



# MOOD:

Auto manufacturers must adjust to shifting needs of today's car buyers, and also embrace this new approach in the dealership experience.

## AUTO DEALERSHIP EXPERIENCE AND NEW CONSUMER ATTITUDE

Once seen as a symbol of personal status, wealth, and success, the role of cars is changing - and fast.

The focus on the automobile as a status symbol has less appeal to the up-and-coming generation of Millennials, who tend to favor flexibility, eco-consciousness, and shared resources over expressions of possession, affluence, or social status. This new consumer attitude and the Millennial demand for integrated technology are driving competition when it comes to vehicle design - and forcing manufacturers to re-examine their approach to automotive marketing, overall.

## SO, WHAT WILL DEFINE THE LEADING AUTOMOTIVE BRAND OF THE FUTURE?

As leading manufacturers recognize the need to redefine their automotive marketing to appeal to younger consumers, their focus is shifting away from the traditional mantras - faster, flashier, and more futuristic - to incorporate concepts of sustainability, economic urban mobility, and seamless integration with mobile technology. Manufacturers must adjust to these shifting needs of today's car buyer, and importantly, embrace this new approach in the dealership experience.

## WHAT MANY AUTO MAKERS HAVE OVERLOOKED, THUS FAR, IS THE DEALERSHIP EXPERIENCE, ITSELF.

After overlooking the importance of a quality dealership experience in recent years, the auto industry as a whole has watched Millennial car buyers drive a spike in vehicle purchases made online. Simply put - a greater number of online vehicle purchases means that the auto dealership of the future will need to create an environment which provides younger buyers with a memorable experience that aligns with their values.

+ **Millennials want what is cutting edge.** Has your dealership adopted a modern image, or are you still drifting in the dusty lanes of Sunday driving and simpler times? Make sure that you're putting your best foot forward and offering the features that Millennials expect of a tech-savvy business. Simple things, such as the **presence of social Wi-Fi** in your showroom or service center waiting room can go a long way towards this endeavor.

+ **Engage the senses.** Sensory experience creates an emotional impression - an essential element when attempting to inspire

Millennial engagement. A multi-sensory dealership experience which includes custom music, scent, and visuals can help you reinforce your automotive brand and create the strong emotional connections which differentiate your dealership from others.

+ **Make it visual.** No matter what generation you're aiming to reach, people of all ages are naturally drawn to digital images and HD TV screens. Be sure to outfit your space with visual elements which help you showcase your automotive brand, such as digital signage that provides a virtual "test drive" of your newest vehicles.

For the waiting room of your service area, look for a versatile commercial TV solution that shows the programs your target audience is likely to enjoy. Some commercial TV solutions even allow you to display promotional zones along the borders of the screen so that you can promote special offerings, news tickers, sports scores, community events and more while helping your customers pass the time. By making the dealership experience visual, you'll not only drive sales, but you'll create a memorable experience that speaks volumes for today's auto buyer.

+ **Give them something to talk about.** More than anything, Millennials love to engage and share with their networks - so why not give them something to talk about? Create an environment which encourages social sharing by incorporating shareable and interactive elements into your automotive marketing. You can set up "selfie stations" which feature your car-of-the-future and incentivize customers to post the photo on your Facebook page. Give your customers something to talk about, and they'll become your best brand advocates!

## CONTACT

To find out more on how Mood Solutions can help design your customer experience, contact us at:

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+ **Get involved.** Community involvement speaks volumes to today's philanthropic generation of young people. Is your dealership sponsoring a 5K for a great cause? Are you planning a winter food drive? Whatever the case may be, you'll definitely want to let your customers know about any community events you're participating in. Overhead and on-hold messaging, digital signage and social media are the perfect mediums for showing millennials your involvement with the community.

+ **Present them with choices.** Would your customers prefer "New Car" scent? How about "Pina Colada"? Not sure? Ask them! Include an interactive element to your dealership's automotive marketing, and let your customers vote for things such as their favorite car scents or exterior colors. Millennials love to be presented with choices and feel that they are partners in the brands they support.

Whether previously focused on luxury, power, or practicality, automotive manufacturers will need to adapt their overall vision for automotive marketing in order to meet the changing desires of today's consumer - beginning with a realistic assessment of their core values, goals, and brand strategy. The trick is to find a niche focus which aligns well with shifting Millennial values, while maintaining a brand image distinct from their competitors. That brand image needs to shine through in the dealership experience and be communicated in creative ways that speak to today's younger generation of car buyers.

From background music to ambient scent, smart dealership design means calling in the power of all the senses, and creating a memorable experience which supports your brand. By considering the desires of your younger customers and adjusting your dealership experience to meet their needs, you'll leave a lasting impression of your brand's core strengths and values - reinforcing the positive associations which inspire brand advocacy and drive sales.

**At Mood Media, we're experts at intelligent experience design for auto dealerships.** We know how to invoke the power of the senses to engage customers of all ages, boost sales, and inspire the sense of well-being and connectedness that Millennials crave of their favorite brands.

For more information on how you can create a lasting connection with the Millennial generation, contact us today. We'll help you determine the best approach for improving your dealership experience - and set the right mood, from the start.

