




HEAR IT FROM YOUR PEERS: I'M A CONTROLLER.

A roundtable discussion on solving the challenges at your dealership.

Dealertrack DMS  TECHNOLOGY THAT DRIVES YOU.

How do you tackle the daily challenges of running an auto dealership? What solutions—and responsibilities—do controllers own when it comes to managing **the people side of the automotive industry**? Hear from a group of your peers who came together to discuss:

- **How controllers solve for hiring and retaining top talent.**
- **Innovative solutions for training and onboarding.**
- **Why technology and systems management brings new opportunity to the dealership.**

HIRING & RETAINING TOP TALENT

"We too like to hire from within. ... the people who progress in the dealership always seem to be the ones you notice taking the initiative to learn more. For example, a salesman who starts asking to go with the sales manager when they're appraising the car. They start asking if it's okay if they go to the auction, and they have a desire to learn more."

—REID WILLIAMS, BILL MACINTYRE CHEVROLET BUICK

Challenge: Finding a "unicorn."

Solution: The perfect team member won't appear like magic in your next candidate interview. It takes time to develop someone into their role. Rather than hiring someone with years of automotive sales experience, or specific technology talent, hire someone willing to learn and help them grow into their role.

TRAINING YOUR TEAM

"You want to make sure the training [aligns with the] actual culture of the dealership and not just what the manufacturer checks off."

—KARLI DEVALL, KARLI DEVALL ACCOUNTING

Challenge: Right People. Right Roles.

Solution: Have a plan for succession and train beyond the manufacturer's plan. Culture is just as important as skills training—don't neglect it.

TRAINING & TOOLS

“Get an answer and don't be embarrassed about asking the question because I feel as though sometimes questions are kicked down the road and then the problem gets worse. I think that at least one person needs to have a complete understanding and grasp of the DMS software, and be able to explain it to other employees.”

—REID WILLIAMS, BILL MACINTYRE CHEVROLET BUICK

Challenge: It's Work. But, It's Worth It.

Solution: Use this time to clean up the junk, throw out old systems and info you're not using. Don't just transfer everything over. Really take the time to evaluate your systems.

Make sure to:

- Inventory all the software you're paying for and determine its value
- Do a deep-discovery of where and how you're collecting data on your customers
- Build a strategy for your digital marketing and ensure your online experience meets or exceeds expectations
- Put your vendors to the test: Are they providing the level of service you want?

MAKING A SWITCH

“When we did our [DMS] change, just being able to sit down and go through all the setups again and make sure they're really set up the way you want them to be, that all the accounts you have are ones that you want to carry forward to the next DMS. That was one thing that I did was went through and cleaned out a bunch of stuff that wasn't needed. It was stuff that had been built up over time.”

—STEPHANIE BETTENCOURT, CENTRAL VALLEY AUTOMOTIVE

Challenge: A (practically) Painless Switch is Possible—If You Prepare!

Solution: Get everyone in the dealership, from leadership down, on the same page with weekly check-ins and status updates. A big change is coming. Here are some tips:

1. **Delegate** - Make sure each department is responsible for getting ready and providing status checks prior to the switch.
2. **Open Communication** - Making a big technology change can have a huge impact on your culture, especially when people don't have a way to voice their concerns. Make sure everyone is being heard.
3. **Find a Trusted Partner** - Your new DMS provider should be there every step of the way to address your specific concerns.
4. **On-going Training** - Once you flip the switch, your partners should be available for continued progress checks, learning, and monitoring.

Controllers know the ins and outs of the dealership business from their unique perspective and position of trust among everyone working within the business. Their shared knowledge among this peer group is valuable beyond measure. As technology continues to advance and impact the automotive industry, it will be this group who drives it.