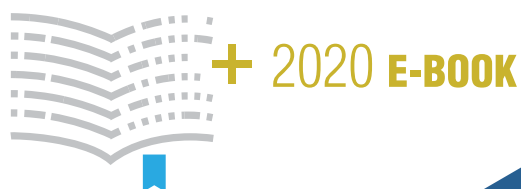


DATABASE 101:
A POWERSPORTS
DEALERSHIP
GUIDE
TO **BUILDING**
AN EFFECTIVE
CONVERSION
STRATEGY

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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 it's 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 eBook, 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 ONE: 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 blind. 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 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" lead 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 TWO: 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 through 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 THREE: 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, homogenous 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 so short a 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 type of query is responded to immediately and so that none fall through the cracks.

»» CONCLUSION

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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