

# 3 Ways Most Marketing Programs Fail to Reach a Key Audience and How to Fill the Gaps



## Article Highlights:

- Your marketing program could be missing a highly profitably customer base.
- Think differently about how to utilize your marketing communications.



According to a recent study by S&P Global, the average age of vehicles on the road today has reached a new high of 12.5 years. Interest rates also continue to rise, causing customers to keep their current vehicles longer and opt for long-term maintenance instead of purchasing a new vehicle. This makes focusing on retention in your service drive more important than ever.

Most service marketing programs typically target customers with vehicle ages of the last seven model years, which leaves behind a large, highly profitable customer base – older vehicles. If the average age of vehicles on the road is 12.5 years, so should be the cars your customers are bringing through your service drive.

Failing to reach this high-dollar customer base can leave major gaps in your marketing communications, so take a second to ask yourself what your marketing program is doing to reach this audience. Better yet, ask yourself what is it NOT doing?

## Pre-Owned Programs

Many dealerships lack an adequate pre-owned marketing program that properly targets retention on older vehicles. If you do offer communications to pre-owned customers, the promotional offers sent are often the same as those given to new vehicles.

Also, think about what types of services pre-owned vehicles more frequently need. Each time these customers return for their routine service, they may be surprised with expensive additional services needed as their vehicle continues to age. Commonly, they delay those services due to the expense or time needed to complete such repairs. Wouldn't it be wise to send a higher value coupon offer to this audience?



## High-Mileage Campaigns

There are more vehicles exceeding 100,000 miles on the road than ever. This growing segment of high-mileage vehicles represents one of the best opportunities for customer-pay repair work.

Do you currently send targeted campaigns to this specific customer segment? High-mileage campaigns are an effective way to get in touch with those customers that may have been left behind by other marketing programs. Not only do these vehicles need routine repairs completed more regularly, but those repairs – such as a timing belt or tire replacement – typically cost more. Sounds like a great opportunity to set up a segmented marketing campaign directed towards this customer base with a variable service discount or tire special.



## Happy Birthday Communications

How are you keeping in contact with customers near their birthday? A great way to stay in touch with your older vehicle customer base, whether they have recently visited your dealership or haven't been back since their vehicle purchase, is by wishing them a happy birthday.

The reality is, most marketing programs don't offer happy birthday communications, so why not take advantage of this opportunity to put yourself in front of your customer on an annual basis? Happy birthday communications reach customers at a prime loyalty touch point when a customer may be interested in something new. Not only that, but people are more likely to check their inbox on or around their birthday for special messages or deals, and you could use that to offer a repair special or a vehicle upgrade.

## Conclusion

It's time to think differently about customizing your marketing plan for your service drive. There may be areas in your current program where you don't have the adequate tools to target an older vehicle customer base, giving you the need to take your marketing into your own hands.

Developing a better service retention program can help fill these gaps and could place your dealership in the top of customers' minds when they are due for service. You don't have to be a marketing expert to do this either. Take this as a sign to increase customer-pay repair orders and overall revenue by improving your relationship with your older vehicle customers.



Contact your Document Services Consultant for more information.  
**800.344.0996 | RDS@reyrey.com**

© 2023 The Reynolds and Reynolds Company. All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A.

 Reynolds  
& Reynolds™  
Document Services

 **LAW**®