

Q&A with Fortune Web Marketing's Jennifer Stine

Jennifer Stine is president of Fortune Web Marketing, a full-service marketing and video company, with more than 15 years' experience of serving the IDC. She offers the following insights for dealers looking to enhance their digital presence.

Q. What are your top tips for dealers looking to get started in social media?

A.

1. Just start. One common misconception is the old-school idea that buyers are not on social media. Nothing could be further from the truth. Whether for business or personal use, they are on social media, and I don't see this decreasing anytime soon—only increasing.
2. Include paid ads in your campaign. You can start with a small budget, then build on it as you see what works.
3. Incorporate videos in your posts and embed them on your site. Videos on YouTube don't perform as well. If you embed them, the videos can autoplay and users will stay on your site.
4. Make sure your imagery is clear, crisp and sensitive to the times. Be aware of what is going on in the world. For example, when everyone was wearing masks during the pandemic shutdown, you wouldn't have wanted to post pictures of crowds or large networking events.
5. No politics.

Q. What social media platforms do you suggest dealers use?

A. Instagram, LinkedIn and Facebook

Q. How can dealers tell if their social media campaigns are successful?

A. Several free online marketing tools are easy to use to measure engagement, such as Google



Analytics. Some of the social media platforms also have their own free tools. It can be hard to track offline success, such as when people phone in [after seeing your posts]. Ask them how they heard of you. And keep a pulse on your business: track when you start a campaign and watch for an increase in business.

Q. How long does it usually take to see results?

A. Some dealers think when they start marketing, they will see instant sales, but it's just the first part of the battle. You need to win relationships to win sales. For this, you need to establish yourself as a subject-matter expert; you need clients to put faith in you as an authority in your field so that you can build trust with them. Google coined an acronym for what its search engine looks for: EAT—expertise,

authority, trust. We apply that to everything we do.

Q. What advice do you have for dealers' websites

A. Follow three basic principles: be sure it's mobile friendly, easy to use and can be found by search engines. Also, Google's algorithms currently focus on the overall website. Google awards or penalizes sites based on technical aspects such as page load times, broken links and imagery, and mobile friendliness. Google also penalizes for pop-ups that block the majority of the page behind them on any size screen—phone, laptop or computer. Another important one is to have a "https" URL. The "s" means the site has an SSL [secure sockets layer] certificate, which means the site is secure. This is huge for ranking with Google and a big trust factor for users.