

Cars.com Announces Latest Feature to Enhance Car Shopping Experience

Cars.com now the only third-party site connecting consumers directly to individual salespeople at the dealership

CHICAGO, Sept. 12, 2017 /PRNewswire/ -- Cars.com (NYSE:CARS) is announcing its latest car shopping feature, Salesperson Connect, which helps connect dealership salespeople directly to in-market shoppers before visiting the dealer lot, creating a more personalized car shopping experience for consumers.

[DealerRater](http://DealerRater.com), a Cars.com company, launched DealerRater Connections earlier this year to help connect consumers directly with dealer salespeople through dealer reviews. This latest feature upgrade integrates DealerRater data with the Cars.com Vehicle Details Page (VDP), providing shoppers with access to information critical to making a buying decision on what Cars.com refers to as the 4P's: Product, Price, Place and Person. Salesperson Connect is available for dealers nationwide who are currently DealerRater Connections customers.

"Real human relationships are a key to the next phase of the consumer-driven shopping transformation, and providing car shoppers with valuable data and information around a specific salesperson moves us towards that goal," said Tony Zolla, chief product officer at Cars.com. "Cars.com has created a Vehicle Details Page that provides a full range of data to help consumers make a more informed decision. The new Salesperson Connect feature surfaces top rated salespeople based on their DealerRater reviews and provides one-stop-shopping for car buyers on a single page, helping us streamline the process for consumers and connecting them to the right dealership and right salesperson to meet their needs."

"In a survey of over 6,400 car shoppers on DealerRater.com, 97 percent of them prefer to select a salesperson before walking into the showroom, which means that making a personal connection early is incredibly valuable," said Jamie Oldershaw, general manager of DealerRater. "Having access to reviews and information about specific salespeople at a dealership empowers consumers and helps them feel more comfortable about the car buying process. It also helps establish a baseline of trust before setting foot in the dealership and ultimately enhances the customer experience."

This feature can also help lead to stronger employee engagement at dealerships when salespeople know each experience with a customer could affect their review rating. In a recent survey of 233 DealerRater Certified salespeople, over 80 percent said their employee profile helps them sell more cars, drives more showroom visits per month, and speeds up the sales process resulting in a higher close rate.

"A shopper recently contacted me after reading a review on DealerRater, asking for me specifically," said "Wrangler Rob" McGuire, certified sales consultant at Garavel Chrysler Jeep Dodge Ram in Norwalk, CT. "Leads that come through the VDP salesperson profiles are more substantial because the consumer is already committed to the car and to the salesperson. Integrating the employee (salesperson) aspect can drive more business to the dealership because a shopper can review the VDP and think, 'I can buy this car anywhere, but this salesperson has more reviews and this is a more reputable dealership.'"

About Cars.com

Cars.com is a leading online destination that helps car shoppers and owners navigate every turn of car ownership. A pioneer in automotive classifieds, the company has evolved into one of the largest digital automotive platforms, connecting consumers with local dealers across the country anytime, anywhere. Through trusted expert content, on-the-lot mobile app features, millions of new and used vehicle listings, a comprehensive set of research tools and the largest database of consumer reviews in the industry, Cars.com helps shoppers buy, sell and service their vehicles. Cars.com properties include [DealerRater](http://DealerRater.com)®, Auto.com™, PickupTrucks.com™ and NewCars.com®. The company was founded in 1998 and is headquartered in Chicago, Illinois. For more information, visit www.Cars.com.

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