Get the Most Out of Your Online Listings

Discover how to turn online shoppers into on-lot buyers with this exclusive mini guide.

IF YOU’RE LISTING YOUR VEHICLES ONLINE, YOU MAY BE LEFT WONDERING HOW MANY CONVERSIONS YOU’RE REALLY GETTING FOR YOUR MONEY.

Here’s the thing, online shoppers are notoriously visual. They’re known for being averse to blocks of text and boring default or stock imagery. For this reason, taking photos of your inventory that excite and thrill your online shoppers is crucial to the success of your online listings.

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**Check out these 12 ways to take high-quality, attention-grabbing photos of your inventory.**

- Find the right light – The best time to take pictures is a few minutes after sunset or a few minutes before sunrise.
- Cleanliness matters! Make sure your car is washed, clean and spotless inside and out.
- Get all the angles – Take multiple shots to ensure you’re showing your car’s best side.
- Frame the shot – Start from further back, then crop as needed.
- Avoid busy backgrounds to maintain the focus of the photo on the car.
- Highlight the car’s best and most unique features.
- Show that odo! A visual of the odometer proves the mileage stated in the description.
- Use overlays to make an immediate impression.
- Upload as many photos as you can. Give the user the most visual experience possible.
- Don’t forget interior shots. Think about the buyer’s experience driving the car and try to capture that experience in photos.
- How’s the tread? Set your shoppers mind at ease by showing them the tires are ready to drive off the lot.
- Update as needed - Images can be updated at any time so don’t hesitate to switch out an image here or there to test.
Remember, pictures are paramount but don’t forget your vehicle descriptions. Avoid paragraph format and use this space to tell your customers about the vehicle’s most important features.

**Make your listings stand out with vibrant and compelling copy with these tips.**

- **Make an outline.** Sometimes it’s easier to write if you have a list of what you want to say.
- **Write a first draft fast.** If you’re having trouble, just start writing and don’t worry about whether it’s good or bad. You can (and should) always go back and edit.
- **Think of your audience.** Imagine who the buyer might be for that specific car and write your headline and description specifically for that customer.
- **Focus on the benefits.** Think of the car’s most important features and make sure they are mentioned first in your description.
- **Make it easy to read.** Use bullet points and be as descriptive as possible in as few words as possible.
- **Avoid the generic.** Make your listings stand out by being unique with sensory adjectives and copy that ignites your customer’s imagination.
- **Tell a story.** Appeal to the customer’s imagination by painting a picture with words.
- **Be conversational.** Write copy as if you were talking to the customer right there on your lot.
- **Use power words and avoid “wussy” words.** Use words like “free,” “instantly,” “now” and “new” and avoid passive language like “may,” “could,” and “try.”
- **Cut the jargon.** Avoid using automotive industry-exclusive phrases that would be unnatural to normal people.
- **Edit, edit, edit.** Read through every description you write for clarity and grammar mistakes.
- **Read it out loud.** If it sounds clumsy out loud, chances are, it sounds clumsy to your customers too.

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You don’t have to spend money on expensive ads and premium placements to drive the success of your online listings. This is your opportunity to tell your vehicle’s story and win over your customers. Make your first impression count.

Once you’ve won over your customers with eye-catching photos and imaginative copy, hold their attention and maximize engagement by following these 5 easy tips.

- **Buyers trust other buyers.** Use your “Seller Description” wisely. It’s for more than just vehicle information! Include a recent consumer testimonial to build trust.

- **Respond in kind.** Respect the method in which the shopper came to you. For example, when they email you, you should respond in email. Let them lead the contact method as you lead them to your sale.

- **Ask, ask, and ask again.** Eight out of ten buyers saw your cars online but won’t contact you. These shoppers have done their research and are ready to buy. It’s imperative that you cater to that audience but you won’t know who they are until you ask: “How did you hear about us” or “Did you find us on CARFAX?”

- **Let the buyer lead.** Today’s buyers know what they want and what they should pay. Give them a seamless transition from your online inventory to their on-lot experience.

- **The end is just the beginning.** Don’t forget about service after the sale. This is a great opportunity to turn a one-time sale into a lifetime partnership via your service shop.

Your best photos and descriptions will go even further on a website free of ads or other distractions, with built-in SEO benefits like prominent links back to your website, and a reputation as an existing authority in the automotive industry.

As a CARFAX Advantage Dealer, you have a unique opportunity to list your cars on Carfax.com – where over 67 million buyers start their used car search with trusted vehicle history and without distracting ads. Want to learn more? Contact your representative.

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