



Sean V. Bradley

INTERNET SALES 20 GROUP VII

Last month we discussed the awesome success of the Synergy Sessions and I promised to go over my interpretation of Stephen Covey's book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. I have come to realize that there is no way I can do Dr. Covey's book justice with a simple article, so I decided to turn it into a seven-part series. Each month I will focus on one of Covey's "7 Habits." This month I will begin the series with the first habit: **Be Proactive**. There are several interpretations for this, but for this article we will focus on one, and that is *take initiative*; don't wait on things to "just happen."

In life you have two choices: to be *reactive* or to be *proactive*. It is much better to be proactive. I want to acknowledge a very proactive dealership — Reed Lallier Chevrolet in Fayetteville, North Carolina, led by Mike Leechford. Mike's Internet department consistently sold 20 units a month. Mike realized that just having a Web site, lead management tool and some leads did NOT mean he was an Internet sales department. Reed Lallier Chevrolet completely redesigned all of their tools to be much more strategic. They created a whole new branch of their Internet department, and set up Internet sales coordinators. These people sell the appointments, NOT the cars. These coordinators aren't simple telemarketers or receptionists, but highly trained Internet and phone ninjas! They have been trained in the art of automotive Internet sales, and handling objections and rebuttals. Reed Lallier modified the compensation plan in the department to make sure they were amply compensated for their efforts, but more importantly they were rewarded for specific and relevant achievements.

This was no "on the job" training effort; everyone was trained and certified. These folks were put through an intensive on-site five-day training program that went into detail about their tools, resources, online marketing, standard operating procedures, intensive role playing, practice drills and coaching. Additionally, Mike Leechford,

attended an off-site week-long powerful Internet director immersion program. Reed Lallier Chevrolet chose to make a serious commitment to achieve the absolute fastest response times for their Internet prospects.

They also created the new position of third-shift coordinator. A staffer actually works from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. The dealership has literally 24/7 coverage. The new program has been well received by online visitors; and has delivered four additional units just last month from these new initiatives. The dealership promotes their services to soldiers at nearby Fort Bragg. Soldiers in Iraq are online viewing the dealerships' Web site and the third-shift coordinator has e-mailed them personally minutes after they were on the Reed Lallier site. But, the success has not been solely from soldiers. You would be surprised how many people are online those hours researching and shopping for a car. What has resulted from these efforts? Reed Lallier Chevrolet has gone from 20 units a month to 60 units a month with this new Internet structure. Don't just wait for things to happen; *make them happen*. Take a proactive approach.

Internet Sales 20 Group's Internet Director Immersion Program

I recently hosted an Internet Sales 20 Group in Philadelphia with dealers coming in from all over the country. It was based on the traditional format of used by NADA and NCM for their 20 groups. The first section went over the philosophy and strategy of Internet sales. The next day the participants spent time in our corporate office in Philadelphia to get a behind-the-scenes look at how analysts conduct their audits and mystery shopping calls. Next we spent six straight hours going over the three-square exercise (I wrote an article several months ago in Volume 6, Issue 6 of *AutoSuccess* explaining in detail the three-square concept). We couldn't believe that six hours passed on one exercise, but with our focus, the time went by quickly.

On the third day we hit the throttle. All of the participants were back in class, but this time:

- We had the team **mystery shop** their dealership and fill out report cards based on the quantitative and qualitative measurements of the phone call.
- They went through **full analytics** of their departments, such as reporting and ROI calculations.
- They went into their **CRM** tool and broke it down. They learned how to analyze their ILM/CRM for information that can help them evolve their department.
- We had four senior executives, each with more than 10 years of automotive experience, **drill down different components** such as process, human resources, management and technology analysis.

On the fourth day, the class took a field trip. We went to a dealership just outside the city that consistently delivers over 100 units a month from their Internet department. In the afternoon they went to another dealership, this one in New Jersey, that went from 60 units a month to over 131 units a month on the Internet.

The group said this was very powerful for them to actually *see* it done the right way. Each dealership was unique, but both had tremendous success with their efforts. Attendees said that most training is theory and some strategy, but they never have been in a session where they could see everything taught being implemented first-hand in the dealership. They got a lot out of seeing teams in action.

The final day was a brief summation and then testing, which they all passed with flying colors. Then we had an in-depth recap of the week and action planning for when they get back to their dealerships. Many said they couldn't wait until the next Internet Sales 20 Group!

Sean V. Bradley is the CEO and founder of Dealer Synergy. He can be contacted at 866.648.7400, or by e-mail at sbradley@autosuccessonline.com.