

4 Steps Toward a

# STRONG DIGITAL PRESENCE

From understanding your dealership's performance metrics to choosing the perfect vendor, this four-part ebook series delivers everything you need to successfully make the digital transition.

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## Step 1

### Analyze Your WEBSITE METRICS

Our first ebook explains how to use your website's metrics to identify opportunities for improving your dealership's online presence.

## Step 2

### Establish YOUR VISION

In our second ebook, we explain how to establish a vision for your dealership that will help you meet buyers exactly where they are — online.

## Step 3

### Prepare and EVALUATE

In our third ebook, we break down the internal preparation process and give you the most important factors to consider when evaluating vendor candidates.

## Step 4

### Choose Your VENDOR

The final ebook in our series walks you through the entire selection process and provides tools that will help you make the best decision possible.

# Prepare and EVALUATE



Now that you've **established your vision** for improving your dealership's digital strategy, the next step is to find the perfect vendor that best fulfills your vision for success.

# Plan INTERNALLY

Before you begin to evaluate any vendors, speak with your current website provider and get with your team to organize a plan to move forward.



## Insider Tip:

Get a head start on the transition by gathering brand logos, dealership imagery and any other important advertising assets. This will ensure a smooth handoff to your chosen vendor.

## Current Vendor CHECKLIST

- When does the contract with our current provider expire?
- Do we own the domain to our website?
- Do we have access to our domain name system (DNS)?
- What systems could be impacted if we switch providers?
- Will we lose any data or content when moving to a new provider?

## Internal Team CHECKLIST

- How far in advance should we plan for this transition?
- How long will this transition take?
- Who should be involved in the vendor evaluation process?
- What organizational change management strategies should we implement to successfully switch?
- Would a new website impact any process improvements that are currently in motion?

# Evaluating the CANDIDATES

It's time to put each of your vendors under the microscope. There are plenty of factors to consider in your evaluation, but don't feel the need to weigh every factor equally. Put extra emphasis on your dealership's greatest needs and let those factors serve as a tiebreaker when narrowing down the options.

Start your evaluation with a look at the features and functionality each vendor offers. Try them for yourself to see if they fulfill your vision and are easy to use.



## Insider Tip:

Let your vendor candidates know about any third-party providers you're currently using to ensure they take your full digital ecosystem into account.

## Features & Functionality CHECKLIST

- Does the vendor offer flexible design customization options and the ability to personalize shopping experiences?
- Does the vendor offer OEM-compliant website designs?
- Does the vendor offer multiple channels for leads to reach out, such as virtual chat or a form?
- Does the vendor offer an accurate way for leads to start the buying process online?
- How easily will the vendor's platform integrate with other systems in our dealership?
- Does the vendor provide monthly performance assessments or other reporting tools?
- Does the vendor use responsive design to optimize the experience on mobile?
- Is the vendor's platform easy to use, and does it work?
- Does the vendor offer managed services like content support, social media management, or SEO?

# Philosophy and PROCESS CHECKLISTS

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There's more to choosing a vendor than testing out the features. You must make sure the vendor you choose is an invested partner, not just a service provider. Also, find out the details involved with each vendor's setup process.

## Methodology CHECKLIST

- Does the vendor prioritize a data-driven approach?
- Is the vendor committed to evolving its platform using the latest tech?
- Will the vendor proactively solve problems and implement effective strategies to achieve our goals?
- Will the vendor act as a devoted partner beyond implementation?

## Logistics CHECKLIST

- What's the typical timeline for the vendor's setup process?
- How much time is required by the entire dealership during the transition?
- How will the vendor transition content and data from our existing website?
- Will the vendor provide strategies and recommendations that are backed by data?
- Will the cost of the platform yield a favorable return on investment?

# Establish Your **SHORTLIST**

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Regroup with your Digital Captains to identify the shortlist of vendors you feel the most confident about. Ask your candidates for data that proves their platforms will solve your problems. Seek out testimonials from other customers. And ask if they offer a 30-day contract, so you can test drive their systems in one store.

Once your shortlist is established, it's time to make a final decision. Our fourth and final ebook gives you everything you need to know to make the best choice possible.

Your dealership deserves a vendor that checks all the boxes. But we understand how hard it can be to make a final decision. We're here to help if you need additional guidance.

[READ THE FINAL EBOOK](#)

[TALK WITH AN EXPERT](#)

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