your database tools. When was the last time that you actually took the time to go through the data and read the reports beyond grabbing the quick metrics that you want to check? A lot of dealerships never even look at the data that isn't brought up on auto-generated reports that were pre-set when installing the software. If you aren't looking, you're missing out on a lot of useful information that can help you improve your marketing efforts. You have nothing but time now, so you might as well dig into the data and check out your reporting tools to see where you can maximize your marketing efforts.

## Review Your Database Marketing Strategy

**Do you have a database marketing strategy in place already?** If so, now is the perfect time to review it and see if your goals and metrics still stand up or if you need to make some changes. It's likely that you will find at least a few things to update, and if you're smart, you'll do some research to see what the future of database marketing looks like. After all, you're not going to come out of this lockdown the same dealership that you went in as, and you're going to have a lot of lost profits to make up for. By reviewing and improving your strategies now, you'll be ready to hit the ground running with sales when the country finally resumes everyday business.



### WHEN REVIEWING YOUR STRATEGY, MAKE SURE THAT YOU'RE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THINGS LIKE:

- *Accurate and relevant customer data (get rid of outdated or incorrect information)*
- *Customer segmentation opportunities (by sales or demographics)*
- *Relationship marketing*
- *Database tools and CRM resources*

If you are lacking in any of these areas or you aren't capitalizing on them with your database marketing, it may be time to revisit your strategy and come up with a better plan for picking things up when the lockdown ends.

## Dealership Growth Starts with a Plan

**You can't grow if you don't know where to go.** With the state of the economy and the current COVID-19 pandemic, every powersports dealership is chomping at the bit to get back out there, get the majority of the customer market, and get people ready to buy as soon as they can come in the doors. If you aren't on this same train, you're going to be left behind from the very start. You can't just decide that you're going to redouble your marketing efforts and hound people to make a purchase until they finally concede. Not only is that ineffective, but it will actually drive people away.

In the next two chapters, we'll discuss how to dig into your database marketing strategy, pick it apart, and find the best way to move forward and build a better strategy for the future. We'll also help you understand the value of this marketing tool, as well as why you need a dynamic, integrated CRM database that sets you up for success from the very start. **Keep reading to find out how your business can hit the ground running** and become the post-lockdown frontrunner by putting a little more work into your marketing now.



## INNOVATION



## CHAPTER FIVE: IS YOUR DATABASE MARKETING STRATEGY ON POINT?

Any effective strategy for database marketing is going to need to have intuitive AI, automated CRM solutions, and other database tools that will assist with lead generation, conversion, and customer retention.

### »»» THIS COULD INCLUDE THINGS LIKE:

- **Tracking Tools:** *campaigns like pay-per-click marketing could be effective tools for marketing, and having a database that allows you to monitor visitor behavior and page navigation will help you better target those visitors.*
- **Leads:** *With the purchasing information already in your database, you can generate new sales leads and retention efforts from your existing customer base, allowing you to get big leads with minimal investment.*
- **Social Media Marketing:** *You can never go wrong offering incentives to your existing customers for referring their own social media contacts to your powersports dealership and having the database information in place makes this campaign much easier to execute.*
- **Maintenance Tools:** *Always make sure that you choose a platform for your CRM and database marketing needs that makes it easy to keep customer information updated so that you can make the most of your marketing efforts.*

The goal of this strategy is always going to be to generate the most leads and repeat business with the fewest amount of resources and the least amount of effort. When you have a robust database platform and tools on hand, you'll get a lot more out of the marketing than you would otherwise. Every business is different, **but you need to use this tool to your advantage in any way that you can.** Whether that is to segment and target specific audiences or just to help you gain insight about how your audience wants to be marketed to, the insight is going to be invaluable.

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## Why You Need a Solid Database Marketing Plan

There are a number of benefits that can be gained from capitalizing on the latest marketing tools, including database marketing. Today's customers are specifically picky about getting the best customer experience across the board, which means that marketers need to ensure that there is a unified experience from start to finish. With a proper database marketing strategy, that will be a lot easier and it will help people feel more appreciated and individually valued.



### WHEN YOU IMPLEMENT DATABASE MARKETING STRATEGIES THROUGH YOUR CUSTOMER DATABASE, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO ENJOY BENEFITS LIKE:

- *The ability to improve customer service by offering a complete 360-degree view of the customer experience and interaction from start to finish.*
- *The chance to identify and segment customer groups for better marketing efforts.*
- *Design highly personalized marketing campaigns and messages for your existing customers and potential leads.*
- *Help you determine which channels will be best to engage your customers and how to choose the appropriate timing.*
- *Build loyalty programs that actually offer useful incentives to the appropriate customers.*
- *Improve efficiency by allowing you to only market to people who are likely to respond or make a purchase.*

These are just a few of the highlights of putting database marketing to work for your powersports dealership. Essentially, you can look at it in a simple way: this is the customer giving you all of the information that you need about how to sell to them. It's like a cheat sheet for digital marketing in today's highly competitive marketplace. **Why wouldn't you want to have this on your side?**

## Wait, What is Database Marketing? How is it Different from Digital Marketing?

Database marketing is an offshoot of digital marketing that focuses specifically on utilizing the CRM database and other database tools to help market and remarket your products. You can use the database to help track user activity, generate new sales leads, and even get people to refer their friends and family via social media and other channels. Digital marketing is a larger umbrella that refers to the entire process of marketing your powersports dealership in the online world. There are many aspects to this process, of which database marketing is the latest and most popular at the present time.

Put simply, database marketing allows you to use existing customer and sales data to identify potential leads, repeat business, and other marketing opportunities at a much lower cost than if you were to invest your efforts in brand new lead generation. **You need to be able to connect your powersports equipment and accessories to the needs of your past, current, and future customers** in order to generate leads, increase retention, and be ready to hit the ground running once the lockdown comes to an end.

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## 5 Strategies and Techniques Your Dealership Needs

When you are looking to improve your digital marketing efforts through the use of database marketing, there are definitely some strategies that work better than others. Of course, you'll also probably have to try a few things out to see what works best. If you want the biggest list of potential options, check out this [master guide to 24 Essential Database Marketing Techniques from the Database Marketing Institute](#). For now, here are five that should be on everyone's list.

**1. RELATIONSHIP MARKETING:** This concept has been around for generations, although it may not have been previously known by this name. Essentially, relationship marketing allows you to find out exactly what customers want in terms of being marketed to, thereby furthering the development of the customer relationship and giving them a sense of trust in your dealership to handle all of their needs.

**2. PREDICTIVE MODELING:** There is so much data available in your metrics and tracking tools. **It's up to you to take advantage of that data** and one of the best ways to do that is through predictive modeling. This tool will allow you to see exactly what will happen if you implement certain strategies or marketing plans, or how you can increase certain metrics by taking a specific action. It gives you a lot of actionable information that you can use to take your dealership to the next level.

**3. CUSTOMER SEGMENTATION:** You no longer have to throw out a net and hope to catch a few leads. Thanks to detailed customer segmentation models and integrated sales and demographic tools, you will be able to create as many customer segments as you want to reach out to the audience that you have in mind. This increases the investment of your marketing dollars and gives you a chance to save wasted efforts.

**4. INTEGRATED DATABASE TOOLS:** There are a number of tracking tools and maintenance features on your CRM database that will allow you to further improve your database marketing. These features will help you identify potential targets for loyalty programs and future sales, among other things. Take advantage of the tools you already have and you'll save money on new ones.

**5. LOYALTY AND REFERRAL PROGRAMS:** **Customers love nothing more than feeling appreciated.** When you offer referral bonus programs or customer loyalty programs, you are giving your customers the chance to get more out of your brand. As a powersports dealer, loyalty might only be reserved for something like the service department, but you can definitely cash in on referral programs with the help of your customers and their social media accounts.



**49% OF BUSINESSES** use email automation

**42% OF MARKETERS**  
do not send targeted email messages;  
only 4% use layered targeting

**66% OF MARKETERS**  
personalize their emails  
based on age data

**83% OF COMPANIES**  
use at least basic segmentation for their emails

**RECIPIENTS ARE 75% MORE LIKELY**  
to click on emails from segmented campaigns  
than non-segmented campaigns



## CHAPTER SIX: START NOW OR GET LEFT BEHIND

The most important takeaway here, aside from understanding the value of database marketing, is that the **time is absolutely now or never**. You have to take advantage of this downtime to get your dealership back on track and ready to hit the ground running. There is no guarantee that you are going to succeed at all of your marketing efforts, but you will certainly fail if you don't take the time to try. You can't wait any longer and you shouldn't have been waiting in the first place. It might be better to be focused on customers and sales, but since you can't be, you might as well be helping your dealership in any way that you can.

### Setting the Competitive Edge

The dealerships around you are already working on their next great marketing campaign. As mentioned earlier, it's not about whether or not you want to do this, but whether you're willing to risk losing to the competition when businesses do get to open their doors once again. By taking the time to build a solid database marketing strategy, you'll be ready to start making sales from the start and might even secure a few deals online in the meantime.

It might be hard to think about business at a time like this, but you have to think about your bottom line. Your competition isn't waiting for the green light. They're using their time to figure out how to turn this situation into a positive and part of that comes from taking the time to improve marketing efforts. With a solid database marketing strategy, you're investing minimal time and even less money, and **you'll get some of the biggest returns on your marketing dollars when things finally do open back up**.

### Ask the Important Questions

In order to make the most of your database marketing, you need to ask a couple of important questions. We've already answered the biggest one—when. So now that you're working on revamping your own strategies, **you have two very important things to consider**:

**WHO?**

**Who is your target customer?** Which audience or customer segment has the best chance of generating new leads? How can you use customer data to find your best targets? By taking advantage of database marketing, you can get very specific about who you should be reaching out to, or which audience you want to focus on at this time.

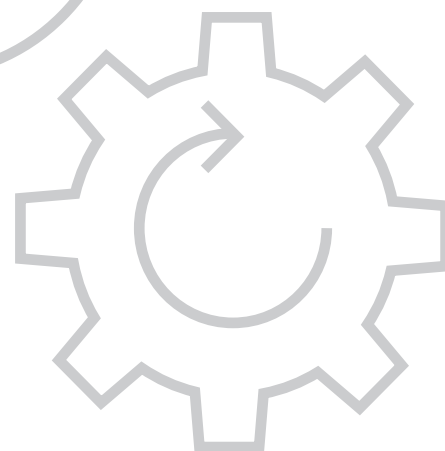


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## HOW?

**Using tracking tools**, you can monitor website activity and user navigation so that you can see exactly how to best market to their personality. This guarantees a more personalized approach, which also means that you'll have a much better chance of getting a good return on your investment.

As long as you can answer these questions, you'll be on the right track with database marketing. Make sure that you're giving yourself the best chances of success. Now more than ever, there's no rush to hammer down the details, so take time to do some research and figure out what's going to be best way to restart your powersports dealership at full throttle.



# BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE **CONVERSION STRATEGY**





## INTRODUCTION: YOUR CONVERSION STRATEGY AND MAXIMIZING EFFICIENCY

Within this series, we have discussed getting your customer database straight, the importance of data hygiene, audience segmentation, multichannel marketing, and more. However, **now is time to bring it all together**. We're talking conversion strategy here.

**REMEMBER;** it doesn't matter how many people see your ads or how many eyeballs you get to your social media ads. If they're not converting into customers, they're not building your bottom line (at least not yet).

The right strategy maximizes visibility, enhances efficiency as you come out of #lockdown2020, converts high-value traffic into leads, and then turns those leads into purchases.

Of course, not all leads are created equal, and getting someone to call your dealership is not the optimal outcome from your marketing strategy. In this playbook, we'll explore these topics and more to ensure that you're able to create an effective conversion strategy that helps you build a strong, thriving powersports dealership post-pandemic.





## CHAPTER SEVEN: CONVERSION IS YOUR PRIMARY METRIC

In the world of digital marketing, it's easy to get distracted by the broad range of metrics used to help determine reach and success. Pageviews, likes, CTR – they can all seem to indicate that you're seeing success with your marketing, but that view is skewed. If your bottom line is not increasing, then your marketing isn't working. It's as simple as that. If you cannot get leads to convert into sales, then you're just throwing your marketing budget down the drain.

### The Truth about Most Metrics

A lot of numbers get bandied about when it comes to digital marketing. You've got things like bounce rate, exit rate, total site visits, traffic sources by channel, interactions per visit, cost per lead, cost per click, click-through rate (CTR), and so many others that seem like they indicate you're getting traction with your audience.

**Here's the thing** – if they're not adding to your bottom line, they're not a good indicator of success.

Does that mean you can safely ignore them? No, you can't. You still need that information to help you determine whether or not your efforts are having any effect.

For instance, CTR can be a viable metric during ad A/B testing to determine things like which text is more effective, which images are most evocative, and the like. Web traffic sources can help you determine what referrers and platforms are giving you the most reach. Returning visitor numbers can give you an idea of how many initial visitors to your site come back at a later point for more information, to do further research, and more.

So, no, you cannot ignore those numbers, and we're not advocating that you do. What we're saying here is that if you're only getting eyeballs, with few or even no conversions, then there is something wrong with your strategy. **Your focus should be on getting leads and converting those leads into sales.**

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## How to Get Leads

**GENERATING LEADS** – it's the Holy Grain for powersports dealers investing in digital marketing. However, there is no single answer to the question.

### YOU CAN DEVELOP LEADS THROUGH A BROAD RANGE OF DIGITAL MARKETING ACTIVITIES AND TACTICS, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

- Email marketing
- Social media marketing
- Content marketing, such as blogging
- Direct mail marketing
- SMS marketing

The most successful powersports dealerships create a multifaceted marketing plan that includes all of the above. However, they don't go into the process blindly. They use a single software solution that allows them to track results, organize customer information, build stronger relationships, and more. **The right CRM (customer relationship management software) helps you achieve success at a level you could not possibly approach without this tool.**

In addition to using a CRM, some important tips apply across the board, whether you're thinking about Facebook ads, Google AdWords, organic social media marketing, or content marketing and we'll touch on those below.

**GIVE VALUE** – You have to give value to get anything. If you're not able to give value to prospective customers, they're going to defect to a dealership that can.

### IN THE POWERSPORTS INDUSTRY, GIVING VALUE PRIMARILY MEANS PROVIDING INFORMATION TO HELP YOUR CUSTOMERS ACHIEVE A SPECIFIC GOAL, SUCH AS:

- Learning more about the available equipment designed to meet their needs
- Learning more about specific makes and models
- Comparing various options to one another
- Learning more about your dealership and why you're the right answer to their challenges

**PERSONALIZE** – Let's be clear about this. If you still think that putting your entire database on blast is the right way to go, you're destined for failure. Consumers today are far savvier than ever before and expect the companies they do business with to personalize their marketing collateral. This goes much deeper than using their first name in an email message.

### IT CAN AND SHOULD INCLUDE:

- Information specific to the customer in question
- Details relevant to where they are in the sales funnel
- Information/incentives specific to makes and models they previously looked at
- Being addressed by name and their history known by sales staff

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**MIX IT UP** – No powersports dealership should be hinging their success on a single digital marketing method or even a couple of them. You need to mix it up. You need to understand that while some customers might prefer email, others will prefer Facebook Messenger, and yet others would rather read a blog post than a Facebook post. Use the right combination of digital marketing methods to reach your audience segments.

**SEGMENT YOUR DATABASE** – Speaking of audience segments, if you haven't segmented your audience yet, you're behind the curve. You need to break your database up into relevant chunks so that you can tailor your marketing efforts to specific interests, points in the funnel, history, and so on. **The more customized and personalized you can make your efforts, the more success you'll see.**

## Not All Leads Are Created Equal

It's tempting to think that "a lead is a lead, but that's not the case. Some potential leads really shouldn't fall into this category at all. For instance, suppose you have two leads – Bob is 36 and enjoys hunting. You have his name and his email address.

On the other hand, you have Roger, who's been into powersports racing since he was a teen. He's now in his late 20s. You have his name, email address, and his interests. He has also signed up for your email list and he follows you on Facebook.

Which of the two people above seems like they would be a better 'bet' when it comes to lead quality? **Yep, it's Roger. Why, though?**

- *You have his name.*
- *You have his email address.*
- *You have interest signals showing his possible intent to buy – signing up for your email list and following you on Facebook.*

Poor Bob, on the other hand, has provided you with no signals that he might be interested in what you have to offer. In fact, he might have zero need for an ATV or any other sort of powersports equipment. So, your time and money are probably better spent reaching out to Roger to get him into the dealership.

Of course, this is just a basic example of how leads can differ. And, make no mistake, we're not saying that there are "good" leads and "bad" leads. There are simply leads that are closer to converting than others, and some that may never convert at all.

**The key is your database** – the more robust the information about a customer, the better qualified that lead will be. This also includes your existing customers. After all, if they have already made a purchase, they're primed for accessories, maintenance and service, cross-sells, and more, so do yourself a favor and ensure that your database is up to the task. That is, it should be clean and hygienic, and contain detailed records.

## Why You Want Fewer Calls

All too often, powersports sales and marketing teams assume that the ultimate goal of their efforts is to get a lead to call the dealership. That's great, but it's not the best option. In fact, in a highly-successful campaign, getting phone calls could be a huge mistake! **Why is that?**

Consider this – every customer who calls your dealership needs to speak with someone, right? What do you do when every available sales rep is tied up on the phone? What do you do about busy phone lines? How do you serve potential customers walking through your doors?

In fact, the fewer phone calls you get, the better. After all, it's pretty unlikely that you're going to make a sale sight unseen. Most soon-to-be-buyers want to get up close and personal with the powersports equipment they're interested in purchasing.

So, the ultimate goal of your marketing efforts should be not to get phone calls, not to get people to the website, and not to have them follow you on social media, but to walk onto the dealership lot.



## CHAPTER EIGHT: CONVERTING HIGH-VALUE TRAFFIC INTO A LEAD

Let's be clear about one thing – you will generate a lot of traffic, but not all of that traffic has the same value. Again, refer to the information we covered in the previous chapter. Some leads are worth your time, and others are not (at least not yet).

You need to identify the highest value traffic, and sort the rest into tiers. This allows you to focus your team's efforts where they'll deliver the most traction, while still nurturing leads that are not quite ready to convert through the sales funnel.

### Identifying High-Value Traffic

Very quickly, let's recap some of the most effective ways to identify high-value traffic, separate those individuals from leads that are not quite ready to convert, and build your bottom line.



**SEGMENTATION** – We've discussed audience segmentation in great depth previously, but it bears mentioning once more. Segment your audience not only by demographics and the like, but also by their position in the sales funnel so that you can focus on those closest to conversion.

**NURTURING** – Lead nurturing is the art of growing a lead from being completely ambivalent about your brand to converting into a customer. Keep tabs on each individual throughout the nurturing process so that you can encourage them to act when the time comes (but not before).

**DEFINE "HIGH VALUE"** – It helps if you know what a high-value lead looks like. Don't assume that every powersports dealership will have the same definition, either. Is it someone ready to buy a motorcycle? Is it someone looking to buy accessories? Riding gear? Someone looking for service or repairs? Define your idea of high value so you know what you're looking for in the first place.

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Spending for marketing automation tools is expected to reach **\$25.1 BILLION ANNUALLY BY 2023**

Businesses who nurture leads **MAKE 50% MORE SALES** at a cost 33% less than non-nurtured prospects

When businesses follow-up with online leads in under five minutes, **THOSE LEADS ARE 9X MORE LIKELY** to convert into customers

**65% OF BUSINESSES** say generating traffic and leads is their biggest marketing challenge



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## Moving Traffic to Lead Status

Now it's time to discuss how you turn high-value traffic into qualified leads. It's actually not all that complicated, but it can be challenging if you haven't done your legwork yet. Traffic is not enough. Website visitors and browsers are not enough. You need to get them to take the next step.

### »» NEWSLETTER

One way to get people to transition from visitor to lead is to provide them with the option to sign up for your newsletter. You can use any number of incentives to get them to do this, too. You can offer coupons, special deals, in-depth buying guides, or what-have-you. The point is to get them to sign up for your newsletter or mailing list.

When they sign up, they will provide you with their name and their email address. However, you must go beyond the basics. Remember that this information will all go into building your database, so make the basic details mandatory, but provide people with a way to give you more information to help you segment your list and market to them.

### »» CALLS TO ACTION

In some cases, a customer is already primed to buy without being part of your list or ever receiving a marketing email. If your website has done its job and has provided in-depth information about the powersports equipment you have for sale, the gear, clothing, and accessories that you're offering, and all the rest, it's entirely possible that someone would be ready to buy without going through the entire sales funnel. In this case, you need to guide them to the action you want them to take. That's best done using calls to action, or CTAs.

A CTA is nothing more than a statement that tells your visitors what you want them to do. For instance, "call today" is a CTA. So is "enroll now" or "sign up today". Of course, this means that you need to know what you want your website visitors to do. Do you want them to call the dealership? Better yet, do you want them to schedule an appointment with a salesperson? Guide them to that action!

### »» VALUABLE LEAD MAGNETS

Lead magnets can be almost anything — eBooks, reports, guides, white papers, etc. The only things all of these have in common is that they provide value, helping turn traffic into leads, and that they help build your brand and position your dealership as the answer to the lead's challenge. Lead magnets can be powerful tools that encourage people to ask for more information, and even to head down to the dealership.

However, you need to ensure that you're creating quality lead magnets that actually do provide value to your audience. You also need to make sure that you combine them with information-gathering tools so that you can flesh out that database record. Because lead magnets are more valuable than, say a newsletter, you can usually feel free to ask for more in-depth information in exchange for access to it.

## The Point of It All

As you have probably guessed by this point, the point of all of these actions is this — to build a detailed record in your database about a prospect. Without that information, it is impossible to move them along the funnel, to nurture a lead through the conversion stage, and to find success. That database is your dealership's lifeline, and it's imperative that you use it to its fullest extent.



## CHAPTER NINE: TURNING LEADS INTO SHOWS

By this point, you should understand that without conversion, all your efforts are for naught. Without a way to gather information about potential leads, you are doing nothing but treading water. However, even after you have that information, your job is not done yet. You still need to nurture leads and transform them into customers. Specifically, you need to get them into the dealership. How do you do that? **The answer is data-driven marketing.**

### What Is Data-Driven Marketing?

Data-driven marketing is what we've been leading up to this whole time. Your database is the key here. If you've done your job, it is a treasure trove filled with, guess what? Data. Data about leads that you can then use to refine your marketing efforts, personalize your communications, and reach those individuals on a deeper level than what would be possible otherwise.

### Market Based on What You Know About Your Audience

Making sales, transforming leads into actual customers, requires that you have a strong understanding of your audience. However, it's just as critical that you realize you don't have a single, homogeneous audience. Your customer base is diverse, made up of people with a wide range of needs, interests, passions, problems, challenges, and goals.

Data-driven marketing allows you to reach each segment of that audience with the right message at the right time. This goes beyond what you might have heard about developing customer personas and the like. Ultimately, these are just guesses, and while they're probably pretty informed guesses, **they're still not accurate.**

The information in your database is the key to successful data-driven marketing. Without detailed records for each lead, you're back to square one and just throwing marketing collateral at people hoping that something will stick. That's no way to run a successful dealership.

Know your products. Know what your current customers value about those products, whether we're talking personal watercraft, motorcycles, ATVs, or something else. Determine what each audience segment wants to see from your dealership (product, value, performance, support, etc.). Next, use internal data collected from existing customers – break down your target audience to reveal the highest-value leads and then market directly to their needs, goals, expectations, and challenges.

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## Turning Leads into Shows

If you have done your legwork, gathered the right information, and then used that to inform your marketing collateral and outreach efforts, you should see an influx of leads ready to convert into customers. **However, you cannot afford to drop the ball here.**

## Why an Under 5-Minute Response Time Is Critical

If you have done your job, leads will take whatever action it is that you want them to perform. That might be to email your dealership, call the office, or come down in person. For most dealerships, the next step is communication of some type, whether email, chat, or by phone.

When a lead reaches out, your team must be able to respond in under five minutes. Why such a short amount time? **Simply put, that lead is primed to buy right now.** If they're forced to wait 30 minutes or an hour for a reply, they will cool off and may not convert immediately.

By responding immediately, you capitalize on their readiness and increase the chances of getting them to convert into a customer dramatically. Structure your team so that any call, email or another other type of query is responded to immediately and so that none fall through the cracks.

## »» CONCLUSION

In the end, your database is perhaps the **single most powerful marketing tool at your disposal.** However, this isn't *Field of Dreams*. Building isn't the end. You need to continually refine and sort, enhance, and expand your database. It's critical that your database is clean and organized, that errors and issues are remedied quickly, that the information is available to people throughout your dealership, and that you enhance your data with additional information that allows you to refine your marketing efforts and drive greater success.

Now that you've got a better idea of what database marketing is and why you need it, you will be able to get your dealership onto the next level in no time at all. **Plus, you won't waste valuable time sitting and waiting for things to open back up.** Instead, you'll be investing that time in your dealership and in getting more out of your marketing efforts. You're already losing profits because everyone had to close their doors when the country went into lockdown. Why are you sitting around losing even more when you could be preparing for the eventual reopening?

Take the information that you've learned in this playbook and put it to work in your dealership. Check out the ins and outs of database marketing, learn what works and what doesn't, and take this opportunity to get to know your customers better than ever before. That knowledge is what will set you apart and give you the head start when the country comes out of lockdown and your doors open once again. You can do a lot of digital marketing and get a lot of different results, but when you want maximum return and lifetime customers, database marketing is the only way to find out exactly how to deliver that and more.

Data-driven marketing is essential for turning leads into shows. Getting customers out of their homes and down to your dealership is the only way to close a sale. However, the key to achieving success with data-driven marketing is your database.

If you are not doing the legwork, you'll be left with guesses at the pain points, motivations, challenges, and other motivating factors that make your audience members reach out. You'll be flying blind when it comes to audience segmentation, and basically just throwing marketing money away with little to show for it. However, with the right stance, the ability and willingness to capture website traffic information, and a robust database in which to organize that data, you can achieve success.



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