

[http://www.insiderradio.com/free/former-dealer-execs-now-in-radio-on-how-to-boost-auto-ad-sales/article\\_a35a915e-bf7e-11eb-8a14-07e03cb6b044.html](http://www.insiderradio.com/free/former-dealer-execs-now-in-radio-on-how-to-boost-auto-ad-sales/article_a35a915e-bf7e-11eb-8a14-07e03cb6b044.html)

FEATURED

# Former Dealer Execs, Now In Radio, On How To Boost Auto Ad Sales.

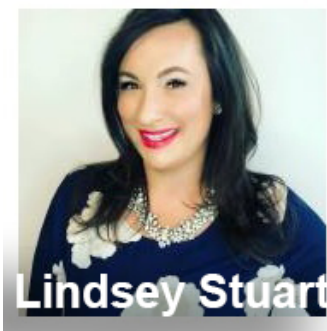
May 28, 2021



Valery Sharifulin

A pair of radio sales execs, who came to the medium after working in the automotive sector, shared success stories and insider tips for marketing to auto dealers this week. Among the takeaways: It takes perseverance and consistency to build long-term relationships with dealers. And they love data, so use lots of research to document a dollar-for-dollar

return on investment.



Lindsey Stuart worked in cable TV advertising and handled marketing for a dealership before joining iHeartMedia's Dallas cluster as Senior Automotive Account Executive. "I spent three years selling against the broad reach of radio," Stuart told an online audience of Radio Advertising Bureau members. But suddenly she had to convince a dealer she worked with in her cable TV job to make the switch to radio. Using a consultative approach, Stuart said she started by getting the dealer to open up about their areas of weakness and how COVID changed their business. Though the big picture goals weren't all that different from most retailers – grow sales and increase market share – the dealer also needed to address weaknesses in specific zipcodes in its trading zone. Despite being known for its geographic targetability, cable wasn't able to solve this shortcoming. Stuart started by showing the challenge and expense of reaching TV viewers that, on average, use six different sources to consume video content in a metro that covers 9,200 square miles across 13 counties.

The pitch was an influencer campaign featuring Jose "J-Si" Chavez from "The Kidd Kraddick Morning Show" to run across broadcast radio, streaming audio and social video, augmented by digital assets and products from the iHeart Automotive Suite. "Radio completely drove results through the entire purchase funnel for this particular dealer," Stuart told the "Radio Works for Automotive (Pt. II)" crowd. "We increased very high quality traffic – walk in, web, chat across all of the channels." The influencer campaign produced 72,000 video views on Facebook, 2,470 clicks and 755 phone calls. It identified 36 new sales and 63 new service customers and sold 21 vehicles, generating \$60,457 in gross profit. In addition, sales efficiency improved in the dealer's "black hole" zipcodes.

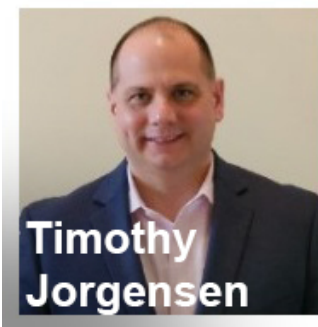
Stuart was able to document a "dollar-for-dollar return" in a post-campaign report that also showed the dealer's sales grew 76% year over year while its dealer rank rose to No. 3 in the market.

Stuart's takeaways: "Radio's reach expands the client's immediate trade zone. It generates sales in new geographic areas and can help dealers be more efficient in their current trade areas," she said. The campaign amplified other marketing tactics, and the use of a well-known, trusted personality to tell the client's story moved the needle.

### Why This Former Dealer Used Radio

Timothy Jorgensen spent 25 years as general manager of a Ford dealership before joining Beasley Media Group as National Digital Automotive Director. Drawing on that experience, he said it takes a consistent long-term effort to build a relationship with a dealer. "It's always better to go in person than to call or send an email because that personal touch is so important," he said. Respect their time, don't make a pitch on the first visit but leave an info sheet behind.

Once a sale is made, regular follow-ups and updates are essential, Jorgensen said. "Dealers love data, they love to see attribution," he explained, and that opens the door to selling additional products and building trust.



Jorgensen reflected on the reasons he would use radio when he ran a dealership: staying top of mind, the power of influencers, and radio's ability to drive store traffic and digital search.

He offered RAB attendees advice on how to deal with dealers' reluctance to advertise when the inventory on their lots is low due to supply chain issues. Staying top of mind, even with low inventory, is critical, he said. "The risk of cutting advertising is the loss of mental availability for a dealership," he said, pointing to research from Kantar showing that six months after cutting advertising, awareness starts to fade and fewer consumers cite your brand as they place they would buy. And even though dealer inventory levels may be low, they still need to sell the cars they do have on their lots.

Putting a cherry on top of his presentation, Jorgensen cited a Beasley client in Southwest Florida who said they had the biggest sales year in the history of their store. "Advertising on the radio was a key driver of our success," the unnamed dealer said. Calling broadcast TV too expensive and cable TV too fragmented, Jorgensen's takeaways from this case study were: make sure the campaign has a precise message with useful and relevant information; be sure the dealer is prepared to handle the website traffic the campaign will create; and understand that it could take six months before a campaign can produce significant results.

***Read Inside Radio's coverage of Part I of the RAB's automotive series [HERE](#).***