



# Trends and Opportunities in the Business Office for 2011

by **Hector Bosotti**

In our travels, we get to see and witness many new ideas implemented and some old ones rekindled. I'd like to share some insights as to what we're observing in the market as potential trends or opportunities for you and your Business office.

## Opportunity #1: The Special Finance Market

With a myriad of Special Financing lenders on hand a few years back, it seemed that many dealerships were taking advantage of the Special Finance market because they had multiple sources to rely on. We saw quite a few lenders either back off or leave the playing field entirely. Having said that, many dealerships who were spoiled by the ease of securing financing for credit challenged individuals also departed the playing field. Many dealerships who aggressively marketed to this segment have backed off their efforts and advertising budgets as well leaving a large void. Here lies a tremendous opportunity to pick up a significant and profitable market share by either re-inventing your Special Finance strategies or finally taking the plunge to tap into this growing market.

## Opportunity #2: Technology, Slide Shows and Videos

We've seen a growing trend of Business Managers begin to use slide shows in their presentations. PowerPoint™ seems to be the most popular and easy to use for this purpose. Slide shows offer a Business Manager the ability to be more creative in stimulating a need for a product and it goes without saying that a picture is worth a thousand words when it comes to showing off the benefits of their products. Because the presentation is prepared in advance, a thorough, complete and economical presentation is a result.

**An audio slide show is simply a video of a slide show with a voice recording over the slides as they change. It's a very economical way of using a more engaging presentation without going to the expense of a fully produced video.**

**Screencast.com is a popular site that can host such a file but you can research others. The biggest advantage that you'll have in using a third party to host a video or an audio slide show is that you can send your customers a link to them without having to send the entire file. Most dealership servers today have firewalls that are like chastity belts – my e-mails sometimes don't get through and all I have on them is my signature image.**

**The concept of using a video in a presentation is certainly not new but when it comes to seeing this strategy used in the Business Office, most Business Managers are unaware that there are videos available that will help them sell their products. Most suppliers today are addressing this opportunity and are starting to produce video presentation tools for their dealerships. If your supplier doesn't have one, you can search on YOUTUBE and you'll be amazed at the amount of choices you'll have in picking out a few videos that you can use to help you sell more. Video links can also be inserted in a slide show presentation or even in some menu software programs available in the market. Some Business Managers are using 'I-pads' to show videos on-line – now that's slick!**

### **Opportunity #3: Marketing the Business Office on your Website**

**This is still an area where most dealerships have not moved forward in their thinking. They've done a great job at developing their websites but go to yours right now and other than having a couple of paragraphs about your financing options or a credit application,... what do you see? Most dealerships have neglected to develop a presence on their website dedicated to the most profitable department per square foot in the dealership. Some dealerships have recognized that more than 80% of their customers are researching their next vehicle purchase on the internet. What and who they'll buy from are certainly questions customers are looking for the answers to but what about HOW they'll buy their next vehicle? Now that's a great question. Do they need an extended warranty, vehicle protection or some level of loan/lease protection? Speak to your dealership and address this opportunity at your next managers meeting. Remember, that you're not trying to sell your products on-line by providing any pricing details but rather planting a seed for the 'need' of your products. An old saying reminds us that "you should go fishing where the fish are swimming." Put out some bait out on your website.**

#### **Opportunity #4: Rename your Business Office**

When I first saw this, I was most impressed. We've seen many U.S. dealerships change the name of their Business Offices to VEHICLE DELIVERY or CUSTOMER DELIVERY. Many dealerships have an excellent retention rate meaning that they have many previous customers return to buy another vehicle from them. Some of the customers from these dealerships have been through their Business Offices numerous times and know the drill. They simply don't want to go in there. Further, with more cash deals because of large delivery credits, many customers ask themselves, "Why do I need to go the Finance Office, - I'm paying cash?"

With this strategy, the dealership has created a new department that the customer is unfamiliar with and accordingly, the customer obliges the salesperson to enter the VEHICLE DELIVERY or CUSTOMER DELIVERY office where they will make arrangements for the pickup of their new vehicle. They are actually anxious to go there to see when they can get their new vehicle. Brilliant!

#### **Opportunity #5: Become a Researcher**

Any Business Manager would love to attend a NADA or an F&I conference at a glamorous destination like Las Vegas or New Orleans but that's not reality for many. Researching on-line is probably your most inexpensive and effective way to keep up with trends and opportunities in the industry. If you don't subscribe to any RSS feeds, set some up. Be sure to regularly visit your favourite industry websites as well. Keep in touch. Always be looking for a competitive edge.

Hector Bosotti is a National Trainer and Consultant with Wye Management. Hector has over 28 years of retail automotive experience whose success has been founded on 3 key elements: People, Process & Training.

Please send your thoughts and requests to [hbosotti@wyemanagement.com](mailto:hbosotti@wyemanagement.com) .

Wye Management offers in-dealership training and consulting and hosts workshops from coast to coast. For more information or a proposal, visit [wyemanagement.com](http://wyemanagement.com) or contact their toll-free number 1(888) 993-6468.