

## In 500 Feet, You will Arrive at Your Destination



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Am I the only person that gets agitated when someone walks up to me and asks “Hey, do you know where this place is?” Hold on. Let me pull out my archaic paper road map and see if I can find it for you. First, we’ll need to clear off the top of the table because once opened up, this map has a wingspan similar to that of a commercial airliner. Once we get it opened, we need to figure out how to use the chart system. Slide across to M, then go

down to 14. It’s got to be somewhere in this one-inch box!

I remember the days of when my father would do all of this—while driving!

Now today, instead of some archaic road map, you could just take out your smart phone and slide over to the Google Maps app. To make it even easier, you can say the name of the place you are looking for into your smart phone without even having to type. Presto, like magic, your smart phone will tell you where the place is and it will give you directions on how to get there.

It’s called technology and it is very useful if you use it!

This is not all that different than when you ask someone where their F&I numbers are for the month. Sometimes you get the response of “Um, I’m about ...” I feel another paper map moment coming here.

In today’s automotive industry, there is no excuse for not knowing where your measurable areas are in real time, all the time. We have the greatest technology our industry has ever seen at our fingertips every day, we just need to use it. Most of us have CRMs in our dealerships that have outstanding reporting tools. CRMs that integrate with our DMS and can give us accurate numbers. If you do not have a CRM, you likely have an electronic menu platform that has good reporting tools built in. These menus often integrate as well and have just as accurate reporting. Even if your dealership does not have either of these tools, you still have a DMS. Right now, every DMS on the market has built in reporting tools. If you do not know where to locate these tools or if you need a refresher on how to use them, call your provider and ask them to give you a tutorial. Most of these systems are web-based and some even have apps for your smart phone.

Gone are the days of having to guess what our numbers are because we have real time access to them. However, as the saying goes, “Bad

data in, bad data out.” To solve this, I recommend cleaning all your deals as soon as possible and get them closed out in your DMS. At a bare minimum, try to make sure all deals are off your desk and turned in every night before you leave. This is a good idea as it will help produce accurate reporting to track your production. Even if you are looking at your reports every day, you will not know where your numbers are if you always have 10 or 12 deals sitting on your desk waiting to be cleaned. There will always be the rare case where you are waiting on a bank, or a stip, or maybe it was a dealer trade. Go ahead and clean the deals that you can so you can go back and check your numbers. When I was in retail, I always checked mine by the end of the day, right before I walked out the door. When I would get back to the dealership in the morning, I would check them again when I walked in to remind me where I was.

Let this be your road map. It tells you where you are and gives you the directions on how to get where you need to be. In today’s business offices there are more products and more measurable goals than ever before. We get graded on gross profit, average profit per deal, average profit per product, percentage of product sales, number of product sales, and the list goes on. No one can manage all of that information in their head and maximize every deal every day. Luckily, we don’t have to. We have incredible technology at our fingertips just waiting to be used.

So, the next time someone asks you “How’s your month going?” pull out your smart phone, pull up your real time report, and show them how your month is going. Use that technology to help you have a great month, every month!

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