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If it ain't broke... maybe you should still fix it

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BY LAUREN LABUNSKY

In many situations we would agree with this phrase, but when it comes to the growth of your business — remove it from your vocabulary. Whether it's "broke" or not, you should always be looking for ways to improve and innovate your business strategy.

Some dealership owners and managers are used to doing things a certain way, and don't necessarily see a need to change it. Running ads for their dealership on local radio stations used to be a big hit — but now with the popularity of satellite radio and podcasts, they don't deliver the same results.

Posters and flyers promoting sales and events used to bring customers in, but now people are scrolling through smartphones throughout most of their day. Flyers posted around the community don't grab their attention as well as what they're seeing in their Facebook feeds.

The shift to digital advertising can be tough for those who are accustomed to traditional methods, but there is a major silver lining. While marketing and advertising budgets used to go toward big-ticket items like billboards and TV commercials, that money can be stretched a lot further when it's applied to digital strategies like search engine and social media marketing. Platforms like Google and Facebook allow businesses to run ads with any budget, and they strategically disperse funds to make the most return on investment.

In addition to keeping digital ad spend under a set amount per day, you can also rest in knowing that your ad dollars aren't being spent on people who are not likely dealership prospects. Unlike a big-budget traditional advertising effort like a TV commercial, which is directed toward a broad audience only limited by channel and time of day, digital ads can be targeted to a narrow audience of people with specific qualities and online behaviors that make them likely prospects. Also unlike many traditional advertising methods, you can pull the plug on digital ads at any time if you feel they are not a good use of money.

There are plenty of ways that you should look to improve your business as a dealership owner or manager, and marketing

efforts are just one area. However, the marketing strategy for your dealership bears a lot of weight in the success of your business, especially in comparison to your local competitors.

If the bike dealer across town is running search engine ads that appear above your listing, customers may choose to visit them instead of you. If customers are consistently seeing content and ads from your competitor on social media, they'll be more likely to think of that dealership next time they are ready to buy. The way to prevent this problem is simple and cost-effective — you simply must be willing to evolve.

Lauren Labunsky is the public relations manager at Dealer Spike, a leading web services provider for powersports dealerships. The award-winning digital advertising company is focused on helping dealers increase sales through powerful, distinctive website design and a full suite of online marketing tools to drive results. Dealer Spike's expertise comes from real-world dealership experience and a team of professionals who also ride. When you work with Dealer Spike, you're working with digital marketing experts who have a passion for your industry.

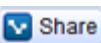
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