

maas
a codesm company

The 2027 Car Dealership Marketing Plan Workbook

A fill-in-the-blanks plan for selling more vehicles and filling more service bays in 2027. Work through it with your GM, sales, BDC and service leads, then use it every week to check cost per vehicle retailed and cost per repair order.

PREPARED FOR

PLAN PERIOD

QUICK START

How to use this workbook

This workbook is the working companion to our car dealership marketing plan guide at trymaas.com/blog. Read the guide once for context, then fill in one section per week. Every box in this PDF is a form field: type straight into it in Acrobat, Preview or your browser, then save.

THE THIRTEEN SECTIONS

1. Business snapshot
2. SWOT analysis
3. Customer personas
4. Competitive analysis
5. Brand positioning
6. Goals and KPIs
7. Customer journey map
8. Channel strategy
9. Content strategy and calendar
10. Budget, stack and measurement
11. 12-month plan
12. Common mistakes
13. Quick start

> **Time budget.** Most sections take 30 to 60 minutes. Do them in order: positioning (section 5) only holds up once the snapshot, SWOT, personas and competitor work are done.

NEED HELP?

If you would rather have a team build and run this plan with you, MaaS by CodeSM is an outsourced marketing team for franchise and independent car dealerships, including service and parts. Book a call at **trymaas.com/get-a-demo**.

SECTION 1 · WHERE YOU ARE TODAY

Business snapshot

One page that anyone on your team, or any partner you hire, can read in two minutes.

BUSINESS NAME

LOCATIONS / SERVICE AREA

CORE SERVICES OR PRODUCTS

AVERAGE SALE OR CUSTOMER VALUE

TOP THREE CURRENT SOURCES OF CUSTOMERS

REVENUE GOAL FOR THE YEAR

CURRENT MONTHLY MARKETING BUDGET

WHO OWNS MARKETING TODAY

WHAT MAKES CUSTOMERS CHOOSE US OVER THE ALTERNATIVES?

WHAT HAS WORKED IN MARKETING SO FAR, AND WHAT HASN'T?

SECTION 2 · HONEST INTERNAL AUDIT

SWOT analysis

Strengths and weaknesses are about you. Opportunities and threats are about your market. Every weakness is a message you should not lead with; every opportunity is a campaign you haven't run yet.

STRENGTHS

Where do you beat nearby stores? Think inventory depth on key models, price position, review rating and recency, service team tenure, loaner or shuttle options, bilingual staff, and how fast your BDC answers.

WEAKNESSES

Where do you lose deals or repair orders? Think response time, vehicle page photos and pricing, used inventory depth, service booking lead time, communication during service, and ad templates that may not meet pricing and disclosure rules.

OPPORTUNITIES

What could you capture in the next 12 months? Lease maturities and equity customers in your market area, a competitor with a slow BDC, out-of-warranty service, hybrid and EV service, underserved language communities, AI search answers.

THREATS

What could cost you share? Same-brand dealers advertising below you, used-car superstores, independent service shops, affordability and rate pressure, OEM allocation, marketplace price changes, and FTC or state enforcement on advertised prices.

TOP TAKEAWAYS

THE TWO STRENGTHS WE WILL LEAN ON HARDEST IN OUR MARKETING

THE ONE WEAKNESS TO FIX BEFORE WE SCALE SPEND

SECTION 3 · CUSTOMER PERSONAS · PERSONA 1

The Model Researcher

Knows the model and trim, is comparing two or three stores.

Has done hours of research on OEM sites, reviews, YouTube and AI overviews and wants an out-the-door price and availability. Buys from the store with the clearest vehicle page and the fastest real answer.

AGE RANGE AND HOUSEHOLD

MODEL, TRIM AND PRICE BAND

TRADE-IN AND PAYMENT METHOD

RESEARCH SITES AND TOOLS USED

TOP DECISION CRITERIA

CONTACT PREFERENCE (CALL, TEXT, EMAIL)

WHAT WOULD MAKE THIS BUYER CHOOSE US OVER THE SAME-BRAND STORE 20 MINUTES AWAY?

WHICH QUESTIONS DO THEY ASK THAT OUR VEHICLE PAGES DO NOT ANSWER YET?

SECTION 3 · CUSTOMER PERSONAS · PERSONA 2

The Payment Shopper

Shops a monthly payment more than a specific vehicle.

Often looking at used or CPO inventory and unsure about approval. Wants to know the payment and the credit answer before driving over, and leaves when the numbers feel hidden.

TARGET MONTHLY PAYMENT

CREDIT SITUATION

VEHICLE TYPE AND AGE RANGE

TRADE-IN OR NEGATIVE EQUITY

MARKETPLACES AND SITES USED

MAIN WORRY OR OBJECTION

CAN THIS BUYER START CREDIT, TRADE AND PAYMENT STEPS ONLINE WITH US TODAY?

DO OUR PAYMENT ADS CARRY THE REQUIRED FINANCE OR LEASE DISCLOSURES EVERY TIME?

SECTION 3 · CUSTOMER PERSONAS · PERSONA 3

The Service Customer

Owns a 3 to 10 year old vehicle and is choosing where to service it.

Weighs the dealership against independent shops and quick-lube chains on price clarity, convenience and communication. Keeping this customer in your service drive keeps them in your sales pipeline.

VEHICLE, MODEL YEAR AND MILEAGE

SERVICE NEEDS THIS YEAR

WHERE THEY SERVICED LAST

BOOKING PREFERENCE (ONLINE, PHONE, WALK-IN)

WHAT FRUSTRATED THEM LAST VISIT

LEASE END OR EQUITY POSITION

HOW EASY IS IT TO BOOK, GET UPDATES AND PAY FOR SERVICE WITH US COMPARED WITH THE NEAREST INDEPENDENT SHOP?

WHEN DOES THIS CUSTOMER NEXT HEAR FROM US, AND ABOUT WHAT?

SECTION 4 · KNOW THE FIELD

Competitive analysis

List the four or five businesses your customers compare you with, including the ones that aren't really competitors but win the same budget. Fill in what you can see from the outside.

BUSINESS	GOOGLE RATING AND REVIEWS IN LAST 90 DAYS	INVENTORY COUNT AND MARKETPLACE PRICE POSITION	VEHICLE PAGE QUALITY AND FULL PRICE SHOWN	LEAD RESPONSE TIME (MYSTERY SHOP)	SERVICE PRICING AND ONLINE BOOKING	PAID PRESENCE (VLAS, META, MARKETPLACES)
Us						
Competitor 1						
Competitor 2						
Competitor 3						
Competitor 4						
Competitor 5						

WHERE WE CLEARLY WIN

WHERE WE LOSE TODAY, AND WHY

SECTION 5 · ONE SENTENCE THAT DECIDES EVERYTHING

Brand positioning

Positioning is the reason a customer should pick you. Write it before you write a single ad.

For [who you serve] who [need or problem], [your business] is the [category] that [main benefit]. Unlike [main alternative], we [proof].

WORKED EXAMPLE

> *For working families in Cedar County who need a reliable SUV without losing a Saturday, Ridgeway Toyota is the dealer that gets you from first message to keys in under two hours, because every vehicle page shows the full price, credit decisions come back online the same day, and one advisor stays with you through your first service.*

OUR POSITIONING STATEMENT

PROOF POINT 1

PROOF POINT 2

PROOF POINT 3

SHORT VERSION FOR THE WEBSITE HEADLINE

SECTION 6 · WHAT WINNING LOOKS LIKE

Goals and KPIs

Three to five SMART goals: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound.

#	GOAL	CURRENT	TARGET	BY WHEN / OWNER
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

Examples. Cut advertising cost per new vehicle retailed from $810 to $720 by Q4 2027 while holding volume. Respond personally to 95% of web leads within 15 minutes during open hours by March 2027. Raise appointment show rate from 52% to 62% by Q3 2027. Grow customer-pay repair orders 10% year over year and book 35% of service appointments online by December 2027.

MONTHLY KPI CHECK-IN

METRIC	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	GOAL
Advertising cost per vehicle retailed (rolling 30 days)					
Deduplicated leads by source					
Median first response time					
Appointment set and show rate					
Close rate by lead source					
Customer-pay repair orders and online service bookings					

SECTION 7 · FROM FIRST SEARCH TO REPEAT CUSTOMER

Customer journey map

Where your customer is, what they are doing, and where you meet them. Fill in the last column with what you will do at each stage.

STAGE	WHAT THE CUSTOMER DOES	WHERE WE MEET THEM	OUR ACTION
Trigger	Lease maturing, big repair estimate, new job or growing family makes them start looking.	Lease-end and equity outreach, service drive conversations, life-event social ads	
Research	Reads model reviews, watches videos, asks AI assistants, runs payment calculators.	Model and comparison pages, YouTube walkarounds, Google and AI answers	
Shortlist	Compares a few stores on price, availability and reviews.	Marketplaces, Google Vehicle Ads, Google Maps, review sites	
Vehicle page	Checks photos, full price, history report and whether the unit is really there.	Vehicle detail pages, Meta inventory ads, retargeting	
First contact	Sends a form, chat, call or text and expects a real answer fast.	BDC, chat, call tracking, text with consent	
Appointment and test drive	Wants confirmation and the vehicle ready when they arrive.	Text confirmations, appointment reminders, showroom	
Deal and finance	Negotiates trade, credit and F&I, ideally with online steps already done.	Online credit app, trade tool, finance office	
Delivery	Feels relief or doubt; first impression of ownership.	Delivery walkaround, tech setup, review request, delivery photo with permission	
First service	Decides whether the dealer service drive is worth it.	Welcome email, first-service reminder, service advisor introduction	
Loyalty and next vehicle	Keeps servicing, refers friends, or drifts to an independent shop and another dealer.	Maintenance and recall reminders, equity alerts, lease-end offers, referral program	

SECTION 8 · WHERE THE BUDGET GOES

Channel strategy

Tick the channels you will run this year and name an owner for each. Investment ranges are planning ranges; adjust to your market.

USE	CHANNEL	ROLE	CADENCE	TYPICAL INVESTMENT	OWNER
☐	**Google Search**	Brand, model, near me and service intent	Always on, weekly search-term review	$6,000-$20,000/mo	
☐	**Google Vehicle Ads**	VIN-level shopping ads from the vehicle feed	Always on, daily feed sync	$3,000-$12,000/mo	
☐	**Meta inventory and video ads**	Retargeting, in-market reach, events	Always on plus event bursts	$3,000-$10,000/mo	
☐	**Third-party marketplaces**	Used and CPO exposure to comparison shoppers	Monthly package review	$5,000-$15,000/mo	
☐	**SEO and model pages**	Organic model, comparison and service traffic	4-8 pages per month	$2,500-$8,000/mo	
☐	**Google Business Profile and Apple Business Connect**	Map visibility for sales, service and parts	Weekly posts and photos	Time plus review tool	
☐	**Reviews program**	Review volume, recency and responses	Daily requests, replies within 48 hours	$300-$1,000/mo	
☐	**Service retention (email, SMS, reminders)**	Customer-pay repair orders and recall work	Weekly campaigns plus triggered reminders	$1,500-$6,000/mo	
☐	**CRM equity mining and lease-end**	Next vehicle from current customers	Monthly lists, triggered alerts	Tool plus BDC time	
☐	**Radio, streaming audio and CTV**	Reach and sales event support	Event flights	$3,000-$15,000/mo	
☐	**Direct mail**	Equity, conquest and service win-back	Monthly or quarterly drops	$0.60-$1.50 per piece	

SECTION 9 · CONTENT AND SOCIAL

Content framework

Roughly 60% short video (walkarounds, quick answers, service tips), 20% model and comparison pages for search, and 20% community and team content. Aim for 4 to 6 social posts a week per rooftop and 2 to 4 new model or comparison pages a month.

EIGHT CONTENT CATEGORIES TO ROTATE

CATEGORY	FORMAT	FREQUENCY	EXAMPLE
1. Walkaround videos	30-60 second vertical video	3 per week	Here is what the 2027 Highlander Limited on our lot actually has that the XLE does not.
2. Model comparisons	Web page plus short video	2-4 per month	Which three-row SUV fits a family of five and a dog? We measured the cargo space.
3. Payment and lease explainers	Carousel or short video with required disclosures	2 per month	What due at signing really means on a lease, in 45 seconds.
4. Service tips	Short video or carousel	Weekly	The three things our techs check before a summer road trip.
5. The team	Photo or short video	Weekly	Meet Maria, the service advisor who will text you when your car is ready.
6. Delivery moments	Photo, shared with customer permission	3-5 per week	Keys in hand for the Garcia family, their third vehicle from us.
7. New arrivals and launches	Video, carousel and inventory ads	As models arrive	Just arrived: the first hybrid trims of the year, see which ones are on the lot.
8. Community	Photo and story	2 per month	Our service team rebuilt the robotics club van for Lincoln High this weekend.

OUR THREE CONTENT PILLARS THIS YEAR

SECTION 9 · CONTENT AND SOCIAL

30-day content calendar

Plan one month ahead. Write the post idea and the channel in each day you publish.

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30

SECTION 10 · BUDGET ALLOCATION

Budget allocation

A starting split for a typical business in this industry. Write your own percentages and monthly dollars next to it.

TOTAL MONTHLY MARKETING BUDGET (AD SPEND + PEOPLE + TOOLS)

BUCKET	EXAMPLE	WHY	OUR %	MONTHLY $
Google Search and Vehicle Ads	27%	High-intent model, brand and service searches plus VIN-level ads		
Third-party marketplaces	19%	Used and CPO exposure; review packages on cost per sold unit		
Meta inventory and video ads	15%	Retargeting vehicle-page viewers and sales event bursts		
SEO, content, Business Profile and reviews	13%	Model pages, walkaround video, listings and review program		
Service retention	9%	Email, SMS and reminders for customer-pay repair orders		
Radio, CTV and direct mail	11%	Event reach, equity and conquest mail		
Testing reserve	6%	Move money to what is working mid-month		

WHAT WE WILL CUT FIRST IF RESULTS LAG, AND WHAT WE WILL ADD FIRST IF THEY BEAT TARGET

SECTION 10 · TOOLS AND MEASUREMENT

Tech stack and weekly dashboard

STACK CHECKLIST

- [ ] CRM with required lead source field and duplicate merging
- [ ] DMS sales and repair order match-back report by source
- [ ] GA4 with vehicle page view, lead and call events
- [ ] Call tracking with dynamic number insertion
- [ ] Merchant Center vehicle feed linked to Google Ads
- [ ] Meta vehicle catalog from the same inventory source
- [ ] Google Business Profiles for sales, service and parts, plus Apple Business Connect
- [ ] Review request and response tool
- [ ] Online service scheduler with booking source tracking
- [ ] Email and SMS platform with consent capture and opt-out handling
- [ ] Ad template library with approved price, finance and lease disclosures
- [ ] OEM co-op program guide and claim calendar

WEEKLY MEASUREMENT DASHBOARD

METRIC	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	GOAL	STATUS
Advertising cost per vehicle retailed				
Deduplicated leads by source				
Median first response time				
Appointment set rate and show rate				
Close rate by source				
Average days in stock				
Customer-pay repair orders and online bookings				
New reviews and average rating per rooftop				

SECTION 11 · THE YEAR AT A GLANCE

12-month action plan

The order we suggest. Move rows to fit your season, add an owner, and tick each one off.

WHEN	FOCUS	OWNER	DONE
Month 1	Snapshot, personas, positioning; pull 90 days of sales and repair orders by source; listings and review program		☐
Month 2	Price and disclosure audit of ads and vehicle pages; launch Google Vehicle Ads and Meta inventory ads from one feed		☐
Month 3	Weekly dashboard and monthly sales match-back; BDC response standard and mystery shops		☐
Month 4	Service retention program: reminders, recall outreach, service search campaigns		☐
Month 5	Model comparison pages and walkaround video library; Memorial Day event plan		☐
Month 6	Mid-year review: reallocate by cost per vehicle retailed; renegotiate marketplace packages		☐
Month 7	Equity mining and lease-end outreach; July 4 event		☐
Month 8	Model-year changeover plan; back-to-school service campaign		☐
Month 9	Labor Day event; conquest campaign against one target competitor		☐
Month 10	Winter service campaign; AI and search visibility check for your brand and city		☐
Month 11	Year-end sales event creative and co-op submissions		☐
Month 12	Annual review of goals and attribution; draft next year's plan and budget		☐

SECTION 12 · WHAT TO AVOID

Common mistakes

The patterns we see most often in this industry, and the fix for each. Be honest about which ones apply to you.

01 Paying for leads instead of sold units

Match sold units back to source every month and judge channels on cost per vehicle retailed.

- [ ] We do this today

02 Advertising a price nobody can pay

Build ad templates that include all mandatory fees and only rebates every buyer qualifies for.

- [ ] We do this today

03 Payment numbers without disclosures

Add approved finance and lease disclosure blocks to every template that shows a payment or amount due.

- [ ] We do this today

04 Inventory ads on a stale feed

Sync the feed daily and audit a sample of ads against vehicle pages each week.

- [ ] We do this today

05 Treating the BDC as a call center

Set a response-time standard, use phone plus text or email, and mystery-shop your store monthly.

- [ ] We do this today

06 Marketing service only when bays are empty

Run always-on reminders tied to maintenance intervals, recalls and seasons.

- [ ] We do this today

SECTION 13 · STARTING FROM SCRATCH

Quick start

If you only have a few hours a week, do these in order.

DONE	WHEN	TASK
☐	**Week 1**	Complete the snapshot, personas and positioning; pull 90 days of sales and repair orders by source.
☐	**Week 2**	Clean up Google Business Profiles for sales, service and parts and Apple Business Connect; start daily review requests.
☐	**Week 3**	Compare five live ads with their vehicle pages against FTC pricing guidance and fix the templates.
☐	**Week 4**	Mystery-shop your BDC and two competitors; set a response standard and add consent language to forms.
☐	**Month 2**	Launch or clean up Google Vehicle Ads and Meta inventory ads from one feed; restructure search campaigns.
☐	**Month 3**	Build the weekly dashboard and monthly sales match-back; review marketplace packages.
☐	**Quarter 2**	Launch the service retention program, equity and lease-end outreach, and model comparison pages.
☐	**Year 1**	Run the annual review and reallocate budget by cost per vehicle retailed and per repair order.

NOTES

You have the plan. Want a team to run it with you?

MaaS by CodeSM is the outsourced marketing team for franchise and independent car dealerships, including service and parts. One team for strategy, creative, paid media, SEO, web and reporting, without hiring a department.

01

A marketing audit

We review your listings, website, reviews, ads and reporting and show you where leads are slipping.

02

See where you stand

We compare your search visibility, reviews and ads with the competitors your customers actually consider.

03

A 90-day plan

You leave with a prioritized 90-day plan: channels, budget, content and KPIs.

04

Or we run it with you

Strategy, creative, paid media, SEO, web and reporting from one outsourced marketing team.

Book a call

trymaas.com/get-a-demo



The outsourced marketing team for franchise and independent car dealerships, including service and parts.

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