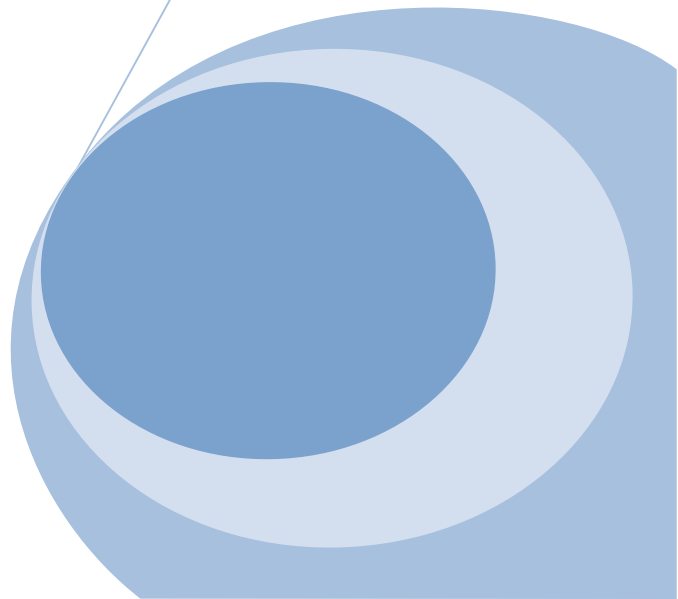


***5 Lead Generation Challenges Facing  
Manufacturers and Their Dealer Network  
and How to Fix Them - Permanently!***

Three Deep Marketing  
“Going Three Deep” Business Series



## Foreword

Our experience has shown that manufacturers, specifically those using distributors or dealers to sell their products, are behind the curve when it comes to online lead generation. In the past, manufacturers have relied upon their independent dealer networks to create demand and drive orders for their products. This may have worked with traditional media like TV, print, and radio, but the effectiveness of those mediums are declining relative to revenue generation. Generating leads online demands an entirely different approach and manufacturers need to lead the charge.

In this whitepaper, you will learn the challenges CMOs face in developing online lead generation platforms for their dealer networks.

1. **Website Structure** - How simple structural website changes could drastically increase inbound lead flow.
2. **Paid Search Engine Marketing** - How effective management, execution and measurement can increase the performance of your paid search campaigns.
3. **Local Search Engine Marketing** - How to get your dealers get found by local buyers who want your products by showing up in localized search engine results, as well as local directories.
4. **Social Media** – The secrets to a successful Social Media campaign (hint: it’s more than a blog or a Facebook page).
5. **Phone follow-up** - The critical importance of immediate phone follow up to turn inbound leads into sales appointments.

## Introduction

**Most manufacturers** depend on their dealer networks to market their products and generate leads, but did you know that 87% of all product and service inquiries now start online, according to *comScore Media Metrix*? Sadly, most dealers lack the knowledge and skill needed to effectively run an effective online marketing program on their own. Most dealers have had bad experiences with online advertising, have inferior or outdated websites, and quite simply are not getting their share of online sales revenue.

To this point, online efforts deployed by manufacturers to support their dealers have been simple, brochure-ware, brand-focused websites that drive very little demand for their products online. On the dealer side, they have seen a slow and problematic transition of their marketing dollars from outbound marketing to inbound leads generated online. Inefficiencies on the part of the manufacturer and their dealer networks have exposed a huge gap in demand generation and revenue attainment, while also representing one of the biggest opportunities for revenue growth for manufacturers moving forward.

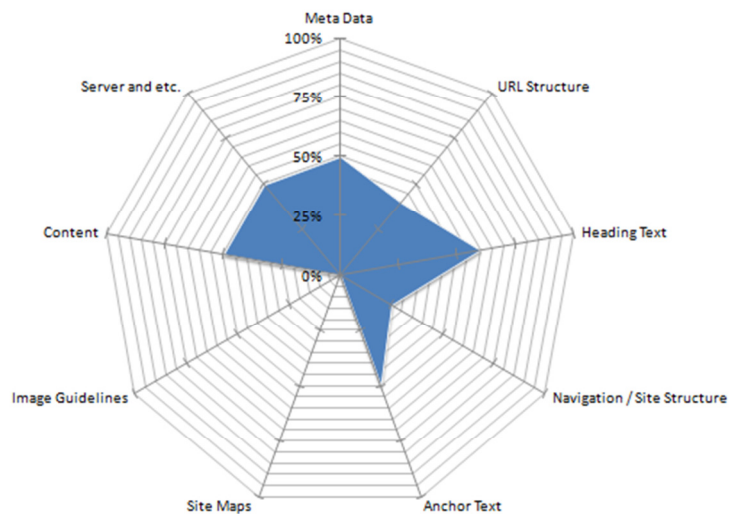
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While most manufacturers would like to “**Think Global and Act Local**” to support their dealer network, the dealers would like to “**Be Local and Drive Sales,**” yet both are lagging behind the curve of the marketplace. We have found that both are about 5-6 years behind the B2C marketplace, and neither manufacturers nor dealers are taking proactive measures to solve the underlying issue. The result is wasted marketing dollars AND lost revenue opportunity (estimated to be in the millions of dollars annually for mid-sized manufacturers with 100+ dealers and tens of millions annually for much larger organizations - 1,000+ dealers).

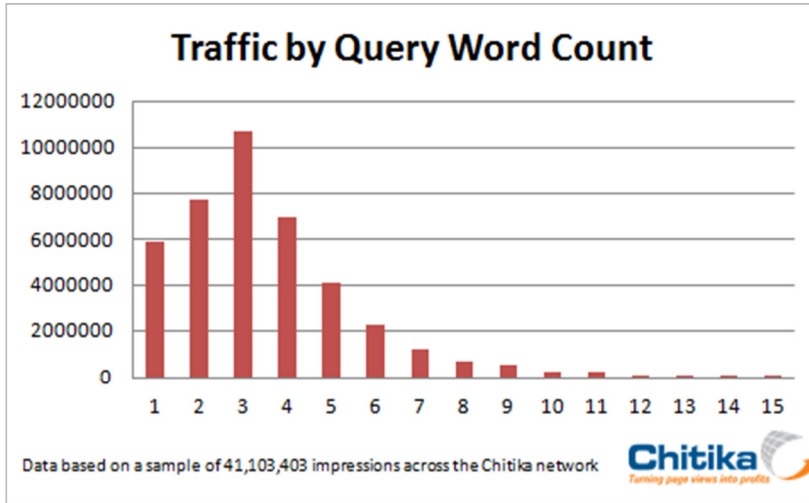
## Top 5 Online Challenges Facing Companies

- 1. Website structure** – a manufacturer’s website is optimized around brands and product content, which draws in visitors who already know about the manufacturer, but fails to draw anyone who starts their online search looking to solve specific needs. Typically the content on a manufacturers’ website is written in marketing language that sells the features of their product, but fails to address the prospects needs or stage in the buying cycle. Additionally, key areas of consumer interest such as a dealer locator or customer support are often buried on the site due to poor navigation and information architecture. Poor or non-existent search engine optimization also leads to unreachable content, and this can severely limit the amount of content that can be found by search engines, which in return, limits the total number of visitors to the site.



- 2. Paid search** – From our experience, paid search (PPC) is the most effective way to drive a high volume of leads for manufacturers. While some manufacturers have national paid search campaigns to drive awareness and leads, these programs often lack the lead tracking and dealer feedback structure needed to prove success. In addition, these programs are often under-funded and what little funds that are available are rarely allocated in a manner that makes all dealers happy. To most manufacturers, the fact that they are doing something to help their dealers should make their dealers grateful (after all, they don’t *have* to do this for them). However, dealers only speak one language when it comes to these programs: **Get me more**

**leads.** The key to an effective paid search program is to find harmony amongst the manufacturers and their dealers, allowing the corporate entity to fund the program to its maximum potential and allow dealers to pay for the only currency they recognize; **leads.**

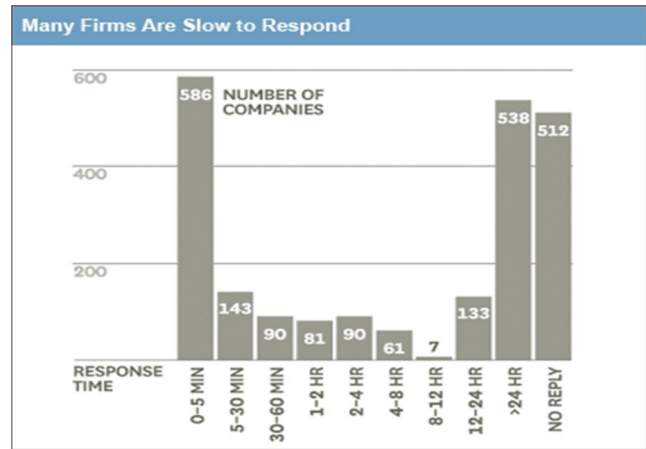


**3. Local Search –** Most searches (over 67%) have three or more keywords, according to the *Chitika Network study*, of over 14,000,000 searchers. Many of these searches (20 % according to Google) have local intent, which means that there can be a city or geographic distinction in the query. These

keywords trigger local results on Google and other search engines. On a local level most manufacturer websites fail to rank for local search results due to poor content structure. In order to get these sites to rank, they will need to align their site with local directories, such as Google Places, and create a profile to highlight their services and location. This process is both time consuming and precise. A single mistake in a directory submission will result in confusion to potential customers, as well as duplicated listings that will be deleted or suppressed from search results. Due to the nature of this process and the literally hundreds of submissions that need to take place, it is best left to a company who can automate the process of publishing these listings.

- 4. Social Media** - Social media allows for a personal connection to be made prior to meeting our customer in person. For some manufacturers, their first impression of the brand is determined from what the customers see from your 'online personality.' If it is cold and impersonal, they are less likely to take that first step and call. Another issue they face online is getting lost in the crowd and not being heard through the online chatter. According to recent statistics from a blog-tracking site, there is a new blog created every half-second. That is 175,000 per day worldwide. If manufacturers and dealers aren't careful, their valuable content will be lost in the sea of words online and never be found by their potential customers. Promoting this content to the right audience is vital to create that warm first impression to your customers.

5. **Phone Follow-up** – Only 37% of companies respond to queries within an hour, according to a study of 2,241 U.S. firms led by James B. Oldroyd, University in South Korea. Firms generally route internet generated leads from their corporate website directly to a decentralized network of dealers with no feedback loop on if the lead was actually contacted. If an interested prospect fills out a form on a corporate website, they are looking for information **NOW!** In working with manufacturers and distributors with multiple locations, we have found that the average response time to an inbound internet lead can vary from as fast as 5 minutes to over a week (if a response is received at all). Furthermore, with a decentralized network of dealers and each using a different technology and call methodology, any resemblance of uniformity in response time and appointment setting scripts from dealer to dealer is nearly impossible.



## Top 5 Dealer online challenges



1. **Website structure** – the dealer’s website (if they have one) is generally a glorified brochure-ware built around brands or products, none of which are optimized for marketing. Dated technology and little depth of content greatly limit the number of times their website is found by online prospects in their search. What the dealer doesn’t realize is that fixing the technical structure of the website and improving lead capture techniques can increase lead flow by more than 150%. That’s a big

number. Most of the websites we have audited for dealers fall short of best practices in terms of search engine and conversion optimization, which means unless the prospect knows who they are; they aren’t finding them in a search query. Their websites are full of missed opportunity and failing to properly position themselves to prospective customers. Even worse, their content does not address the needs of the customer or their stage in the buying process. For most prospective customers, the message of the website is completely irrelevant, which deters the customer and forces them to look elsewhere for a solution.

Even worse, a dealer creates a high-friction process of requesting more information by attempting to receive up to 20 pieces of information in one single contact form, or burying their email address somewhere in the site. To make the process quick and easy for their prospective customers, they should use a short web form that collects the bare minimum information needed to service the lead. We feel the users should not have to work hard to contact you.

- 2. Paid search** – Many dealers have created campaigns on Google to advertise their company. Some believe that their campaigns are successful while hemorrhaging money, while others fail altogether and complain that “Google doesn’t work.” More than likely, they are correct about both: Google didn’t work for them because they were hemorrhaging money by ineffectively managing campaigns. The problem is that Google makes it very easy to spend money with their search engine, but it takes an expert to maximize the effectiveness of the money they spend with search engines. Too many dealers are spending a great deal of money to produce few leads; often crediting the leads they generate through organic search to their paid search spend. When properly managed and configured, paid search should provide an excellent return on investment and lead flow, which improves search lead flow by 200% without spending any extra money with Google. Again, those are big numbers.



- 3. Local Search** – Over 20% of searches today have local intent in their query, yet most dealers don’t know the first thing about optimizing their location to show up in local search listings.

Claiming and optimizing company profiles with local directories can improve your qualified lead flow. When you search for a service provided in a dealers’ geographic area, do they show up on both the map and in the organic results? Chances are they won’t, and that can be a big loss for these dealers. How many more customers would they have reached if they had coverage for different phrases related to the products and services they offer? It takes a good deal of time, effort, and knowledge for a business to rank well in local search, and the amount of knowledge needed to be successful in local search is



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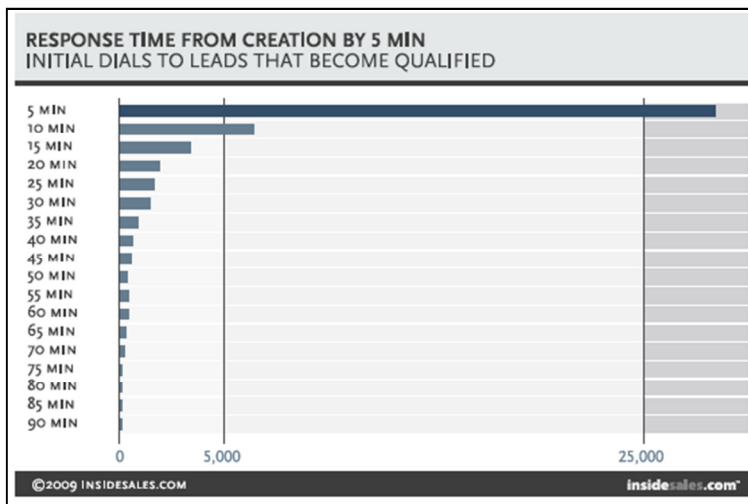
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daunting for many companies. Smart dealers will outsource this work with a provider that can put a human touch on listings, while automating the process of submitting to hundreds of directories.

4. **Social Media** – Blogging about a new product or service, posting YouTube videos, and Facebook Fan Page “likes” can all contribute to more prospects finding your products or your dealers online. These endorsements provide prospective buyers with useful information from your current customers, without being overtly pushy. This is considered a *soft sell* approach, ideal for this type of online campaign. Most dealers fail to get this far however, and are often left with deserted relic of a blog on their website that consists of outdated post and looks about as tasteful as broken down cars in the front yard. Not very welcoming to prospective customers. Creating quality content on a consistent basis is hard, but improving the social media presence of a can create buzz about products and services, encourage customer endorsements, and provide a personal touch to an otherwise opaque industry.



5. **Phone follow-up** – A study by MIT concluded that the odds of contacting and qualifying an inbound Internet lead decreases 2,100% (you are reading it right-no typo here) if your response time slips from 5 minutes down to a half an hour. **That’s huge.**



time slips from 5 minutes down to a half an hour. **That’s huge.** It is vital that dealers follow up with their leads right away, yet most do not have a systematic process in place to respond to these inquiries in a timely manner. At best, these inquiries periodically get handled when the dealer “has a chance.” Many dealers do not even have basic contact management systems for

tracking and managing their inbound prospects. As a result, most web leads will get a few call attempts from the dealer, and will be abandoned and forgotten if no contact is made. By implementing a phone follow-up process for contacting web inquiries immediately, the dealer

will drastically increase their ability to turn prospects into customers. The longer a company takes to respond, the more likely that prospect finds a competitive solution.

## Solving the Online Demand Generation Problem with Connexus

When we set out to build the platform that ultimately became Connexus, we were painfully familiar with these online lead generation problems plaguing manufacturers and dealers. We knew that in order to truly solve the problem, we needed a combination of industry knowledge and technology to solve these problems with scale. Connexus is revolutionary in the sense that it is able to do this and more by leveraging our company's 40+ years of industry and online business experience with state of the art software on a cloud computing platform to turn a basic website into a conversion engine.

How Connexus is designed to solve the problems that manufacturers and dealers face every day?

- **Website structure** – Connexus is technically sound and search optimized in its origins. By incorporating feedback and measuring the results of thousands of landing pages deployed by clients, we built a platform that is designed to be the best at its core without all of the hassles and complications. It allows for the efficient creation of hundreds of product-focused and need-based landing pages that are designed to draw in visitors from the search engines. These pages are set up to convert visitors into prospective customers by offering prominent phone numbers and short contact forms to capture information. Best of all, leads are stored in a centralized database and can be shared with most CRM systems.



- **Paid search** – Solve the problem of paid search by using a platform built with search in mind. Instead of having one landing page for all visitors, you can have hundreds with Connexus. Make your marketing more relevant by addressing the nuance of a visitor's query, and they will be more likely to contact you. Track your conversions with Google and Bing by adding their codes to pages that indicate a successful visit and incorporate Google Analytics easily with our expert

integration. You can even track phone calls to your pages and integrate these results into your conversion tracking system. Connexus is designed to maximize paid search effectiveness.

Landing pages can then be tightly integrated with paid search campaigns that will provide a clear, consistent message and a clean user experience that begins the second they see an advertisement or land on your site. These pages also allow for the site to rank for a variety of organic search queries due to superior site structure persuasive, click-enticing descriptions and titles that are like gold to search engines.

- **Local Search** – Easily create pages for each of your local dealers that are optimized around their location. Finish things off by working with our team to automate the process of submitting the site to local directories, verifying and enhancing the listings.
- **Social Media** – Connexus provides the flexibility for each dealer to produce new content related to their business. They can blog about a new product, post YouTube videos, incorporate a Facebook “Like” box and more from within the system. The content can be found through built in syndication alert system and promoting this valuable content is easy.
- **Phone follow-up** – Connexus optionally integrates to our “state-of-the-art” contact center to ensure that all leads generated are contacted within minutes of the inquiry coming in. No longer does a dealer or manufacturer need to take days to respond. Make that first contact right away and your leads will be worth their weight in gold to both dealers and manufacturers.

*Instead of spreading your budget amongst many ineffective programs, why not put your resources together to make a program that benefits everyone’s bottom line? Connexus solves the problems that are plaguing dealers and manufacturers alike by providing state of the art technology, best in class marketing techniques and the years of industry knowledge needed to make your online campaigns successful.*

## Three Deep has a Complimentary 5 Step Audit Process\*

*We focus on many of the key online challenges that CMOs face, including:*



- ✓ **Website Usability and Structure** – Review the usability and structure of your website to ensure you are properly equipped to receive traffic from search engines
- ✓ **Paid Search Engine Marketing** – Understand current search marketing campaigns and whether they are being properly executed and measured to increase awareness and drive inbound inquiries
- ✓ **Local Search Engine Marketing** – Determine if your sales outlets are being found by local buyers and show up in localized search engine results relevant to your products
- ✓ **Social Media Presence** – Review whether the right social media tactics are being deployed to improve the odds of your company being found online
- ✓ **Immediate Follow-up** – Test lead follow-up methods and timing, whether via email or phone, because timeliness is vital for turning online inquiries into sales leads.

*\* - This offer is good for qualifying companies only. In return for our research efforts, we ask for a 30 minute review of our findings over the phone with you. If interested in learning more, please send an email to [sales@threedeeppmarketing.com](mailto:sales@threedeeppmarketing.com).*



Three Deep is digital marketing optimization firm focused improving the online lead generation challenges that corporations face with their 2-3 tier sales distribution model. Clients have found our analytical, process-based approach to dig deeper into their online marketing programs to uncover under-performing initiatives or discover new opportunities refreshing.

Here's a few of the results that we're achieved for our clients.

- For a top 5 CPG company's ecommerce site, it meant taking a negative performing campaign and turning every dollar of ad spend into \$6 dollars of revenue.
- For a top 10 home improvement company, it involved reducing high online lead costs from \$487 per lead to \$77 per lead.
- For the largest security systems seller in the US, it represented increasing website organic search results by over 1,027% in just 60 days.

***We like numbers and when you're talking digital, we believe data over opinion matters.***

In addition to being both Google Adwords and Google Analytics certified, last year Three Deep was also named an Inc. 5000 Fastest Growing privately held company and a Minnesota Best Places to Work for 2010 and 2011.

