Dealers Share CRM Software Feedback

Do you use client relationship management (CRM) software? This month's cover story features three dealerships regarding their CRMs, as well as the results of a Business Technology Association (BTA) dealer member survey regarding the use of CRM software in their dealerships. The survey results and comments on pages 15 and 16 give you an idea of what CRMs dealers favor, as well as their thoughts on the value of the software used in their dealerships. You can see the full survey results at www.bta.org/CRMSurvey.

Some of the multiple-choice questions on page 15 also allowed for "additional comments," which I thought you might find interesting. Following is a sampling of anonymous dealer comments from those questions.

[How do you describe] the extent to which your dealership utilizes your CRM for marketing, quoting, data mining, relationship management, automated processes, etc.?

■ "This is an initiative in our organization and we are working diligently to optimize its usage. We improve every day."

■ "We use the basics, but haven't done a lot of work with the modules we could add."

■ "We are optimizing it every month. Great tool. It will never be fully optimized."

■ "Notes, tasks, contact info and proposals are about the extent of our use."

How would you characterize your CRM software vendor in terms of its level of support, guidance, training and receptivity to recommendations for improvement?

■ "Support is timely and issues/questions are usually resolved quickly."

■ "It's all online interaction, so having a representative of our own would be nice."

■ "They are a great partner with great support. However, if your business isn't willing to invest PMT (people, money and time) into the tool, it's crucial to have realistic expectations that you will not see any real significant changes. There's no magic bullet a vendor can provide without a substantial investment in the project. If you're not planning to invest PMT, then consider finding the cheapest and most basic tool."

How satisfied are you with your CRM, in terms of its functionality, ease of use and contribution to your dealership's sales success?

■ "Works well when fully utilized."

■ "It's OK. I rarely, if ever, hear anyone say they are satisfied with their CRM."

■ "The interface is dated. We still rely on an on-prem server/database, which limits functionality when sales reps are on the road. Updating pricing is a real chore. Still, it does what we need it to do in many ways."

How would you describe your sales team members' commitment to utilizing your CRM on a daily basis?

■ "This is always a work in progress based on the managers holding the sales reps accountable."

■ "Our reps hit the basics well (logging activity, updating current sales info, etc.). Anything aside from that ends up being on a rep-by-rep basis. Some will use equipment modules within the system, others will do everything offline."

■ "We made it mandatory, and as a business, we decided to drive this change without allowing any employee to be a roadblock due to their unwillingness to change. So, we said it's OK if they do not want to use the tool; those who did not want to participate would lose their ability to upgrade current customers. Shockingly, everyone is a valued user today. It's the best decision we've ever made!"

— *Brent Hoskins*

FLASHBACK

NOMDA Spokesman
NOMDA'S LEGAL COUNSEL CITES REASONS WHY DEALERS CANNOT APPROACH MANUFACTURERS ON SUBJECT OF PRICE SCHEDULES OR POLICIES

RECORD TURNOUT AT MINNEAPOLIS PREDICTED AS CONVENTION RETURNS TO MIDWEST AREA

The association's magazine cover 62 years ago this month — the NOMDA Spokesman, February 1962.