

DealerRater Boosts Kelly Auto Group's Online Presence to Drive Showroom Traffic and Increase Sales

ISSUE

A strong focus on the customer experience has always been part of the Kelly Automotive Group's philosophy. In early 2010, the dealership learned about DealerRater's Certified Dealer Program and realized they were doing very little to capitalize on their satisfied customer base. They also felt rather out of touch with the advances in digital marketing; with around 99% of the marketing budget allocated to traditional media with minimal Search Engine Optimization or digital marketing.

Kelly Auto Group began to see how customer reviews could be used to help gain market share, provide a competitive edge and boost traffic to their dealerships. They became a DealerRater Certified Dealer and made online reputation management and the customer review process an integrated part of the dealership culture and overall CRM and marketing emphasis.

APPROACH

Kelly Auto Group presented the DealerRater program to its sales consultants and they were soon all on board and enthusiastic to start the program. The dealership built ratings into the sales consultants pay plans and allocated \$60,000 extra bonus money. They set a goal to be #1 in the country and state for each store and the sales consultants each had to have a minimum of 10 reviews by the end of the first quarter, 30 by the end of next quarter and have a DealerRater score of over 4.8 for their franchise.

MEASURE & RECOGNIZE

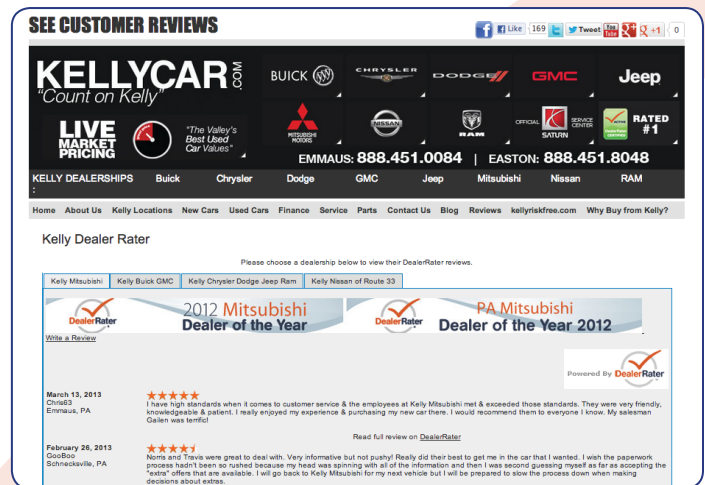
Dealership management believes that what gets recognized gets repeated. Therefore, monthly meetings are typically held at each dealership where scores are reviewed for every sales consultant and the dealership as a whole. Additionally each quarter, the entire group meets at a company-wide breakfast to hand out bonus money to the winning sales consultants.

SHIFTING FROM TRADITIONAL TO DIGITAL MARKETING

Kelly Automotive Group shifted its marketing mix from 99% traditional and 1% digital to a greater online focus with approximately 60% of the budget for traditional and 40% digital. It incorporates DealerRater into all its advertising: print, TV, radio, online, as well as social media. It prominently displays the DealerRater Certified Logo on its website, as well as the Dealer of the Year logo on the sites of its 3 winning franchises. They also take a strategic approach to advertising and include print and third party sites such as Auto Trader to get the message out in many different mediums.

RELYING ON CUSTOMER TOUCH POINTS TO BUILD REVIEWS

Templates were created for sales consultants to use to respond to Internet leads, encouraging potential car buyers to visit DealerRater reviews. In addition, DealerRater rating reminder cards are placed at the Service department's cashier checkout; and, whenever a customer compliments the dealership for its service, the cashier asks the customer to fill out the card.



“When happy customers speak up for us online it leads to more referrals and more sales. In the first quarter of 2012 the Kelly Auto group has had more than a 40 percent increase in profit and units sold. Customer ratings have now become an integral part of our culture and have given us a unified objective; everyone is united in ensuring the customer has a good experience.”

Chris Saraceno, Vice President/Partner, Kelly Auto Group

RESULTS

Kelly Auto Group began the DealerRater Certified Dealer Program in the first quarter of 2010, and soon after had three franchises ranked #1 in the country by DealerRater for 2011; Buick, GMC and Mitsubishi. In addition, Kelly Nissan was ranked #1 in Pennsylvania and Kelly Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, Ram narrowly missed being top-rated in Pennsylvania with a #2 ranking.

INCREASED SALES

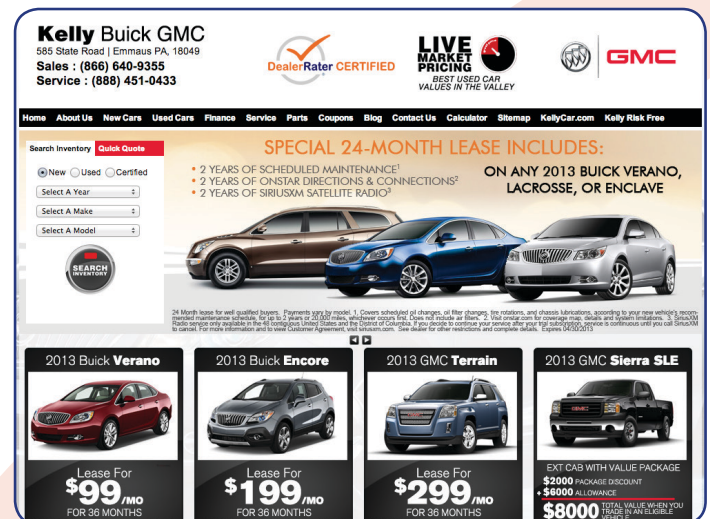
- Within the first 90-days, the program produced an impact in sales as consultants began seeing more referrals come in from DealerRater.
- Car shoppers now arrive at the dealership asking for a specific sales person. These customers have already done their research online and read DealerRater reviews on both the dealership and its sales people.

STRONGER ONLINE PRESENCE

- Depending on the store, between 10-30% of Kelly Auto Group's customers go online and rate the dealership and its sales consultants.
- DealerRater reviews and ratings have helped increase Google search rankings. Each dealer site now comes up on the first page of Google search results.

UNIFIED DEALERSHIP OBJECTIVES AND CULTURE BUILT AROUND SATISFIED CUSTOMERS

- Every OEM franchise CSI score demonstrated a significant improvement in 2011 over 2010, for new and used sales, as well as in service.
- DealerRater has raised the entire awareness of the organization regarding customers' online ratings and has engrained online reputation management and customer service into Kelly's culture. The dealer's sales associates continue to focus on the customer experience and rely on DealerRater as a safe environment in which to communicate with customers and ensure a positive dealership experience.



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